Components of an Effective Outreach System

Friday, August 14, 2020
House Keeping

- Because this is a webinar, attendees are muted
- Please type any questions you have into the Questions Box
- This webinar is being recorded and we will send out the link to everyone who registered at a later date.

Type in questions below
Speakers

Carl Asikainen  
Youth Systems Coordinator  
Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness

Tashmia Bryant  
Capacity Building and Equity Program Manager  
Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness

David Gonzalez Rice  
Senior Program Manager  
Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness
Vision and Framework for Coordinated Outreach

Effective Outreach Practices

Outreach is Collaborative

Tailored Approach to Outreach
Vision and Framework for Coordinated Outreach

David Gonzalez Rice, PhD
Senior Program Manager
CT Coalition to End Homelessness
What is Homeless Outreach?

1. A nurse does monthly foot care clinics at the shelter in town.
2. The Local Mental Health Authority has drop-in hours – no appointment needed.
3. Volunteers hand out socks and resource guides on the streets.
4. CAN staff scan the appointment schedule and place phone calls to “No Shows”
5. A store owner calls 211 about a customer who seems to be living in the parking lot.
6. Library staff arrange for a PATH outreach worker to visit their building every week.
What is Homeless Outreach?

Many tasks and functions
Not one job description

Mobile
Flexible
Intentional

Proactive
Assertive
Seeking underserved people
Why is Outreach so Important?

An example of what’s at stake:

Unsheltered VI-SPDAT respondents in a sample of 15 states were:

- 8x more likely to report 3+ years of homelessness.
- 25x more likely to report “trimorbid” health conditions.
- 10x more likely to have recent police or emergency contacts.

Unsheltered women are 2x more likely to report abuse and trauma as the cause of their current homelessness.

Source: https://www.capolicylab.org/health-conditions-among-unsheltered-adults-in-the-u-s/
“We launched two years ago to satisfy coordinated entry guidelines. We quickly realized the population was larger than we had thought, and we scaled up... Our shelter waitlist is 6 months long and we don’t have enough Rapid Rehousing to offer everyone, so we support self-resolution and diversion strategies in the field.

We felt we needed to widen the front door and identify everyone so we can be honest about what it really takes to end homelessness in our community.”
Outreach Strengths in Connecticut

• Unsheltered numbers low compared to national trend

• Infrastructure of 211 and the CANs screens most need

• Zero:2016 educated CANs and providers about unsheltered homelessness and need for outreach

• PATH is significantly invested in street outreach (not the case in every state)
Challenges in Connecticut

• Certain populations less likely or able to call 211 or attend a CAN appointment

• Hotspot canvassing leaves many communities uncovered

• Data is not reliable / available / convenient

• Too few outreach staff to canvass every zone, follow up community reports, and get clients into housing

• Inconsistent 211>CAN>Outreach processes
What Could Coordinated Outreach Look Like?

Outside of CT, common features include:

- Municipal government invested and committed
- Multidisciplinary teams in the field
- Real-time data reduces duplication and ensures coverage
- Various strategies to “widen the front door”

211 deploys outreach (Montgomery County, PA)
Community at large refers through a portal (LAHOP)
What components do you think make an Effective Outreach System?

*please enter in chat box*
Outreach Roles and Functions

• Initial Identification: who is out there?
• Mobile CAN Appointment
• Verification
  • For housing prioritization (in all CANs)
  • For shelter prioritization (in some CANs)
• Crisis/Community Response
• Assertive Engagement: keep offering services
• Case Management/Services Coordination
Coordinated Outreach Goals and Strategies

• Quickly identify and engage anyone experiencing homelessness
• Provide assertive, trauma-informed, equitable services
• Promote and monitor progress toward positive outcomes
• Integrate outreach efforts through shared tools, processes, and data
• Incorporate qualitative and quantitative data for evaluation, sustainability, and replication
During COVID-19

• Harder time for unsheltered folks with reduced access
• Better reach of CAN appointments with shift to phone-based (Low No Show rates)
• More resources for Individual Diversion / Rapid Exit
• This winter will be different than last – ongoing uncertainty.
• New difficulty identifying homeless students

Outreach could become more important than ever as other safety nets and support networks are strained.
Outreach is Collaborative

Carl Asikainen
Youth Systems Coordinator
CT Coalition to End Homelessness
Establish Partnerships

• CAN partners are vital, but only the surface

• There are Strength in numbers—more is better—this is network building—and over time.

• Broad work in communities to address homelessness means multiple levels and types of stakeholders
  - **Outreach** can utilize: DOT, Parking Enforcement, Police, Business owners
  - **Youth Service Bureaus** can utilize: McKinney Ventos, clinicians, teachers
  - **Housing Navigators** can utilize: shelter staff, health care providers, business owners, municipal staff
  - **Schools** can utilize: McKinney Ventos, guidance counselors, outreach workers, town level social service agents, RHY staff (more to come)
Work Towards a Plan

This is utilizing the strength of networks, partners to:

**ID gaps in resources, timing**

**USICH goal:** Comprehensive Geography

**Addressing special populations, most marginalized**

**Consider other similar community efforts:** PATH, Re-entry, Head Start for example
Example of Youth Outreach and Count/PIT

• Events that result in ‘snapshots’ of data from a moment
• PIT is accomplished with direct input from outreach and local partners to shape canvassing.
• YOC is community engagement event with data result with partners in various areas such as schools, Parks and Recreation, street outreach, youth service bureaus

• BOTH of these events rely on partners (outreach and other, including volunteers!) AND these partners are important year round.
UHY in COVID: Challenges Now

• How are we going to make sure we are identifying unaccompanied homeless youth connected with (or struggling with connections to) school systems?

• The different ways distance learning will occur in the fall presents particular challenges.

• Not just school district staff and CAN staff and SDE

• FQHC, YSBs, RHY, DCF, DOC, CFB and Foodshare, YM and YWCA
A Tailored Approach to Outreach

Tashmia Bryant
Capacity Building and Equity Program Manager
CT Coalition to End Homelessness
Tailoring Your Outreach Strategy

Targeting...
- Cultural Organizations
- Various Faith-Based Institutions
- Community Hubs
- Multi-Lingual Services

To Reach...
- Undocumented Community
- Non-English Speaking Communities
- BIPoc
- “Non-traditional” Clients
Tailoring Your Outreach Approach

Using These Approaches...

• Trauma-Informed + Racialized
• Client-Driven + Client-Centered
• Collaborative
• Motivational Interviewing
• Harm Reduction

To Achieve...

• Cultural Humility
• Culturally Appropriate Services
• Client-Molded Services
• Sustainable Solutions
• Client-Provider Trust
Outreach Resources

National Alliance to End Homelessness

CT BOS Trainings

CT BOS Resources

CCEH Resource Library

Defining Functions of Outreach

Statewide Response to Unsheltered Homelessness - Goals and Strategies

Multidisciplinary Outreach Team Roles and Functions
Questions?

Type in questions below

For any additional questions please email: webinar@cceh.org