

## **Recap Community Forum Meeting November 4, 2009**

Thirty-four people representing approximately 20 agencies from Acton, Boxborough and Concord attended the forum at the Boxborough Library.

The common theme running through each of the agencies is that funding and grants are significantly decreased and/or eliminated, the numbers of clients have increased placing clients on wait-lists, and the needs of clients are on the up tick due to economic conditions.

State and Federal decisions on Capitol Hill have changed eligibility for interventions placing more pressure on the agencies to meet the need locally.

### **Highlights**

- The food pantry is helping 200 families, last year it was 80 families
- People are losing their housing because they are not able to make payments; children are moving back with their elderly parents
- Elderly parents are often caught in a catch-22 due to losing services when adult children are in the home; i.e., no meal delivery
- Transportation, fuel, utility, and housing assistance increased
- Financial assistance for people in desperate situations: last year 20 people, year to date is 30 people
- No emergency housing in Acton or Boxborough for displaced people
- Increase in reported cases of domestic violence, elder abuse, and teens with siblings & parents
- Need individual financial counseling, seminars in budgeting, how to make payments, managing credit
- HGRM is seeing 100 people per week

### **Positive Steps**

- Agencies collaborating with each other, town services, community involvement, and regional councils
- Reliance on Acton Town Social Worker
- Clergy are working with various agencies
- Lowering or waiving co-payments when outpatient services are not affordable

Bottom line, the agencies need more funding in order to meet the local demand.

### **Suggestion**

Since this Forum is a wonderful venue for the agencies to connect, think about having more than one a year.