

Southernmost Homeless Assistance League, Inc.

P.O. Box 2990, Key West, FL 33045-2990 • www.shalkw.org

John Miller, Executive Director
502-876-5092
ExDir.SHAL@gmail.com

Patrice Pelletier-Sanders, Chair
Christine Trovato, Vice Chair
Tiffany Curry, Secretary
Richard Casey, Jr. Treasurer
Alan Teitelbaum, Past Chair

SHAL Monthly Report June 2016 SHAL News

Life-Threatening Homelessness

During June, there was another death at the Shelter, an elderly woman from Sweden who had come to Key West to be near her son, who was unable to provide any help. The entire SHAL staff worked with her, including contacting the Swedish Consulate in Ft. Lauderdale and the Embassy in Washington, but was unable to secure her permanent housing mostly due to her intransigence about returning to Sweden where the social safety net is much stronger. As an undocumented immigrant, she was ineligible for benefits here. She collapsed and died on June 26th in the women's restroom at the Shelter. She was 78.

Cost Per bed

At the end of the SHAL fiscal year, and with more precise data from the Client Track database, we are able to more accurately quantify the cost of the Shelter. The City's total cost for each available bed is less than \$8, and the actual allocated Shelter operational expense is under \$7 for each occupied bed. The actual Shelter usage is down, in large part to relocating of many eligible clients and SHAL assistance and encouragement to find permanent housing either on their own or through our housing First program. But the alternative cost of incarceration, or through a transitional housing program, is many times higher. SHAL works hard to make the Shelter a brief "stop over" on a homeless person's journey back to permanent housing.

Homeless Myth #1 (of 7)

"Something caused them to be homeless. If we don't address the cause it's just a waste of money."

We must remember that while "something" may have caused every person to be homeless, most times that is not an "internal" or integral part of the person, but more likely it is something that happened to the person, including health problems, employment problems, violence (especially domestic), and other problems that members of our society have encountered that caused their homelessness.

Being homeless makes overcoming those external factors more difficult, not easier.

SHAL SHELTER OPERATIONS

Shelter Usage

June was a slow month at the Shelter, as the Client Track database shows that there were only about **86** clients sleeping in the Shelter on an average night, although there were **218** different (non-duplicated) individuals staying at the Shelter for an average stay of **12** days during the month. Along with SHAL Outreach, SHAL served a total of **281** unduplicated homeless persons in during the month.

SHAL Shelter Director **Mike Tolbert** organized the first continuous regular breakfast during June, with a weekday offering put together in part to a grant from the **Community Foundation of the Florida Keys**. SHAL works to make improvements like food, as well as enhancements in safety, cleanliness and other operational changes so that more homeless persons will utilize the shelter, helping to integrate them into SHAL programs and Case Management, and move them more quickly toward self-sufficiency.

There were **3** EMT calls made for Shelter clients in June. Clients with non-urgent medical needs are transported via the SHAL automobile, saving an ambulance run.

SHAL OUTREACH

Service Summary Report • June 2016

SHAL Outreach provided nearly **900** services to **130** different clients in June. This included services to **63** Sheltered and **67** unsheltered homeless persons in Key West & Marathon. **Another ten** individuals were relocated back to the mainland and other states in June.

Total Services: 874, Case Management contacts: **130**

Health Care Services Referred: 39

Mental Health: 1 Prescription Assistance: 8 Medicaid Replacement Card: 4

Other Services:

Case Management: 228

Information Services: 199

Cell Phones: 25

Food/Clothing: 25

ID/Residency Services: 21

SS Issues: 11

Birth Certificates: 41

Trans. Services: 8

Food Stamps: 20

Mailing Address: 136

Long Dist. Relocation: 10

**Coordinated
Assessments: 48**

June SHAL Success Stories

Housing, housing, housing!!!

This month SHAL placed three individuals into permanent housing! One adult male,

two adult females. One of the females has a 10-year-old daughter. All are now stably housed!

Other Highlights

- Continued shower services to unsheltered clients.
- Continued to provide temporary mailing address for SS, Food Stamps and Birth Certificates.
- Continue expanded services to the middle Keys.
- Continued work on the Housing First Rental Program.
- Assisted clients with scabies obtain their medical appointments and prescription treatments.
- Continued meeting with the Substance Abuse Council, which is also providing some valuable insight and networking to other agencies and potential services.
- Continued communication with the Sheriff's Department regarding a diversion program and also a better integrated care plan for released inmates to receive follow-up case management assistance.

On a sad note, SHAL suffered many losses in June. One of which being an unsheltered client in Big Pine that we had worked with to obtain Social Security benefits in addition to multiple other services. His family is planning a benefit memorial for him, and would like the proceeds to go to SHAL for all that our organization did for him. We must never forget that homelessness is a fatal condition for many people.

--**Elicia Pintabona**, SHAL Outreach Director