Overview

Community Support Services' COVID-19 Response

- Throughout this COVID-19 pandemic, the Veterans Services Division has had to adapt quickly to two major changes: the passing of Division Director Janene McGee, and the closure of the main office and Community Resource Center office at the Valerie C. Woodard Center.
- Division staff began contacting clients to follow-up on the status of their benefits with the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Clients were told that staff is still available to assist them to navigate the VA's system. The benefits process will be accomplished by email, telephone and fax.
- Veterans are being encouraged not to file any new claim while the Veteran Services Officers are out of the office. Instead, veterans are to request an 'Intent to file' with the VA by phone or through their E-benefits system. This will give the veteran one year to file their claim and allow the Veterans Services Division to help the veteran to develop their claim after the offices reopen.
- Veterans Services Division staff helped fulfill the staffing needs at the County's Isolation/Quarantine Hotel. These hotels provided shelter to individuals and families experiencing homelessness as they awaited their COVID-19 test results.
- For more information on the Veterans Services Division operations during the COVID-19 response, please contact Interim Veterans Services Division Director Ronnie Devine at 704-621-7419 or Ronnie.Devine@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov.

FY2020-2022 Strategic Business Plan Update

Goal 4: Decrease the number of homeless households by the end of 2022 as a partner in the community goal to end homelessness.

- There has been an increase in the number of families seeking hotel assistance due to COVID19. In response, CSS is leading hotel eviction prevention efforts by screening callers from NC211 who are reaching out for hotel assistance.
- The intention of this project is to prevent families from entering or reentering the homeless system.
- CSS staff are triaging and referring for case management and financial assistance. This work is done in partnership with the Department of Social Services (DSS), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, and other community partners.
- Since this project began at the end of September, CSS has screened and referred over 256 households, accounting for nearly 550 people.
- For more information, please contact Business Manager Karen Pelletier at 704-430-6225 or Karen.Pelletier@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov.

Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	January	February	March	April	FY20 YTD	FY19 YTD	YTD Change
Meals Served	2,099	2,199	1,657	1,071	20,990	20,089	4.49%
Shelter+Care hhlds.	230	232	235	235	232	238	(2.52%)
Claims Filed	345	314	213	0	2,791	3,344	(16.54%)
NOVA (Intakes)	20	17	10	0	243	377	(35.54%)
DV Adults (Intakes)	45	42	27	0	402	480	(16.25%)
DV Children (Intakes)	21	42	18	0	256	287	(10.80%)

Context for Key Performance Indicators

1. **Meals Served** by the Homeless Resource Center, which provides space to ministries and community service organizations that serve meals during evening and weekend hours to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Variation is due to the transient nature of the target population. The reduction in the number of meals served has been attributed to the increase in other agencies also providing meals.

2. **Shelter+Care hhlds** is the number of households receiving rental assistance in the Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program. S+C is a HUD- and county-funded Permanent Supportive Housing program, which links housing with supportive services to move individual adults, or adults with families, who are homeless, have a disability, and a low-income, to permanent housing. Rent and utilities continue to be paid on time and housing stability maintained for over 230 clients.

3. **Claims Filed** by Veterans Services help eligible military veterans and their families develop and file benefits claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Defense, state and local agencies. This number is lower than previous months because this service was suspended due to the COVID-19 situation. A Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, can reach out to the Veteran Crisis Line by calling 800-273-8255 and pressing 1 or by texting 838255. Veterans may submit a VA claim or check the status of their claim by visiting www.ebenefits.va.gov. VSO service officers began contacting clients to follow-up on the status of their benefits with the VA and help clients understand that the office was still there to assist them to navigate the VA's system, but now the benefits process would be accomplished by email, telephone and fax.

4. **NOVA (Intakes)** is a state-certified service, which provides assessments and psycho-educational accountability groups to individuals identified by the court system as batterers. The majority of the intakes are court referrals; fluctuations in intake counts are driven by the criminal court system locally. This number is lower than previous months because this service was suspended due to the COVID-19 situation. As of May 14, 2020, NOVA is using Zoom to provide virtual psychoeducational groups for domestic violence offenders.

5. **DV Adults (Intakes**) provides trauma-informed individual and group counseling to adult victims of domestic violence, including bilingual/bicultural counseling for Latin American victims, and ancillary services to Work First and Child Welfare clients in domestic violence situations. This number is lower than previous months because

this service was suspended due to the COVID-19 situation. Individuals needing mental health crisis support are able to contact Mecklenburg County Mobile CriSyS at 704-566-3410. For domestic violence, sexual assault, or parenting crisis support, individuals can contact the 24-hour Greater Charlotte Hope Line at 980-771-4673.

6. **DV Children (Intakes)** provides trauma-informed individual and group counseling to child witnesses of domestic violence (ages 2-18) and teen victims of dating violence. This number is lower than previous months because this service was suspended due to the COVID-19 situation. Individuals needing mental health crisis support are able to contact Mecklenburg County Mobile CriSyS at 704-566-3410. For domestic violence, sexual assault, or parenting crisis support, individuals can contact the 24-hour Greater Charlotte Hope Line at 980-771-4673.