

Hawaii Department of Health (DOH)
Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD)
Request for Information (RFI) Response Summary
RFI No. AMHD 420-6-21
Consolidated Housing Continuum of Care
Statewide

A Request for Information (RFI) for AMHD's Consolidated Housing Continuum of Care was issued on March 1, 2021, to obtain community input in preparation for developing a Request for Proposals for this service. The AMHD received two responses from the community in response to this RFI. Below is a summary of the responses received through this process as they relate to the questions from the RFI.

The AMHD asked if organizations currently provide specialized residential services or housing services in the State of Hawaii. Both Respondents stated that they provide specialized residential services in the State of Hawaii.

Organizations were asked if they provide specialized residential services or housing services for the AMHD. One Respondent stated that they currently provide specialized residential services for AMHD; the other Respondent does not.

The AMHD asked organizations to identify the challenges in creating a consolidated housing continuum of care as described in the RFI. One Respondent stated that the challenge would be for services to have reasonable expectations that match the pricing structure and resources available. Despite staff being passionate and eager to serve the community, staff turnover is high. Also, rents are going up, and the prediction is that this trend will continue despite the recession. The other Respondent stated the challenge would be funding for specialized staff and staff training licensures to fulfill the goals of the program. They felt funding may also be required for additional staff to address the specific needs of AMHD clients such as peer specialists and advocates.

The AMHD asked organizations if they were aware of any local demographic concerns, resource issues, or other special conditions in their geographic or current service area that the AMHD should consider when developing a consolidated housing continuum of care. One Respondent stated that Hawaii's multi-cultural population requires agencies to provide various training and experiences to be able to provide culturally competent services. Ongoing training is an issue, which is often well done and affordable when provided by the DOH; however, more is needed. Providing services on the neighbor islands is a concern due to the shortage of qualified staff and the minimal number of service providers. The other Respondent stated that transitional shelters should have on-site medical monitoring, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a component for immediate housing to transition those with mental health concerns into permanent housing. Another concern cited has health and safety, proximity to resources in Kapolei, and resources to find low barrier units to house AMHD clients.

The AMHD asked organizations for an overview of potential barriers and challenges to the provision of a consolidated housing continuum of care as described in the RFI, and to provide recommendations to modify requirements to mitigate the challenges while achieving the same outcomes. One Respondent stated that “Not in My Backyard” is always a concern, which takes time and extensive planning. Collaborations amongst various agencies need to be developed for systemic changes in infrastructure across systems and agencies including community outreach to reduce stigma. Systems need to be more integrated by encouraging collaborations, which the state could promote to include more effective and cost-efficient housing and treatment services with the use or more case management. The other Respondent stated that the potential barrier and challenge would be funding for specialized staffing and staff training/licensures, income barriers, and well as medical comprehension.

The AMHD appreciates the feedback received from the community in response to this RFI. The constructive feedback and recommendations will be reviewed and taken into consideration when developing the scope for this service.