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## **Bridging Recovery Assistance Program (BRAP) Monitoring Report Quarter 1 FY2016 (July, August, September 2015)**

The Bridging Recovery 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 also recognizes that recovery is achieved on an individual basis which is not predicated by length of time but rather individual progress, successes and the necessity for rental assistance for persons with mental illness where length of assistance and amount of services are measured in need rather than in months. 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,<sup>1</sup> in Maine, 95 percent 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 94 percent and Sagadahoc 98 percent. In the City of Portland 115 percent 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) 110 percent.

BRAP is designed to assist individuals who have a psychiatric disability with housing costs 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 the *Housing First* evidence-based program model, initial BRAP recipients are encouraged, but not required, to accept the provision of services to go hand in hand with the voucher.

Currently, the BRAP program is in the RFP process, with an anticipated award announcement before the end of October, 2015 and an anticipated contract start date of January 1, 2016.

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

### **BRAP Waitlist**

The bullets below highlight some of the details regarding the 220 persons who are currently waiting for a BRAP voucher: The percentage terms reflect the percentage of relative change compared to the last report.

- ❖ Priority 1: 46 BRAP applicants who were discharged from a psychiatric hospital within the last 6 months are waiting for BRAP services. Typically, Riverview and Dorothea Dix consumers are not waiting more than 3 business days from the date of a completed application to receiving a BRAP voucher.
- ❖ Priority #2: 144 BRAP applicants who meet HUD's definition of Transitional Homelessness are waiting for BRAP services.

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<sup>1</sup> Cooper, E., O'Hara, A, Siner, N., and Zovistoski, A. Priced Out In 2012: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities. Technical Assistance Collaborative Inc. Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, Housing Task Force. 2013.

- ❖ Priority #3: 6 BRAP applicants identified as living in sub-standard housing (Substandard Housing). Statewide priority 3 waiting for BRAP services is 8 persons.
- ❖ Priority #4: 24 BRAP applicants identified as having left a DHHS funded community residential facility within the past six months are waiting for BRAP services.
- ❖ Currently, 83 individuals have been on the waitlist for BRAP services for more than 90 day, this reflects the maximum use of funds available.

### **BRAP Vouchers Awarded**

Since BRAP's inception, there has been a total of 3,262 BRAP vouchers awarded, which are broken down as follows:

- ❖ Priority #1: 1487 individuals discharged from psychiatric hospitals have been awarded BRAP vouchers
- ❖ Priority #2: 1425 individuals who meet HUD's transitional homeless definition have been awarded BRAP vouchers
- ❖ Priority #3: 47 individuals identified as living in sub-standard housing have been awarded BRAP vouchers
- ❖ Priority #4: 282 individuals who were leaving a DHHS funded living facility have been awarded BRAP vouchers.

Note that, since BRAP's inception, 22 vouchers have been awarded to persons with no priority assigned to them. In the first quarter of fiscal year 2016, a total of 59 BRAP vouchers were awarded.

The BRAP census as of September 30,2015 was 1008 vouchers.

Additional funding of \$1,233,947 was added to the BRAP budget of \$5,372,414, which brings the total FY16 BRAP budget to \$6,606,361, which will allow for an additional 150-200 additional vouchers in FY16. SAMHS is working closely with community providers and councils in order to direct these vouchers to those most in need as well as those leaving State funded Hospitals and Residential Facilities.

The number of individuals on the BRAP program for 24 months or more remains steady at 50% of the entire BRAP program. This is seen as a direct 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 to a criminal history. The lack of availability of these resources, particularly Section 8 at the federal level, has translated to an increased amount of pressure on state programs such as BRAP, to pick up where these programs have left off.

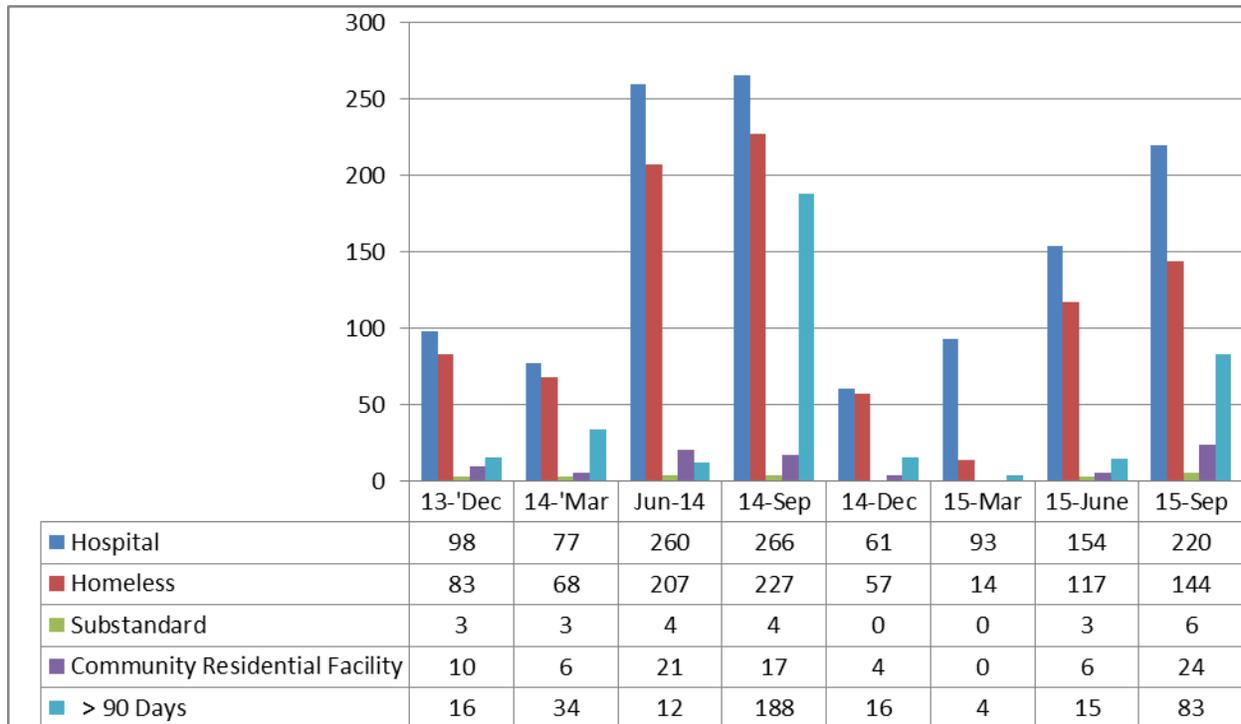
### **Other Housing Programs**

In addition, the PATH program, also managed by SAMHS, is being directed to outreach, engage and enroll literally homeless individuals into housing and mainstream resources with a focus on the literally homeless individuals who are eligible for sec.13 and 17 in the Maine Care Manual and would be prioritized for BRAP and Shelter Plus Care.

Lastly, SAMHS administers a substantial number of Shelter Plus Care vouchers, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, more than any other state on a per-capita basis. The census as of September 30, 2015 is 1,041 vouchers. This program has seen significant growth over the last decade, which is the direct result of SAMHS aggressively applying for, and receiving, new grants annually. However, there has been no increase in HUD funding over the past two years, causing a zero increase in grants funded through

HUD. SAMHS is focusing vouchers, when they become available through turnover, on the Chronic and Long Term homeless populations who generally qualify for this program.

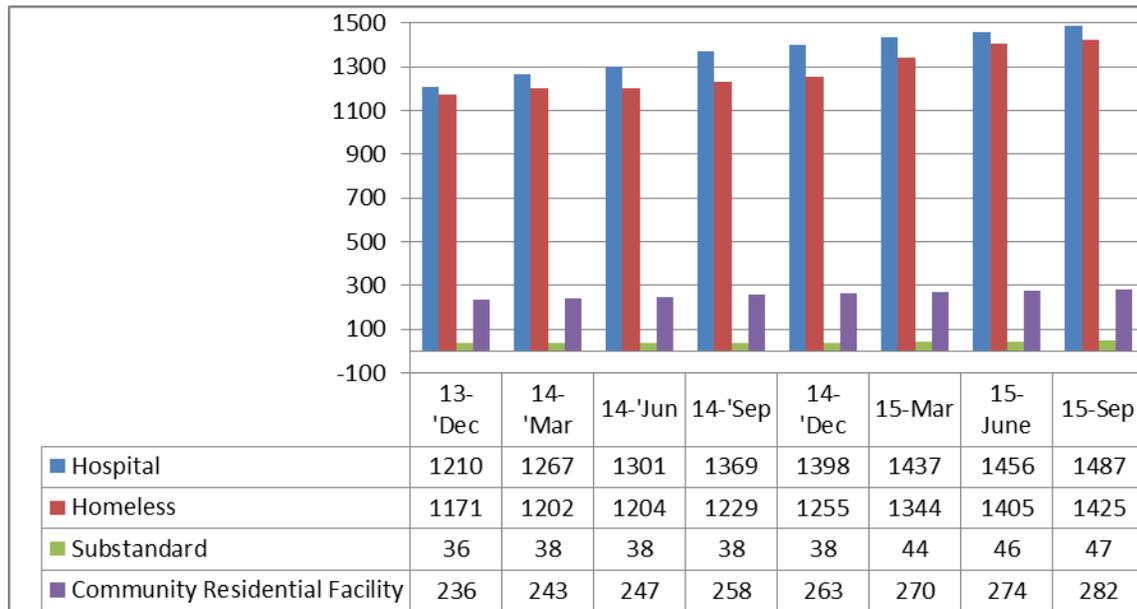
**BRAP Waitlist Status--Graph:  
Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**



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

Reporting Period	13-'Dec	14-'Mar	Jun-14	14-Sep	14-Dec	15-Mar	15-June	15-Sep	% Change relative to Last Report
Total number of persons waiting for BRAP	98	77	260	266	61	93	154	220	43%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	2	0	26	17	0	0	27	46	70%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	83	68	207	227	57	14	117	144	23%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	3	3	4	4	0	0	3	6	100%
Priority 4—Leaving a Community Residential living facility	10	6	21	17	4	0	6	24	300%
Total number of persons on wait list more than 90 days awaiting voucher	16	34	12	188	16	4	15	83	453%

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



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

Reporting Periods	13-'Dec	14-'Mar	14-'Jun	14-'Sep	14-'Dec	15-Mar	15-June	15-Sep	% Change relative to Last Report
Cumulative number of persons awarded BRAP	2668	2767	2808	2914	2974	3116	3203	3262	1.84%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	1210	1267	1301	1369	1398	1437	1456	1487	2.13%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	1171	1202	1204	1229	1255	1344	1405	1425	1.42%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	36	38	38	38	38	44	46	47	2.17%
Priority 4—Leaving a DHHS funded living facility	236	243	247	258	263	270	274	282	2.92%