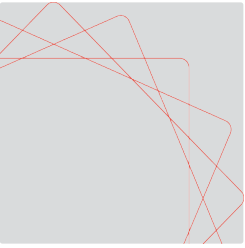


Using System Mapping to Re-engineer Your Homeless System


COHHIO
2017 Annual Conference



Operational Definition of an End to Homelessness - USICH


An end to homelessness **does not mean that no one will ever experience a housing crisis again....**

An end to homelessness means that every community will have a **systematic response in place** that ensures homelessness is **prevented whenever possible or is otherwise a rare, brief, and non-recurring** experience.



Essential System Elements for an End to Homelessness - USICH

- **Quickly identify and engage** people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness.
- Intervene to **prevent** the loss of housing and **divert** people from entering the homelessness services system.
- Provide immediate **access to shelter and crisis services**, without barriers to entry, while permanent stable housing and appropriate supports are being secured.
- When homelessness does occur, **quickly connect people to housing** assistance and services—tailored to their unique needs and strengths—to help them achieve and maintain stable housing.

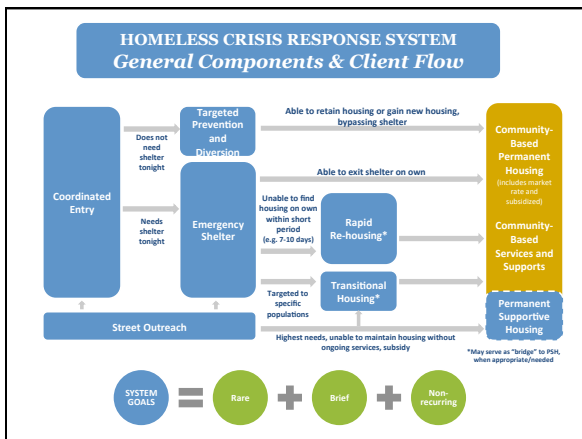


How does a Homeless Crisis Response System “End Homelessness”?

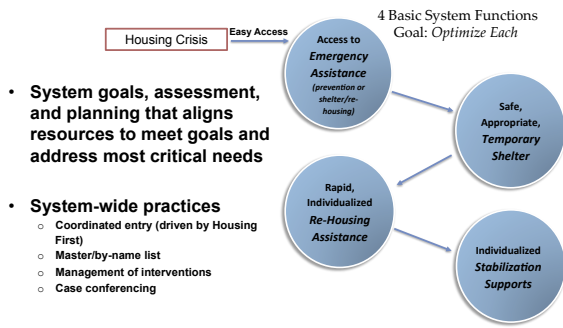
- INTERNAL: Organize homeless assistance and optimize system functions & performance
- EXTERNAL: Advocate for community response and resources

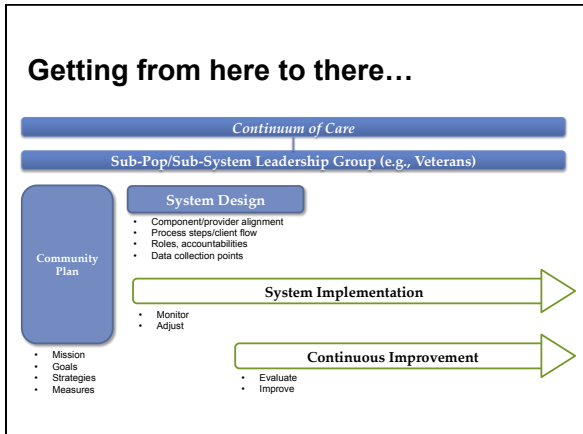
Optimization: an act, process, or methodology of making something (as a design, system, or decision) as fully perfect, functional, or effective as possible.
-Merriam-Webster Dictionary

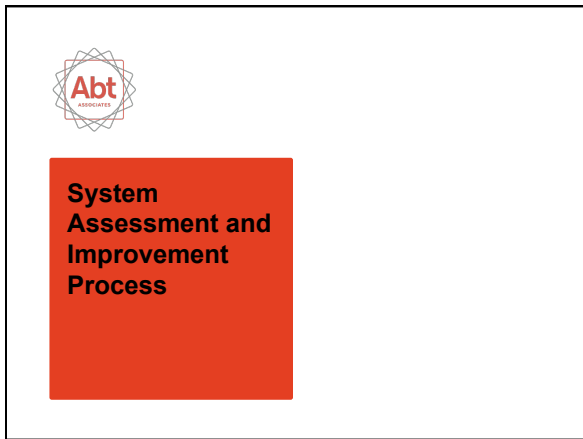
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System Evolution in Practice







Why focus on system assessment and improvements?

- Systems with effective projects were not ending Veteran homelessness because:
 - Processes were missing, ineffective or inconsistently applied
 - Veterans who were referred to permanent housing interventions were not connecting to them
 - Veterans at different points in the system who should have received similar supports were treated differently

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What is the goal of system assessment and improvement process?



- Make systems more effective by looking at current inventory, client flow, gaps and inconsistencies
- Achieve system, community and federal goals
- Develop shared understanding of how the system should function
- Create basis for system documentation (e.g., Policies & Procedures or MOUs between system partners), ongoing training, oversight and improvements

Approach to System Assessment and Improvement



1. IDENTIFY and ASSESS
2. RE-VISION and ACTION PLAN
3. FORMALIZE and CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



Identify & Assess



Identify and Assess Current System Components, Providers and Client Flow

– System components and providers within each component

- System entry points including:
 - emergency shelter
 - street outreach
- Transitional housing, including GPD
- Rapid re-housing (and system navigation)
- Permanent supportive housing
- Homelessness prevention

TIP:
Use most recent Housing Inventory Count (HIC) from CoC to ID

– General client flow between components

– Data collection

What are we trying to know when conducting a system assessment?



- ✓ Progress Toward the Goal
- ✓ Local Coordinated Entry System
- ✓ Demand & Resource Analysis
- ✓ Optimization of Master List
- ✓ Links to Permanent Housing
- ✓ Housing First

Assessing and Improving your System: Example Questions



Across the system and all components/providers...

- Data Collection
 - Is the desire/goal to use HMIS as much as possible for data collection & master list generation?
 - Is essential data collected?
 - Which providers don't participate in HMIS? How do they provide data for master list?
- Accessibility
 - Are there eligibility limitations? If so, what are they specifically?
 - Are programs low-barrier (i.e., can a Veteran access if intoxicated? If previously stayed? Income or other restrictions?)?



Assessing and Improving your System: Example Questions



By component and provider...

- System entry points
 - Are Veterans screened for other safe housing options to avoid shelter admission?
- Emergency shelter
 - If coordinated entry not implemented, what is the protocol for immediately connecting potentially eligible Veterans to appropriate PH programs including SSVF, HUD-VASH and other RRH or PSH options?



Assessing and Improving your System: *Example Questions*



By component and provider...

- Street outreach
 - Is outreach comprehensive and routine, covering all 'known locations' and other potential locations via outreach or community partners (e.g., law enforcement, city service staff, hot meal programs)? Are there gaps?

Assessing and Improving your System: *Example Questions*



By component and provider...

- Transitional housing, including GPD
 - Are more intensive GPD/TH services targeted to Veterans who want or need it?
- Rapid re-housing (and system navigation)
 - Is there a protocol for using SSVF or other RRH or PH assistance as a bridge to quickly house a Veteran when they are awaiting a permanent housing subsidy (e.g., HUD-VASH not immediately available)?

Assessing and Improving your System: *Example Questions*



By component and provider...

- Permanent supportive housing
 - Is HUD-VASH dedicated or targeted to literally homeless Veterans? To chronically homeless and long-term homeless Veterans?
- Homelessness prevention
 - Is SSVF HP assistance targeted to Veterans who are screened and diverted from shelter?
 - Is SSVF HP coordinated with other HP in the CoC?

Re-vision & Develop Action Plan

- ✓ Design Desired System
- ✓ Identify System Gaps and Changes Needed to Achieve Desired System
- ✓ Develop Action Plan by Component to Address Gaps/Changes
- ✓ Document Plans and Agreements

TIP:
Identify and address system staffing needs

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Identifying & Prioritizing Barriers

- ✓ Discuss identified barriers with all parties
- ✓ Barriers may appear different depending on perspective
- ✓ Look for consensus, bring disagreements or different understandings of how things “should be” to the surface
- ✓ After agreement on vision, move to prioritizing issues for action
- ✓ *Be ready for hard conversations*

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Keeping the Federal Vision in Mind

Most of the issues you uncover will fit into one or more of the Federal Criteria and Benchmarks – Veteran Example:

Criteria 1: *Has the community identified all Veterans experiencing homelessness?*

- How well is your Master/By Name List working – does it include all literally homeless Veterans?
- Is your outreach sufficiently coordinated and comprehensive?

Criteria 2: *Does your community provide shelter immediately to any Veteran who wants it?*

- Is shelter easy to access 24/7/365?
- Do you have sufficient and accessible capacity of low barriers shelter?

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Formalize & Continuous Improvement

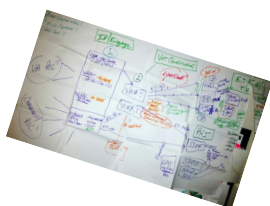


- ✓ Document System Flow, Policies and Procedures
 - Regularly review and update policies & procedures
- ✓ Train System Providers on New Flow, P&Ps
- ✓ Establish Performance Measures and Targets
- ✓ Implement the Re-Designed System
- ✓ Monitor, Evaluate & Improve Performance
 - Monitor implementation of processes to assess impact

Community Examples of System Assessment and Improvement



- Detroit
- Chicago
- Columbus



Resources



Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
System Assessment & Improvement Toolkit
(March, 2017)

https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_System_Assessment_and_Improvement_Toolkit_Revised.pdf

Discussion Questions



- Has your CoC focused on system processes to improve performance?
- The System Assessment and Improvement Process approach originated with systems to end Veteran homelessness, do you think the approach would be useful for other populations?
- The focus on system processes is a second phase of the work to end Veteran homelessness. Do you think the System Assessment and Improvement process approach could be used in planning the development of other systems, such as for youth?
- How does planning for effective system processes fit into designing and implementing coordinated entry?



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