

Notes for Southern Mountains Homeless Coalition online/Zoom meeting  
Region 2 in the N.C. Balance of State (BoS) Continuum of Care (CoC) for Homeless  
December 3, 2020, 9:30 AM Carrington Cosby (Thrive) hosting

**Persons attending:** Kristen Martin and Emily Lowery (Regional co-leads); Emily Lowery (The Haven of Transylvania County), Kristen Martin, Stephanie Gilliam, Carrington Cosby and Nickie Kilgore (Thrive), Alyce Knaflich (Aura Homes Women Vets), Lauren Wilkie (Safelight), Vicki Huntley (WCCA Family Advocate Coordinator), Kenett Melgar (Blue Ridge Health), Trina Rushing (Henderson County Library), Kaitlynn Lovelace (The Housing Assistance Corporation), Michael Absher (Only Hope WNC), Jennifer Drum (NC Works Veteran Svcs. - Rutherford/Polk), Brenda Ploss (NC Works), Amanda VanDuyne (Polk County Schools preK), Adam Jahnke (VA-LCSWA Outreach-HCHV program), Katie Kohler (Henderson County DSS), Jodie Grabowski (Behavioral System Coordinator - Health Dept.), Jessica Owenby and Matthew Gruebmeier (Henderson County Schools), Jessica Rice (ABCCM Vet Services of the Carolinas SSVF), Sarah Kowalak (United Way Henderson County), Beth Branagan (Transylvania Schools), Chris Berg, Sherrie Stokes (Salvation Army), Charlotte. See also the appended Chat, and a supplement from Henderson County Schools.

**Minutes** of November 3 meeting: Kristen asked for any corrections or comments on those minutes of the Coalition, as distributed. None were offered, so the distributed version was adopted by common consent.

**BoS Steering Committee: November** meeting: NC HOPE program issues were considered. 2-1-1 has been inundated, connections are not always available. 2-1-1 has a sizeable answering team, so please keep trying. Various 2-1-1 HOPE admin details were covered; for discussion or Q and A see <https://www.ncceh.org/media/files/files/d85b48fd/november-2020-steering-committee-minutes.pdf>

A governance (charter) update covered uploads, attachments, etc., reflecting an annual review to clarify current practice.

The funding and performance subcommittee plans more HMIS bed coverage (reporting), so that 75% of all emergency beds and 45% of all transition beds in BoS are reported in HMIS by the end of 2021. The ongoing question is what would induce nonreporting shelters or programs to agree to report in HMIS without supporting funds. Kristen is in contact with Hendersonville Rescue Mission about this, and plans to connect with Polk and Rutherford programs. The Haven in Transylvania uses HMIS now.

The Governor's Executive Order about eviction moratorium created a process resting on a CDC-created declaration form. Landlords wanting to evict must provide blank forms to tenants. Filing for evictions may then begin, but must include affidavits stating the form had been provided (effective through December). Renters using the form are not evictable while the moratorium lasts.

Other updates and meetings were announced.

**Back@Home: Blue Ridge Health: Kennett Melgar** reported some support is provided, especially work with Hvl Rescue Mission to test cold-night shelter seekers for Covid. Trisha is to be back Monday and more outreach is planned then. Code Grace is supported by a medical director taking relevant clients to be cleared, so they then will have shelter. **Alyce**

**Knaflich** offered Aura Homes support to provision folks trying to shelter in the cold, and will contact Kennet.

**Thrive: Carrington Cosby** said ten households are enrolled: three are [housed], two have applications for units pending, and five are being assisted in search for suitable spaces based on needs. Kristen said more intakes will occur when the majority to-date are housed; the concern is awakening false hope in new intakes that housing is immanent, when often it is not.

**Post-overdose response team, PORT: Jodie Grabowski** said this pandemic-delayed but funded team (see rack card in an email just distributed by Kristen) coordinated by Lexie Wilkins (at Family Preservation, see chat) will support overdose recoverees – and others at risk of overdosing, to offer un-forced supports toward fuller recovery, and useful contacts. Lexie lives with this situation also. The Free Clinic is involved. Referrals will usually be from EMS, and a HIPAA-related agreement allows shares of protected information. PORT offers a backup to engage OD recoverees who refuse on-the-spot interventions. Opiate OD aftermaths are difficult, so backup is valuable. Community and self-referrers are also fine. The cards will be great to distribute during PIT Count. This also involves the Hope Coalition (fka Hope Rx) – family support cards offered by Hope Coalition can link clients or families to PORT. All this is free of charge, and free of clipboard-centric annoyance. It's just low key support offers.

Emily asked about geographic coverage. Buncombe (Amy Upham) is just starting a parallel effort. Lexie and others are aware there is cross-county movement that harm reduction efforts must allow for. While technically the grant is for Henderson, he is sharing info with Haywood, McDowell and others. Transylvania would be welcome to have folks call in, and PORT will reply with suitable backup providers, but would not attempt continuing involvement. If another county sees a similar program need, these grant opportunities pop up regularly, so Jodie's happy to assist there, and also with state contacts.

Kristen asked if PORT connects with health department responses to outbreaks of illness.

It does. A hepatitis A outbreak led Lexie to do outreach for vaccinations at the Rescue Mission. The team will carry Narcan and some harm-reduction materials - further details by request. Transylvania could consider PORT as a pilot. Likewise, Rutherford uses harm reduction, so they could also be interested.

**Racial equity subcommittee: Stephanie** said NCCEH has sent committee members a survey on reactions to this year's dialogs, and inviting suggestions for next year. There will be follow-up on the November C4 consultant trainings next Tuesday (Dec. 8, 10:30-noon); the aim is to devise ongoing collaboration with BoS Steering Committee. They are pleased that NAEH blog posted on the dialogs and the racial equity effort.

**Children & Youth Homeless Action Coalition, CYHAC: Beth** said Kim Guice, her co-chair, has sent out a link for tomorrow's (Dec. 4) Zoom meeting at 10 AM. Casey Steen from Pisgah Legal will be guest speaker, to speak on the NC Hope program and Project Uplift. The group will also revisit their goals with an eye to 2021.

**PIT and HIC (Housing inventory count) update: Sherrie Stokes** just joined, so Kristen and she presented. A lot changed yesterday. Last year's phone app, Counting Us, will not be used in camps or other sites, but will be used in shelters not on HMIS. Safelight and other DV

shelters will get specific training, so Coalition leads will update the region's DV facilities. Wednesday night, Jan. 27-28, will be the Point in Time. The region's verification work will be done from Jan. 28 to Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>. There will NOT be a volunteer field survey the morning of Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>, as in other years.

Shelters and housing reporting in HMIS will be tabulated by the State, not regions.

The unsheltered count will be adjusted. The start-point will be the Coordinated Entry regional by-name list. Kristen was very concerned to learn this. Our regional list is rather large, and recontacting listed folks is very hard – phone #'s change, phones may be turned off, or may be outside service zones, or may be dead and so on. It takes time. It helps that [Back@Home](#) has imposed list cleanup already, including some removals. The outreach teams, Sherrie with Salvation Army, and Kennet and Trisha at Blue Ridge Health, are asked to do or lead street outreach “when feasible” on planned canvassing days. That is, canvass when virus' spread patterns in a community look more permissive, and insure outreach people be protected with PPE. These would be done until Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>. Service points or centers will be alerted about the process. Any new unsheltered persons found would be added to the by-name list. It means interviewers will check by asking ‘are you listed’. Any one not sure will need their interviewer to call in to schedule a list placement. This gets people into Coordinated Entry, so that they also become prospects for housing services. All this implies that Coordinated Entry leads will become co-leads on PIT, joining the PIT leads already designated. Safe information collection will follow usual virus precautions, PPE, hand washing, social distance etc.

There will be no resource fairs associated with this count.

PIT assistance will be most needed to contact everyone on the by-name list. The Coordinated Entry committee would team with volunteers to make contacts, to confirm each listed person is (or isn't) unsheltered on count night. This would take place during the Jan. 28 – Feb. 9 verification window, before the State pulls results of our PIT count.

Alyce asked how does this get split up? Do volunteers call from homes? Kristen didn't know yet. Thrive hasn't staff to do all of it. We'll need to work with leaving voicemails and getting call-backs. Possibly part could be Thrive working with Blue Ridge Health, and their client info, which would include a significant number of by-name people. But for those not on HMIS – all other facilities but The Haven- we'd need release of lots of information. Also, could it be remote work? Or would it have to be teams rotating through Blue Ridge's largest conference room? The Health Department now has to do something like that to contact trace.

Carrington asked, when a household is contacted, what are our questions? Is it just, Are you still homeless and unsheltered? Kristen: Yesterday's orientation said to ask where they spent the PIT night. The de-duplicating ID info shouldn't be needed. Per that training (we will make it available when it's released) our PIT leads – **Sherrie, Kennet, Trisha, plus Emily and Kristen**, will need to have a work plan in ten days. Agencies will then be getting trained and outreach efforts planned.

There will be a CE lead training on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>.

There will be 4 virtual open-office training sessions, that Sherrie, Kennet and Trisha will need to attend to at least some extent. These would be the likeliest places to resolve questions.

Sarah Kowalak asked whether they will just relax the margin-of-error requirements, to permit going ahead from PIT data to make decisions? Kristen said it looks like they believe this process will yield the best data yet. Kristen doesn't believe this. Contact needs: For newly

homeless, two contacts, one to get on the list and one to verify; for those listed already, a verification to assure contact info is up to date.

Kristen's first step will be to filter the by-name list to ID those unsheltered at intake. But, given COVID, many shelter-stayers may have left. Doubling-up may also have increased. So it appears we will need to contact every name on the list. Contact by texting wasn't discussed yesterday. Contacts from a variety of agency numbers could be pretty confusing.

Carrington was concerned, should listed but low-scoring homeless just be confirmed, or is it better to try to use a contact to update needs or situation, make referrals etc.

Lauren Wilkie asked how provision of gift bags of needed things could be arranged. Kristen described past outreach, and the resource fair as usual sources, but it isn't clear how that would work this year in connection with PIT. Sherrie added that socks, hygiene, blankets etc. induce willingness to talk and promote honesty. Ongoing outreach from Blue Ridge and Salvation Army can certainly supply these items, but there will be no PIT street count this year.

Kristen will come up with both intake-unsheltered, and total, numbers from the by-name list. The outreach teams will need to decide how to canvass till that info is ready. The effort needs to cover all four counties. They will seek accurate contact info to have available for the ten-day confirmation follow-up calls.

Sherrie and Trisha will set up any follow-up PIT meetings as needed. Kristen will send out any needed Zoom invitations. Kristen has been pinch-hitting today because she was on for the full training yesterday, which was marred by tech issues for many attendees.

Sherrie, Trisha and Kennet will consult offline on what needs to happen.

Kristen put a URL in chat that is used to notify any us of any developments in PIT:

<https://www.ncceh.org/datacenter/pointintimehowto/>

Brenda asked if Charles George VA staff had been contacted about any plans to support our regional PIT. Kristen said all this was learned yesterday afternoon, so no, not yet. Adam Jahnke of VA social support said he, and probably some interns, will be assisting, though most VA staff will focus on Buncombe. Adam will connect here through the PIT email loop. Jessica Rice added in chat that Joe Landry will be helping from ABCCM.

**Coordinated Entry update:** Kristen said [Back@Home](#) funding has allowed pruning the list of those finding housing on their own, and those now being served and housed. There has been steady additions of cases/names but no big influx, due to the eviction moratorium. We will stay tuned for changes as the new year approaches. The statewide goals are to increase access to ESG and CoC funded housing resources, and to build community responsibility with all housing options. That implies that the infrequent past coordination with Section 8, housing authority, and other resources, needs to be involved in coordinated entry, so these resources and providers are incorporated in our case conferencing. Also, we need to similarly coordinate quicker access to shelter beds, so that the congregate shelter suppliers can be better integrated once Covid numbers ease to make that more feasible.

The [Back@Home](#) intake mechanism via 2-1-1 has been revised to drop a planned connection to NC Cares 360 – it wasn't feasible. Now 2-1-1 is using Smart Sheets as of this week. This is not yet being advertised as kinks need to be resolved before general launch. 2-1-1 is still strained by other programs it now supports. Even so, [Back@Home](#) provider agencies are challenged to handle referrals prior to their training on the referral system. Kristen assures all that regardless of system opacities, no one is getting delayed in obtaining housing. When Thrive finds units, placements are made very quickly. Case managers are

aggressive in getting inspections, checks, leases and move-ins often within 48 hours. We encourage leads on units anywhere in the four counties, as that enables faster placements.

**Veterans updates:** **Jessica Rice** said ABCCM emphasizes placing emergency cases into hotels, at least into 2021. Efforts are made to try to relocate the hotel stayers to other units within 30 days. It's noticed that 60-day-plus hotel stayers get comfortable there and are harder to work with. Joe Landry (info in chat) works Henderson, Haywood and Buncombe, and does peer support/outreach. They are reaching out to encampments in Henderson and have had successes in getting them into the HOPE program, aiming at placements in SSVF supportive housing. They also have their employment program for literally homeless veterans. Please call or email Joe or Jessica with any vet related matters.

**Adam Jahnke** said the VA cooperates with ABCCM components and others on SSVF program work. VA emphasizes clinical, chronic vet cases; but Adam regularly goes out to triage, usually with a paired partner; he also wants to assist in each county as needed, talk to resource providers, law enforcement etc., and can assist with health issues, to thread VA hoops etc. Please reach out.

**Alyce Knaflich** said Aura Homes just housed two women vets; has two spaces available; send them women vets needing shelter. Note that 85K COVID vaccines are directed to NC, to go to the most vulnerable first. Be aware of changes to state laws regarding expungement for minor crimes; and for possible driver license limited privilege reinstatement (up to a year) when licenses have been revoked for failure to pay. Aura Homes was pleased by a writeup in The Laurel of Asheville – see chat.

**Brenda Ploss** will cover 11 counties the next few months for NC Works. They see many more women vets, so the word is getting out. She put a link to the 4-county job list in chat. Call her if more specifics would help. **Jennifer Drum** works out of Shelby/Cleveland office but covers Polk and Rutherford for job assistance to vets. If a veteran there has need please call her – info is in chat.

The next regional meeting is set for January 7 2021, 9:30 AM. - Chris Berg

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From Alyce Knaflich to Everyone: 09:31 AM  
morning everyone

From Brenda.Ploss to Everyone: 09:32 AM

Brenda.Ploss@NCCommerce.com 919.710.3748 NCWorks Veterans Career Advisor (Henderson & Transylvania + Buncombe & Madison)

From bbranaga to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Beth Branagan, Transylvania County Schools

From Lauren Wilkie to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Lauren Wilkie Safelight

From Stephanie Gilliam to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Stephanie Gilliam Thrive

From Sarah McDaniel, she/her to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Sarah McDaniel, HC Dept. Public Health

From Vicki Huntley to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Vicki Huntley, Family Advocate Coordinator for WCCA

From Carrington Cosby to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Carrington Cosby, Thrive

From Alyce Knaflich to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Alyce Knaflich Aura Home Women Vets

From Kenett Melgar-BRH to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Kenett Melgar- Blue Ridge Health

From Matthew Gruebmeier to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Matt Gruebmeier, Dir, Student Services, HCPS.

From Trina Rushing to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Trina Rushing, Henderson County Library

From Me to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Kristen Martin, Thrive

From Kaitlynn Lovelace-HAC to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Kaitlynn Lovelace, The Housing Assistance Corporation

From Michael Absher to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Michael Absher - Only Hope Wnc

From Katie Kohler to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Katie Kohler - Henderson County DSS

From nickie kilgore to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Nickie Kilgore from Thrive

From Jodi Grabowski to Everyone: 09:34 AM

Jodi Grabowski, Behavioral Health System Coordinator, Health Dept.

From Sarah Kowalak to Everyone: 09:34 AM

sarah kowalak United way

From Jennifer Drum to Everyone: 09:35 AM

Jennifer Drum-Rutherford/Polk NCWorks Veteran Services

From Kenett Melgar-BRH to Everyone: 09:42 AM

kmelgar@brchs.com

From Lauren Wilkie to Everyone: 09:51 AM

Thanks Jodi!

From Emily Lowery to Everyone: 09:51 AM

Thank you Jodi!

From Jodi Grabowski to Everyone: 09:53 AM

jgrabowski@hendersoncountync.gov cell:828-845-5523.The PORT program call Lexie 828-845-0541 and see the rack card Kristen sent

From Carrington Cosby to Everyone: 09:57 AM

Please make sure you have signed into chat with your name and organization. Thanks!

From Emily Lowery to Everyone: 09:57 AM

Emily Lowery, The Haven of Transylvania County, emily@havenoftc.org/828-877-2045

From Brenda.Ploss to Everyone: 10:06 AM

How is the CG VAMC Homeless Program assisting with PIT in our county coverage areas?

From Christopher Berg, Greenville SC MM he/him to Everyone: 10:13 AM

Would it be helpful to assign contacters with a subset such as last name A-D, E-J and so on, for by-name list contacting?

From Sarah McDaniel, she/her to Everyone: 10:17 AM

I'm wondering if any organization has a confidential textline the group could share. I'm thinking of something that serves as an app, where administrators can log in anywhere and the texts are all collected in one location - so anyone can pick up a text conversation where someone else left it off.

I've used this program in the past: <https://www.preventionpaystext.com/>

From bbranaga to Everyone: 10:18 AM

There is a texting app that the school uses. It's called Talking Points. That might be an option.

From Me to Everyone: 10:19 AM

<https://www.nccch.org/datacenter/pointintimehowto/>

From Alyce Knaflich to Everyone: 10:20 AM

PIT volunteer aurahome.alyce@gmail.com 912-484-6316

From Jessica Rice to Everyone: 10:20 AM

Kristen I will offer up our Peer Support Outreach Veteran Specialist Joe Landry Joe.Landry@abccm.org

From Brenda.Ploss to Everyone: 10:23 AM

NCWorks Veterans Services and Job List - 12/1/2020

From Adam J to Everyone: 10:24 AM

adam.jahnke@va.gov if I could be added to the PIT count planning email chain. Thank you.

From ahvandyne to Everyone: 10:24 AM

Amanda Vanduyne Polk County Schools PreK

From Sarah McDaniel, she/her to Everyone: 10:26 AM

smcdaniel@hendersoncountync.gov - I can volunteer with the PIT count.

From Jodi Grabowski to Everyone: 10:27 AM

I have to hop off- thank you for having me on and thank for all you're doing!

From Adam J to Everyone: 10:30 AM

Adam Jahnke, adam.jahnke@va.gov 828-578-8544. LCSWA, Outreach Social Worker HCHV Program

From ahvandyne to Everyone: 10:31 AM

Sorry I have to go to another meeting now.

From Alyce Knaflich to Everyone: 10:32 AM

<https://thelaurelofasheville.com/communities/spotlight-on-aura-home-women-vets/>

From Jennifer Drum to Everyone: 10:34 AM

Jennifer.drum@ncommerce.com

From Alyce Knaflich to Everyone: 10:34 AM

Thrive open house

From Kenett Melgar-BRH to Everyone: 10:34 AM

Thank you!

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Supplement from Henderson County Public Schools' Matt Gruebmeier:

From: Matthew Gruebmeier <mwgruebmeier@hcpsnc.org>

Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 10:42 AM

To: Kristen Martin <kmartin@thrive4health.org>

Cc: Jessica Ownbey <jmownbey@hcpsnc.org>

Subject: power surge

Hey!

We got bumped here. Can you include a mid-year update for us?

186 school aged homeless youth. 97 K-5, 89 6-12.

Approximately this many by housing category:

134 shared housing

23 substandard

14 shelters

12 Motels

1 Unsheltered

Thank you for your leadership!

Matt Gruebmeier, Director of Student Services, HCPS

(828) 697-4733

