

United Way of Laramie County End-of Year Report

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Agency Name: COMEA, Inc.	Program: Transitional Living Program	Reporting Period: Jan - Dec 2009
Agency Web Site (If Applicable) www.comeahouse.org		
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Agency Mission/Vision:	The COMEA House provides safe and secure emergency shelter to homeless men, women and families; offers transitional housing for single adults; and collaborates to create opportunities for self-sufficiency.
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Priority Need Addressed:	Helping our Neighbors in Crisis and Strengthening Families to Move Toward Economic Self-Sufficiency.
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Purpose and Population Served:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the Transitional Living Program is to provide transitional housing for single adults in route from homelessness to self-sufficiency. • The Transitional Living Program serves homeless, single men and women. • The specific characteristics, needs and requirements of homeless individuals quite often surprise those that have had no direct contact with a homeless person. Many assume that the media's portrayal of homelessness is a reality when, in fact, it is quite different from the situations in which many homeless men, women and children must live. Those suffering the plight of homelessness are not always alcoholics; they're not all crazy; they're not all lazy and jobless. The faces of homelessness are as varied as the causes of homelessness: single fathers, struggling mothers, elderly individuals, innocent children. The homeless come from all walks of life and possess a variety of education levels as well as family backgrounds. Their reasons for being homeless are countless and unique. Some homeless people suffer from mental illness that makes it impossible to maintain employment. Others experience domestic violence and must run from that environment with no time to plan. There are those who find themselves in an uncontrollable situation created from the loss of a job or a health crisis, and many lack necessary living resources such as transportation and child care. In addition to the aforementioned situational homeless causes, there are those who are chronically homeless as well. The chronically homeless are unable to attain self-sufficiency without interventions for a variety of reasons. • Statistically, 50% of Wyoming's homeless are men, 26% are veterans, and 35% are part of a homeless family. Laramie County's homeless population tends to be comprised of fewer families with children and more single adult males, with men accounting for about 85% of those sheltered by COMEA and less than 10% in homeless families. Veterans comprise about 25% of Laramie County's homeless. Domestic violence is a growing issue both statewide and locally. Approximately 80% of the homeless women in Wyoming reported domestic violence in their history while 60% of the women at COMEA make that claim. Substance abuse is a major factor in causing homelessness nationally, statewide, and locally with 22% of those surveyed saying they were homeless due to substance abuse, 30% indicating they had been in residential treatment for alcoholism, and 24% saying they had been in treatment for drug abuse. (Data cited from 2004 Wyoming Homeless Survey and COMEA House internal data), • The needs and requirements of homeless individuals vary. Obviously, they are faced with the need for basic necessities: food and shelter. In addition to the basics, they need many other things in which COMEA strives to provide (without duplicating other services): clothing, showers, toiletries, household items, case management, referrals, and social relationship resources. After having these basic needs met, homeless men and women need a structured environment in which they can move themselves out of homelessness permanently. This environment is provided through COMEA's Transitional Living Program. • Past trends show that COMEA serves more single, white males, ages 30-49 than any other demographic. Our largest sub-population groups are those with healthcare needs, substance abuse and/or mental health issues and veterans. These trends are derived from statistics that have been collected annually for more than fifteen years. COMEA's trend analysis shows that while participating in the Transitional Living Program, residents need Case Management that is more focused towards long-term goals and root causes of homelessness. While living in the emergency shelter, clients focus on short-term, immediate goals such as obtaining identification, securing employment, and locating housing. Although these short term goals have been reached, the root causes of homelessness remain as there is not enough time to address them during the emergency shelter stage.
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Program Significance to the Community	<p>The Transitional Living Program targeted homeless men and women. The residents served lived in a safe and secure single-room-occupancy apartment for a period of up to two years. During this time-frame, they participated in Case Management, goal setting, monthly life-skills classes, and volunteering. The Transitional Living Program was significant within our community as it placed concentration on the root causes of homelessness and ways to prevent it from happening again. A community can reap many benefits by teaching individuals how to become and remain self-sufficient, the main one being less need for emergency services. COMEA's Transitional Living Program takes homeless individuals and guides their movement into self-sufficiency, helping them become permanently self-sufficient and productive, helpful members of the community.</p>
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Program Resources		Program Activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff 4FTE, 3PTE, 8 Experience Works Volunteers, and a changing # of volunteers donating more than 12,000 hours during the reporting year. Facility and Equipment: Common area, lobby, three offices, donation room, dedicated maintenance area, 12 single-room-occupancy apartments, laundry facilities, parking lot. Collaborative with Wyoming Coalition for the Homeless, Welcome Mat, Needs Inc, Peak Wellness Center, Crossroads Clinic, Community Action of Laramie County, LCCC, LCSD#1, the Laramie County Community Partnership, St. Mary's, First Presbyterian Church, First United Methodist Church, Cheyenne Hills, and a multitude of other churches, private and corporate donors. 		<p>Case Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both short and long-term goal setting. Money management (savings, etc.) Employment guidance Referrals <p>Transitional Living General Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and secure housing Volunteer Opportunities Monthly life-skills classes (nutrition, relationships, etc.) 	
Outcome	Performance Measure	Method of Measure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each participant will attend four life skills classes per month. Each participant will accomplish at least one goal related to increasing skills/income. Each participant will accomplish at least one goal related to self-determination. Each participant will demonstrate at least three applications of life skills learned to enhance self-determination. Each participant will participate in relevant support groups. Each participant will accomplish at least two goal related to housing during the exit phase of the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of participants will attend four life skills classes per month. 100% of participant s will accomplish at least one goal related to increasing skills/income. 100% of participants will accomplish at least one goal related to self-determination. 100% of participants will demonstrate at least three applications of life skills learned to enhance self-determination. 100% of participants will participate in relevant support groups. 100% of participant s will accomplish at least two goal related to housing during the exit phase of the program. Participants will demonstrate a 75% success rate in acquisition of permanent housing upon exit 	<p>Data collection, record review, case management notes, client feedback.</p>	
Program Results		Results Analysis and Next Steps	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 homeless individuals participated in COMEA's Transitional Living Program during 2008. 100% of participants (100% of respondents) reported accomplishing at least one goal related to increasing skills/income. 95% of participants (100% of respondents) reported accomplishing at least one goal related to self determination. 90% of participants (100% of respondents) demonstrated at least three applications of life skills learned to enhance self-determination. 90% of participants (100% of respondents) participated in relevant support groups. 100% of participants exiting the program accomplished at least two goals related to housing during the exit phase of the program. 95% of participants demonstrated a success rate in acquisition of permanent housing upon exit. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentages have increased since 2008. The TLP case manager has put into action case management skills and reports to easily measure how we are helping our clients. The TLP Case Manger will meet regularly with the Executive Director of COMEA, Inc. to review data and information, ensuring that all performance measures are indeed being tracked and all outcomes are being met or adjusted where needed. The TLP case manager is working on having more support and life groups held at the Comea to insure a 100% success rate for 2010. 	