

SUMMARY FOR THE CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS QUARTERLY COUNCIL MEETING

March 27, 2024
1:00pm – 4:00pm

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order on March 27, 2024, at 1:00 PM

Council Members Present:

- **Tomiquia Moss**, Council Co-Chair and Secretary of the California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH)
- **Dr. Mark Ghaly**, Council Co-Chair and Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)
- **Dr. Tomás J. Aragón**, State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- **Glenn Tsang**, designee for Michelle Baass, Director of the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
- **Stephanie Clendenin**, Director of the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH)
- **Susan DeMarois**, Director of the California Department of Aging (CDA)
- **Kim Johnson**, Director of the California Department of Social Services (DSS)
- **Tiena Johnson Hall**, Executive Director of the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA)
- **Veronica Lewis**, Director of Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS)
- **Diana Toche**, designee for Jeff Macomber, Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
- **William McGee**, Director of the Student Achievement Support Division, California Department of Education (CDE)
- **Alisa Becerra**, designee for Tony Tavares, Director of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- **Lindsey Sin**, Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet)
- **Gustavo F. Velasquez**, Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- **Gina Buccieri-Harrington**, designee for Nancy Ward, Director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
- **Marina Wiant**, Executive Director of the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC)
- **Joe Xavier**, Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

II. Consent Calendar

There were two items on the Consent Calendar:

- Adoption of the Meeting Summary from the November 30, 2023 Council Meeting
- Adoption of the State Funding and Programs Working Group Racial Equity Data Recommendations

No Council Members made comments on these items.

Public Comment:

- **Gregory Farin:** I sit on the mental health board and the CoC in Sonoma County. We are discussing racial equity, using it to shape our policies, and would use this data.

The council voted to approve the consent calendar.

III. Council Co-Chair Opening Remarks

Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss addressed her new role as the Secretary of BCSH and Co-Chair of the Council. She stated that ending homelessness and housing insecurity is more urgent than ever, even during a budget deficit, and looks forward to aligning Cal ICH goals with the work of the Advisory Committee, the LEAB, and all state and local partners in this work. She expressed the need to use the data from HDIS to improve conditions for populations impacted by the work of the Council and the desire to lead with a sense of urgency to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly highlighted Secretary Moss' emphasis on community. He also discussed the recent passage of Proposition 1, which will change both resources and policy by moving 30 percent of Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding into housing interventions which could be up to one billion dollars per year. He stated the need to partner with counties to successfully implement Proposition 1 and that its passage has made the Council's work more urgent. Cal HHS and CDSS were selected to be part of a conversation at the federal level with USICH on coordinating health, housing, and homelessness with Cal AIM. In addition, 100 million dollars were released as part of the Community Care Expansion project to get more beds, particularly for older Californians in challenging situations.

IV. Executive Officer Updates

Cal ICH Executive Officer, Megan Marshall identified significant transition for Cal ICH in the 2023-24 fiscal year. Cal ICH is charged with aligning the brain trust of the Council to prevent and end homelessness in California and thanked staff for their contributions. Marshall introduced the Governor's Senior Advisor on Homelessness, Hafsa Kaka.

Hafsa Kaka noted the leadership demonstrated by Marshall and the Cal ICH team. She stated that while she has been in her position for close to a year, it is a new role within Cabinet Affairs. This role is designed to create external accountability, accessibility and transparency. She has worked for several mayors in multiple counties and has gained an understanding of regional coordinated efforts. She's worked alongside Cal ICH to ensure the administration's priority on homelessness is top of mind.

V. Advisory Committee Recommendations

Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy, Cody Zeger introduced the Advisory Committee Recommendations and next steps for moving forward. His presentation identified action steps for discussion and adoption by the Council.

Cal ICH Executive Officer Megan Marshall noted that the Advisory Committee made recommendations on funding length and design that were outside of the scope of the Council.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: Are we adopting these recommendations to be incorporated into the Action Plan, or will this be a separate activity? As a member of the Racial Equity Working Group (REWG), we need a matrix to figure out where different departments are on the spectrum of equity-based decision-making and that should be determined by the REWG.

- **Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy Cody Zeger** clarified that if approved, the Council will adopt these action steps to move towards the recommendations. Work that our staff, LEAB, or working groups will be doing will be included in the Action Plan. This would be one of many activities identified for the REWG in the upcoming Action Plan, but it will not replace other work that is currently going on.

Council Member Joe Xavier: We should include disability as an essential element of equity, particularly when you consider the intersectionality of disability within all other elements of equity. Lifting up the capacity building of the aging and disability system in serving this population is a necessity. For people with high medical needs, include personal care attendants for people who need support with activities of daily living, home modification, assistive technologies, and transportation when and where you need it.

Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss: How can we as a Council also have our own action steps as we ask our LEAB and Advisory Committee to engage in this work? Let's integrate that knowledge for the folks on these bodies.

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall** made an ask to Department Directors and Agency Secretaries to support Cal ICH's working groups, particularly by supplying them with department staff who have decision-making authority.

Council Member Gustavo Velasquez: Many recommendations suggest improvements on reducing administrative burden and streamlining applications, reporting, and monitoring, all of which is very important. We have fragmented funding in the State of California and for low-income affordable housing, the time it takes once a housing development is in the title process has been reduced from three years to 18 months, but there's still a lot we can do. The latest legislative mandate is AB 519. Some of us are starting to work on that to have recommendations for a unified application, which these action steps seem to be leaning towards. We're talking about affordable housing with Cal HFA, the Treasurer's office, the limited allocation committee, and HCD to further reduce administrative burden, but there are a lot of programs that aren't integrated. Utilizing the process we're using for low-income housing can benefit additional programs. I am pleased to see these proposed action steps.

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly: There's a lot of work happening that can facilitate these recommendations and help us invest in the work. There is expertise that has developed in terms of working with Tribal entities across California. Equity is the throughline. When you have staff with lived experience who look and speak like those they serve, that makes a big difference.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: We need to better understand the nonprofit and tribal organizations that are doing the work on the ground, considering the inability of organizations to administer programs due to compliance and other requirements that go along with government contracts. Nonprofits can't afford to do the work due to administrative costs. I understand it's outside of the Council purview, but it needs to be lifted up considering the economic crisis across the state in all sectors, but particularly the nonprofit sector and homeless response system. Are there opportunities to do something, even if it's exploratory?

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall** noted that we have an opportunity with the transition of our grant programs to offer deeper technical assistance. Our Local Initiatives team are in communication with nonprofits who are struggling. Cal ICH is taking the approach of supporting those entities to alleviate the burden in a challenging climate.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: Capacity development to administer these grants is one issue, but the financial piece and not being able to afford running the program for the reasons described is still a problem. Outside of the regulatory prescribed administrative rates, are there other opportunities to address unfunded costs for nonprofits?

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly: We have to dig into the issue more and hear from providers and leaders. There are best practices where people have tried to improve those issues. It won't happen overnight, but we can look into those strategies and transition our approach to doing business to focus on equity principles. Technical assistance needs to be a shared learning conversation so we can learn how to support the work that is currently happening.

Council Member Kim Johnson: The State Programs and Funding working group has the charge to focus on marginalized communities and can build on this conversation. We can provide better technical assistance with tribes and support others as we learn more from these communities.

Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss: The state can offer guidance and support on how local jurisdictions are interacting with their service providers. When I ran a direct service nonprofit, we were getting 80 cents on the dollar to operate, and I had to fundraise the remainder of that money. The business model is in question as we ask communities to do more, with higher quality. We need to leverage state influence to partner with localities and get creative.

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall:** We need to look at how our cities and counties are interacting not just with nonprofits, but their tribal communities as well. Cal ICH has hosted our first tribal listening sessions to hear from tribes in northern, central and southern California so we can hear directly from them. We understand that these communities already know what to do and we made course corrections early on to see what the State can do to get out of their way.

Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy, Cody Zeger addressed what the Council can do to implement the action steps through participation in working groups and other Council activities.

Public Comment

- **Gregory Farin:** I'm representing the Homeless Emergency Program Association (HEPA). We built the First Five Association of California. HEPA has helped with your Lived Experience Board by providing funding, and we encourage you to get folks at the local level with lived experience to talk among themselves and give recommendations. We have experience in creating coalitions and are looking for something to do to help the homeless.
- **Ludmilla Bade:** I want to highlight challenges with unified funding for smaller programs that may get pushed to the side. Unified funding helps with eliminating duplication, but at the local level it may lead communities to only focus on major programs. We need to make sure that outreach and community-based projects can be supported. Additional guidance could be added to make sure smaller programs aren't missed.
- **Ruth Roofless:** LA City Council has a local lived expertise body endorsed by LAHSA, but it will die this year if no action is taken, and I'd like to elevate that issue to this body. I

started my own hotline to help people who have been displaced. People need to be able to raise their issues and allow those affected by homelessness to receive help.

- **Cindy Soto:** I am the Chair of the personal assistant service council for LA County. We oversee IHSS for LA County and have been grappling with how to help unhoused people with IHSS services. 40 percent of IHSS recipients are in LA County and we have a provider shortage that has reached a crisis. If we can have a dialogue or help with this issue, we'd be happy to discuss this with you.

The Council voted to approve the proposed recommendations and action steps to implement the recommendations to strengthen state funding and programs.

VI. Homeless Data Integration System Overview

Executive Officer Megan Marshall introduced the upcoming presenters and encouraged the Council to consider what data their respective agencies are responsible for and have access to, and what data they would like to have access to.

Cal ICH Director of Data and Research, Sydney Bennett presented an overview of the Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS) which can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials.

CalHHS' Corrin Buchanan presented on the integration of HDIS data with the CalHHS data hub to provide a person-centered view to help inform policies and programs addressing homelessness.

CDSS Director, Council Member Kim Johnson, discussed CDSS' role in homelessness data integration and opportunities to further demonstrate outcomes with housing, health and social services and improve focus areas. CDSS operates population-specific housing programs supporting children and families experiencing homelessness or poverty, those in the child welfare system, older adults in Adult Protective Services, and those with disabilities.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: This data demonstrates what we anecdotally understand about the systems folks are involved in and correlations between length of services and exit destinations and outcomes. The State needs to model how to overcome to complexities of data sharing related to state and federal regulations for counties and local jurisdictions. Can you explain community college data in HDIS? Children who are part of families experiencing homelessness are more likely to later experience homelessness themselves. Locally, we're trying to pour resources in to stop the generational cycle. Do we have longitudinal data to say whether these minors are showing up again later in the homeless response system? From local experience, we see them show up again seven, 10 years later as adults in crisis. We understand the connection between folks who are justice-involved and those experiencing homelessness. It may be a long-term strategy to look at people who are involved in multiple systems.

- **Cal ICH Director of Data and Research, Sydney Bennett:** Community colleges administer a housing and homelessness pilot program and have been working with housing partners to provide services to students experiencing homelessness. That data is now being captured in HMIS. Regarding youth homelessness, our longitudinal data only goes back to 2017, but we're interested to look into this more as we have more years of data. The State is also working with the Cradle to Career system and data sharing with education and homeless data. Cal ICH is implementing the Homeless Youth Act and looking at creating separate performance measures for youth. We're also working on data

related to unaccompanied women and survivors of domestic violence. We don't have a lot of data on justice involvement so that's another opportunity for data sharing.

Council Member Susan DeMarois: One of our key measures in the Master Plan on Aging is longitudinally tracking older adult homelessness, and Cal ICH has been supporting our team do that. There's great interest in shallow rental subsidies for our community, are we tracking how many are accessing that service? Are we capturing programs funded at the federal and local level, or just those receiving state dollars? We are not a housing provider, but we track and have had a huge increase in phone calls about housing. That is data we can contribute.

- **Cal ICH Director of Data and Research, Sydney Bennett:** Many federal, HUD-funded programs are in HMIS and have federal reporting requirements. Reporting local data into HMIS varies by jurisdiction. HUD defines the data fields in HMIS, so Cal ICH doesn't have purview over specific data fields. Programs include permanent housing, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter, and others, but we don't have specific information on the amount of rental subsidies provided. In our work on AB 977, we're working with state departments to create codes and guidance for their programs.

Council Member Joe Xavier: In terms of disability equity, we know that almost 50 percent of people experiencing homelessness have a disability. Does any of the existing data speak to employment or job loss that contributes to homelessness?

- **Cal ICH Director of Data and Research, Sydney Bennett:** HDIS has a field on whether someone has a disabling condition and whether it is a mental or physical disability or chronic health condition, but there is not sufficient detail to disaggregate to see the types of services accessed by different populations. There is very little data on employment in HDIS, but we can link up with other data sets for more information on the causes of homelessness. Certain federal programs have more data.

Council Member William McGee: Does HDIS collect the number and age of family members? We're trying to identify children experiencing homelessness, which can pose difficulty in schools due to stigma.

- **Cal ICH Director of Data and Research, Sydney Bennett:** Demographic data is collected for all members of a household who are accessing services, including age, race and gender. We can use the data to see how households are changing over time, but households aren't constant. For example, transition age youth may be accessing services alone, and then be with family members a year later.

Council Member Tiena Johnson Hall: Is HDIS a proprietary data system? At Cal HFA, inquiries are often related to housing unhoused students at community colleges. Is that data you capture with this system?

- **Cal ICH Director of Data and Research, Sydney Bennett:** HMIS system is a HUD requirement, so localities contract with vendors for their systems. At the State level, Cal ICH has a proprietary data warehouse system for combining data. We only capture data from UC, CSU, or CCC programs that require HMIS reporting, so only one community college currently.

VII. **New Action Plan Structure and Goals**

Director Cody Zeger transitioned discussion to the State action plan to prevent and end homelessness. Zeger presented a high-level overview of the vision, structure, goals and timeline of the forthcoming Action Plan (currently referred to as AP '24).

Council Member Lindsey Sin: CalVet represents more than just the State, we have an advisory committee of people with lived experiences and other local committees. There is an opportunity to add an advocacy and recommendations component to the vision. The work is more than coordination, we also set policy and make recommendations about changes we'd like to see in California.

Director Cody Zeger introduced a full group discussion on the vision for AP '24 and invited members to share their thoughts to contribute to the vision.

Council Member Stephanie Clendenin: Discussed the need to see community engagement reflected in the vision statement. Homelessness is a collective problem, not just a state problem, and we need to engage with community partners and counties.

Council Member William McGee: What's the thinking around the word "ensure" that homelessness is rare, brief and one-time?

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall:** The language we pulled is written in statute for Cal ICH.

Council Member William McGee: We don't necessarily need that language in the vision, if we can't commit to ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief and one-time.

Council Member Tomás J. Aragón: A vision should inspire and motivate people, be easy to remember, and operate as a tagline of what we stand for. This vision appears to include goals without metrics.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: A vision statement should be the north star. There's a need to strengthen and provide comprehensive support regarding the health, services and safety needs of people experiencing homelessness. We can use stronger language than "address" given the gaps we're aware of.

Council Member Kim Johnson: The vision statement is not bold enough. Homelessness is unacceptable, it shouldn't happen. We need to lean into intentionally integrating services and housing.

Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss: We need targeted outcomes to reduce the percentages of those experiencing homelessness in our communities. Set timelines that give us time to reduce homelessness by x percent over five or 10 years. Unless we discuss scale and population-level outcomes, we're missing something. We cannot box ourselves in, but we can take accountability.

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall:** This is going to be the first ever multi-year Action Plan, so setting specific metrics is appropriate. What would we like to see at the end of three years?

Council Member Designee Gina Buccieri-Harrington: We need to provide Californians with access to services, not just provide them services, so they know where to get help. Cal OES has 80 programs that fund over 800 subrecipients, mostly community-based organizations for victims of crime, but many people don't have access or know where to receive those services. Access is missing.

Council Member Susan DeMarois: The vision focuses on prevention, but all of our goals focus on people experiencing homelessness. We need to add a prevention goal.

Council Member Lindsey Sin: The draft goals read like metrics rather than goals. We're excited to focus on HDIS, but the tools are more like goals.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: The draft goals read more like objectives. We need to add actual numbers to the goals. There are other measures we can use to track progress across California that don't just reflect state-funded programs. This body should weigh in on measures and indicators.

- **Director Cody Zeger:** This is the Council's plan, so those decisions can be made by this body. Feedback is always welcome.

Council Member William McGee: Once we figure out how to measure the goals, let's make sure they're time-bound and get annual updates so we can see if we're on-track. We can start with baseline data to begin the discussion.

Council Member Gustavo Velasquez: Does this Council agree on the number of people experiencing homelessness? California only has 24 homes for every 100 extremely low-income people. The potential to become homeless is always there. This Council needs to agree on the problem we're trying to address.

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall:** Expressed the difficulty of having a wide variety of definitions to describe homelessness. For example, at least four different Council departments have a different definition for encampments, which can make directional percentage goals difficult, but if directed by the Council, our staff can draft a resolution for the Council to come to agreement in these necessary areas.

Council Member Kim Johnson: We can end homelessness using different strategies. In terms of engaging community and those with lived experience, we need guiding principles. Can Cal ICH staff support us in developing those principles?

Council Member Veronica Lewis: The exciting aspect of being on the Council is breaking down silos and creating alignment between departments. With all of the collaboration we're doing, there's opportunity for more strategic alignment across the work and should be reflected in the goals. There's an opportunity for the state to be in a better place, even given current budget constraints.

Council member Joe Xavier: How do we set a baseline, if we're not sure what the end goal is? We need to consider the end result first.

Director Cody Zeger introduced small group discussions to further continue dialogue on the draft vision and request any changes that could better reflect department roles. Facilitators presented a summary of each small group discussion:

- **Dhakshike Wickrema, BCSH Deputy Secretary of Homelessness:** Expressed the ongoing desire for the vision to be bold and memorable. For example, "end homelessness for everyone and prevent homelessness for all Californians." If homelessness does occur, it should still be rare, brief and one-time with faith that our systems will respond accordingly. The vision is the "why" goals are the "what" and objectives are the key results of the "how." We will prevent and end homelessness as measured by a certain metric. Regarding the tools, we could use goals or approaches.

For coordinating state programs, we should add integration. Integration should be an approach for all tools. For the supply of housing, we need to be explicit about the need for affordable housing. Without enough housing, we can't achieve other objectives. CDSS' community expansion program is looking at ways to create new housing while retaining existing assisted living facilities. CDSS' CalWORKs program assesses eligibility for a variety of programs simultaneously during intake. Their HSP program is building flexibility to potentially build new affordable housing. State hospitals are serving people with severe mental health issues with their own housing stock, so as not to compete with other limited housing options for the general public. We need to address prevention for people exiting institutions. CDSS and DHCS are making sure there are shared opportunities across departments. CDSS' HDAP program is connecting social security supports and housing assistance for adults with disabilities.

- **Corrin Buchanan, CDSS:** Discussed the importance of imagining the future of California in the vision statement, and the need for it to be shorter and catchier. TCAC and CDCR discussed integration of housing in communities for people with complex needs. Themes of access and prevention were emphasized, as well as user-friendly navigation and consideration of the end user to be effective. Partnership and coordination are key to identify best practices across California for the education system. A school in San Francisco is providing shelter for families. Cal OES also emphasized navigation, access, and clear guidelines. We can lift up 211 and where people can get the services they need. Proactive outreach is necessary, especially when considering tribes. Using our data to drive outcomes, and spending time to unify ourselves around definitions. This work needs to tell the story of what we're trying to accomplish. Building trust in government is another key to achieving our goals.
- **Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** Racial inequities and disparities were discussed by CalTrans and expanding partnerships with the community given they don't provide direct services. Prevention was another theme discussed by the entire group, including workforce interventions. Integration is missing from the current vision and should be considered with the lens of how people interact with our systems to have a more responsive set of resources and program outcomes. Housing navigation and interventions like Medi-Cal could be strengthened to stabilize households and help people thrive.
- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall:** Highlighted a comment made by Council Member Joe Xavier that for the majority of people to access services, they have to fail first, as benefit programs require people to be in a dire state. The Council should have a different approach.
- **Council Member Lindsey Sin:** Underscored themes of system integration and expressed that all departments have a major role to play in terms of building and providing housing. Explored the idea of what happens after solving homelessness and getting California to a place where this Council does not need to exist because basic needs are taken care of. We need a better definition for the baseline of the problem and can use human centered design for population level goals. The cost of building housing and providing services once that housing is built are major issues. Thinking creatively can allow us to be more expansive and innovate. This group would like to see the vision be bigger and bolder.

Public Comment

- **Irving Torres, All Home:** Urged Cal ICH to include prevention in its Action Plan goals and set a strategic direction around funding and scaling for these programs. Cal ICH should reduce first time homelessness as a key proxy for reducing homelessness overall. More than 20,000 people experiencing homelessness for the first time each year. Evidence-based approaches will have the greatest impact in addressing homelessness and reducing racial disparities.
- **Reba Stevens, Advisory Committee Member:** Highlighted targeted outcomes with accountability and transparency can prevent homelessness in the first place. In terms of access, recommended advertisements so people know where to go and what to do. Expand awareness that the State is not working in silos. People are dying on our streets every day. Use language such as end users rather than clients. Empower those with lived experience.
- **Ruth:** Ending and preventing homelessness is often discussed. There is a motel in LA where people are going to be evicted back on the streets. How can we prevent and end their homelessness? If they can't stay in their current living situation, how can we get them into another motel shelter?

VIII. Public Comment

- **Ludmilla Bade, Advisory Committee Member:** Recalled themes in today's discussion of integration, end user, thrive and access. Expressed concerns around Proposition 1 implementation that should occur without destruction to community-based organizations. People should not be funneled into large institutions absent community based behavioral centers where people can access support. Environmental science should be included in the Action Plan. United Nations sustainability goals should be incorporated into the way housing is built. A template for local 211 systems that welcome people experiencing homelessness would be helpful.

IX. Final Remarks and Adjournment

Director Cody Zeger expressed gratitude to the Council for their discussion, underscored the desire for urgency around addressing homelessness, and noted that the Council's actionable work continues to move forward due to the thoughtful contributions made by its members. Zeger also thanked members of the public for attending and contributing their stories of working to end homelessness in their local communities. The next Council meeting will be June 12, 2024 at 1pm with the location to be announced.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.