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## **Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) Monitoring Report Quarter 4 FY2014 (April, May, June 2014)**

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, homeless shelters, and places considered substandard for human habitation. 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 2012* in Maine, 95% 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% and Sagadahoc 98%. In the City of Portland 115% 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%.

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.

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 BRAP program was frozen on May 20<sup>th</sup> with only Priority #1 persons being awarded coming out of Riverview or Dorothea Dix psychiatric centers.

- Priority #1 applicants (Discharge from a psychiatric hospital within the last 6 months). Riverview and Dorothea Dix consumers are typically not waiting more than 3 business days from the date of a completed application. Statewide priority 1 vouchers increased from 0 to 26.
- Priority #2 applicants (Homeless) have increased from 68 to 207 persons.
- Priority #3 applicants (Substandard Housing) increased from 3 to 4 persons.
- Priority #4 applicants (Community Residential Facility) increased from 6 to 21 persons.
- Persons on the waitlist greater than 90 days have decreased from 34 to 12 persons—a result of reaching out to each of these persons to determine interest in remaining on the waitlist for the program.

Since inception of the wait list, there has been a total of 2,808 BRAP vouchers awarded broken down as follows: Priority #1, 1,301; Priority #2, 1,204; Priority #3, 38; Priority #4, 247. Note that 18 vouchers have been awarded to persons with no priority. In the last quarter 41 vouchers were awarded—the reduction from previous quarters is due to a partial freeze of new program vouchers in order to meet budgetary constraints in the close of FY14.

The BRAP census as of June 30, 2014 is 966 vouchers which is more in line with our targeted goal of 930 vouchers. The waitlist did spike in the last quarter as a result of the partial freeze of new BRAP vouchers beginning on May 20<sup>th</sup>. However, the number of persons waiting more than 90 days has substantially decreased as a result of contacting those individuals to determine ongoing interest in remaining on the program.

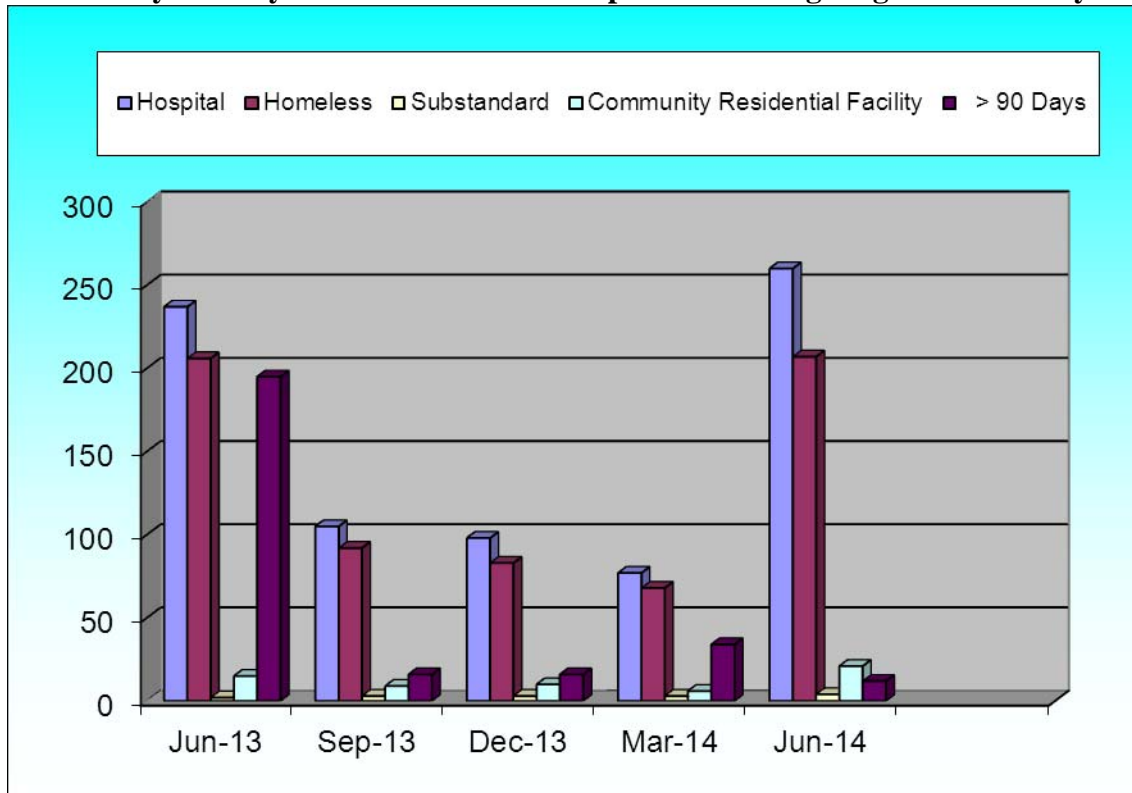
The overall BRAP budget for FY 15 is now a part of the baseline budget at SAMHS and remains at \$5,372,414.00. Depending on regional demand for vouchers, we anticipate the census being able to support between 930 to 975 vouchers at any given time statewide.

The number of persons on the program for greater than 24 months remains steady at 50% 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 to criminal history. 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.

SAMHS administers a substantial number of Shelter Plus Care vouchers, more than any other state on a per-capita basis. The census increased by 164 vouchers, due to leveraging efforts, to 1,062 as of June 30, 2014. 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. It should be noted that HUD has eliminated new project funding through an overall reduction of over 5% in this latest funding round.

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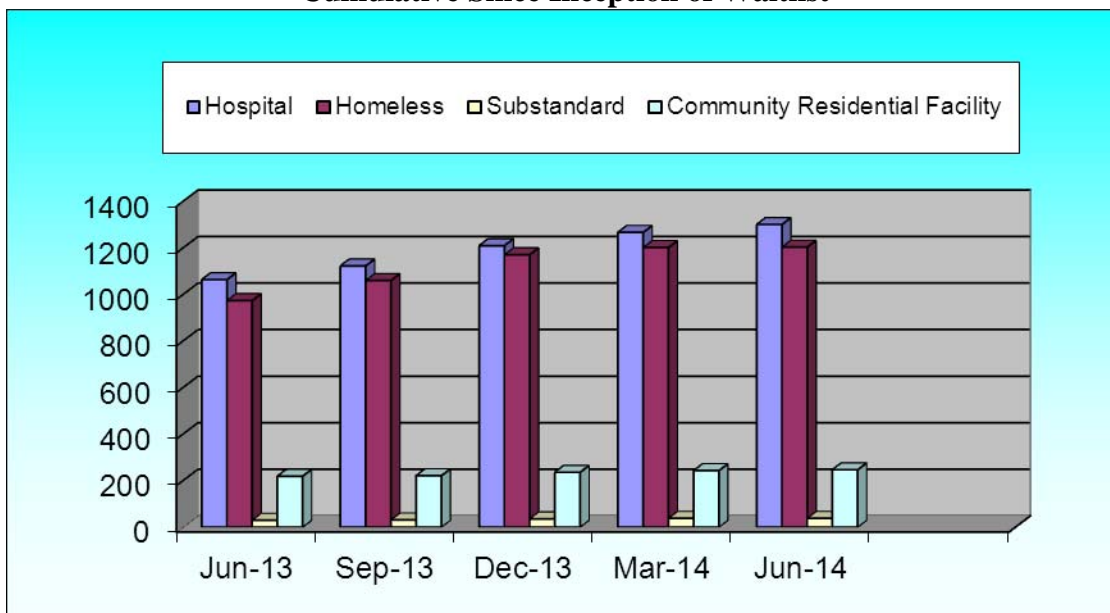
**BRAP Waitlist Status--Graph:  
Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**



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

Reporting Period	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14	% Change relative to Last Report
Total number of persons waiting for BRAP	237	105	98	77	260	70%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	12	1	2	0	26	100%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	206	92	83	68	207	67%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	2	3	3	3	4	25%
Priority 4—Leaving a Community Residential living facility	15	9	10	6	21	71%
Total number of persons on wait list more than 90 days awaiting voucher	195	16	16	34	12	-65%

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



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

Reporting Periods	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14	% Change relative to Last Report
Cumulative number of persons awarded BRAP	2300	2450	2668	2767	2808	1%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	1064	1123	1210	1267	1301	3%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	974	1060	1171	1202	1204	0%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	30	31	36	38	38	0%
Priority 4—Leaving a DHHS funded living facility	219	221	236	243	247	2%

\*Note: 18 persons awarded with no priority