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Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) Monitoring Report Quarter 1 FY2013 (July, August, September 2012)

The Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) has been established in recognition that recovery can only begin in a safe, healthy, and decent environment, a place one can call home. The Office of Substance Abuse and Adult Mental Health Services recognizes the necessity for rental assistance for persons with mental illness, particularly those being discharged from hospitals, group homes, and homeless shelters. There is not a single housing market in the country where a person receiving Social Security as his or her sole income source can afford to rent even a modest one-bedroom apartment. According to a report issued by the Technical Assistance Collaborative, *Priced out in 2010*, in Maine, 98% of a person's SSI standard monthly payment is needed to pay for the average one-bedroom apartment statewide. In Cumberland County the amount is 104% and Sagadahoc 106%. In the City of Portland 126% of a person's SSI is necessary to pay for the average one-bedroom apartment and in the KEYS area (Kittery, Elliot, York and South Berwick) 125%.

BRAP is designed to assist individuals who have a psychiatric disability with housing costs for up to 24 months or until the individuals are awarded a Housing Choice Voucher (aka Section 8 Voucher), another federal subsidy, or until the individuals have an alternative housing placement. All units subsidized by BRAP funding must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Quality Standards and Fair Market Rents. Following a **Housing First** model, initial BRAP recipients are encouraged, but not required to accept the provision of services to go hand in hand with the voucher.

The monitoring of the Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) is the responsibility of the Office of Substance Abuse and Adult Mental Health Services (SAMHS) and particularly the Data, Quality Management, and Resource Development team.

On July 13, 2007, because the number of persons with BRAP vouchers was 41 over the maximum, the BRAP Wait List Protocol was fully activated. The following report details the census activity over the most recent four quarters. Trending information from the previous reports is provided so ongoing activity can be readily measured against longitudinal trends.

The bullets below highlight some of the details regarding persons who are currently waiting for a BRAP voucher: The percentage terms reflect the percentage of relative change compared to the last report, the formula is $((\text{Current Report Number} - \text{Previous Report Number}) / \text{Current Report Number})$.

- Priority #1 applicants (Discharge from a psychiatric hospital within the last 6 months). Riverview and Dorothea Dix consumers are typically not waiting more than 5 days from the date of a completed application. Priority 1 applicants waiting for a BRAP voucher have decreased from 41 to 5 persons, down 88%.
- Priority #2 applicants (Homeless) have increased from 180 to 269, up 33%

- Priority #3 applicants (Substandard Housing) up from 0 to 2.
- Priority #4 applicants (Community Residential Facility) have increased from 34 to 38 persons, up 11%.
- Persons on the waitlist greater than 90 days have dramatically increased from 20 to 184 persons, up 89%.

Since inception of the wait list, there has been a total of 2,003 BRAP vouchers awarded broken down as follows: Priority #1, 915; Priority #2, 841; Priority #3, 27; Priority #4, 208. Note that 12 vouchers have been awarded to persons with no priority.

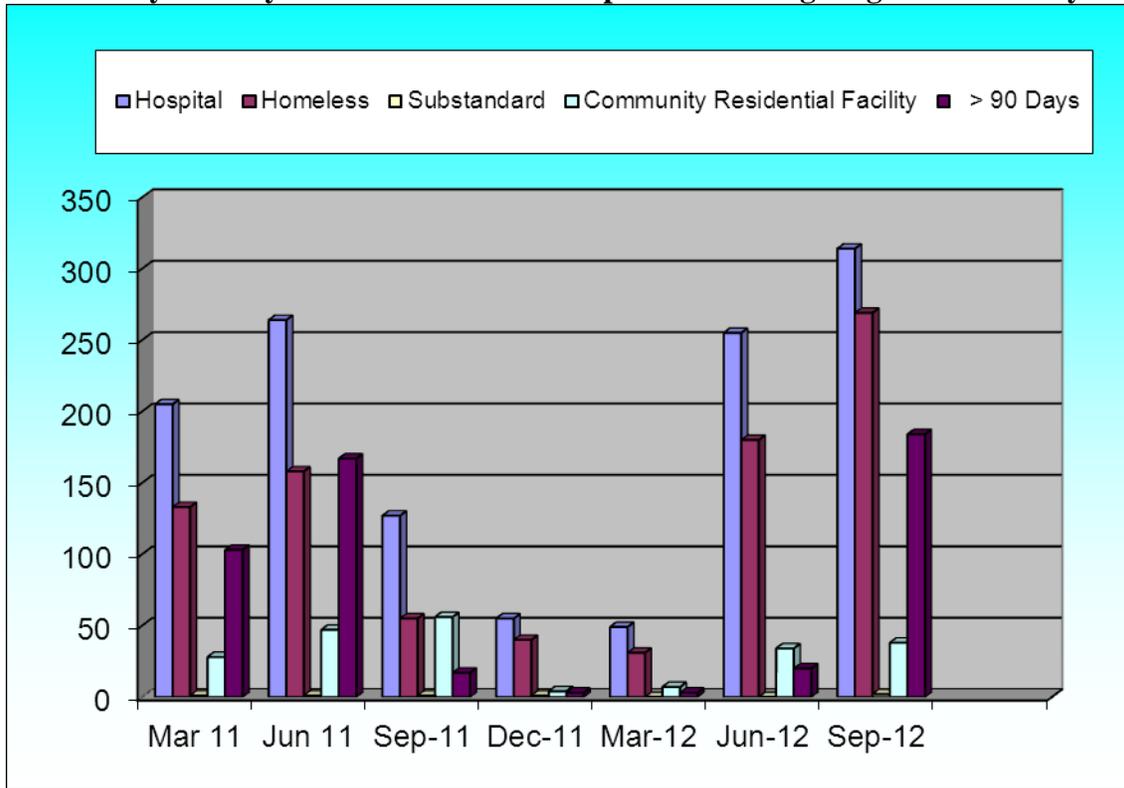
The current BRAP census as of September 30, 2012 is 840 vouchers. As mentioned in the prior report, the no-lapse in funds carry over clause, now in law, is estimated to allow us to utilize \$350,000 of funds that would otherwise have been turned back to the General Fund. These vital funds have allowed us to issue vouchers to nearly all Priority 1 persons on the waitlist. We may need to re-propose the no-lapse in funds clause for FY14-15 as it appears that it was tied to the budget order for FY13. This will be examined over the course of the next quarter.

The number of persons on the program for greater than 24 months remains steady at 25% of the entire program. This is principally a result of decades of federal and state cuts to low-income and supportive housing programs. The lack of availability of these resources, particularly Section 8 at the federal level, has translated to increased pressures on state programs such as BRAP.

HUD has recently issued a second definition of homelessness which has a direct impact on the Shelter Plus Care program. We are awaiting further clarification from HUD on the new definitions before implementing them into the BRAP program—HUD is currently training its Regional Representatives in Washington on the new HEARTH Act. HUD's new homeless definition is broader than the existing one and includes 'at-risk' categories. It is likely we will have to narrow BRAP to the 'literally homeless' category in order to stay within limits of funding and manage waitlists. As of September 2012, HUD is still working on final rule making and will likely have this out before the next report.

OAMHS administered a substantial number of Shelter Plus Care vouchers, 970 as of September 30, 2012. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and has seen significant growth over the last decade, the result of OAMHS aggressively applying for and receiving new grants each year. The FY2013 annual budget for Shelter Plus Care is \$7.1 million. The total dollars for all SPC grants (one year renewals to 5 year new contracts) administered by OAMHS is \$13,434,250. Shelter Plus Care (SPC) is designed to provide permanent rental subsidies (housing vouchers) and supportive services (provided by MaineCare) to literally homeless individuals with: severe and persistent mental illness (63%), chronic substance abuse and mental illness (30%), and chronic substance abuse and HIV/AIDS (7%).

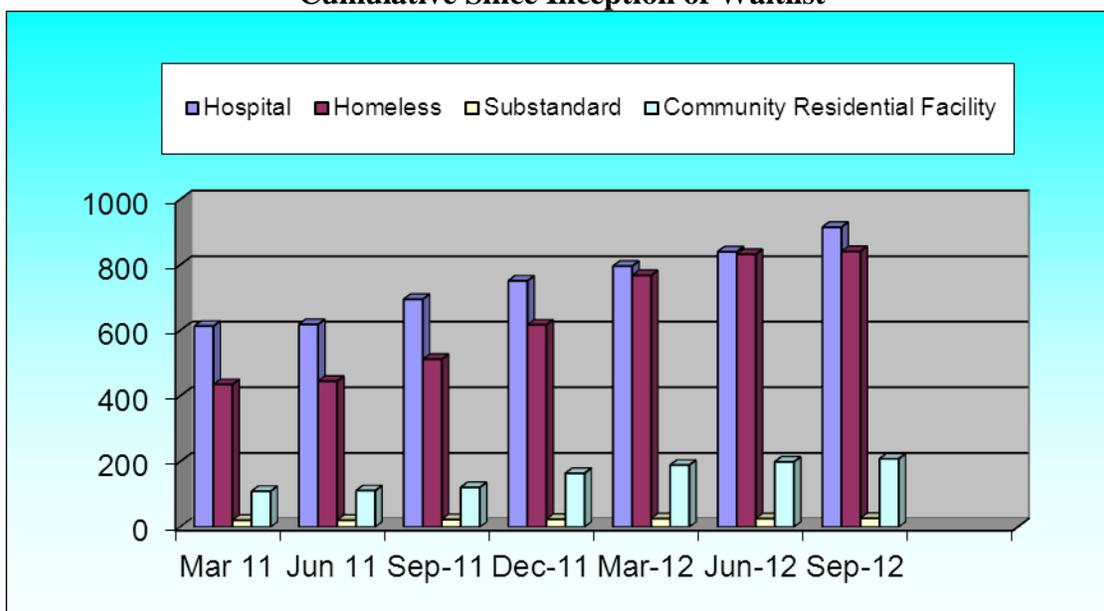
**BRAP Waitlist Status--Graph:
Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**



**BRAP Waitlist Status—Table:
Detail by Priority Status to include those persons waiting longer than 90 Days**

Reporting Period	Mar 11	Jun 11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	% Change relative to Last Report
Total number of persons waiting for BRAP	205	264	127	55	49	255	314	19%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	42	57	15	9	11	41	5	-88%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	133	158	55	40	31	180	269	33%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	100%
Priority 4—Leaving a Community Residential living facility	28	47	56	4	7	34	38	11%
Total number of persons on wait list more than 90 days awaiting voucher	103	167	17	3	3	20	184	89%

**BRAP Awards—Graph
Cumulative Since Inception of Waitlist**



**BRAP Awards—Table
Cumulative Since Inception of Waitlist**

Reporting Periods	Mar 11	Jun 11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	% Change relative to Last Report
Cumulative number of persons awarded BRAP	1188	1205	1361	1566	1790	1908	2003	5%
Priority 1—Discharge from state or private psychiatric hospital within last 6 months	613	618	695	751	796	840	915	8%
Priority 2—Homeless (HUD Transitional Definition)	435	445	512	617	768	832	841	1%
Priority 3—Sub-standard Housing	21	21	23	24	26	26	27	4%
Priority 4—Leaving a DHHS funded living facility	109	111	121	164	189	199	208	4%

Note: 12 persons awarded with no priority