

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

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## **CoC Bi-Monthly Meeting**

November 30, 2021; 10:00AM to 12:00PM

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting *and*

1 Smithfield St, Pittsburgh, 15222 (HSB, Lower Level)

**Purpose:** The Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) is a public/private partnership formed to assist and recommend to Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills on public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the wellbeing of persons and families who are homeless.

### **HAB Members**<sup>1</sup>

Nicole Anderson (P)

Breanna Benjamin

Damian Butler-Buccilli (P)

Jane Downing (P)

Laura Drogowski (P)

Stuart Fisk (P)

Pete Giacalone (P)

Knowledge Build Hudson (P)

Anna Kudrav (P)

Joe Lagana (P)

John Lovelace (P)

Jennifer McCurry (P)

Susie Puskar

Christy Pietryga (P)

Diana Reichenbach (P)

Lea Etta Rhodes

Katie Stohlberg (P)

Gale Schwartz

Kyona White (P)

Bethany Wingerson (P)

In addition to the below notes, the [meeting recording can be accessed here](#).

### **Minutes**

#### **1. Welcome—Christy Pietryga**

Christy Pietryga welcomed all HAB members and CoC participants.

#### ***September 2021 Meeting Minutes were approved by the HAB***

#### **2. CoC Annual Process Overview— Christy Pietryga**

##### ***HAB Membership***

- Each Fall, the CoC opens a nomination period to seek new HAB members. Nominations are received through November 30th and from the nominations the Executive Committee proposes a slate of members to be voted on by the full HAB at the January meeting. HAB membership terms are 3 years, and service begins following the January HAB meeting. Members can serve 2 terms, with the exception of the Provider Representative.
- Provider Representatives are selected via a provider committee vote, and serve 1, 3-year term.
- Current HAB members whose second terms are ending following the January 2022 HAB meeting are: Jane Downing, Anna Kudrav, Joe Lagana and John Lovelace. Additionally, Lea Etta Rhodes will be completing her term as Provider Rep.
- Jennifer McCurry's and Gale Schwartz's first term will be ending, and they can seek a second term.

##### ***Annual Review: Governance Charter and Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures***

- There is also an annual review of the CoC's Governance Charter and Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures. These documents are available on the [CoC's Planning Documents webpage](#) and will be distributed via email to the CoC. Public comments will be accepted through November 30<sup>th</sup>, and proposed changes will be presented for vote at the January HAB meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> (P) indicates HAB members who were present for the meeting.

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## 3. Committee Updates

### Current and upcoming topics/areas of focus for each of the Committees were presented:

#### *CoC Analysis and Planning Committee—Pete Giacalone*

- Review of the metrics from the annual U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for assessment of what those metrics mean for the people served in the Allegheny County CoC, and to ensure alignment with work moving forward.
- Planning for the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count, which is the annual count of individuals and households experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness, as required by HUD.

#### *Communication and Education Committee—Jennifer McCurry*

- Continuing to work on website development for the new Allegheny County CoC website. Current focus includes establishing processes and communication channels to capture information and updates from providers and partners.
- Additionally looking ahead to starting back up with experiential events to engage community members and communication about homelessness.

#### *Homeless Outreach Coordinating Committee—Laura Drogowski*

- The HOCC will be reconvening in the new year, with initial efforts to map out appropriate plans and structure for the group. Common recent themes for focus have included the impact of overdoses, access equity across the County, and supporting best-practice outreach processes, including well trained and supported outreach teams.

#### *Provider Committee—Kyona White*

- Resource and information sharing across the provider network.

## 4. Allegheny County CoC Street Outreach

The CoC's Street Outreach services have grown and evolved substantially over the past few years—this panel presentation provided an opportunity for the HAB and CoC to hear more about this important piece of our continuum. The presentation slides are in Appendix A, and the presenters are listed below:

- Gabe Krivosh, OCS Field Unit
- Dave Lettrich, Bridge Outreach
- Jacqueline Hunter, Pittsburgh Mercy Operation Safety Net
- Dan Palka, Allegheny Health Network

Related questions, feedback and discussion areas, included:

- As Street Outreach teams and practices grow and strengthen, the CoC needs to think critically and systemically about the resources available to individuals and families experiencing homelessness beyond their contact with those Street Outreach teams. If the homelessness and housing services and supports available to people are not responsive to the individuals and are not of high-quality then distrust in the system, and the ability for Street Outreach workers to engage will erode.
  - System assessment questions to consider include: If demand is exceeding supply, where and why are there program vacancies? What solutions can be implemented to make services more accessible to fill any vacancies?
- What laws are in place that are criminalizing homelessness, and how might the CoC engage in a collaborative advocacy effort to address this?
- The engage and role of people with lived expertise was raised, including both how it is occurring and how it might be improved across the CoC. Feedback and considerations shared, included:
  - Compensating people with lived experience for their time and expertise for any participation in CoC activities.
  - Incorporating the expertise of people with lived experience across the spectrum of the CoC,

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including planning, operationalizing, administering and evaluating, as well as hiring people with lived experience as professional staff members.

- Being mindful of who is convening people and how the facilitation happens

## 5. Public Comment/Announcements

- No comments/announcements were presented beyond the discussion areas noted above

### **Next CoC Meeting**

January 25, 2022 from 10:00am to 12:00pm

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting *and*

1 Smithfield St, Pittsburgh, 15222 (HSB, Lower Level)

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## Appendix A Street Outreach in Allegheny County



### Street Outreach in Allegheny County

Dave Lettrich  
Executive Director  
Bridge to the Mountains

Doug Murry  
Homeless Services Supervisor  
Pittsburgh Mercy Operation Safety Net

Dan Palka  
Administrative Director  
AHN CIH Program for Homeless and Urban Poverty Medicine

Gabe Krivosh  
Program Supervisor  
Allegheny County DHS OCS Field Unit

### Staffing Snapshots

#### 2016

OCS Field Unit	2
OSN	3
Bridge Outreach	1
CHS	1
Familylinks	2
Team PSBG	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>

#### 2021

OCS Field Unit	8
OSN	4
Bridge Outreach	5
Familylinks	2
Team PSBG	7
AHN	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>

## Linkage Model

A model by which the Outreach Worker is employed to seek out individuals living in the street and link those individuals to brick-and-mortar based resources.

### Characteristics


- Entry level position
- Relatively low wages
- Minimal educational requirements
- Preprogramed choices
- Focused on quantity of engagements
- High turnover

## Relationship Centered Model

A model by which the Outreach Worker seeks to engage, meet, and patiently form meaningful relationships with individuals living in the street.

### Characteristics

- Mid to high level position depending on the organization
- Truly competitive salary
- Requires higher levels of relevant education and experience
  - Masters or bachelors of psychology, social work, or other relevant fields
  - Professional certifications
  - Relevant life experiences
- Individual agency and choice
- Emphases on quality of experiences rather than quantity of engagements
- Relies on a low turnover rate to maintain relationships



## Evidence Based Practices

- Harm Reduction
- Trauma Informed Care
- Housing First
- Motivational Interviewing



## Shared Values

- Access to Housing is a Fundamental Human Right
- Human Centered Approach
- Culturally Responsive
- Maintain Individuals' Agency
- Harm Reduction
- Trauma Informed and Trauma Responsive
- Respect

## Collaboration is Critical

Team Approach Across Orgs and Systems  
Weekly Case Conferencing Sessions  
Highly Active WhatsApp Group Chats  
Individual Teaming Meetings  
Mutual Support  
Shared Training Opportunities  
Client Determined Support Teams

## Strategic Plan Highlights

- **Explore adding physical entry points and/or more field workers in the Coordinated Entry System** to strengthen ability to prioritize assistance to clients with the most intensive service needs and enable on-site diversion services at shelters.
- **Expand outreach to cover the entire CoC.** Ideally, street outreach capacity should be sufficient to:
  - Daily canvassing of all areas known to be frequented by those who are unsheltered.
  - Twice weekly canvassing of all areas suspected to be frequented by people who are unsheltered.
  - Weekly canvassing of areas where unsheltered people are likely to be found.
  - Establish a predictable schedule of where outreach workers can be found.
  - Coordinate regularly with other service providers, community resources, homeless and formerly homeless adults, family, and youth to identify unsheltered people.
  - Use an effective system to record locations, consult with partners, and adjust strategies as needed.
- **Implement person-centered, housing-focused case management in outreach, shelter projects, and transitional housing projects.**

## Continued Evolution

Identify and Implement Strategies to Connect to All Communities

Strengthen Skillset and Expertise of Outreach Staff

Reinforce or Establish Partnerships with Community Orgs

Foster Growth of Newer Orgs

Establish Core Competencies and Expectations

### Staff Summary

- 5 full time Outreach Staff
- Resource Coordination
- Harm Reduction and Connection to Care
- Intensive Case Management

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- 4 masters degrees
  - 1 bachelor's degree
  - 5 professional certifications
  - 19 years of Street Outreach experience

To come alongside and accompany individuals navigating life on the street.





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## Continuous Care Model

A model by which relationships are patiently formed while someone might be living outside but continues until such time as the individual decides our services are no longer needed.

704 -	Individuals served
104 -	Transition aged youth
202 -	Housed
100 -	Sheltered or doubled up
254 -	Connected to care
45 -	Deceased
285 -	Active
143 -	Currently in the street
854 -	Overdose reversals

To come alongside and accompany individuals navigating life on the street.



## Pittsburgh Mercy Operation Safety Net Street Outreach Team

- OSN founded in 1992 by Dr. Jim Withers in partnership with Sisters of Mercy
- Part of larger OSN system
  - Engagement Center
  - Winter Shelter
  - Street Medicine
    - Residency Program with UPMC Mercy
    - Street Medicine Fellowship
    - Medical Student Rotation
  - Homeless Housing Programs
- Part of larger Pittsburgh Mercy system
  - Family Health Center
  - Behavioral Health Services
  - Residential Services

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# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

## OCS Field Unit

est. 2016







7 Field Service Coordinators

1 Diversion Specialist

1 Program Supervisor

### Core Principles

-  The most vulnerable are least likely to come to you – go to them.
-  Do what makes sense, when it makes sense, and how it makes sense – for the person served.
-  Why say no when you can say yes?
-  Person centered service delivery with a system level perspective.

## OCS Field Unit



### Primary Functions

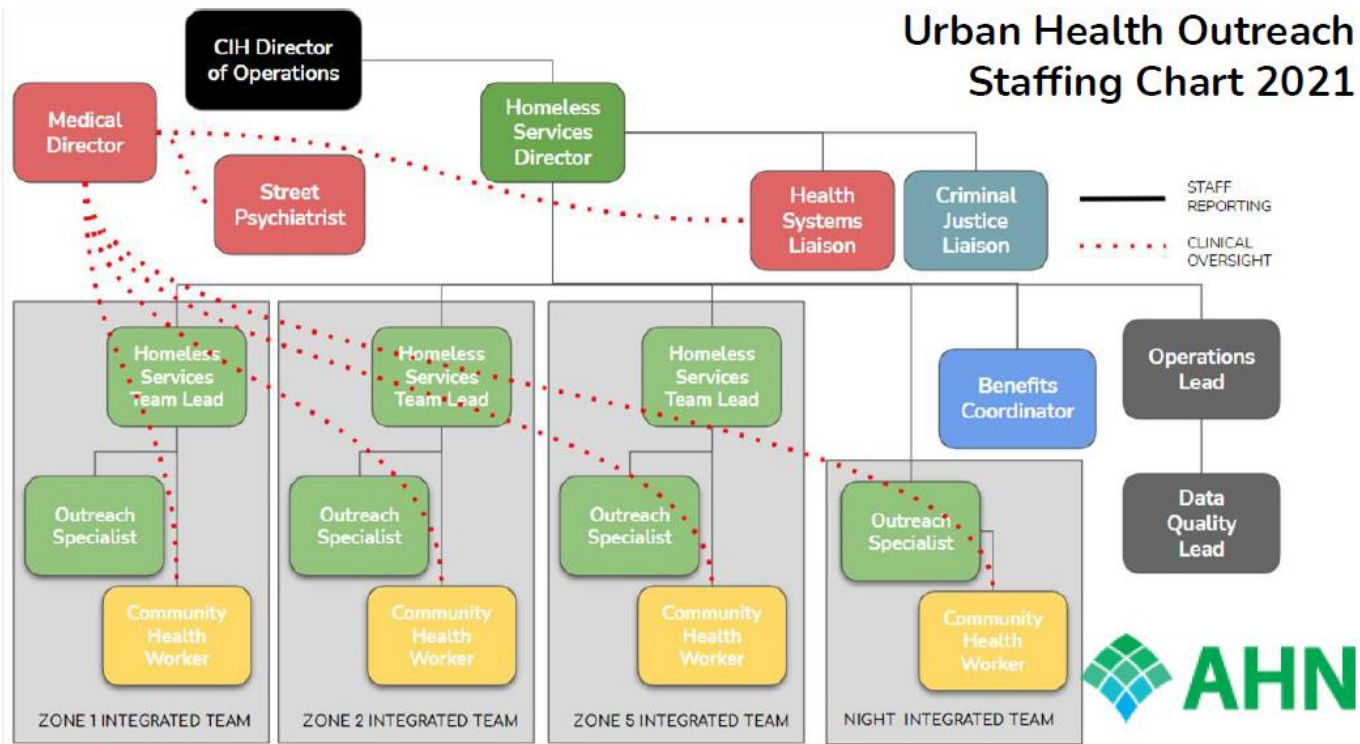
- Street Outreach to People Experiencing Homelessness
- Coordinated Entry System Navigation
- Flexible Case Management
- Provider Partner Support
- Accessing Mainstream Housing Resources
- Facilitating Teaming and Case Conferencing

### Quick Numbers for 2021

- 5241 Contacts Documented
- 862 Coordinated Entry Screenings Completed

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

## Urban Health Outreach Staffing Chart 2021



## URBAN HEALTH OUTREACH OVERVIEW

### March 2021-Present, Engagements

	Unique	Total
Zone 1	360	1927
Zone 2	194	1358
Zone 5	172	1032
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>4317</b>

Benefits Connections	107
People Vaccinated	213
City Public Safety Responses	515

### Community Outreach Hubs

**Zone 1:** Smithfield Street, Downtown

**Zone 2:** East Ohio Street, Northside

**Zone 5:** Broad Street, East Liberty

### Services

- Case Management
- Benefits Coordination
- Outpatient Health Services
- MOUD Referrals
- Harm Reduction Services
- Housing Connections
- Job Search Services
- Public Health Outreach
- Veterinary Services



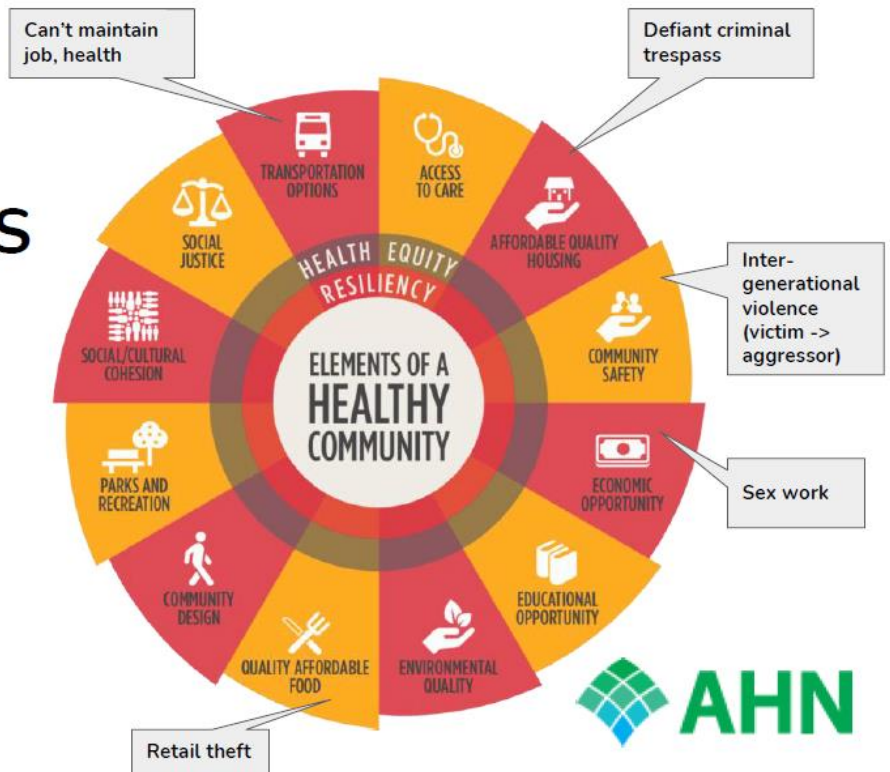
## TEAM MEMBER BACKGROUND

- Pittsburgh Mercy (Operation Safety Net)
- Re:solve Crisis
- Community Human Services (CHS)
- Power Recovery
- 412 Food Rescue
- VisionQuest
- Community Justice Project
- Neighborhood Legal Services
- PA Department of Corrections
- Doctors Without Borders (MSF)
- International Committee of the Red Cross/
- Red Crescent (ICRC)
- UPMC



## SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the social and environmental factors that are proven to cause homelessness, drug use, mental health issues, and violent crime



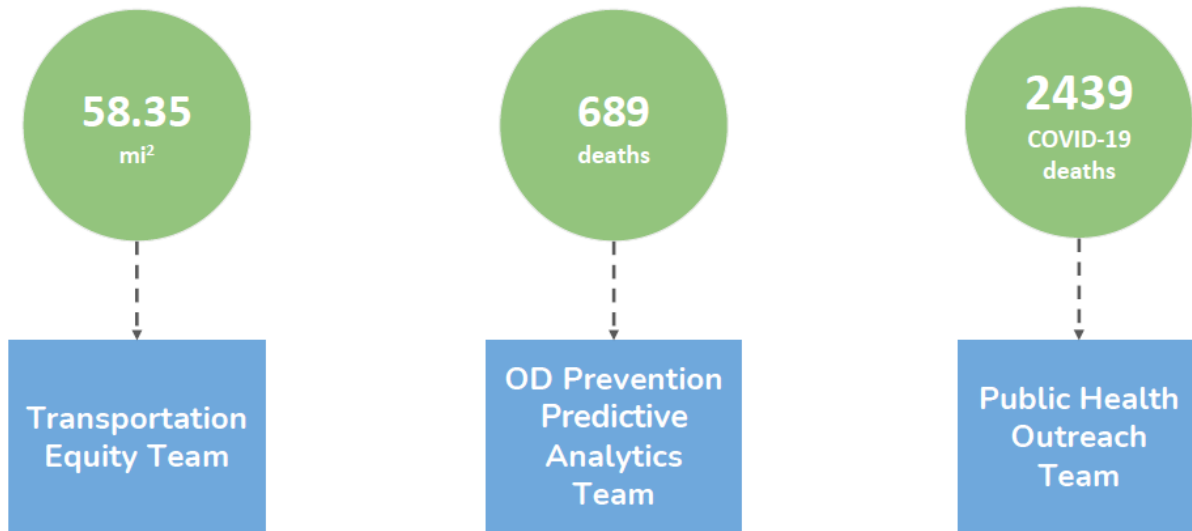
## URBAN HEALTH OUTREACH & STREET MEDICINE

### FUTURE BY THE NUMBERS



## URBAN HEALTH OUTREACH & STREET MEDICINE

### FUTURE PROJECTS



# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board



## Q&A

**Dave Lettrich**  
Executive Director  
Bridge to the Mountains  
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**Doug Murry**  
Homeless Services Supervisor  
Pittsburgh Mercy Operation Safety Net  
[dmurry@pittsburghmercy.org](mailto:dmurry@pittsburghmercy.org)

**Dan Palka**  
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