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**Service Definitions
for PATH-Funded Services**

Developed by the PATH Administrative Workgroup

January 2005

Guiding Principles of PATH Administration and Management

The PATH program is a vital resource in communities as they seek to reduce and end chronic homelessness. PATH programs across the country have led the way in developing and perfecting methods of outreach and engagement that are effective with people who have serious mental illnesses/co-occurring disorders and who are literally homeless. PATH programs serve as the front door to Continuum of Care services and to mainstream mental health, primary health care and substance abuse service systems.

In order for PATH to fulfill this role, we urge State Contacts to guide the activity of providers towards services to literally homeless persons and active participation in the Continuum of Care. For states that have used PATH funding for people who are at risk of homelessness, we understand that providing services primarily to persons who are literally homeless will mean a change in the focus of PATH funded programs; and this voluntary shift will be dependent on overall policy and administrative practice in each state.

Guiding Principles:

Person-centered services: The PATH program is committed to services that meet the needs and preferences of people who are homeless and who have mental illnesses/co-occurring disorders. Services are effective only if they meet needs identified by the individual. Service plans must be developed in partnership with individuals receiving services.

Culturally competent services: The PATH program is committed to meeting needs and preferences of individuals within the context of culture. For this to happen in a meaningful way, services must be offered in accordance with individually appropriate language, customs and cultural norms.

Consumer-run services: The history of the PATH program proves the effectiveness of services provided by people who have “been there”. Individuals who have achieved recovery serve as powerful examples, and consumer-run services are a strong tool in our efforts to address homelessness.

Commitment to quality: State PATH Contacts are committed to helping providers achieve high quality in all areas of service provision. Encouragement of evidence-based and exemplary practices within homeless services and mainstream systems is part of this strategy.

Service Definitions

1. Outreach

The process of bringing individuals into treatment who do not access traditional services. Effective outreach utilizes strategies aimed at engaging persons into the needed array of services, including identification of individuals in need, screening, development of rapport, offering support while assisting with immediate and basic needs, and referral to appropriate resources. Outreach results in increased access to and utilization of community services by people who are homeless and have mental illnesses.

- Active outreach is defined as face-to-face interaction with literally homeless people in streets, shelters, under bridges, and in other non-traditional settings. In active outreach, workers seek out homeless individuals.
- Outreach may include methods such as distribution of flyers and other written information, public service announcements, and other indirect methods.
- Outreach may also include “inreach”, defined as when outreach staff are placed in a service site frequented by homeless people, such as a shelter or community resource center, and direct, face to face interactions occur at that site. In this form of outreach, homeless individuals seek out outreach workers.

2. Screening and Diagnostic Treatment

A continuum of assessment services that ranges from brief eligibility screening to comprehensive clinical assessment.

3. Habilitation and Rehabilitation Services

Community-based treatment and education services designed to promote maximum functioning, a sense of well-being, and a personally satisfying level of independence for individuals who are homeless and have mental illnesses/co-occurring disorders.

4. Community Mental Health Services

Community-based supports designed to stabilize and provide ongoing supports and services for individuals with mental illnesses/co-occurring disorders or dual diagnoses. This general category does not include case management, alcohol or drug treatment and/or habilitation and rehabilitation, since they are defined separately in this document.

5. Alcohol or Drug Treatment

Preventive, diagnostic, and other outpatient treatment services as well as support for people who have a psychological and/or physical dependence on one or more addictive substances, and a co-occurring mental illness.

6. Staff Training

Materials, packages or programs designed to increase the knowledge or skills of individuals who work in shelters, mental health clinics, substance abuse programs and other sites regarding the needs of the target population, job related responsibilities and service delivery strategies to promote effective services and best practices.

7. Case Management

Services that develop case plans for delivering community services to PATH eligible recipients. The case plans should be developed in partnership with people who receive PATH services to coordinate evaluation, treatment, housing and/or care of individuals, tailored to individual needs and preferences. Case Managers assist the individual in accessing needed services, coordinate the delivery of services in accordance with the case plan, and follow-up and monitor progress. Activities may include financial planning, access to entitlement assistance, representative payee services, etc.

8. Supportive and Supervisory Services in Residential Settings

Services provided in residential settings that are designed to support individuals during their transition into mainstream services.

Housing Services

Specialized services designed to increase access to and maintenance of stable housing for PATH-enrolled individuals who have significant or unusual barriers to housing. These services are distinct from and not part of PATH-funded case management, supportive and supervisory services in residential settings, or housing assistance referral activities.

9. Minor Renovation: Services or resources provided to make essential repairs to a housing unit in order to provide or improve access to the unit and/or eliminate health or safety hazards.

10. Planning of Housing: Activities related to the analysis and formulation of a detailed set of action steps, timelines, and resources necessary to create or expand housing for the target population.

11. Technical Assistance in Applying for Housing Services: Targeted training, guidance, information sharing, and assistance to, or on behalf of, PATH-enrolled individuals who encounter complex access issues related to housing.

12. Improving the Coordination of Housing Services: The process of systematically analyzing interagency interactions among housing service providers, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate authorities of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to best meet the residential needs of the target population.

13. Security Deposits. Provision of funds for PATH-enrolled individuals who are in the process of acquiring rental housing but who do not have the assets to pay the first and last month's rent or other security deposits required to move in.

14. Costs associated with matching eligible homeless individuals with appropriate housing situations. Expenditures made on behalf of PATH-enrolled individuals to meet the costs, other than security deposits and one-time rental payments, of establishing a household. These may include items such as rental application fees, furniture and furnishings, and moving expenses. These may also include reasonable expenditures to satisfy outstanding consumer debts identified in rental application credit checks that otherwise preclude successfully securing immediately available housing.

15. One-time rental payments to prevent eviction. One-time rental payments are made for PATH-enrolled individuals who cannot afford to make the payments themselves, who are at risk of eviction without assistance and who qualify for this service on the basis of income or need.

16. Referrals for Primary Health Services, Job Training, Education Services and Relevant Housing Services

Services intended to link persons to primary health care, job training, income supports, education, housing, and other needed services not directly provided by the PATH program or individual PATH providers.

17. Other Appropriate Services, As Determined By The Secretary