

Government Operations Committee Meeting
Homelessness Related Services Summary
March 7, 2022

Video Recording at www.bangormaine.gov/video
Agency Website: www.wellspringmaine.com

Wellspring - Executive Director Suzanne Farley

- Incorporated in 1965, originally offering residential services for men suffering from alcohol addiction but in 1985 opened a house for women. They also have outpatient program that include counseling and other services.
- Services are for those with substance use disorder and/or co-occurring mental health disorders.
- Three residential substance use treatment facilities.
 - The men's and women's houses each have space for 15 people for up to 6 months of treatment for substance use disorder treatment.
 - Infinity house is for mothers who can bring their children (under age of 6) with them. Capacity is 10 individuals including children for up to six months of treatment.
- Contractual provider of the Penobscot County drug treatment program that provides intensive group therapy, called IOP and is successful. It entails three-hour sessions, three days a week for nine hours total.
- Additionally, have one of two public detox centers in Maine.
 - 10 bed facility in Hampden – folks stay 5-10 days depending on needs.
 - Clients have many different substances in system. Alcohol is predominant substance for those seeking treatment and is the most dangerous.
- Transitional housing program - Four units offering 10 beds total, but two are being renovated.
- In total, Wellspring served over 1,200 individuals through their programs.
- Over \$4 million budget. 70 employees. In process of opening another outpatient program in Millinocket area. Those in residential services come from all over Maine.
- Homelessness is a tremendous problem. When clients are in residential program, they aren't considered homeless, so finding places for them to go after is a challenge for several reasons. Affordable housing is biggest challenge because without it, staff face releasing clients into unsafe living conditions that increase chances of relapse and is dangerous for them.
- Recent statistics show that Penobscot County has over 30% of statewide overdose deaths but our population is only 11% of the state. Shows lack so core continuum needed for those post treatment to help those survive and thrive in their recovery and housing is very important for that. Housing is critical need for long term success for those going through their programs.
- In response to a question related to fragmentation, Ms. Farley spoke about her experience related to a coalition in Albuquerque, AZ that included state, local, nonprofit, landlords, and other stakeholders at the table to help solve the issue. They employed an opportunity center – had counselors, shelter, case managers, etc. to keep people safe and assist with services. This happened while other efforts happened related to creating affordable housing and mixed income housing projects.
- Ma. Farley stated that chronic substance use disorder often starts when people are young which has a different impact than when they are older. Having support to help keep people on track is useful. People do well when they have peer support and wrap around services.

This document was compiled by the City of Bangor based on information provided at a City meeting. For complete information and for questions related to this agency's services, please contact them directly.