

Homelessness in Hawaii

Homeless Forum November 19, 2003

The community forum on homelessness brought together various segments of the community who are affected by homelessness to discuss the serious issues related to homelessness. Also included in the forum was a presentation that laid out plans to end homelessness. The following Policy Brief includes information about the forum panelists and what they discussed, questions and answers included in the forum as well as information related to the forum presentation. Also included in this final brief is information from the community that relates to homelessness in Hawai'i.

Who are the Homeless?

Addressing the issues related to decreasing resources and an increase in the numbers of homeless in Hawai'i, both Lynn Maunakea and Linda Schaladermundt discussed the shifting focus of service providers in addressing the needs of the homeless population. With a shift in strategy focusing on the 10% of the homeless population who is chronically homeless and using over 50% of the resources. Both speakers believed that finding permanent and supportive housing for the chronically homeless would free up some of the resources to effectively help the other 10% who are mentally ill or suffer from substance abuse, and the 80% of the homeless who are temporarily homeless.

It was stated that the largest percentage of homeless are those individuals and families who have suffered some kind of trauma such as job loss or illness. This population is rarely homeless for long periods of time or fall into homelessness after they find housing.

We Need More Beds !!!!!

One of the more important issues discussed at the homeless forum was the need for more beds and housing to address the needs of the homeless. Despite bringing in 20 million dollars and working with Steadfast Housing, those homeless individuals who seek the services of the Adult Mental Health division in Hawai'i are faced with waiting lists and little options.

For those seeking shelter at Institute of Human Services are faced with a lottery draw to see who will be housed in Hawaii's largest emergency shelter.

Awareness Week

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The homeless forum was part of Hawaii's National Hunger and Homeless Awareness week, which included the 5k walk/run "Walk a Mile in my Shoes," a service provider forum and several articles covering the issue and events related to homelessness

Five Ways to Help the Homeless

Honolulu Advertiser November 16, 2003

- Respect homeless people as individuals. Respond with kindness.
- Make a donation to an organization that helps homeless people.
- Urge organizations you are part of to donate space or resources to provide shelter or services to homeless people
- Volunteer your time to help homeless people Give.
- Giving money to those who beg is a personal choice, but alternatives include buying food or gift certificates from fast-food restaurants.

Forum Panelists

Major Michael Tucker: In 2004, Major Tucker will begin his 30th year as a police officer. He originally graduated with a Bed. In secondary education from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa in 1972 and in 1973 he received his Professional Teaching Diploma from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. In 1992 Major Tucker graduated from Chaminade University of Honolulu with a degree in Criminal Justice Administration. In 1993 he attended the three-month F.B.I. National Academy Associates at Quantico, VA and was the chapter president for the F.B.I National Academy Associates from 2001 to 2002. Major Tucker is currently completing his fourth year as the Honolulu Police Department's District 1 Major, which primarily covers the downtown Honolulu area, stretching from Liliha to Punahou Street and whose resident population is roughly 70,000 people. Finally, in 2004 Major Tucker will begin his 30th year as a police officer.

Discussion: In talking about the serious issues that surround homelessness, Major Tucker discussed the difficult role the police are forced to play in dealing with homelessness. As it currently stands, homelessness is not a crime and the police don't want "criminal laws used to attack the condition of homelessness," because the homeless are the victims of both society and crime. The police are required to respond to all calls for service, and in dealing with the homeless situation, this often takes place when the public calls and wants access to public parks and beach facilities that are being occupied by the homeless. Police don't want to use criminal law to fight homelessness nor do they have the resources to become the solution to the homeless problem. However, according to Major Tucker, the police are more than willing to work with the community to develop alternative solutions that will be advantageous for all those involved.

Lynn Maunakea: Since 1997, Lynn Maunakea has been the Executive Director of the Institute for Human Services (IHS), Oahu's emergency homeless shelter. She moved to Hawaii in 1977 to attend The University of Hawai'i at Manoa where she earned a Masters Degree in Social Work, and prior to IHS, Lynn managed a Based Grant and Loan Program for the Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

Discussion: Lynn shared with the panel and audience some of the changes she has seen take place during her stay at IHS. She has seen her agency grow from one small emergency shelter to one shelter serving 240 men a night and another shelter that serves women and families. Lynn also discussed the increase in people seeking emergency shelter that has forced her agency to begin using a lottery system to

decide who will be housed on any given night. Lynn also focused her discussion on the change in strategy that IHS and other service providers have taken in dealing with the homeless population in lieu of the increasing number of homeless individuals and families they are forced to serve with decreasing funds and resources. “We started learning a couple of years ago that we can do more than cycle people through the homeless shelters.” With the utilization of current and accurate data, IHS and other service providers have begun to break down the homeless population into distinct groups instead of classifying all homeless under one umbrella. For instance, the chronically homeless account for only 10% of the homeless population yet utilize over 50% of the resources. By using “evidence-based practices” and utilizing data, Lynn believes that service providers can both successfully move the chronically homeless to permanent housing and be able to focus more resources to service other homeless populations.

Linda Schladermundt: Linda has been a registered nurse in Hawaii since 1977, and received Masters Degree in Business Administration in Healthcare Administration from Alameda College and University. Since her arrival in Hawai'i, Linda has worked as the quality assurance coordinator at Straub Hospital and Clinic, Kahi Mohala Treatment Center as the Director of Quality Management and the Hawai'i State Hospital in Kaneohe as the Associate Administrator and Acting Administrator. Linda is currently the Oahu Service Area Administrator for the Department of Health's Adult Mental Health Division.

Discussion: Linda focused her attention on the work the Adult Mental Health Division is doing to help combat homeless and the increasing need for permanent and affordable housing. As a result of the increasing need for housing in Hawai'i, Adult Mental Health has added homelessness as a priority in the department's most recent strategic plan. They have taken presumptive eligibility approach, which means that any person who is homeless is automatically eligible for housing services before eligibility for Adult Mental Health services is determined. However, despite this change in eligibility and bringing in over 20 million dollars and 1300 beds, Linda discussed turning away those in need and the waiting list facing those who come to Adult Mental Health for shelter. Linda ended here discussion by the community's need to collaborate and work as a team in developing effective solutions to the problems facing both the homeless and the service providers addressing homelessness.

Wanda Curry: For the past eight years, Wanda is Director of Programs at Po'ailani, inc. Dual Diagnosis Continuum of Care. Wanda has 15 years experience providing treatment services for individuals with alcohol and/or drug related problems

and/or co-occurring disorders. Since 1999, she has personally been providing housing for homeless dually diagnosed individuals.

Discussion: Wanda focused her discussion on the challenges faced by homeless people living their lives on a day to day basis as well as transitioning into permanent housing. Wanda further discussed the debilitating stigma that is attached to homelessness, and “while you never know who is homeless,” the stigma is the most challenging aspect in dealing with the issue as a whole. Wanda also discussed her personally experience living dually diagnosed and homeless, her movement out of homelessness, and her experiences as a landlord, providing housing for the homeless. She pointed out that the homeless don’t take for granted the things that a housed person does daily such as showering, getting ready for work/school, etc., and that transition into permanent housing takes time.

Jon Korrice: Currently, Jon is the Circulation Director for the Honolulu Star-Bulletin and has been in the newspaper business for over 20 years. Jon is the bairnchild who created and developed “Kid’s Day” where newspapers are disseminated to support the Parents and Children Together Program (PACT). Jon works closely with the homeless population who distribute newspapers for the Star Bulletin.

Discussion: Jon discussed the unique opportunity the Honolulu Star-Bulletin gives members of the homeless community on working towards self-sufficiency. The paper currently employs a large number of homeless individuals to work as “Hawkers,” selling newspapers throughout the island. It is Jon’s belief that most homeless people are homeless by chance and that he and his paper are “always working towards helping those who want to be helped.”

Margaret and Jordan Akau: Homeless for more than two years and currently live at Sewers Beach in Waianae. Both Margaret and Jordan volunteer at the Waianae Community Outreach Program. Margaret is a volunteer clerk and Jordan assists with the food pantry and maintenance Both are attending Cbase, which is a Competency Based High School Diploma Program offered by the Department of Education. Both Margaret and Jordan are also involved in the plans to develop the Village of Hope at eh Boat Harbor in Waianae.

Discussion: Both Margaret and Jordan openly discussed their current homeless situation and what they are doing to improve their lives. The couple first experienced homelessness 12 years ago, and lost hope when their two youngest children were taken by CPS as a result of the couples drug and alcohol abuse. Most recently, the couple have been homeless for the last two years and living at Sewers

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beach in Waianae. However, the couple has realized that “life is everything and you cannot give up on life,” and have found hope and are working towards improving their life. The couple also spoke about working towards their high school diplomas and the volunteer work they are performing at the outreach program. Magaret, in discussing her volunteer work, shared with the audience volunteering has been a way for her to give back to those who have helped her and her husband as well as serving as a way for her to develop skills that will help her find work in the future.

Thanks to the Masters of Social Work (MSW) students from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa who took part in various forum activities.

Forum tries to raise awareness of homelessness

By James Gonser

Advertiser Urban Honolulu Writer

About 50 people heard firsthand what it is like to be homeless, work with the homeless and live outside society in Hawai'i during a forum yesterday at the State Capitol.

The forum, sponsored by the service providers group Partners in Care, was part of the National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week activities in Hawai'i, and attempts to bring more residents into discussions about the homeless.

Panelists Margaret and Jordan Akau have lived on the beach at Wai'anae for more than two years. They have no income, limited education and because they were using drugs, their two youngest children were taken away from them. Then the Wai'anae Community Outreach program stepped in to offer them hope for the future.

The couple realized their prospects were dire without earning high school diplomas.

"At first I never like go back to school. No like do nothing," Margaret said. "With the help of the outreach program, I had a chance to go back to school and Dec. 1, I will take my test for a diploma."

In exchange for food and tuition, the couple has been doing volunteer work with the program.

"Life is everything," she said. "You cannot give up on life no matter what."

The couple took part in the panel to support the idea of Camp Hope, a proposed tent city to house the homeless on five acres of city land beside Wai'anae Boat Harbor. The plan has been criticized by some residents who say it would be a magnet for the homeless.

The camp is needed, providers say, because the number of homeless people continues to rise and financing for services is stagnant. A state report released this week shows that the numbers have increase dramatically to 6,029 homeless people on any given night, up from 3,171 four years ago.

Lynn Maunakea, executive director of the Institute for Human Services, said collecting the data is important for deciding about the best ways to help the homeless.

Maunakea told the group that 10 percent of the homeless are considered chronic with mental health and substance abuse problems and can be helped. Another 10 percent are substance abusers who simply don't want help. The majority, 80 percent, move in and out of homelessness and existing programs have so many clients they are forced to turn people away. Service providers are relatively successful when they can help, she said.

Following criticism about police treatment of homeless people, Honolulu Police Maj. Michael Tucker said the homeless are treated like anyone else and are victims of both circumstances and crime.

"The community wants access to areas occupied by the homeless and they call us," Tucker said. "We don't want to be in a position that laws are used to find a solution for homelessness. Incarceration is not the best alternative for mental illness." Rebecca Anderson, chairwoman of the week's events, said there's a 10-year plan to end homelessness in Hawai'i.

"The 10-year plan needs to have a really broad ownership so a lot of people are vested in it," Anderson said. "I think we did that. We saw some faces (at the forums) we have never seen before."

Local Homeless Shelters and Service Providers Offer Community Tours

A number of local service providers who serve individuals who are homeless opened their doors to the public and offered tours to help bring awareness to their programs and how they are affected by homelessness. The tours took place after the homeless forum where descriptions of the participating programs and accompanying maps were handed out to all those interested. The programs who participated included:

Safe Haven: A program that provides services to individuals who are homeless and suffer from a severe mental illness such as schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, or major depression. Safe Haven is located in the heart of downtown Honolulu and provides services to many homeless individuals who are in the area. Up to 25 individuals are able to reside at Safe Haven and other individuals are able to come in during the day for activity center activities. Activity Center activities include: Showers, meals, laundry, and recreational activities. Safe Haven is a collaborative project between Mental Health Kokua and Kalihi-Palama Health Center's, Health Care for the Homeless Project, and services include case management, medical and psychiatric treatment.

Institute for Human Services (IHS): An emergency shelter that provides 3 meals per day, toiletries, clothing, case management, mail and telephone messages, etc. Through community collaborations, the shelter is also able to offer on-site counseling such as anger management, family enrichment, substance abuse counseling as well as having the ability to offer medical and dental care. All IHS services are free and are available to anyone who is homeless. Through case management activities and rent subsidies, IHS has a permanent housing program that help chronically homeless individuals find and remain in permanent housing.

Catholic Charities: Ma'ili Land is a transitional housing program, which accommodates 45 families for up to 24 months. The program provides services such as case management, housing and financial counseling, skills preparation, education, and a children's program.

'Ohana Ola 'O Kahumana: A transitional housing program that assists homeless adults with minor children for up to 24 months.

New York Program

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New York City has perhaps the nation's best ongoing operation to end homelessness. Sam Tsemberis, executive director of Pathways to Housing Inc. in New York City, visited Honolulu last month to discuss his program of getting chronic homeless off the streets and into apartments of their own with assistance from local care providers.

Tsemberis said most homeless programs require clients to participate in drug, job or counseling programs before being provided housing, but Pathways follows a "housing first" model that puts clients into homes before working on personal problems.

" We can put somebody in an apartment, pay 80 percent of the rent with government funding, and provide treatment for \$5,000 per year cheaper than it cost to put them in a shelter cot," he said.

Landlords have learned to trust the program because the tenants are supported by the agency and they know the rent will be paid on time and any problems are dealt with by case workers.

" We can cure homelessness," he said. "There is a fix and we are doing it right now." Locally, Health Care for the Homeless and IHS are running Shelter Plus Care housing first programs, but with a tight housing market, apartments are hard to find and landlords are wary of taking in homeless tenants with substance-abuse and mental-illness problems...

Staff writers Christie Wilson, Kevin Dayton, and Jan Tenbruggencate contributed to this report. Reach James Gonser at jgonser@honoluluadvertiser.com or 535-2431.

Questions from the Audience

There was a portion of the forum set aside in order for audience members to ask questions of the panelists. The following is a summary of some of the questions raised and how the panelists addressed the issues raised. While the developers of this final report attempted to be as accurate as possible in its reporting of the forum events, this is just a summary of the answers and questions and the information below is not directly quoted.

Question (REP. CYNTHIA THIELEN): Are there state, federal tax incentives to encourage private developers to build housing for people in transition?

Answer: NO. --But she is drafting a bill asking for state to legitimize illegal vacation rentals on Oahu so that they can use back? taxes and new taxes generated toward fund for homelessness--will " earmark all taxes not presently being paid to be directed toward homeless fund--enthusiastically supports Rep. Chun-Oakland's "Unclaimed Property Bill"--did not expand on that bill.

Question (To the Akaus): What is the hardest part of finding a home?

Answer: The finances. Being unemployed makes it difficult to get a place. Also, the rents are so high we can't afford to pay it. Stigma, people label us, but not all homeless are bad.

Question: Are there enough vacant apartments? Are there requirements for new buildings?

Answer (Lynn Maunakea): No. Policy of IHS board of directors is to provide emergency shelter and our board of directors has chosen not to expand its' housing services. But we understand that Hawai'i is behind in housing development. Mutual Housing is developing some, but it is not a money making venture so developers are not willing to take the risk to develop housing for the homeless population.

Question: Is there affordable medical/dental?

Answers: ~Wanda Curry - At Pualani, social workers work to get clients health care.
~ Linda Schladermundt - Case managers at Adult Mental Health Division are responsible for assisting with mental health services as well as medical and dental.
~ Lynn Maunakea - Kalihi-Palama Health Center has Healthcare for the Homeless program. Dental is a need identified by the homeless during a survey.
~Laura Thielan - Majority of dental care consists of extractions. Dental care is a major need.

Question: What percentage of the homeless population is Hawaiian?

Answer (from audience): About 37% according to this morning's paper.

Question: What is Camp Hope? (located at Waianae Boat Harbor)

Answer: ~J. Akau - A place of healing to help everybody get back on their feet and give them hope.

~M. Akau - People working together. All homeless on Waianae coast. Bring them off the beaches to heal themselves. With a stable place to live they can heal inside. Form by people in the community.

~Tulu (Waianae Community Outreach Homeless Specialist) - Site chosen to heal and help the population who want to change life and be self-sufficient. From transitional housing shelters to permanent housing.

What is Camp Hope?

One topic of concern discussed at the homeless forum was the proposed Camp Hope. What camp hope is and its' purpose remained unclear for many of those who attended the forum. The proposed camp hope would be located at Wai'anae Boat Harbor and would provide a safe place for many homeless people already spread throughout the Wai'anae beach areas. Camp Hope would be a clean and sober encampment where there would be a 24 hour case management service that would be providing services to those at camp hope and linking those in need to community resources.

Hawaii's Action Plan to End Homelessness

Laura E. Thielen, Project Coordinator for Kalihi Palama Health Center's Healthcare for the Homeless Program, provided an overview of Hawaii's Action Plan to End Homelessness. The plan was created in May of 2003 through combined efforts from service providers and consumers. It is a working document that addresses issues of homelessness and an action plan to prevent homelessness in the future. The action plan is a draft and is expected to alter over the next 10 years to accommodate additional issues that may impact people who are homeless.

The guiding principles of the plan are as follows:

- Homelessness is unacceptable in community
- Society benefits when all individuals have access to safe, decent, affordable housing
- Equal needs for all segments of the homeless population
- Attentive to cultural aspects of homelessness. E.g. Waianae
- It's a solvable problem
- We have the political, social, and moral will to make it happen
- We will hold ourselves & all community policymakers & leaders accountable
- We will not only "manage" homelessness – we need to solve homelessness & its related problems
- Housing First Approach – housing is directly related to improved healthcare.
- Hawaii is different from other regions. The plan will reflect the uniqueness of Hawaii & the homeless population.
- The active participation of consumers to develop & implement this plan is essential to its success
- Develop partnerships with businesses, service providers, community & faith-based organizations, government entities & consumers to develop & implement this plan
- Evidence based best practices will be incorporated.
- Prevention is essential within any plan that intends to end homelessness & incorporate prevention.

The goals of the plan are as follows:

- Goal #1: Access to Appropriate, Affordable, Safe and Decent Housing for All
- Goal #2: Prevent Individuals and Families from Becoming Homeless
- Goal #3: Decrease Barriers to Housing
- Goal #4: Improve Data Collection/Research

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- Goal #5: Provide Appropriate Support Services
- Goal #6: Create Collaborative Partnerships to End Homeless

The presentation stressed the importance of everyone working together to accomplish the goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii. An executive summary of the plan was provided to attendees of the forum; however, copies of the complete plan are available by contacting Laura E. Thielen at 791-6344 or by e-mailing her at lthielen@kphc.org.

Five Myths About The Homeless

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1. People choose to be homeless. Nationally, 2.5 million to 3.5 million people are homeless every year and an estimated 500,000 low-income housing units are also lost each year. Private developers sometimes concentrate on lucrative housing and commercial projects and can destroy affordable housing in the process of urban renewal and gentrification.
2. Homeless people don't want to be helped. Recent studies show that even the severely disabled mentally ill, chronically homeless people will accept help with approaches and strategies appropriate to their circumstances. Homeless people's resistance to help is often their own attempt at some measure of self-dignity.
3. Homeless people are mostly able-bodied men who don't want to work. The fastest-growing segment of the homeless population is families with young children. Other new homeless include battered wives and runaway and throwaway children.
4. Most of Hawaii's homeless are shipped here from the Mainland. One survey from a major downtown homeless service provider shows that of 3,720 clients, 1,588 or 43 percent, have lived in Hawai'i for five years or more; 632 or 17 percent had lived here from one to five years; and 1,501 or 40 percent had lived here for less than a year.
5. Homeless people commit more crimes than other people do. The arrest rate for homeless people committing violent felonies is about one-half of those with homes. When crimes are committed by homeless people they are usually misdemeanors committed to secure food or a place to sleep.

Source: Partners in Care

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Final Policy Brief



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In exchange for food and tuition, the couple has been doing volunteer work with the program.

"Life is everything," she said. "You cannot give up on life no matter what."

The couple took part in the panel to support the idea of Camp Hope, a proposed tent city to house the homeless on five acres of city land beside Wai'anae Boat Harbor. The plan has been criticized by some residents who say it would be a magnet for the homeless.

The camp is needed, providers say, because the number of homeless people continues to rise and financing for services is stagnant. A state report released this week shows that the numbers have increase dramatically to 6,029 homeless people on any given night, up from 3,171 four years ago.

Lynn Maunakea, executive director of the Institute for Human Services, said collecting the data is important for deciding about the best ways to help the homeless.

Maunakea told the group that 10 percent of the homeless are considered chronic with mental health and substance abuse problems and can be helped. Another 10 percent are substance abusers who simply don't want help. The majority, 80 percent, move in and out of homelessness and existing programs have so many clients they are forced to turn people away. Service providers are relatively successful when they can help, she said.

Following criticism about police treatment of homeless people, Honolulu Police Maj. Michael Tucker said the homeless are treated like anyone else and are victims of both circumstances and crime.

"The community wants access to areas occupied by the homeless and they call us," Tucker said. "We don't want to be in a position that laws are used to find a solution for homelessness. Incarceration is not the best alternative for mental illness."

Rebecca Anderson, chairwoman of the week's events, said there's a 10-year plan to end homelessness in Hawai'i.

"The 10-year plan needs to have a really broad ownership so a lot of people are vested in it," Anderson said. "I think we did that. We saw some faces (at the forums) we have never seen before."

Local Homeless Shelters and Service Providers Offer Community Tours

A number of local service providers who serve individuals who are homeless opened their doors to the public and offered tours to help bring awareness to their programs and how they are affected by homelessness. The tours took place after the homeless forum where descriptions of the participating programs and accompanying maps were handed out to all those interested. The programs who participated included:

Safe Haven: A program that provides services to individuals who are homeless and suffer from a severe mental illness such as schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, or major depression. Safe Haven is located in the heart of downtown Honolulu and provides services to many homeless individuals who are in the area. Up to 25 individuals are able to reside at Safe Haven and other individuals are able to come in during the day for activity center activities. Activity Center activities include: Showers, meals, laundry, and recreational activities. Safe Haven is a collaborative project between Mental Health Kokua and Kalihi-Palama Health Center's, Health Care for the Homeless Project, and services include case management, medical and psychiatric treatment.

Institute for Human Services (IHS): An emergency shelter that provides 3 meals per day, toiletries, clothing, case management, mail and telephone messages, etc. Through community collaborations, the shelter is also able to offer on-site counseling such as anger management, family enrichment, substance abuse counseling as well as having the ability to offer medical and dental care. All IHS services are free and are available to anyone who is homeless. Through case management activities and rent subsidies, IHS has a permanent housing program that help chronically homeless individuals find and remain in permanent housing.

Catholic Charities: Ma'ili Land is a transitional housing program, which accommodates 45 families for up to 24 months. The program provides services such as case management, housing and financial counseling, skills preparation, education, and a children's program.

'Ohana Ola 'O Kahumana: A transitional housing program that assists homeless adults with minor children for up to 24 months.

New York Program

Posted in Honolulu Advertiser November 16, 2003

New York City has perhaps the nation's best ongoing operation to end homelessness. Sam Tsemberis, executive director of Pathways to Housing Inc. in New York City, visited Honolulu last month to discuss his program of getting chronic homeless off the streets and into apartments of their own with assistance from local care providers.

Tsemberis said most homeless programs require clients to participate in drug, job or counseling programs before being provided housing, but Pathways follows a "housing first" model that puts clients into homes before working on personal problems.

"We can put somebody in an apartment, pay 80 percent of the rent with government funding, and provide treatment for \$5,000 per year cheaper than it cost to put them in a shelter cot," he said.

Landlords have learned to trust the program because the tenants are supported by the agency and they know the rent will be paid on time and any problems are dealt with by case workers.

"We can cure homelessness," he said. "There is a fix and we are doing it right now."

Locally, Health Care for the Homeless and IHS are running Shelter Plus Care housing first programs, but with a tight housing market, apartments are hard to find and landlords are wary of taking in homeless tenants with substance-abuse and mental-illness problems...

Staff writers Christie Wilson, Kevin Dayton, and Jan Tenbruggencate contributed to this report. Reach James Gonser at jgonser@honoluluadvertiser.com or 535-2431.

Questions from the Audience

There was a portion of the forum set aside in order for audience members to ask questions of the panelists. The following is a summary of some of the questions raised and how the panelists addressed the issues raised. While the developers of this final report attempted to be as accurate as possible in its reporting of the forum events, this is just a summary of the answers and questions and the information below is not directly quoted.

Question (REP. CYNTHIA THIELEN): Are there state, federal tax incentives to encourage private developers to build housing for people in transition?

Answer: NO. --But she is drafting a bill asking for state to legitimize illegal vacation rentals on Oahu so that they can use back? taxes and new taxes generated toward fund for homelessness--will " earmark all taxes not presently being paid to be directed toward homeless fund--enthusiastically supports Rep. Chun-Oakland's "Unclaimed Property Bill"--did not expand on that bill.

Question (To the Akaus): What is the hardest part of finding a home?

Answer: The finances. Being unemployed makes it difficult to get a place. Also, the rents are so high we can't afford to pay it. Stigma, people label us, but not all homeless are bad.

Question: Are there enough vacant apartments? Are there requirements for new buildings?

Answer (Lynn Maunakea): No. Policy of IHS board of directors is to provide emergency shelter and our board of directors has chosen not to expand its' housing services. But we understand that Hawai'i is behind in housing development. Mutual Housing is developing some, but it is not a money making venture so developers are not willing to take the risk to develop housing for the homeless population.

Question: Is there affordable medical/dental?

Answers: ~Wanda Curry - At Pualani, social workers work to get clients health care.

~ Linda Schladermundt - Case managers at Adult Mental Health Division are responsible for assisting with mental health services as well as medical and dental.

~ Lynn Maunakea - Kalihi-Palama Health Center has Healthcare for the Homeless program. Dental is a need identified by the homeless during a survey.

~Laura Thielan - Majority of dental care consists of extractions. Dental care is a major need.

Question: What percentage of the homeless population is Hawaiian?

Answer (from audience): About 37% according to this morning's paper.

Question: What is Camp Hope? (located at Waianae Boat Harbor)

Answer: ~J. Akau - A place of healing to help everybody get back on their feet and give them hope.

~M. Akau - People working together. All homeless on Waianae coast. Bring them off the beaches to heal themselves. With a stable place to live they can heal inside. Form by people in the community.

~Tulu (Waianae Community Outreach Homeless Specialist) - Site chosen to heal and help the population who want to change life and be self-sufficient. From transitional housing shelters to permanent housing.

What is Camp Hope?

One topic of concern discussed at the homeless forum was the proposed Camp Hope. What camp hope is and its' purpose remained unclear for many of those who attended the forum. The proposed camp hope would be located at Wai'anae Boat Harbor and would provide a safe place for many homeless people already spread throughout the Wai'anae beach areas. Camp Hope would be a clean and sober encampment where there would be a 24 hour case management service that would be providing services to those at camp hope and linking those in need to community resources.

Hawaii's Action Plan to End Homelessness

Laura E. Thielen, Project Coordinator for Kalihi Palama Health Center's Healthcare for the Homeless Program, provided an overview of Hawaii's Action Plan to End Homelessness. The plan was created in May of 2003 through combined efforts from service providers and consumers. It is a working document that addresses issues of homelessness and an action plan to prevent homelessness in the future. The action plan is a draft and is expected to alter over the next 10 years to accommodate additional issues that may impact people who are homeless.

The guiding principles of the plan are as follows:

- Homelessness is unacceptable in community
- Society benefits when all individuals have access to safe, decent, affordable housing
- Equal needs for all segments of the homeless population
- Attentive to cultural aspects of homelessness. E.g. Waianae
- It's a solvable problem
- We have the political, social, and moral will to make it happen
- We will hold ourselves & all community policymakers & leaders accountable
- We will not only "manage" homelessness – we need to solve homelessness & its related problems
- Housing First Approach – housing is directly related to improved healthcare.
- Hawaii is different from other regions. The plan will reflect the uniqueness of Hawaii & the homeless population.
- The active participation of consumers to develop & implement this plan is essential to its success
- Develop partnerships with businesses, service providers, community & faith-based organizations, government entities & consumers to develop & implement this plan
- Evidence based best practices will be incorporated.
- Prevention is essential within any plan that intends to end homelessness & incorporate prevention.

The goals of the plan are as follows:

Goal #1: Access to Appropriate, Affordable, Safe and Decent Housing for All

Goal #2: Prevent Individuals and Families from Becoming Homeless

Goal #3: Decrease Barriers to Housing

Goal #4: Improve Data Collection/Research

Goal #5: Provide Appropriate Support Services

Goal #6: Create Collaborative Partnerships to End Homeless

The presentation stressed the importance of everyone working together to accomplish the goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii. An executive summary of the plan was provided to attendees of the forum; however, copies of the complete plan are available by contacting Laura E. Thielen at 791-6344 or by e-mailing her at lthielen@kphc.org.

Five Myths About The Homeless

Honolulu Advertiser November 16, 2003

1. People choose to be homeless. Nationally, 2.5 million to 3.5 million people are homeless every year and an estimated 500,000 low-income housing units are also lost each year. Private developers sometimes concentrate on lucrative housing and commercial projects and can destroy affordable housing in the process of urban renewal and gentrification.

2. Homeless people don't want to be helped. Recent studies show that even the severely disabled mentally ill, chronically homeless people will accept help with approaches and strategies appropriate to their circumstances. Homeless people's resistance to help is often their own attempt at some measure of self-dignity.

3. Homeless people are mostly able-bodied men who don't want to work. The fastest-growing segment of the homeless population is families with young children. Other new homeless include battered wives and runaway and throwaway children.

4. Most of Hawaii's homeless are shipped here from the Mainland. One survey from a major downtown homeless service provider shows that of 3,720 clients, 1,588 or 43 percent, have lived in Hawai'i for five years or more; 632 or 17 percent had lived here from one to five years; and 1,501 or 40 percent had lived here for less than a year.

5. Homeless people commit more crimes than other people do. The arrest rate for homeless people committing violent felonies is about one-half of those with homes. When crimes are committed by homeless people they are usually misdemeanors committed to secure food or a place to sleep.

Source: Partners in Care