



Homeless Crisis Response

Presented by USICH and HUD March 6, 2012



Panelists

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Webinar Purpose

- At the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:
 - Explain the core tenets of effective crisis response.
 - Describe a new framework for thinking about your community's response to homelessness.
 - Identify tools and opportunities provided by the HEARTH Act.
 - Identify six steps every community can take to get started.



Webinar Format

- Call will last approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes
- We have reserved time at the end of the webinar for Q&A.
- Audience members who would like to pose a question can do so at any time through the “questions” function found in the “GoToWebinar” toolbar.
- Call audience members are “muted” due to the high number of participants.
- Call will be recorded.



Opening Doors

- Nation's first-ever comprehensive strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness.
- Four goals:
 - 1) Finish the job of ending **chronic** homelessness by 2015.
 - 2) Prevent and end homelessness among **Veterans** by 2015.
 - 3) Prevent and end homelessness among **families, youth, and children** by 2020.
 - 4) Set a path to ending **all** types of homelessness.



Imagine a day when....

- There are no chronically homeless individuals in your community anymore. Or perhaps only a handful, and the few remaining are regularly engaged, and there is housing available for them whenever they decide they are ready for it.
- There are no unsheltered individuals, and most certainly no unsheltered families. You have enough shelter beds to assist those who cannot be helped through your diversion assistance.



Imagine a day when....

- However, you actually have far fewer shelter beds than you did at other points in your community's history because shelter stays are now extremely short. You have become so efficient at administering housing assistance that people are back into housing in less than a month.
- You have a community-wide system for identifying households at risk of homelessness. Through your targeted prevention assistance, you've been able to dramatically reduce the number of people experiencing first time homelessness, as well as the number of people that experience additional episodes.



Imagine a day when....

We have ended homelessness as
we know it in America!



Opening Doors - Objective 10

- Transform homeless services to **crisis response systems** that prevent homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing.



Core Tenets of Effective Crisis Response

- People know where to go for help and can easily access assistance.
- Assistance is client-centric, not program or agency centric.
- People spend the least amount of time in homelessness possible; the focus is on quickly stabilizing people in permanent housing.
- Assistance is “just enough” to help the client achieve/maintain housing stability.



The Current State

Outreach

Emergency Shelter

Safe Havens

Transitional Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing

Affordable Housing



The Desired State

Housing Crisis Occurs

Multiple entry points

- Eviction or personal/family crisis
- Release from institutional care
- On streets/cycling through shelter

Rapid Response System

Assess and develop re-housing plan

- Prevention and Diversion
- Emergency/Transitional Shelter Housing

Stable Housing

Targeted to individual needs

- Rapid Re-Housing
- Affordable housing
- Permanent supportive housing
- Reunification with family



Rapid Response Framework: The 3As

Access

- Prevent
- Divert
- Admit to Shelter

Assessment

Assign Permanent Housing Intervention

- Rapid Re-Housing
- Affordable Housing
- PSH



Access to a System of Care

- Comprehensive approach will acknowledge/respond to multiple entry points into homelessness:
 - Eviction or personal/family crisis
 - Release from institutional care
 - On streets
- Access should include:
 - Centralized/coordinated access
 - Adequate street outreach capability
 - Coordination with mainstream systems and community programs (to prevent/divert)



Access to a System of Care

- Models for Coordinated Access
 - ❑ Physically/geographically centralized
 - ❑ Centralized telephone (e.g., 211 hotline)
 - ❑ Decentralized but coordinated
 - ❑ Hybrid (i.e., different for different populations)
- Join us again on March 20 for webinar specifically on this topic.



Assessment

- Critical for effective targeting or “right-sizing” of interventions.
 - ❑ Goal is just enough assistance to achieve/maintain housing stability.
 - ❑ Although not ideal, many rent-burdened households can and do maintain housing.
 - ❑ “Extra” assistance to one household can mean housing loss or a delay to stability for someone else in the community.
 - ❑ Should include an assessment of assets, strengths, and desires – not just challenges/deficiencies.



Assessment

- Different levels of assessment
 - Prevention/diversion screening
 - Admit to emergency/transitional shelter
 - Development of re-housing strategy



Assignment of Intervention

- Prevention/diversion
- Rapid Re-Housing/Transition in Place
- Affordable Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing



The Importance of Services in RRH/Housing First Environment

- Services just as critical as the housing subsidy.
- Focus needs to be on keeping people in housing, not just getting them in housing.
- Different households will require different type and level of services.
 - Focus of services should be on issues that threaten housing stability.
- Access mainstream partnership opportunities (Medicaid, TANF, etc.).



The Role of Shelter in the 3A Model

- When diversion isn't possible, people need a safe/secure place to stay while searching for permanent housing.
- As we become more effective with RRH and Housing First models, beds will turnover more quickly, so fewer shelter beds may be required.
 - Communities with large unsheltered population may still need more capacity, but...
 - All communities should examine the impact of shorter lengths of stay to understand how needs may change over time.



The Role of Shelters in the 3A Model

- In some communities, shelter providers are adding housing search/placement and stabilization services as key program components.
- Other communities have found it more effective to have separate agencies that specialize in housing search/stabilization and co-locate within shelters.



Getting There: Right-sizing Your System

- Analyze your data to understand:
 - ❑ Which programs are effectively meeting needs
 - ❑ Which programs may need to be modified/repurposed
 - ❑ What gaps exist
- Analysis is ideally community-wide, not just HUD-funded programs.
 - ❑ Will be increasingly possible as other targeted programs begin use of HMIS.



Getting There: Right-sizing Your System

- Data to examine:
 - ❑ Program utilization (do you have programs with empty beds? and yet unsheltered homeless individuals/families?)
 - ❑ Diversion rates (avoid shelter admission, housing stabilization)
 - ❑ Program outcomes (placement into permanent housing, average length of stay, housing retention/recidivism)
 - ❑ Cost effectiveness (average cost per household per served, average cost per placement into permanent housing)



Getting There: Right-sizing Your System

- Opportunities available to communities:
 - ❑ Repurposing existing programs (i.e., modifications to an existing program model)
 - ❑ Reallocation of CoC-funded programs
 - ❑ Affordable Care Act/Medicaid expansion to cover greater percentage of service costs
 - ❑ Partnering with your local PHA to increase permanent housing opportunities
 - ❑ Leverage private sector involvement
- Remember, systems change in a **process**, not a single event.



Systems Change and the HEARTH Act Programs

- Homeless Definition - FINAL
- Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program - INTERIM
- Continuum of Care (CoC) program – TO BE PUBLISHED
- Rural Housing Stability Assistance (RHS) program – TO BE PUBLISHED
- HMIS – published as PROPOSED



Homeless Assistance Programs and the Continuum of Care

The **Continuum of Care (CoC)** is a collaborative funding and planning approach that helps communities plan for and provide, as necessary, a full range of emergency, transitional, and permanent housing and other service resources necessary to address the various needs of homeless persons. It is also the group of community stakeholders involved in the decision making process.



Centralized or Coordinated Assessment

Utilization of a centralized or coordinated assessment system will be required of CoC and ESG grant recipients.

The system must be designed locally in response to local needs and conditions.

Funds through the ESG program and the CoC program may be used to fund centralized or coordinated assessment system.



Homeless Crisis Response System

A **homeless crisis response system** typically consists of 6 basic elements:

1. System of outreach, engagement, and assessment
2. Emergency shelters with appropriate supportive services
3. Rapid re-housing to help persons move to, and remain in, conventional housing units



Homeless Crisis Response System

A **homeless crisis response system** typically consists of 6 basic elements:

4. Transitional housing with appropriate supportive services
5. Permanent housing, or permanent supportive housing
6. Homelessness prevention strategies



Outreach, Engagement, and Assessment

- The ESG program provides funding for street outreach
- The SHP program provides funding for street outreach through supportive service only projects
- The CoC program authorizes the use of funds for supportive services for individuals and families who are currently homeless



Emergency Shelters

- The ESG program provides funding for emergency shelter. This includes funding for:
 - Essential services
 - Operating
 - Renovation and rehabilitation



Rapid Re-Housing

- The ESG program provides funding for rapid re-housing.
- The CoC program allows for rapid re-housing by combining re-housing services and rental assistance or leasing.



Transitional Housing

- The SHP program provides funding to projects that provide transitional housing as well as supportive services for persons while they reside in transitional housing.
- The CoC program allows funding for transitional housing and supportive services for persons in transitional housing.



Permanent Housing

- The SHP and S+C programs provide funding to projects that provide permanent supportive housing.
- The CoC program allows funding for permanent housing, including permanent supportive housing.



Homelessness Prevention

- The ESG program provides funding for homelessness prevention.
- The CoC program allows funding for homelessness prevention when the CoC has been designated a High Performing Community.



The Role of Centralized or Coordinated Assessment

- Assist communities in consistently assigning appropriate intervention to individuals and families no matter where they present
- Assist communities in consistently assessing the level of housing and service needs of individuals and families that present



Getting started: Six steps you can take today!

- Get started on your data analysis.
- Join 100,000 Homes Campaign – get started on your registry.
- Form working group to plan for coordinated/centralized assessment.
- Partnership analysis – who needs to be at the table that isn't?
- Review/update your community plan with specific goals, responsibilities, timelines.
- Use this PowerPoint at your next community planning meeting to ensure all agencies have a shared vision, and ask each agency to repeat the training with their staff.



For More Information...

- USICH Crisis Response Toolkit:
 - http://www.usich.gov/usich_resources/toolkits_for_local_action/
- HUDHRE HEARTH Page:
 - <http://hudhre.info/hearth/index.cfm>
- HUDHRE Virtual Help Desk:
 - <http://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewHelpdesk>



Questions?

- Please submit your questions via the chat function.
- The webinar will be available on our websites at <http://www.usich.gov> and <http://hudhre.info>

