

WEST TEXAS RYAN WHITE PROGRAM

Administered by Lubbock Regional MHMR Center



Housing Assessment Report

SPRING 2011

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ACRONYMS

AMI	Area Median Income
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
COALITION	El Paso Coalition for the Homeless
EFA	Emergency Financial Assistance
EPDCHD	El Paso Department of Community and Human Development
ESG	Emergency Shelter Grant
ESG	Emergency Solutions Grant
HACEP	Housing Authority of the City of El Paso
HCV	Housing Choice Voucher
HEARTH	Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing
HOME	HOME Investment Partnership Program
HOPWA	Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS
HPRP	Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program
HRSA	Health Resources Services Administration
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
IAE	International AIDS Empowerment
LRMHMRC	Lubbock Regional MHMR Center
PLWHA	People living with HIV/AIDS
PSH	Permanent Supportive Housing
(S+C)	Shelter Plus Care
SH	Supportive Housing
SRO	Single Room Occupancy
STRMU	Short-term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Assistance
TBRA	Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

INTRODUCTION

Safe, decent, affordable housing makes a significant difference in the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). It is well documented that adequate housing improves PLWHA access medical care and other services necessary to maintaining health. This was confirmed in the 2010 West Texas Comprehensive Needs Assessment. In that study, out-of-care consumers were homeless or living in unstable housing to a greater extent than those receiving HIV medical care. Results demonstrated:

- Medical care is not a priority for PLWHA when they are concerned about locating safe housing.
- Medication storage can be difficult for those who are homeless or who live in unstable settings.
- Disclosure of HIV status is the greatest housing barrier to HIV medical care with 34% of all survey respondents identifying this barrier.
 - The percentage identifying disclosure concerns ranged up to 55% of those who are homeless, live in group homes or halfway houses, etc. Among those living with friends and family, 36% identified disclosure of HIV status as a barrier.
- Seventeen percent of respondents report being on a housing waiting list. Issues impacting access to waiting lists include:
 - Housing Choice (Section 8) waiting list is frequently closed to new applicants. It currently stands at more than 2,000 individuals and families, but will be opening for applicants for three weeks on May 9, 2011.
 - PLWHA without legal immigration status or with some types of felony convictions are not able to access most housing services.

In West Texas/El Paso, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) to support PLWHA who are in unstable housing. HOPWA funds, however, are inadequate to fulfill the wide array of PLWHA housing needs and are designed to work collaboratively with other community housing resources. This is challenging as El Paso and West Texas residents have an ongoing history of poverty which has been exacerbated by recent local and national events.

- El Paso County is the fourth poorest county in the United States. Unemployment is over 10%, and 24% of the population lives in poverty, including 31.5% of those under 18 years of age.¹
 - The 2010 Ryan White Comprehensive Needs Assessment found 75% of PLWHA were unemployed.
- Employment barriers exist for many El Pasoans due to low educational attainment, undocumented immigration status, and/or limited English proficiency.
 - Approximately 32% of the City's population age 25 and older have less than a high school diploma, and the 2010 Ryan White Comprehensive Needs Assessment found

¹ "Consolidated Plan for the City of El Paso, Texas 2010 – 2015," City of El Paso Department of Community and Human Development, June 22, 2010, page 84.

- 37% of consumer survey respondents have less than a high school diploma including 24% with an education level of eighth grade or less.
- Available, affordable housing is in very short supply in the El Paso region.
 - Recent increased housing demand has resulted from an influx of new immigrants escaping the violence in Ciudad Juarez and new residents supporting the expansion/construction at Ft. Bliss.
 - The El Paso 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan (Consolidated Plan) Housing Market Analysis reports a 9% vacancy rate for renters and 2% for owner-occupied units as well as a wide affordability mismatch for both renters and owners. This was confirmed by presenter comments at the April 27, 2011 Ryan White Housing Forum.
 - The Consolidated Plan also finds the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) has a 162% increase in the need for public housing since 2009.

The number of substandard units reported is nearly 39,000 which is considered “extremely high.”² Therefore, the City’s primary goal is to “conserve and upgrade the existing supply of affordable housing through rehabilitation. Its secondary goal is to increase the number of units in the affordable housing market through new construction.”³

These barriers coupled with the housing issues identified by the 2010 Ryan White Comprehensive Needs Assessment resulted the need for more information about housing services in the El Paso/West Texas region. The Lubbock Regional MHMR Center (LRMHMRC), the administrative agent for the West Texas Ryan White program and for a portion of the HOPWA program, contracted for this housing assessment in order to support the development of PLWHA housing strategies to cost-effectively and collaboratively meet their housing needs in the West Texas region. Specific objectives are to:

- Learn about the effectiveness and cost of providing funds for housing assistance for rent and/or emergency financial assistance (EFA) for utilities.
- Help determine a system to provide emergency/short-term housing/utilities including how to determine need, time frames, and requirements that allow assistance to the most PLWHA.
- Impact of the change in administrative agency and dividing HOPWA roles and responsibilities between two agencies.
- Understand the overall El Paso housing system including requirements and waiting lists.
- Identify barriers to PLWHA accessing housing outside the HOPWA/Ryan White system.
- Provide case manager training about housing options to improve access for their clients.

² Ibid., page 62.

³ Ibid., page 63.

METHODOLOGY

In order to accomplish the objectives of this study, the following tasks were undertaken:

TASK 1—Review Of Housing Policies, Procedures And General Information

In order to provide the necessary background and understanding of housing issues affecting the West Texas region, the documents and websites found in the bibliography in Appendix A were reviewed.

TASK 2—Key Informant Interviews

Five key informant interviews were conducted with leadership of key El Paso area housing services. These included representatives from the City of El Paso Department of Human and Community Development, City of El Paso Housing, International AIDS Empowerment, Sun City Behavioral Health Care and the El Paso Coalition for the Homeless.

TASK 3—Review of Budget, Service Utilization and Referrals

LRMHMRC provided detailed budget and utilization information beginning in September 2009. Previous records from Planned Parenthood of El Paso were not available.

TASK 4—Resource Inventory of El Paso Area Housing Services

A Housing Resource Inventory provided detailed information about 19 housing services in the El Paso area. To obtain the necessary information a telephone survey was administered. It included:

- Services and Target Populations
- Locations and Contact Information
- Eligibility Requirements and Intake Procedures
- Policies related to PLWHA and Medication Administration
- Policies Related to Undocumented Immigrants and Convicted Felons
- Fee Structure

Interview length ranged from 15 minutes to more than an hour, and multiple contacts were made with several of the larger agencies that offer diverse services. (Refer to Appendix B for Interview Guide)

TASK 5—Case Manager Focus Group

A focus group was conducted with 10 case managers from five agencies that provide services to PLWHA. The HEI case manager from Aliviane was not available for the focus group, so a telephone interview was conducted with her and her supervisor in lieu of attending the focus group.

The objectives of the focus group were to:

- Identify issues/challenges encountered in linking clients with housing, including specialized housing.
- Identify housing resources used by case managers.
- Identify population-specific housing needs, such as singles, women with children, etc.
- Identify barriers to accessing housing.
- Identify educational requirements to enhance referral and linkage to housing services.

Refer to Appendix C for the focus group guide.

TASK 6—Housing Forum

The case managers appreciated the networking opportunity provided by the focus group, and were interested in attending a more detailed educational session. Therefore, an educational Housing Forum was presented April 27, 2011. This targeted Ryan White and other case managers with information and presentations by El Paso's largest housing service providers. The agenda from the Housing Forum is attached in Appendix D.

BACKGROUND AND DEFINITIONS

The following definitions provide background for understanding housing issues.

Homelessness

The definition of homelessness varies by organization/agency. Since the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the most significant housing funding source, that agency's definition will be the baseline in this report. The current HUD definition is:

Individuals and families sleeping in areas "not meant for human habitation" as well as:

- Living in transitional or supportive housing for homeless persons but originating in streets or shelters.
- Direct threat of eviction within *a week (seven days)* from private dwelling units and no subsequent residences have been identified and they lack resources and supportive networks to obtain housing.
- Are within a week from leaving institutions in which they have been residents for more than 30 consecutive days, and no subsequent residences have been identified and they lack resources and supportive networks to obtain housing.
- People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

The definition was broadened as part of the 2009 reauthorization of the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance programs. The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act expands HUD's definition to include:

- People at imminent risk of losing their housing within *14 days*.
- Families or youth who live in precarious situations and are unlikely to become stable.

Although the HEARTH Act was signed by the President in May 2009 with the new definition scheduled to take effect approximately 18 months from the date the law was enacted,⁴ changes to the definition were not in force in April 2011.

Income Levels

An individual or family's availability to access HUD assistance varies based on total family income. Three categories have been defined:

1. **Low-income family.** A family whose annual income does not exceed *80% of the area median income (AMI)*, adjusted for family size. Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) clients must be at this income level.
2. **Very low-income family.** A family whose annual income does not exceed *50% of the AMI*.

⁴ <http://www.henrywaxman.house.gov/UploadedFiles/homelessness.pdf>. Retrieved April 5, 2011.

3. **Extremely low-income family.** A family whose annual income does not exceed 30% of the AMI. The Housing Choice Voucher Program requires 75% of client incomes at this level.⁵

HIV/AIDS as a Disability

HUD defines both HIV and AIDS as disabling conditions. HUD also considers PLWHA as persons with special needs.

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in HUD programs.
 - Other than HOPWA providers, no El Paso housing agency reports screening clients for HIV/AIDS status.
 - Key informants and agency contacts reported a “don’t ask, don’t tell” environment among homeless PLWHA when screening for HIV status.
- Reasonable accommodations must be made to allow people with disabilities to participate in HUD programs.
- HUD allows person with disabilities to receive support when housed with family members who own the home.

HUD Funding and The Consolidated Plan for the City of El Paso, Texas 2010–2015

The “Consolidated Plan for the City of El Paso, Texas 2010–2015” (Consolidated Plan) is a five year planning, strategy and process management tool required by HUD to direct the use and measure the effect of federal funds granted to the City of El Paso. All programs and activities must address the HUD goals of “creation of a suitable living environment, provision of decent housing and creation of economic opportunities”⁶ with economically disadvantaged residents and neighborhoods as the focus. HUD funds can only be used for housing for U.S. citizens and legal immigrants.

Although the City of El Paso receives funds from 26 federal resources and programs, the four annual formula entitlement grants are considered the “most reliable” and include:

1. **The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program** is a flexible program that provides resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs among low-to-moderate income neighborhoods. It works to:
 - Ensure decent, affordable housing
 - Provide services to the most vulnerable in our communities
 - Create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses

To judiciously use CDBG funds, El Paso City Council has prioritized non-profit public facility projects including senior centers, handicapped centers, homeless facilities, neighborhood facilities and public works projects.⁷

⁵ “Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program,” Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Texas, page 3-11.

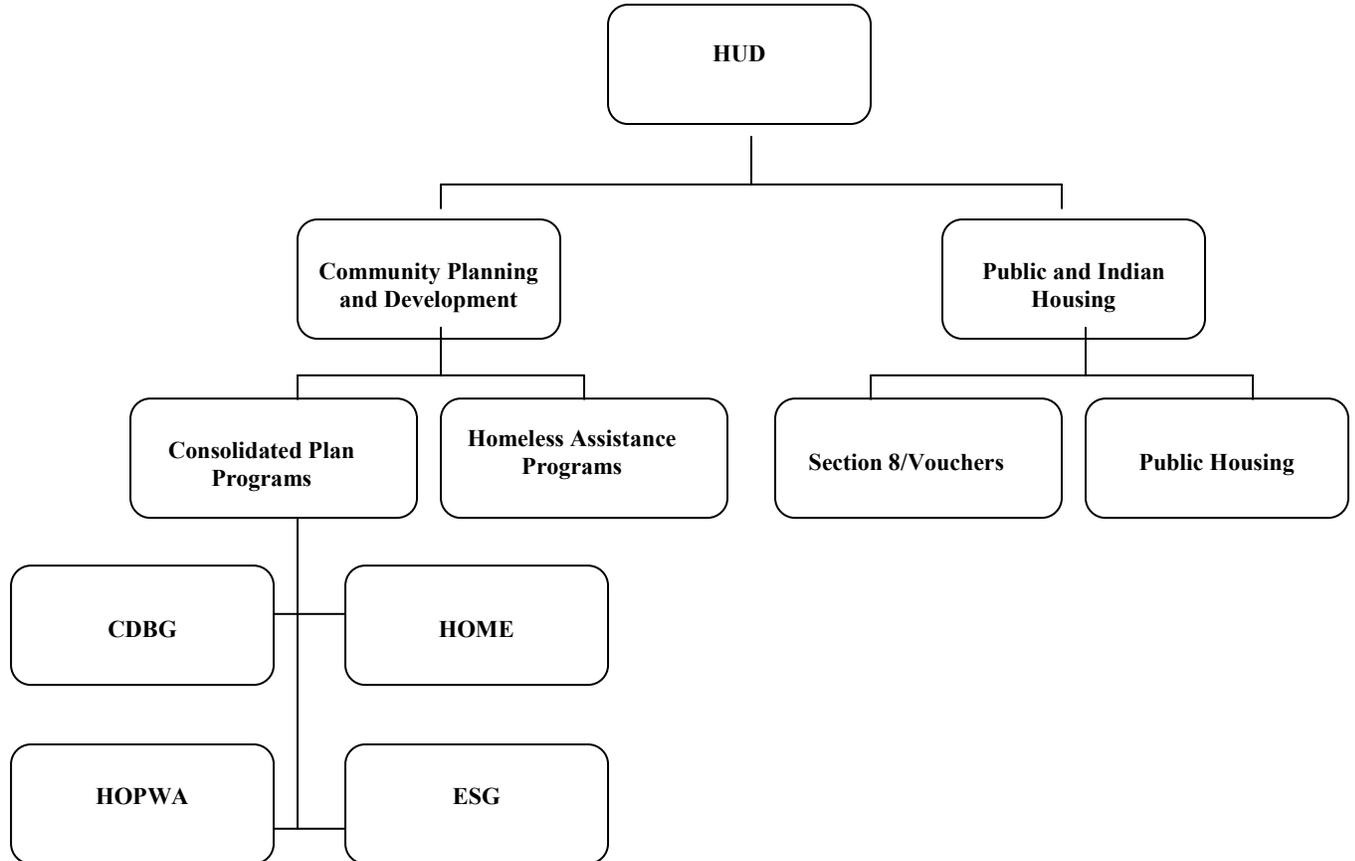
⁶ Consolidated Plan, page 1.

⁷ Ibid., page 62.

- The anticipated annual amount of this grant is \$9,500,000 with the five year projection between 2010 and 2015 of \$47,500,000.
- 2. **The HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Program** provides incentives to develop and support safe, decent and affordable housing through the rehabilitation or purchase of existing homes, as well as construction of new housing.
 - HUD requires matching funds for some of HOME funded projects which has been a barrier in El Paso. Given the economics of the region, in some instances HUD has waived the matching requirement.
 - The anticipated annual amount of this program is \$5,200,000 with the five year projected amount of \$26,000,000. (This includes program income.)
- 3. **The Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program** provides funds to homeless shelters. The funds pay for renovation, operating expenses, essential services, and homelessness prevention activities.
 - The HEARTH Act modified the ESG program, and it has been renamed the Emergency Solutions Grant. It is designed to be the first step in the continuum of assistance to enable homeless individuals and families to move toward independent living as well as prevent homelessness. New ESG regulations to accompany the changes to the program directed by the HEARTH Act for FY2011 have not been issued by HUD. As a result, actual implementation of this program may further be defined by new regulations, directives or guidance issued by HUD at a later date.
 - The anticipated amount of this program between 2010 and 2015 is \$400,000 annually for a total of \$2,000,000
- 4. **The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program** funds housing assistance and related supportive services. Grantees are encouraged to develop community-wide strategies and form partnerships with area non-profit organizations.
 - Annually HOPWA funds are expected to be \$300,000, with a total between 2010 and 2015 of \$1,500,000.
 - The following diagram demonstrates HOPWA's position within the HUD network of services.⁸

⁸ Consolidated Solutions—from handout.

How HOPWA Fits in HUD



The Consolidated Plan outlines priority populations with weights of high, medium or low and identifies the “unmet need.” The following are the high priority populations and the estimated unmet need:

**City of El Paso
High Priority Housing Needs
2010-2015**

HIGH PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS	% of AMI	NUMBER WITH UNMET NEED
RENTER		
Small Related (1 -2 members)	0 – 30%	5,322
	31 – 50%	4,981
	51 – 80%	3,688
Large Related (2 – 4 members)	0 – 30%	2,655
	31 – 50%	2,644
	51 – 80%	2,093
OWNER		
Large Related Owner	51 – 80%	2,608
NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS		
Elderly	0 – 80%	28
Frail Elderly	0 – 80%	221
Severe Mental Illness	0 – 80%	238
Physical Disability	0 – 80%	555
Developmental	0 – 80%	80
HIV/AIDS	0 – 80%	390
Victims of Domestic Violence	0 – 80%	80

The strategic goal outlined in the 2010–2015 Comprehensive Plan is to “Provide TBRA and supportive services, such as case management services, to low-income persons who reside in El Paso County that are living with HIV/AIDS and the families to provide improved affordability of safe and decent rental housing.”⁹

- The City of El Paso has identified a need for \$750,000 over five years to meet the needs of the 390 PLWHA with unmet needs with an annual goal of 54 individuals and families.

El Paso Coalition for the Homeless

The City of El Paso, through a cooperative partnership with the El Paso Coalition for the Homeless member agencies, has set the ambitious goal of ending chronic homelessness in the community by 2014. This will be partially accomplished through the following goals:

- Increase the number of permanent supportive housing beds for the chronically homeless.

⁹ Ibid., page 4

- Increase supportive services to the chronically homeless.
- Continue to assure the availability of medical services for homeless persons.
- Increase employment opportunities for homeless persons.
- Address issue of discharge planning as related to homelessness.
- Support advocacy efforts for homeless persons.
- Address long term issues of funding for homeless service providers.¹⁰

El Paso Coalition for the Homeless has identified the following priorities in providing for those who are considered chronically homeless: (1) increasing housing options for persons who are chronically homeless, (2) increasing supportive services to chronically homeless persons that will enable them to be supported within the community, and (3) developing additional housing subsidy options for persons who are not disabled but do not have enough funds to independently maintain housing.

El Paso Housing Services

This outlines available El Paso housing services that can be combined with HOPWA services to expand the housing continuum available to PLWHA. Each is described below along with implications for PLHWA.

¹⁰ Consolidated Plan, pages 86–87.

EMERGENCY SHELTER

DEFINITION

Emergency shelters are facilities designed to temporarily house homeless persons. El Paso's emergency shelters provide a wide range of services for homeless individuals. In addition to a place to stay, the emergency shelters provide food, case management, education and employment services, medical care, psychiatric care, substance abuse treatment, HIV counseling and testing.

KEY FINDINGS

The El Paso Coalition for the Homeless (Coalition) is an active organization with approximately 60 members that include local agencies, former homeless persons, private funding agencies, and City staff. Together, Coalition members work to meet the needs of homeless and chronically homeless persons in El Paso. The Coalition works closely with the City of El Paso to optimize homeless services and use of available funds.

As a result of this collaboration, many services to support the homeless are available in El Paso. The Consolidated Plan reports that the current emergency shelter inventory is 511 beds resulting in a gap of 28 beds.¹¹

SERVICES

El Paso has ten emergency shelters, with an 11th trying to meet code and other operational requirements. While some of the shelters target very specific populations, such as seasonal migrant workers or runaway teens, the agencies presented below offer services to a broader range of individuals:

- Annunciation House provides services for homeless immigrants with a capacity ranging between 70 and 100 individuals. They accept men, women and families.
 - They offer supportive, educational and limited case management services
- Opportunity Center has services for single men and women, with the men's shelter accommodating 150 or more men on sleeping mats and up to 50 women with 21 beds and the remainder on mats.
 - The men's shelter allows men who are not residents to spend time at the center during the days.
 - Safe Zone is a 90 day residential substance abuse treatment program offered at the shelter for homeless individuals coming out of detoxification.

¹¹ Consolidated Plan page 194.

- Rescue Mission has 110 beds for households without children and 25 beds for women and children. They report having 125 people per night for the 110 spaces.
 - They offer short term shelter and longer term shelter for those seeking to change their lives. The program of the longer term residents includes employment assistance.
 - They currently have two medical beds, but are expanding to 16 medical beds and hope to staff these with a registered nurse.
 - They offer a 13 week residential substance abuse program.
 - They are in the middle of a building project to expand permanent housing on-site.
 - They offer employment services through Rescue Furniture Factory to help residents learn a trade and establish an employment history.
- Salvation Army provides emergency shelter and case management targeting families with children

RELEVANCE TO PLWHA

Access to many of El Paso's housing services begins with the homeless shelters. Clients must conform to HUD's definition of homelessness in order to qualify for services.

According to key informants and shelter employees, most shelters have a "don't ask, don't tell policy" when it comes to sheltering PLWHA. Unless the person volunteers their status, agency staff do not screen for it.

The 2010 needs assessment found 1% of those receiving HIV medical care reported being homeless compared to over 17% of those not receiving HIV medical care. However, the total reporting homelessness was eight respondents, a number that should be considered anecdotal.

During the case manager focus group, a wide range of concerns and "rumors" related to emergency shelters were discussed.

- Several participants stated that medication is "not allowed" or can get stolen at shelters. Interviews with shelter staff, however, identified protocols to allow clients to safely store medication and access as appropriate.
- The stigma of HIV in a shelter was a concern.
 - "It is for the safety of the client, if others know of their HIV status, it puts extra pressure on the client."
- Issues of cleanliness, sleeping on the floor, cold/flu/virus were identified as concerns for PLWHA who are immuno-compromised.

HOMELESS PREVENTION RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM (HPRP)

DEFINITION

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) provides homelessness prevention assistance to households that would otherwise become homeless, and provides rapid re-housing assistance to persons who are homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act. A major aspect of this program is to provide rental assistance coupled with housing-focused case management services.

Funds are predominantly used for: (1) Financial assistance which includes rental assistance/arrears, utility assistance/arrears, security deposits, utility deposits, moving cost assistance, hotel/motel vouchers and (2) Housing relocation and stabilization services which includes case management, outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, legal services, credit repair.

Low to moderate income families and individuals who are facing eviction can get their rent and utilities paid for in full for three months and have those bills partly paid for up to 15 more months. So the total assistance that is provided can be equivalent to 18 months of housing expenses.

HPRP was funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act with a one time allocation for homeless prevention activities. The HEARTH Act Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) will provide funding for homeless prevention and rapid re-housing when HPRP ends.

KEY FINDINGS

For prevention, the City of El Paso received nearly \$1,610,000 for financial assistance and over \$500,000 for stabilization services, projecting to serve over 900 households over three years. For Rapid Re-Housing the City granted over \$780,000 for financial assistance and nearly \$300,000 for stabilization services, projected to service 150 households over three years.¹²

HPRP funds were available in September 2009 with a three-year grant term. Once funds are depleted, however, the program ends. All El Paso area funds will be expended by August 31, 2011.

El Paso County General Assistance has funds available for three months rent (two months in arrears plus current month) as the HPRP program concludes.

HPRP provides assistance to households at or below 50% of AMI. The HEARTH Act ESG will reduce eligibility to 30% of AMI, but will use the expanded definition of homelessness or pending homelessness. In addition, ESG will expand the emphasis on homeless families with

¹² Consolidated Plan, page 94.

children and youth. Funding for financial assistance and housing relocation/stabilization services will generally be maintained. The funding amount has not been disclosed.

RELEVANCE TO PLWHA

International AIDS Empowerment (IAE) is a HPRP subgrantee. Coordination of HOPWA and HPRP has been successful at IAE. They provide intensive case management for prevention which stabilizes at-risk households and rapid re-housing which moves households out of unstable housing, shelters and transitional housing as quickly as possible. The individual housing plans guide the longer term goals and access support.

It remains to be seen whether ESG funds will replace a portion of the HPRP funds. If not, a significant gap can be expected.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

DEFINITION

Transitional Housing programs offer temporary but longer term housing for homeless persons in order to help them transition into employment and economic self-sufficiency. These programs typically offer housing and supportive services from several months up to two years.

KEY FINDINGS

Twelve organizations offer 18 targeted programs with a total of 543 transitional housing beds. Of these 187 beds are for households without children and 356 beds for households with children.¹³ Populations range from single parent families to men and women in recovery.

RELEVANCE TO PLWHA

On the 2010 Ryan White Comprehensive Needs Assessment, very few PLWHA reported living in transitional housing. A total of seven (3%) reported living in a “halfway house, transitional housing or treatment facility.”

¹³ Ibid, pages 184 – 185.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING/SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR DISABLED

DEFINITION

HUD provides funds for supportive housing programs for homeless as well as supportive housing for people with disabilities. These include:

1. Supportive Housing (SH) provides funds to develop housing and related supportive services for people moving from homelessness to independent living. Program funds help homeless people live in a stable place, increase their skills and their income, and gain more control over the decisions that affect their lives. SH may include the following components to help homeless people achieve independence.
 - Transitional housing,
 - Permanent housing for persons with disabilities,
 - Supportive services only,
 - Safe havens which engage hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness and other debilitating conditions who are on the street. The Opportunity Center Magofin Avenue Safe Haven is the only safe haven program in El Paso.
2. Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Program provides rental assistance with supportive services to assist “hard to serve” homeless individuals and their families. Per HUD, these individuals primarily include those with serious mental illness, chronic problems with substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS or related diseases.¹⁴
3. Section 811—Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities is designed to allow persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community, HUD provides funding to develop rental housing with the availability of supportive services for very low income adults with disabilities. HUD then provides rental assistance which covers the difference between the HUD-approved operating costs of the project and the tenants’ contribution toward rent.

KEY FINDINGS

The Comprehensive Plan assigns a high priority for supportive housing for person with special needs. These groups include those with disabilities, those with diagnosed behavioral conditions, the elderly, and children and adults with development needs.

Local social service agencies and nonprofit organizations addressing the needs of these populations receive funds from a wide range of federal and state sources. Nevertheless, the needs are greater than available services. The City of El Paso continues to work with local organizations to assist them as they seek funds for supportive housing for persons with special needs. The following have applied for Section 811 or Section 202 (supportive housing for the elderly):

- TVP Nonprofit in partnership with Opportunity Center for the Homeless
 - Project Vida Community Development Corporation
 - El Paso Collaborative for Community and Economic Development

¹⁴ www.hudre.info/index.cfm?do=viewShelterPlusCare. Retrieved April 5, 2011.

Permanent Supportive Housing in El Paso includes 184 beds for households without children. Fifty are new beds and 24 are under development. There are also 31 beds for households with children including six under development.¹⁵

RELEVANCE TO PLWHA

Current supportive housing focuses on elderly, those with severe mental health disorders (schizophrenia, bipolar, or major depression) or disabled veterans. Supportive housing beds dedicated to PLWHA are not currently available in El Paso.

¹⁵ Ibid, pages 188-189.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS (HOPWA)

DEFINITION

The overall goal of the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) Program is to provide housing assistance and supportive services for income-eligible individuals living with HIV/AIDS and their families to establish or better maintain a stable living environment in housing that is decent, safe, and sanitary, to reduce the risk of homelessness, and to improve access to health care and supportive services.¹⁶

The City of El Paso's goals for the HOPWA program are to:

- Enable PLWHA to establish or better maintain a stable living environment in housing that is decent, safe and sanitary by providing long-term assistance through tenant-based rental assistance and permanent housing.
- Improve access to health care and supportive services and maintain housing stability by providing case management, mental health services and substance abuse treatment.
- Expand the community's capacity to provide stable housing for PLWHA through resource identification and planning.

HOPWA is:

- Not a homeless program, but is designed similarly to homeless initiatives.
- One of multiple resources for housing PLWHA.
- Often the link to getting tenants into permanent, supportive housing.
- Designed to work with existing housing resources.

HOPWA funds may be used to assist all forms of housing designed to prevent homelessness including emergency housing, shared housing arrangements, apartments, single room occupancy (SRO) dwellings, and community residences. Appropriate supportive services must be provided as part of any HOPWA assisted housing, but HOPWA funds may also be used to provide services independently of any housing activity.

The following HOPWA services are provided in El Paso:

- 1. Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)** provides income-eligible PLWHA and their families rent and utilities until they are able to secure Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) housing or other affordable stable housing. It is long-term but not permanent with clients re-evaluated at least annually.
 - Supportive services are included in TBRA to complement the housing assistance provided. Supportive services, such as housing/non-medical case management, substance abuse treatment or mental health therapy and counseling, are provided to promote housing stability, reduce the risk of homelessness, and improve access to healthcare.

¹⁶“HOPWA Program Manual,” Texas Department of State Health Services, February 2008, page 6.

- A Comprehensive Housing Plan must be completed for each client with regular reviews.

2. Short-term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Assistance (STRMU): A time-limited housing subsidy for short-term rent, mortgage, and utility payments to *prevent homelessness* of the tenant or mortgagor of a dwelling. It cannot be used for clients who are homeless.

- This program provides assistance for a period not to exceed 21 weeks (147 days) worth of assistance in any 52-week period. These payments are for eligible individuals and their household beneficiaries who are already in housing and who are at risk of becoming homeless. Payments are made to the third party (landlord, utility company, etc.). STRMU was previously known as Emergency Assistance in Texas.

EL PASO HOPWA SERVICES

In July 2009 Planned Parenthood of El Paso, which administered West Texas Ryan White, HOPWA and other HIV service programs, abruptly closed its doors. Lubbock Regional MHMR Center (LRMHMRC) assumed the Ryan White administrative agent role and is HOPWA administrator for the HOPWA funds provided to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).¹⁷ Simultaneously, the City of El Paso Department of Community and Human Development (EPDCHD) began administering the HOPWA funds provided directly from HUD.

- LRMHMRC subcontracts with Sun City Behavioral Health Care for HOPWA services.
 - Sun City HOPWA provides TBRA and STRMU payments with TBRA of approximately 36 clients annually and STRMU limited to less than \$4,000 annually.
- EPDCHD subcontracts with International AIDS Empowerment (IAE) for TBRA.
 - IAE maintains the HOPWA TBRA waiting list for both programs which is currently 56 people.

KEY FINDINGS

In 2010 a HOPWA Planning Council was established to improve planning, coordination, communication and linkages between the El Paso HOPWA programs and other community resources. It has eight monthly meetings annually.

The Consolidated Plan states that HOPWA TBRA will be the main activity for addressing the housing needs of PLWHA and who are homeless. Over three quarters of the HOPWA budget will be dedicated to TBRA. An estimated 14% of HOPWA funds will be used to provide supportive services to both housed and homeless PLWHA.¹⁸ The Consolidated Plan's Objective Decent Housing 2.5 targets TBRA to 50 PLWHA in 2010, increasing to 76 in 2015.

According to the Consolidated Plan, HOPWA does not fund or plan to fund Housing Facility projects between 2010 and 2015.¹⁹

¹⁷ These funds come from HUD to DSHS to LRMHMRC.

¹⁸ Consolidated Plan page 151. Note: Remaining funds will be used for grant administration.

¹⁹ Consolidated Plan page 153.

HOPWA income requirements are 80% of AMI. This is higher than many other housing options.

- Housing Choice/Section 8 requires 75% of tenants be at 30% of AMI,
- HPRP which requires clients income be no more than 50% of AMI.

The goal of HOPWA is to provide assistance until the client is able to find permanent housing.

- All HOPWA clients they must apply for Housing Choice/Section 8.
- If HOPWA services are provided to individuals with undocumented status, they have cannot apply for Housing Choice and have few other housing options available.

HOPWA provides housing for undocumented and criminals with felony convictions that are not eligible for many other housing services, so moving these clients to non-HOPWA housing services is difficult.

The current El Paso HOPWA waiting list is estimated to be two years. Individuals are taken from the HOPWA based on a weighted priority system.

- IAE has developed an acuity scale for prioritizing the HOPWA waiting list. This is presented in Appendix E.

A Comprehensive Housing Plan will be developed for each client assisted and will be reviewed during each assistance request visit or during caseworker sessions to track progress.

- Determine housing needs, preferences and strategy to achieve or maintain housing stability.
- Identify eligibility for other housing assistance.
- Link to supportive services to maintain stability.
- Determine eligibility for mainstream assistance.
- Set goals for housing and independence.

PERMANENT HOUSING

DEFINITION

Public Housing provides decent, safe, affordable housing for low income families, the elderly and people with disabilities. In El Paso they tend to be multi-family developments, high-rise towers and scattered site homes. The Housing Authority for the City of El Paso (HACEP) is the local housing agency.

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program (Section 8) currently has more than 5,000 Housing Choice Vouchers allocated to it. These vouchers provide rental assistance to low- and moderate-income recipients who live in privately owned homes and apartments of their choice. Additionally, the HCV Program now offers qualified participants the opportunity to enter into home ownership via the Home Ownership option.

HCV targets extremely low (30% AMI) income individuals and families. It is required that 75% of participants are extremely low income. Military families are priorities.²⁰

KEY FINDINGS

HACEP provides high-quality affordable housing to 40,000 low- to moderate-income. Two thirds of public housing units are occupied by extremely low income individuals or families. With an \$80 million annual budget, HACEP is the 20th largest public housing authority in the country and the second largest in Texas. It is an independent government organization authorized by city statute and regulated and primarily funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In 2010 the HACEP Public Housing wait list was 14, 516. In 2011, the Housing Choice Voucher program (Section 8) waitlist is over 2,000 individuals and families.

Housing Authority City of El Paso (HACEP) operates 6,044 available housing units and 5,653 of these are habitable and occupied (93%).

- In 17% of these units, the tenant moved in during the last year, this reflects approximately 960 units being occupied in 2009.
- The 2010–2015 Consolidated Plan places a high priority on renters with small households consisting of one or two members. Twenty eight percent (1,583 units) are occupied by one person.²¹

²⁰“Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program,” Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Texas. March 25, 2009, page 3-12.

²¹ Ibid., pages 171 – 172.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8)

HCV program currently has a two-step process since it is expected that a family will not be selected from the waiting list for at least 60 days from the date of application.

1. Initially provide only the information needed to make an initial assessment of the family's eligibility, and to determine the family's placement on the waiting list.
2. The family will be required to provide all of the information necessary to establish family eligibility and level of assistance when the family is selected from the waiting list.

Applications accepted intermittently throughout the year. Publication of dates can be found in local newspapers, from housing/homeless organizations and social workers/case manager. The waiting list will be opened for three weeks beginning May 9, 2011.

Priority is given to extremely low income (ELI) families (income does not exceed 30% of the AMI) since 75% of those receiving housing must be in this level.

- Other priority populations include:
 - Any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding.
 - Military families living or relocated within the El Paso area jurisdiction.

It is reported that families who are between 30% and 50% of the AMI have been on the waiting list for up to seven years.

PUBLIC HOUSING

HACEP's low-income public housing program includes thirty-six family developments that consist of one-to-six bedroom apartments and four high-rise towers totaling over 6,565 units. HACEP also has a very active scattered site rental program that consists of 260 single-family and duplex homes scattered throughout El Paso.

Public housing targets low (80% AMI) and very low (50% AMI) individuals and families.

RELEVANCE TO PLWHA

HACEP's Annual Action Plan for 2010–2011 includes the following goals that are consistent with the City's prioritized use of funds and may support collaboration with HOPWA and development of housing for PLWHA:

1. Partnering with other public-oriented organizations in the community to help families achieve self-sufficiency and homeownership.
2. Facilitating programs that will assist the elderly and persons with disabilities who live in public housing developments.

The high priority placed on renters with small households is particularly relevant to PLWHA, many of whom are single without children.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE—RENT, MORTGAGE, UTILITIES

DEFINITION

Emergency financial assistance for rent, mortgage and utilities is defined as the provision of short-term payments to agencies or establishment of a voucher program to assist with emergency expenses related to rent and essential utilities. Some, but not all, programs allow emergency financial assistance for mortgage payments.

Emergency financial assistance is available through a wide range of sources, with each having their own requirements and terms.

KEY FINDINGS

HOPWA STRMU and HPRP/HEARTH ESG funds both provide financial assistance for rent, mortgage and utilities to avoid eviction, foreclosure and utility shut-off. The goal is to maintain established housing and avoid the monetary and emotional costs associated with homelessness.

Ryan White has the option to provide emergency financial assistance for rent or utilities, but the West Texas HSDA does not currently fund this service category.

Other local agencies that provide emergency financial assistance for rent, mortgage and/or utilities include:

- **El Paso County General Assistance** provides emergency financial assistance to county residents once time each year. The funds are for rent to avoid eviction or utility bills to avoid shut off of services. Applications are taken at the local County office, but should call to make sure funds are available.
 - As mentioned in the HPRP section of this report in April 2011, El Paso County GA reported having funds available for three months rent.
- **El Paso Electric Company “Project Care”** provides temporary utility assistance for persons having difficulty paying their utility bills. Request assistance directly from the electric company.
- **La Fe Care Center**—Provided utility assistance for clients in 2010. It is not anticipated that these funds will be available in 2011.
- **Project Bravo** provides limited utility assistance. Applications are taken at their five neighborhood centers.
- **St. Vincent de Paul**—Ten Catholic churches provide financial assistance for rent and/or utilities. Each Catholic church covers a specified ZIP code. Each has different amounts of financial assistance available depending on the congregation.
- **International AIDS Empowerment We Care Assistance**—helps all clients with general bills--\$20 to \$25 per month.

RELEVANCE TO PLWHA

The 2010 Comprehensive Needs Assessment found one third for PLWHA reported their need for Emergency Funding for Rent was not being met. This included 31% of those receiving medical care and nearly half of those not receiving care.

- Forty percent had no need for emergency funding for rent.

**2010 Comprehensive Needs Assessment
Emergency Funding for Rent
Service Use and Need**

Emergency Funding—Rent										
Population	Need Met— Easily		Need Met— Hard		Need Not Met		No Need		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total (n=233)	28	12.0%	17	7.3%	78	33.5%	93	39.9%	17	7.3%
In-care (n=198)	27	13.6%	15	7.6%	61	30.8%	84	42.4%	11	5.6%
Out-of-care (n=35)	1	2.9%	2	5.7%	17	48.6%	9	25.7%	6	17.1%

Note: Percentages based upon the numbers shown in the parenthesis.

The 2010 Comprehensive Needs Assessment also found that 27% of respondents reported not having their need for utility assistance met, with 24% of those receiving medical care and 43% of those out of care providing this response. The most significant barriers identified was “limited funding,” identified by 34% of those reporting barriers.

**2010 Comprehensive Needs Assessment
Emergency Financial Assistance—Utilities
Service Use and Need**

Emergency Financial Assistance—Utilities										
Population	Need Met— Easily		Need Met— Hard		Need Not Met		No Need		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total (n=233)	44	18.9%	26	11.2%	63	27.0%	87	37.3%	13	5.6%
In-care (n=198)	43	21.7%	24	12.1%	48	24.2%	75	37.9%	8	4.0%
Out-of-care (n=35)	1	2.9%	2	5.7%	15	42.9%	12	34.3%	5	14.3%

Note: Percentages based upon the numbers shown in the parenthesis.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

HOPWA Funds

HOPWA funds are important to PLWHA, but very minor compared to the amounts El Pasoans receive through the HUD programs of: CDBG, HOME Affordable Housing, and Emergency Shelter grants.

Sun City HOPWA, administered by Lubbock Regional MHMR Center, provided \$154,320 in TBRA and \$3,715 in STRMU funding in FY2010. Forty four clients accessed these housing services.

- TBRA provides 36 consumer slots for an average of \$4,287 per client.
- STRMU was provided to eight consumers for an average of \$464 per client.

IAE HOPWA, administered by the City of El Paso, has a 2011 budget of \$355,000. Of this, 76% (\$269,800) is for TBRA and 14% (\$49,700) for support services.

- 50 clients received TBRA in 2010 for an average of \$7,100 per client.

Fifty-four clients are currently on the HOPWA waiting list maintained by IAE.

Ryan White Housing Funds

La Fe Care Center provided \$8,712 in Ryan White funded emergency utility assistance in 2010. This provided 226 payments for 101 clients. This is an average of \$38.55 per payment or \$86.25 per client.

Ryan White funding for housing services has undergone recent changes in philosophy and approach. This was outlined in a May 2010 letter from Deborah Parham Hobson, Assistant Surgeon General and Associate HRSA Administrator. In that letter she stated that the 24 month cap in transitional and emergency housing services is not required, but is “strongly encouraged.” This is due to the fact that “HUD defines transitional housing as non-permanent housing with a maximum duration of 24 months, and HRSA/HAB recommends that grantees consider this as their standard.”

Dr. Parham further stated that the HRSA HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) believes that this Housing Policy reaches an appropriate balance that will achieve the following goals:

1. “Strengthen linkages to The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Programs and State and local housing resources for providing longer-term assistance;
2. Minimize housing disruptions for people living with HIV/AIDS;
3. Integrate housing with a broader range of services that collectively assist individuals in maintaining their health.

With that in mind, LRMHMRC has been developing linkages with housing providers throughout El Paso. Along with Sun City HOPWA, they seek to expand these associations in order to maximize all community housing resources for PLWHA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Maintain the HOPWA Short Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility (STRMU) program at the current level, allowing a small number of PLWHA access to this financial assistance to maintain their current housing.
2. Increase the Sun City HOPWA Program Coordinator's role to include becoming a medical case manager resource for emergency financial assistance (EFA) for rent, mortgage and utilities. This will result from:
 - (a) Relationship building/collaboration with regional EFA agencies;
 - (b) Understanding eligibility and other requirements of regional EFA providers; and
 - (c) Communicating with case managers about the availability of, or changes in, EFA and other housing resources on a regular basis.
3. Using Ryan White or DSHS funds for EFA is not recommended. If funds were to become available, allow the medical case managers at both La Fe Care Center and Texas Tech University to distribute.
4. In collaboration with IAE, the City of El Paso and the HOPWA Planning Council, refine the HOPWA waiting list priority scale to ensure it is valid and supports the philosophy and missions of both HOPWA programs. Questions to consider:
 - Should Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) be a permanent/long-term housing solution or an interim solution while waiting for housing options to become available?
 - Should all, or a percentage of, HOPWA clients qualify for Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)/Section 8 prior to being accepted on the waiting list? HOPWA clients be HCV/Section 8 candidates (meeting HCV/Section 8 requirements of 30% of AMI, legal immigration status, limitations on types of felonies, etc.)?
 - What are the most important and equitable factors to be considered in prioritizing the HOPWA waiting list?
 - Are there established, valid HOPWA acuity scales from other parts of the country that may be relevant in West Texas/El Paso.
5. LRMHMRC/Sun City HOPWA should become a member of the El Paso Coalition for the Homeless (EPCH). The Sun City HOPWA Program Coordinator should attend EPCH meetings in order to:
 - (a) Understand available homeless services;
 - (b) Be aware of changes to the homeless continuum of care;
 - (c) Network with homeless/housing service providers; and
 - (d) Communicate any notable changes to LRMHMRC staff and West Texas Ryan White case managers.

6. Evaluate homeless shelter options; identify those most suitable for PLWHA; educate shelter staff about HIV and the distinct concerns of PLWHA; and advocate for necessary changes at shelters to improve.
7. Continue networking with West Texas/El Paso housing agencies begun during the housing assessment.
 - Actively participate in the HOPWA Planning Council, requesting input into the agenda and possibly co-chairing the Council with IAE.
 - Develop email contact lists to communicate/update housing providers about LRMHMRC/Sun City HOPWA activities.
 - Consider developing targeted lists based on Housing Forum attendees and resource inventory information.
8. Consider offering an HIV educational seminar in Fall 2011 targeting housing providers, shelter staff, area case managers, others who work with PLWHA. Topics might include assessment of HIV status and appropriate referral, HIV prevention and outreach, practical aspects of HIV diagnosis and treatment, strategies to maintain client confidentiality.

APPENDIX A

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. “Consolidated Plan for the City of El Paso, Texas 2010 – 2015.” City of El Paso Department of Community and Human Development. June 22, 2010.
2. “Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.” Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Texas. Approved by HUD April 3, 2009.
3. “Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Program Manual.” Texas Department of State Health Services. Revised February 2008.

The following websites provided essential information:

- HRSA HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) at www.hab.hrsa.gov
- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at www.hudhre.info/hopwa

APPENDIX B

EL PASO HOUSING ASSESSMENT RESOURCE INVENTORY INTERVIEW GUIDE

Agency Name Telephone

Contact Name Title

Email

Website

I am conducting a housing study for the El Paso Ryan White program. Who should I speak to about the housing services your agencies offers?

1. What housing and housing-related services do you provide? (probe permanent housing, financial assistance for rent/mortgage/utilities—this is called STRMU, housing case management, assisted living for people with disabilities)
2. How many locations do you have? Are all services provided at all locations?
3. Do your services target specific groups of people (such as families with children, etc.).
4. How does someone access your services? (location, hours for intake, etc.) What eligibility documentation is necessary?
 - Income requirements
 - Must they be a legal resident?
 - Will you accept convicted felons?
5. Do you have a waiting list? If so, how long is it by service?
6. The Ryan White program focuses on services for people living with HIV/AIDS. Do you screen your clients for medical conditions? Do you specifically screen for HIV/AIDS?
7. Do you offer any specific support that people living with HIV/AIDS might benefit from?

APPENDIX C

EL PASO HOUSING FOCUS GROUP GUIDE MARCH 23, 2011

1. Introductions name, agency role, case load and how much of your time each day or each week is spent on your clients' housing issues?
 2. What are the most frequent housing issues you see day to day?
 3. What are the most difficult housing issues you try to help with?
 4. Thinking of your clients, what is their top housing need?
 5. What has been the impact of the change in administrative agencies on access to and availability of housing in regard to HOPWA? How do you deal with the dual agencies?
-
1. Worksheet—ask about each special population
 - Identify issues encountered in linking their clients with housing, including specialized housing.
 - Identify housing resources
 - Identify population-specific housing needs, such as singles, women with children, etc.
 - Identify barriers to accessing housing.
 7. Identify educational requirements to enhance referral and linkage to housing services.

Thank you for your help!!

HOUSING FOCUS GROUP			
NAME		2010 CASE LOAD	
Populations to consider: OOC, MSM, Women, Families, Undocumented, Previously Incarcerated, Substance Users,			
HOUSING SERVICE	% 2010 CLIENTS	REFERRED ORGANIZATIONS	OUTCOME/BARRIERS
EMERGENCY SHELTER			
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING			
PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING			
PERMANENT HOUSING			
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE--RENT			
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE--UTILITIES			

APPENDIX D

AGENDA
HOPWA/Ryan White Housing Forum
Sponsored by Lubbock Regional MHMR Center
APRIL 27, 2011

10:00 AM Check-In

**Community Development Room,
8th Floor, El Paso City Hall**

10:30 AM Program

Welcome

Chris Thomason
Program Supervisor HIV/AIDS
Lubbock Regional MHMR Center

HIV/AIDS in the Region

Lynn Schultz
New Solutions, Inc.

Agency Presentations:

**International AIDS Empowerment
HOPWA and Other Housing Services**

Antonio Martinez
Case Manager

Sun City HOPWA

Noe Vargas
HOPWA Program Coordinator

El Paso Coalition for the Homeless

Camille Castillo
Planner

Housing Authority--City of El Paso (HACEP)

Lorena Rivera
Director of Section 8

Project Bravo

Apolonio Montejano
Housing Services and Development Manager

El Paso County General Assistance

Michael Flores
GA/VA Programs Manager

**International AIDS Empowerment
Developing a Housing Plan**

Michael Maillet
Housing Case Manager

Rescue Mission

Reverend Julian Martin

Questions and Wrap Up

Lynn Schultz

12:30 Lunch and Networking

APPENDIX E

ACUITY SCALE FOR PRIORITIZING THE HOPWA WAITING LIST

First suggestion is to use a validated tool from another area.
Secondly, for each attribute, use one definitive/key variable so that a single attribute can't
"stack the deck."

Category	3 Points	2 Point	1 Point
Income Look at HOPWA requirements—80% of AMI or even HPRP requirements 50% of AMI	<input type="checkbox"/> Income is less than \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> Income is between \$1000 and \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> Income is greater than \$1000
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has five or more individuals living in the household	<input type="checkbox"/> Has between five and two individuals living in the household	<input type="checkbox"/> Only one individual living in the household
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has only one source of income	<input type="checkbox"/> Has two sources of income	<input type="checkbox"/> Has more than two sources of income
Health What is the definition of Medical Coverage? Is RW considered medical coverage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 200 CD4 count	<input type="checkbox"/> Between 200 and 500 CD4 count	<input type="checkbox"/> Greater than 500 CD4 count
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has no medical coverage	<input type="checkbox"/> Has limited medical coverage	<input type="checkbox"/> Has medical coverage
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has two or more comorbidities associated with HIV	<input type="checkbox"/> Has one comorbidity associated with HIV	<input type="checkbox"/> Has no comorbidity associated with HIV
Employment Status If someone is not eligible or able to work, they will be unemployed and receive 9 points on this item.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible to work	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible to work but a limited status	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible to work with no limitations
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is not medically able to work	<input type="checkbox"/> Is medically able to work but with limitations	<input type="checkbox"/> Is medically able to work with no limitations
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> Has infrequent employment	<input type="checkbox"/> Has consistent employment

Category	3 Points	2 Point	1 Point
Expenses How does this equate to homeless status or living with friends? They will only get 1 point.	<input type="checkbox"/> Spends more than 30% of income on rent	<input type="checkbox"/> Spends between 30% and 15% of income on rent	<input type="checkbox"/> Spends less than 15% of income on rent
Length of Time On Waiting List	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 10 Months	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 to ten months	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 months or less

Tony, Michael and Skip said that convicted felons with no other housing options use HOPWA. These people will be on HOPWA for a long time since they have few or no other options.

This is a philosophical issue that the committee should grapple with if the scale is discussed. If HOPWA is supposed to be short or medium term housing while waiting for Section 8 or some other waiting list to clear, these people may not be the preferred clients—they may never find other housing. On the other hand, is HOPWA meant for people who are seriously ill who have no other option?

As an example, Project Bravo will take people with some felony convictions but won't take the ones they refer to as "moral turpitude."