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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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MAY 08 2008

Honorable Eddie A. Pérez
Mayor
City of Hartford
550 Main Street
Hartford, CT. 06103

Dear Mayor Pérez:

We are writing to advise you of the results of our monitoring of the City of Hartford's Housing Opportunity for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program conducted March 25 through March 28, 2008, by Community Planning and Development Representative Cecelia A. Peppers-Johnson. Monitoring is scheduled periodically for all programs administered by this office to assure compliance by the program provider with applicable laws and regulations, and to assess the quality and effectiveness of the programs and services being delivered by program participants.

City staff members, subrecipient staff members and clients from Reverend Zezzo House, Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition (CARC), and Chrysalis Center, Inc. participated in the monitoring of the housing and supportive services provided by the City and its subrecipients. They included Mr. Miguel Matos, Administrative Operations Manager, City of Hartford; Sue Loranger, Contract Manager, City of Hartford; Trisha Donaldson, Contract Manager, City of Hartford; Sheila Blint, Contract Manager, City of Hartford; John Merz, Executive Director, CARC; Aaron Lucas, Housing Associate Fund Coordinator, CARC; Yvonne Price, Property Manager, Reverend Zezzo House; John Selders, Program Manager, Reverend Zezzo House; Sandra Foster, Case Manager, Reverend Zezzo House; Kathy Shanley, Program Manager, Chrysalis Center, Inc.; Anthony Hebert, Associate Director, Chrysalis Center, Inc.; and housing residents from Reverend Zezzo House and Chrysalis Center, Inc.

We reviewed the following program areas:

- Housing Planning and Rent Subsidies;
- Project Sponsor or Subrecipient Management; and
- General regulatory compliance and the understanding of participating staff of HOPWA rules and guidelines.

CONCLUSIONS

This section will provide a summary of what we observed during our monitoring, and the conclusions we made based on our review. We are pleased to inform you that we have no findings or concerns. However, we have one suggestion for your consideration based on our observation, which is discussed below. The housing, social service program, and subrecipient management were found to be in compliance with the regulatory and performance areas monitored, and to be consistent with the annual funding requirements.

A. Housing Planning and Rent Subsidies

We looked at both the eligibility of the clients being served and the eligibility of grant expenditures and found them to be for actual, incurred costs that were determined to be reasonable. In addition, we looked at the Housing Needs Plans and Client Assessments and found that the subrecipients' housing activities provided within the service area were consistent with the housing needs described in the Consolidated Plan. The City provided funding to subrecipients for short-term rent, mortgage and utility (STRMU) programs. In reviewing the subrecipients' agreements, we found the agreements with project sponsors to be within the time limitations and enforced. By providing STRMU payments, the subrecipients demonstrated a "good faith effort" to provide opportunities for placement in permanent housing for clients by requiring all case managers to create and implement long-term housing plans.

B. Project Sponsor and Subrecipient Management

During our monitoring visit, we looked at all subrecipients' agreements to ensure compliance with HOPWA requirements for project sponsors and subrecipients that carry out HOPWA activities. We found each subrecipient's file contained a written agreement with the City. Further, the City used a competitive process to choose subrecipients to administer the HOPWA program. There is a management system for the oversight and monitoring of the City's subrecipients, which is in each agreement and was included in the City's latest Annual Action Plan. We were pleased to see that the City monitored 100% of its subrecipients.

We commend the City for developing a risk analysis checklist that will be used prior to monitoring visits to help determine which subrecipients pose the highest risks.

For the period monitored, each subrecipient was required to and submitted quarterly reports, an Annual Performance Report (APR), and a year end report.

C. Satisfaction of Homeless Participants - Reverend Zezzo House

The residents interviewed were satisfied with the program and with the relationship maintained with staff. The clients appeared to understand the nature of the housing and the supportive services program. All of the clients interviewed expressed satisfaction with the program and their ability to participate in decisions affecting the program regarding needed services and housing concerns.

Suggestion:

During our site visit at Reverend Zesso House, we noticed that the parking lot and backyard were open and could possibly be used by unauthorized guests. In talking to residents, this was voiced as a safety concern. Currently, there is a partial fence. The City may want to consider the installation of a full fence to ensure residents' safety and to limit unwanted traffic on the property. During its next monitoring visit, the City may also want to revisit the safety issue with residents.

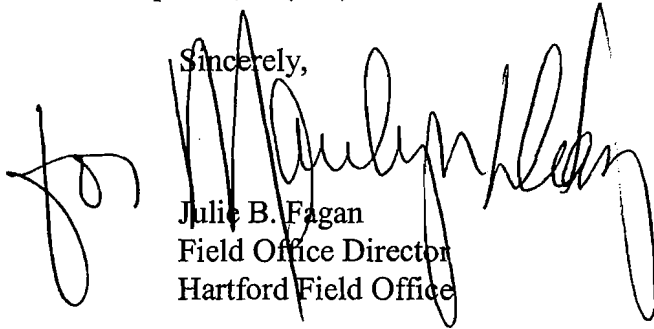
D. Satisfaction of Homeless Participants - Chrysalis Center

The residents interviewed appeared to be extremely satisfied with the program and equally with the relationship maintained with staff. One of the residents interviewed credits Chrysalis Center for keeping residents alive. "I relapsed in the past, but given my current health concerns this is where I need to be...being here has provided me the opportunity to get my life back."

We wish to thank your staff for the assistance we received during our monitoring visit. The City staff was extremely helpful and accommodated our schedule. We are also appreciative of the time provided to us by Miguel Matos, Sue Loranger, Trisha Donaldson, Sheila Blint, Laura Lopez, the staff at CARC, Chrysalis Center, Reverend Zezzo House, and the residents. We ask that the City forward a copy of this letter to the agencies visited.

If you would like to discuss the content of this letter, please call Gary Reisine,
Director, Community Planning and Development, at (860) 240-9770.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie B. Fagan', written over the typed name and title.

Julie B. Fagan
Field Office Director
Hartford Field Office

cc: Miguel Matos, Administrative Operations Manager