Making Our System Flow

A special thanks to our Presenting Sponsor:
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Making Our System Flow
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Who We Are

The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a nonprofit, non-partisan, organization committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States.
### What We Do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy and Programs</th>
<th>Capacity Building</th>
<th>Homelessness Research Institute</th>
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<td>• Carries out the vital work of educating policymakers and the field about key strategies and policies for ending and preventing homelessness.</td>
<td>• Supports efforts to end homelessness by offering training and technical assistance tailored to communities' unique needs.</td>
<td>• Analyzes data to identify homelessness trends on national, local, and Continuum of Care levels.</td>
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<td>• Keeps federal policymakers and legislators informed of the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the programs serving them.</td>
<td>• Helps design and implement crisis systems, improve systems' performance, and utilize data to end homelessness, particularly with an equity lens.</td>
<td>• Publishes research that ensures policymakers, practitioners, the media, and the public have the best information about trends and emerging solutions to the problem.</td>
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<td>• Leads advocacy efforts on a grassroots level.</td>
<td>• Provides online courses, trainings, and webinars to inform the field of best practices to end homelessness.</td>
<td>• Uses an equity lens to identify disparities in homelessness data.</td>
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### Lived Experience Innovation + Strategic Communications
The Alliance works to ensure that diverse voices are included as facilitators, attendees, and guests in our training forums. All voices are welcome.

The organization has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination or abusive behavior. The Alliance is committed to ensuring that all its events are safe and respectful for all participants.

Participants acknowledge that any form of discrimination, violence, or abusive behavior may result in removal from an office hour or forum depending on the situation.

If any discrimination is witnessed or experienced during the training, or if you feel unsafe, please notify any member of the Alliance staff.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness strives to create a diverse, inclusive, accepting, and safe space for everyone.
Session Objectives

• Understand the elements of an effective homeless response system
• Understand the intersection of all interventions
• Recognize the everyone’s role in ensuring effective system flow
Welcome: Who’s Here?

- Emergency Shelter Providers
- Transitional Housing Providers
- RRH Providers
- Street Outreach Providers
- CoC/System Leaders
- HMIS/Data Staff
- Elected/Appointed Officials
- Funders
- City and/or County Agency Staff
- Public Housing Authority Staff
- Community Advocate
- Others
On a sticky note,

• First, list your current job
• Next in 5 words or less, describe what comes to mind when you hear the phrase “system flow”…
OK, SO JUST WHAT IS A “HOMELESS SYSTEM”???
Effective, Equitable and Efficient Homeless Response System: **GOAL**

**House** people as quickly as possible and **divert** people from imminent homelessness whenever possible.
Effective, Equitable and Efficient Homeless Response System: ENDGAME

Homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time

- People in a housing crisis have access to immediate help, including a safe place to go
- People are not unsheltered
- People do not spend long periods of time homeless
- People exit homelessness quickly and do not quickly cycle back into homelessness
Effective Homeless Response System: PERFORMANCE

Establish systemic performance measures

• Reduce in-flow into homelessness
• Increase exits to permanent housing
• Decrease average length of homelessness
• Decrease returns to homelessness
Crisis Response System

Family or individual retains housing or gains new housing, bypassing shelter

- Targeted prevention and diversion
- Coordinated assessment for individuals and families with a housing crisis

Emergency shelter with safety, crisis stabilization, and housing search support

Family or individual exits shelter on own

Rapid Exits

- Rapid re-housing and links to services
- Transitional housing with services

Second assessment as needed

- Individuals and families for whom RRH and/or TH is unsuccessful and have high needs

Families and individuals with highest needs

Community-based permanent housing (includes market rate and subsidized) and community-based services and supports

Permanent supportive housing

ENDHOMELESSNESS.ORG
A Homeless Response System
The Systemic Approach to Ending Homelessness
Elements of an Effective Crisis System

- Housing First Approach
- Homelessness Prevention
- Diversion
- Street Outreach
- Emergency/Crisis Housing and Crisis Services
- Quick Return to Housing with RRH, PSH, and Mainstream Housing Options
IS OUR SYSTEM STUCK
You Gotta Have Flow
Effective Homeless Response System: Increase System Flow

System Flow:
An efficient and coordinated **process** that moves people from homelessness to housing as quickly as possible

The “**process**” means that all interventions need to work as one system to create flow.
Symptoms of Poor System Flow

1. Unchanging or increasing number of unsheltered people
2. Waitlists for shelter
3. Long lengths of stay in shelter (more than 30 days)
4. High percentage of exits from shelters to homelessness
5. Average length of homelessness is not decreasing
6. In-flow into homelessness is steady or increasing
7. Long waitlists for RRH and PSH (long CES wait list)
8. Significant amount of people aren’t getting any assistance
9. Programs are not connected to coordinated entry with many “side doors”
System Performance Measures

Every intervention focuses on their role in meeting the measures

- **Reduce** overall homelessness
- **Reduce** the number of people who become homeless
  - Are you reducing “first time” homelessness
- **Increase** exits to permanent housing
- **Reduce** the length of time people spend homeless
- **Reduce** returns to homelessness
- **Increase** jobs and income
- **Thoroughness** in reaching homeless population

So….How is your CAN doing?
An Effective System

- Housing Problem Solving
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Permanent Supportive housing
- Market rate housing
- Creative housing solutions
- Voucher
INCREASING SYSTEM FLOW

The road to ending homelessness
The Element of System Flow

System flow is an efficient and coordinated process that moves people from homelessness to housing as quickly as possible.

The “process” means that all intervention need to work as one system to create flow.
When Programs Row in Sync, They Make Progress
Symptoms of Poor System Flow

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Adding Capacity…

• Does not mean having to add more interventions/beds; rather asking…
  • Do we ensure that each intervention is housing focused?
  • Does everyone in our system take responsibility for quickly housing people (and believe that people can find solutions outside system resources?)
  • Do we effectively engage people in housing problems solving across every intervention?
  • Are we creating efficiencies or barriers in our system?
  • Do we see ourselves as working together as one system?
  • Are we in constant dialogue with each other across the system?
  • Is each component working effectively and efficiently to quickly end homelessness?
  • Do we let our challenges limit us, or do we challenge our limits?
Characteristics of an Effective Crisis Response System With Good System Flow

• Entire System is Housing Focused
• Prevention of or diversion from homelessness when possible
• Rapid identification and engagement of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to connect them to crisis services
• Quick, accessible pathways to shelter and other crisis services with short stays in shelter
• Rapid connection to permanent housing for all sheltered and unsheltered people, with priority on most vulnerable
AND...
• Partnerships and cross-connections across interventions.
“Key System Outcomes” Show Good System Flow

Reduce Homelessness

1. Reduce first time AND unsheltered homelessness
2. Reduce length of time people experience homelessness
3. Increase exits from the homeless system to permanent housing
IMPROVING OUR CAN SYSTEM FLOW

What’s my role?
Let’s Think About Ending Homelessness

The community ideally…

1. Identifies everyone facing homelessness
2. Prevents/diverts homelessness whenever possible
3. Shelters people as needed
4. Coordinates effectively
5. Links people to housing and services
6. Tailors interventions to people’s needs
7. Moves people to housing quickly
8. Believes in people
9. Prevents recurrences of homelessness
Elements of an Effective Crisis System

- Housing First Approach
- Homelessness Prevention
- Diversion
- Street Outreach
- Emergency/Crisis Housing and Crisis Services
- Quick Return to Housing with RRH, PSH, and Mainstream Housing Options
BUT Having All Elements is NOT Enough…

Is this the experience…

Or this
Connecticut System Flow
Where are our log jams?
Discussion: Creating System Flow in Your CAN

• What does system flow look like in your CAN?
• What do you need to change to quickly move people to permanent housing?
  • Coordinated Entry
  • Diversion
  • Emergency Shelter
  • Rapid Re-Housing
  • PSH for Families
• What do we have vs. what do we need?
• Where can we focus efforts to improve?
Housing First Orientation Creates System Flow

Each intervention across the system embraces a housing first philosophy – embraces the belief that people can be housed quickly and are resourceful in identifying housing options.
Coordinated Entry that Creates System Flow

- Engages in robust problem-solving conversations and diverting from the homeless system
- Believes in client resolution and resiliency
- Provides reality conversations when assessing
Outreach that Creates System Flow

Primary purpose of street outreach is to assist families and individuals to move off the streets into housing as quickly as possible.

• Street outreach is mobile housing work
• Focuses on permanent housing solution that are individualized and strength based
• Relational and engaging to build belief and trust
• Builds community partnerships

People who say “no” to shelter does not mean “no” to housing

Reduces unsheltered homelessness;
Reduces the length of time people spend homeless
Emergency/Crisis Housing that Creates System Flow

Safe, appropriate, and immediate, temporary, low-barrier, AND housing focused shelter, for people who have no viable alternatives, that serves as a first step to being quickly and permanently re-housed:

- Problem-Solving conversations continue
- Every staff interaction and conversation is housing focused
- Expectation that households will self resolve – find housing without system interventions
- Don’t depend on “other programs” to move people to PH
- Increases exits to PH
Rapid Re-Housing that Creates System Flow

Start planning for exit at entry-focus on one month at a time

Works closely with outreach & shelter
- Provide “housing search” tips to shelter staff and guests
- Collaboration & housing focused culture

Not a “one size fits all” model – least amount of assistance for the shortest time necessary to stabilize

Not “a bridge” to a subsidy
- Belief that people can find housing solutions
- Creative housing options
Permanent Supportive Housing that Creates System Flow

- Is not the outcome for most shelter guests
- Reserved for those with highest service needs and insurmountable housing barriers
- Creates move-out strategies for those who no longer need intensive supports
- Practices a Housing First approach for all units
Access to Stabilization Supports to Create System Flow

Access to stabilization supports helps people further stabilize in housing, resolve future crisis, connect to community supports, prevent eviction and avoid returns to homelessness.
Discussion: Creating System Flow in Your Practice

• What role does your practice play in system flow?
• What can we change to increase system flow?
• Where can we/I improve?
• Make one commitment as a table to increase system flow
We gotta have flow.....

Make sure each program takes responsibility to make the system flow...by rowing together
Remember - A Crisis Response System
One clock with each intervention in sync with each other
Questions???

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Thank you for attending this workshop!

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