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Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) Monitoring Report Quarter 3 FY2013 (January, February, March 2013)

The Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) has been established in recognition that recovery can only begin in a safe, healthy, and decent environment, a place one can call home. The Office of Substance Abuse and Adult Mental Health Services recognizes the necessity for rental assistance for persons with mental illness, particularly those being discharged from hospitals, group homes, and homeless shelters. There is not a single housing market in the country where a person receiving Social Security as his or her sole income source can afford to rent even a modest one-bedroom apartment. According to a report issued by the Technical Assistance Collaborative, *Priced out in 2010*, in Maine, 98% of a person's SSI standard monthly payment is needed to pay for the average one-bedroom apartment statewide. In Cumberland County the amount is 104% and Sagadahoc 106%. In the City of Portland 126% of a person's SSI is necessary to pay for the average one-bedroom apartment and in the KEYS area (Kittery, Elliot, York and South Berwick) 125%.

BRAP is designed to assist individuals who have a psychiatric disability with housing costs for up to 24 months or until the individuals are awarded a Housing Choice Voucher (aka Section 8 Voucher), another federal subsidy, or until the individuals have an alternative housing placement. All units subsidized by BRAP funding must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Quality Standards and Fair Market Rents. Following a **Housing First** model, initial BRAP recipients are encouraged, but not required to accept the provision of services to go hand in hand with the voucher.

The monitoring of the Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) is the responsibility of the Office of Substance Abuse and Adult Mental Health Services (SAMHS) and particularly the Data, Quality Management, and Resource Development team.

On July 13, 2007, because the number of persons with BRAP vouchers was 41 over the maximum, the BRAP Wait List Protocol was fully activated. The following report details the census activity over the most recent four quarters. Trending information from the previous reports is provided so ongoing activity can be readily measured against longitudinal trends.

The bullets below highlight some of the details regarding persons who are currently waiting for a BRAP voucher: The percentage terms reflect the percentage of relative change compared to the last report, the formula is ((Current Report Number – Previous Report Number) / Current Report Number).

- Priority #1 applicants (Discharge from a psychiatric hospital within the last 6 months). Riverview and Dorothea Dix consumers are typically not waiting more than 5 days from the date of a completed application. Priority 1 applicants waiting for a BRAP voucher have decreased from 23 to 22 persons, down 4%.
- Priority #2 applicants (Homeless) have increased from 342 to 369 up 8%

- Priority #3 applicants (Substandard Housing) no change, remains at 3 persons.
- Priority #4 applicants (Community Residential Facility) have also decreased 44 to 40 persons, down 9%.
- Persons on the waitlist greater than 90 days have increased from 242 to 350 persons, up 45%.

Since inception of the wait list, there has been a total of 2,071 BRAP vouchers awarded broken down as follows: Priority #1, 976; Priority #2, 844; Priority #3, 27; Priority #4, 212. Note that 12 vouchers have been awarded to persons with no priority. In the last quarter 33 vouchers were awarded and 24 people were added to the waitlist.

The current BRAP census as of March 31, 2013 is 768 vouchers. Given the fiscal climate, it is unlikely there will be any carry-over dollars via the no-lapse in funds clause this year. We anticipate requesting \$100,000 of AG Funds for Quarter 4, that were part of the Supplemental Budget passed earlier this year. This should allow us to provide up to 100 additional vouchers, or approximately 25% of the documented waitlist in Q4. Additional dollars using AG Funds budgeted for FY14 should allow us to carry forward these vouchers into the next Fiscal Year.

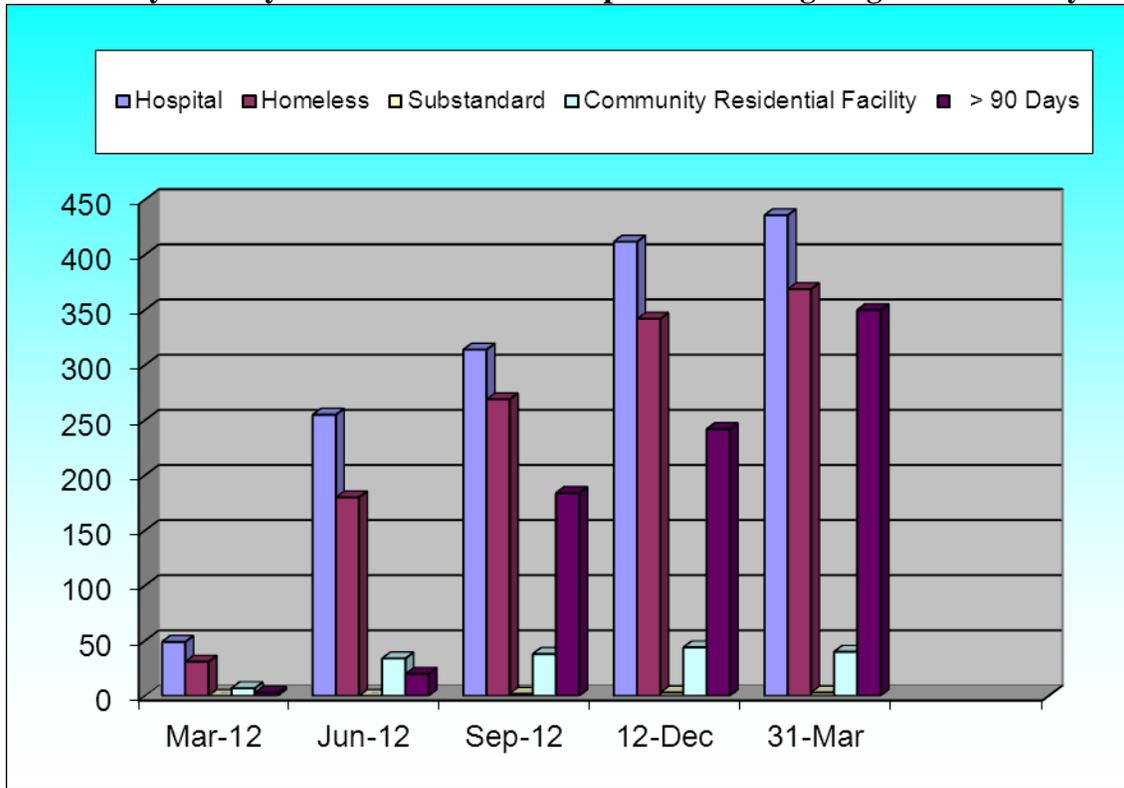
The number of persons on the program for greater than 24 months remains steady at 25% of the entire program. This is principally a result of decades of federal and state cuts to low-income and supportive housing programs, including persons who will not qualify for Section 8 due criminal activity. The lack of availability of these resources, particularly Section 8 at the federal level, has translated to increased pressures on state programs such as BRAP.

HUD has recently issued a second definition of homelessness which has a direct impact on the Shelter Plus Care program. We are awaiting further clarification from HUD on the new definitions before implementing them into the BRAP program. HUD's new homeless definition is broader than the existing one and includes 'at-risk' categories. It is likely we will have to narrow BRAP to the 'literally homeless' category in order to stay within limits of funding and manage waitlists.

Other potential impacts to the program surround General Assistance and TANF as BRAP currently has an income requirement, and is not designed to support 100% of the rental assistance. Depending on legislative initiatives and outcomes this Legislative session (126th) we may need to modify BRAP program guidelines regarding income and longevity.

SAMHS administered a substantial number of Shelter Plus Care vouchers, 794 as of March 31, 2013. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and has seen significant growth over the last decade, the result of SAMHS aggressively applying for and receiving new grants each year. The FY2013 annual budget for Shelter Plus Care is \$7.1 million. The total dollars for all SPC grants (one year renewals to 5 year new contracts) administered by SAMHS is \$13,434,250. Shelter Plus Care (SPC) is designed to provide permanent rental subsidies (housing vouchers) and supportive services (provided by MaineCare) to literally homeless individuals with: severe and persistent mental illness (63%), chronic substance abuse and mental illness (30%), and chronic substance abuse and HIV/AIDS (7%).

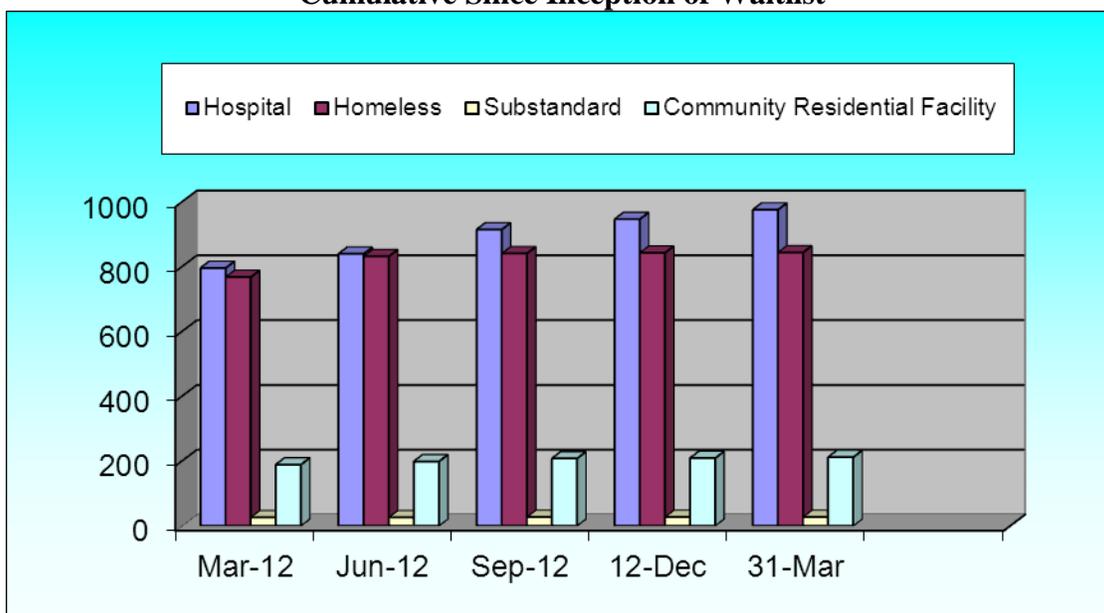
**BRAP Waitlist Status--Graph:
Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**



**BRAP Waitlist Status—Table:
Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**

Reporting Period	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	12-Dec	31-Mar	% Change relative to Last Report
Total number of persons waiting for BRAP	49	255	314	412	436	6%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	11	41	5	23	22	-4%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	31	180	269	342	369	8%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	0	0	2	3	3	0%
Priority 4—Leaving a Community Residential living facility	7	34	38	44	40	-9%
Total number of persons on wait list more than 90 days awaiting voucher	3	20	184	242	350	45%

**BRAP Awards—Graph
Cumulative Since Inception of Waitlist**



**BRAP Awards—Table
Cumulative Since Inception of Waitlist**

Reporting Periods	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	12-Dec	31-Mar	% Change relative to Last Report
Cumulative number of persons awarded BRAP	1790	1908	2003	2038	2071	2%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	796	840	915	947	976	3%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	768	832	841	843	844	0%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	26	26	27	27	27	0%
Priority 4—Leaving a DHHS funded living facility	189	199	208	209	212	1%

Note: 12 persons awarded with no priority