Key Components of Emergency Shelters in an Effective Crisis Response System

Cynthia Nagendra
Kay Moshier McDivitt
The National Alliance to End Homelessness is the leading national voice on the issue of homelessness. The Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, effective policy solutions. The Alliance works collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, leading to stronger programs and policies that help communities achieve their goal of ending homelessness. The Alliance provides data and research to policymakers and elected officials in order to inform policy debates and educate the public and opinion leaders nationwide.

Working with a strong network of innovators, the National Alliance to End Homelessness identifies and evaluates hundreds of policy and program strategies and their impact on homelessness. The Alliance’s Center for Capacity Building helps communities replicate and customize the best of those strategies. The Center focuses on strategies that are cost effective, data driven, and can be implemented at a scale that can significantly reduce homelessness.
Today’s Training

• Provide a **basic framework** for the **immediate** response to a community’s homelessness crisis
  – Understand how the system components fit together and interact:
    • Entry to the homelessness system
      – Coordinated entry
      – Diversion
      – Prioritization
    • **Emergency Shelter/Crisis Beds**
    • Housing Interventions

• Learn the key components of an effective low-barrier emergency shelter within this crisis response framework
• Discuss the Role of Rules in shelters
• Action plan for re-tooling your shelter
How are you feeling?

- Anxious
- Excited
- Confused
- Exhausted/Overwhelmed
- Annoyed
Or...More Like This?
Key Components of Emergency Shelters

- Housing First approach
- Immediate and easy access
- Housing-focused services
- Rapid exits to permanent housing
- Measure outcomes to improve performance
“What If” Concerns about a New Shelter Model

• What if our clients aren’t ready for housing?
• What if we are setting people up to fail by putting them in housing too quickly?
• What if there is no housing available?
• What if we don’t have extra resources for these changes?
• What if staff quit?
• What if we need more training?
Changing the Framework
Where are you in your Transformational Change?

Old Shelter Model

Need for Change
Confusion
Anxiety/Loss
Clarity

New Vision
Integration
Restructuring

New Shelter Model
Philosophical Shift

Practice Shift

Operations Shift
Homelessness in King County
Homeless Nationally


549,928
King County Point in Time Count 2006-2016

Table 2: One Night Count results, 2006-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Transitional Housing</th>
<th>Overnight Shelter</th>
<th>Unsheltered</th>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>7,910</td>
<td>3,501</td>
<td>1,946</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>7,839</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>8,439</td>
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<td>8,916</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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<td>2,485</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>8,830</td>
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<td>9,062</td>
<td>3,452</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>10,688</td>
<td>2,993</td>
<td>4,505</td>
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## Other Cities vs. Seattle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark City</th>
<th>2014 County Population Estimate</th>
<th>2015 Homeless PIT Count by CoC</th>
<th>Change # Homeless 2010-2015</th>
<th>County FMR - $2BR</th>
<th>30% of Area Median Income (County)</th>
<th>2015 Rental Vacancy Rate by MSA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houston/Harris</td>
<td>4,441,370</td>
<td>4,609</td>
<td>-28%</td>
<td>$890</td>
<td>$20,790</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
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<td>Salt Lake City/County</td>
<td>1,091,742</td>
<td>2,176</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$901</td>
<td>$21,660</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
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<td>Las Vegas/Clark</td>
<td>2,069,681</td>
<td>7,509</td>
<td>-25%</td>
<td>$969</td>
<td>$17,760</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Orleans/Orleans</td>
<td>384,320</td>
<td>1,703</td>
<td>-80%</td>
<td>$950</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
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### West Coast Peers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population Estimate</th>
<th>Homeless PIT Count</th>
<th>Change 2010-2015</th>
<th>County FMR - $2BR</th>
<th>Median Income</th>
<th>Rental Vacancy Rate</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Portland/Multnomah</td>
<td>776,712</td>
<td>3,801</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>$944</td>
<td>$22,170</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seattle/King</td>
<td>2,079,967</td>
<td>10,122</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>$1,415</td>
<td>$26,880</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
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<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>10,226,705</td>
<td>41,174</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>$1,424</td>
<td>$18,900</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>852,469</td>
<td>6,775</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>$1,386</td>
<td>$21,699</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
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Peer communities: Los Angeles

- Veteran homelessness fell **41%** in City of Los Angeles
- **1,617** veterans homeless in 2016, down from **2,733** in 2015
- Unsheltered veterans reduced **43%**
- **36%** of homeless veterans now **sheltered** vs **33%** in 2015
Peer communities: Los Angeles

- LA County:
  - **18%** decrease in homeless family members from 2015 to 2016
  - Unsheltered family members decreased **35%**

- LA CoC:
  - **18%** decrease to **6,128** family members

- LA City:
  - **17%** decrease to **3,662** family members

![Bar chart showing decrease in family members from 2015 to 2016 for LA County, LA CoC, and LA City.]
King County’s Strengths and Assets

• Strong agreement that the community benefits from strong collaboration and a commitment from governmental and non-profit leadership to work together to end homelessness.

• The transformation of the King County Committee to End Homelessness into All Home and the process of developing the Strategic Plan are important recent accomplishments.

• The community has come a long way towards embracing a Housing First approach which has helped to increase their success in housing people with high housing barriers.
2016 King County PIT Count Report

• “Year over year increases of 14%, 21% and 19% clearly show that we are in a growing crisis that available housing and shelter are not meeting. • The increase in people who lack basic safety and protection is real.

• 40% said they had lacked shelter the night before.

• The numbers of people we see outside tells us about the unmet need for shelter and housing.
Seattle’s Emergency Shelter Outcomes

• 2015 average shelter utilization:
  - 89% for adult households and 69% for families

• 2016 average shelter utilization:
  - 80% for adult households and 60% for families

• 66% of single adults and 64% of families entering shelter were literally homeless

• 22% of adults and 36% of families enter shelter from an unsheltered location

• Exits from shelter to Permanent Housing from Shelter: 14%
Using Data to Improve Performance Outcomes

- DECREASE Length of stay
- INCREASE Exits to permanent housing
- DECREASE Returns to shelter
- INCREASE Shelter utilization
Role of Emergency Shelter in Crisis Response System
Why are shelters so important?

• **Shelter** plays an **important role** in your system’s response to homelessness
• People will always need a safe and decent place to go when having a housing crisis
• The effectiveness of emergency shelter greatly impacts your system’s performance
  – Average length of homelessness
  – Exits to permanent housing
  – Returns to homelessness
What Do We Know About Shelter Stays?

- The majority of people who become homeless have relatively short stays in the homeless system and rarely come back to it. ("transitionally homeless")
- Families with long stays are no more likely than families with short stays to have intensive behavioral health treatment histories, to be disabled, or to be unemployed.

What Do We Know About Shelter Stays?

The results suggest that policy and program factors, rather than family characteristics, are responsible for long shelter stays.

What Do We Know About Shelter Stays?

- Significant portion of people self-resolve or seek help from another system
- Most people can exit homelessness with a light touch of services and assistance to exit homelessness for good (RRH)
- Minority of people need more intensive services and long-term housing supports (PSH)
Homelessness is Misunderstood & It Impacts Shelter Practice

While there are over 43 Million people living in poverty, less than 600,000 will be homeless on any given night.

Federal rent assistance programs only assist 5 Million people annually.

4.2% of the population in the United States lives with a Serious Mental Illness. Only 42% receive treatment or counseling.

7% of the population has an addiction or dependency on alcohol. 93% receive no treatment or assistance with their problematic alcohol use.

3% of the population uses other illicit drugs. 88% receive no treatment or counseling.
Things to Keep in Mind

- Households experiencing homelessness are not significantly different that other poor households
- Majority experience homelessness due to a financial or other crisis
- Prolonged exposure to homelessness has a significant negative impact on adults and children
Homelessness and Poverty

Source: Census and HUD PIT Count
Most People Stay Housed

• Almost everyone with poor credit history is housed, not homeless.

• Almost everyone with a history of evictions is housed, not homeless.

• Almost everyone with a felony conviction is housed, not homeless.

• Almost everyone who is a registered sex offender or sexual predator is housed, not homeless.

-Orgcode
Activity

Complete the following sentences:

• I believe that the role of emergency shelter in a crisis response system is to…

• When someone enters shelter, the goal is to assist them to…
Crisis Response System
Crisis Response System

OUTREACH

- CAN HOUSEHOLD BE DIVERTED TO SAFE AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING?
  - YES
    - DIVERSION
  - NO
    - STREET

STREET

- COORDINATED ENTRY: PRIORITIZATION, ASSESSMENT, AND PROGRAM REFERRAL
  - DOES HOUSEHOLD NEED A SHELTER BED?
    - YES
      - ENTRY TO EMERGENCY SHELTER
    - NO
      - JAILS, HOSPITALS, OTHER

JAILS, HOSPITALS, OTHER

- CAN HOUSEHOLD SELF-RESOLVE IN 7-14 DAYS?
  - YES
    - PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
  - NO
    - CHRONICALLY HOMELESS?
      - YES
        - RAPID RE-HOUSING
      - NO
        - HOMELESS ONE OR MORE TIMES
          - NO
            - DIVERSION
Key Elements of an Effective Crisis Response System that *Ends Homelessness*

An effective Crisis Response System provides **immediate and easy access to safe and decent shelter** to anyone that needs it and aims to **re-house** people as quickly as possible.
Low-barrier shelter is a cornerstone of a functional crisis response system.
Creating Flow Through The System to Housing

Prioritize Unsheltered People With Housing Crisis Seeking Shelter

Diversion

Crisis Resolution

Permanent Housing
Activity
Table Discussion
5 minutes for each question

How do people access shelter?
What is used to determine who will enter shelter?
Do you need to get utilization rates of your shelter to be higher? How will you do that?
The Role of Homelessness Diversion
Homelessness Diversion

- Diversion prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements or helps them stay where they are *if safe and appropriate*

- Offers services, mediation, and related services and financial assistance to help people retain or return to housing.

- Diversion is NOT a separate “program” but rather part of the entire system –

- Diversion should always be safe and appropriate for the person seeking help
Keys to Successful Diversion

✓ Happens through coordinated entry process and at shelter front door
✓ Resourceful staff trained in having these conversations
✓ Strength-based and problem solving
✓ Recognizes client choice and safety
✓ Linkages to mainstream services and natural supports
✓ Flexible dollars
The Four C’s of Diversion

1. Commitment
   – Mainstream and homeless service providers must believe households are better served outside of homelessness system

2. Conversation
   – Diversion works best as a conversation, rather than checking off a list of questions

3. Creativity
   – Help clients think of creative solutions and explore every option

4. Continuous
   – Diversion conversation may happen multiple times, not a one time service
Community Examples

Los Angeles
• Through CES, 30-40% of families diverted

State of Massachusetts
• 20% diverted
• 1.2% return after one year

New York City
• 15% of families and individuals diverted
• Less than 3% return
Shelter Assessment and Prioritization
Assessment and Prioritization

• **Phase the assessment process**
• **Prioritize** people who are unsheltered, most vulnerable, and have the most severe service needs
• **Do not** serve people on a first-come basis
• **Do not** use the VI-SPDAT to prioritize for shelter
“Path Forward” recommendations

- **Prioritize** for housing interventions those families and individuals who have the longest histories of homelessness and highest housing barriers and rapidly connect them to a viable housing option.

- If there is insufficient emergency shelter capacity, shelter should be for the unsheltered individuals and families who are at greatest risk for severe health and safety consequences if not sheltered.
Key Components of Emergency Shelters

- Housing First approach
- Immediate and easy access
- Housing-focused services
- Rapid exits to permanent housing
- Measure outcomes to improve performance
BREAK
OrgCode’s 10 Critical Questions
For Shelter Providers

• Is shelter a process or a destination?
• Are the people getting shelter in your community those that need it the most, or those that were lucky enough to get in?
• Do you attempt to heal or fix people?
• Do you provide social service or exercise social control?
• Does the built form and layout promote dignity and decrease conflict?
• Do you believe homelessness should be infrequent & short in duration - and that shelters have a role to play in that happening?
• Do you restrict services only in limited circumstances? And for what purpose?
• Is there any group of persons that you automatically disqualify from services?
• Do you provide professional staffing with the right training?
• Do you measure what you do, and refine based upon available data?
Key Component

Housing First Approach: A Philosophical Shift
Philosophy Shift ➔ Housing First Principles

• Homelessness is foremost a housing problem
• Everyone is ready for housing *now* if they choose
• Permanent housing is a right to which all are entitled
• People should be returned to or stabilized in permanent housing as quickly as possible and connected to resources necessary to sustain that housing
Philosophy Shift ➔ Housing First Principles

Issues that may have contributed to a household’s homelessness can best be addressed ... 

once they are permanently housed
Philosophy Shift ➔ Housing First Principles

• For most people experiencing homelessness, intensive services are not necessary.

• Vast majority of homeless individuals and families fall into homelessness one time after a housing or other crisis.
Housing First Components of Shelters

- Few to no programmatic prerequisites to permanent housing entry
- Low-barrier admission policies
- **Rapid** and streamlined entry into permanent housing
- Supportive services are voluntary
What if our guests aren’t ready for housing? Aren’t we setting them up for failure?
What if we decided that housing gives people a strong foundation for success and they have more potential to do well being housed than while being homeless.
Activity: Self-Assessment

Are We a Housing First Shelter?

1. Complete the self-assessment
2. Find others from your agency. Take 5 minutes to talk about your assessment.
3. Identify two things that are a challenge to becoming a “housing first” shelter.
4. What steps do you need to take to take a Housing First approach?
Key Component

Immediate and Easy Access
“Our community should offer a place inside for everyone who is outside”

-Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (2012 report) “The Role Of Shelter in Addressing Homelessness”
Immediate and Easy Access: Getting Into Shelter

• Prioritize most vulnerable
• Provide low-barrier access
• Review eligibility criteria for entry
• Provide voluntary services
• Shift in Practice
• Shift in Operations
Prioritize, Prioritize

• The MOST acute, highest needs, unsheltered, literally homeless people are your community’s priority; NOT the most compliant, motivated, and “housing ready” people.

• Fill your shelter with those that need it the most, not those that got there first.
Why do you think some people experiencing homelessness avoid shelter?
Why People Avoid Shelters

- Curfew, kicked out in the morning, rules and regulations: 14%
- Can't shelter with partner, or partner does not want to be in shelter: 12%
- Did not know about shelter or could not get into shelter: 10%
- Experienced or heard of violence, afraid of violence or assault: 9%
- Experienced theft or afraid of theft: 8%
- Had poor experiences with shelter staff: 8%
- "Prefer the streets": 7%
- "Don't like shelters": 6%
- Pets not allowed in shelters: 4%
- Bed bugs, hygiene of others, afraid of illness: 4%
- Using drugs, PTSD, homophobia: 3%
- Too many people in general, as well as the "wrong types" of people: 15%
- "Prefer the streets": 7%
Low-Barrier Means…

1. Prioritizing those with the MOST need and HIGHEST barriers and making it easy for them to access shelter
2. Serving households of any configuration including couples without children, persons identifying as LGBTQ, two parent households, families with teen boys
3. Serving people using substances and or with mental health challenges, regardless of treatment compliance
4. Serving people with criminal history
“Low-barrier Does NOT Mean:

- First come, first serve
- Everyone calling needs a shelter bed
- Waiting in line to get the next bed
- Building more shelter beds
- No rules
Are You Screening People In Or Screening People Out?

Low Barrier Does NOT Mean Requiring:

- Income at entry
- “Employability”
- Exhibiting a “desire” to change
- Having a “good” attitude
- Being cooperative
- Seeming “motivated”
Harm Reduction in Sheltering

- Supports a Housing First model
- Affirms choice and self-determination
- Opens door for honest communication about drug use and other risk factors which allows for a stronger service interaction and intervention
- Supports a trauma-informed framework
- Supports a client-centered, strengths based intervention
- Behavior doesn’t correlate to housing ‘readiness’ – Promotes a ‘low barrier’ response – OrgCode
Substance Use

• Whether alcohol or other drugs, our focus in applying harm reduction strategies with our participants should focus on:
  – Health impacts
  – Budgeting and how consumption may impact
• Ability to pay the rent
• Lease violations – drug use on premises, noise complaints, etc.
Discussion

How can we ensure safety of residents if we allow persons under the influence to enter our shelter?
Discussion

If we let people who are currently using drugs and/or alcohol, doesn’t that jeopardize the sobriety of people who are trying to stay clean and sober?
Immediate and Easy Access

Operational Shift

Since emergency shelters should serve people in an immediate housing crisis as quickly as possible…

- Shelter should be available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days per year
- Staff available to allow entry as needed
- Connects directly to street outreach
Immediate and Easy Access

Operational Shift

- What does our space look like?
  - Configure it to serve more populations
  - Flexible spaces to accommodate special household needs
  - Private and confidential space for meetings
  - Space to store belongings
  - Accommodate pets if possible
Equal Access Rule

Answers these questions:

- What criteria can I use to determine who is eligible for shelter or housing programs?
- What are the requirements around same sex couples, unmarried couples, families with teenage boys, or transgender clients?
- Can I ask people for an ID to verify their gender?
- How do I handle complaints or discriminatory comments from shelter residents?
Equal Access Rule

What it requires:

- Determine eligibility regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status
- Must not discriminate against anyone because they do not conform to gender or sex stereotypes
- Grant equal access consistent with a person’s gender identity
Equal Access Rule

What it requires:

✓ Cannot discriminate against a group of people presenting as a family based on the composition, the age of members, disability, marital status, actual or perceived sexual orientation, or gender identity.

✓ Must not ask anyone to provide anatomical information or documentation (like an ID), physical, or medical evidence of gender identity.

✓ Take non-discriminatory steps when necessary and appropriate to address privacy concerns raised by any residents or occupants.
Equal Access Rule

One quick example:

- An emergency shelter that serves households with children
  - Can limit assistance to households with children
  - Cannot limit it only to women with children
  - Must serve single male head of household with minor children
  - Must serve any household made up of two or more adults, regardless of sexual orientation, marital status, or gender identity, presenting with minor child(ren).
Immediate and Easy Access

- Train staff in conflict resolution, crisis de-escalation, trauma-informed care
- Use motivational interviewing and strength based approaches
- Change staff role from being “program monitors” or “house parents” to being housing navigators and partners with clients
- Re-frame statements like, “they are not working the program so they have to leave” to “the case plan doesn’t seem to be working so the case manager should work with the client to revise it so it is more achievable”
Activity: Self-Assessment

Do we provide easy and immediate access to everyone who needs shelter?

1. Complete the self-assessment
2. Find others from your agency. Take 5 minutes to talk about your assessment.
3. What steps do you need to take to provide immediate and easy access
WHICH RULES ARE THE “RIGHT” RULES?
RULES

• Which rules are needed to operate your emergency shelter?

• How can a shelter promote safety without creating unnecessary barriers to services and housing?
“Sometimes I feel like a child, with everyone watching my every move. It’s not a good feeling and it makes me feel like I did something wrong by being homeless.”

Consumer, Family Study
How Adults Respond

Does not work

• Coercion
• Pressure to change
• Moralizing
• Telling clients what they should do
• Disagreeing, judging, criticizing, or blaming
• Bargaining
• Penalizing, warning, threatening
The Role of Rules

Promote safety
Don’t try to change or control people or their behaviors
Reviewing the Rules

• How does this activity/service get people into or hinder people from getting housing?
• How does this keep people safe?
• Is this rule about making things easier for staff and not about being client-centered?
• Is this rule about controlling or changing behavior?
• Does this rule hinder people from getting housed quickly?
Re-tooling the Rules

Which rules cause people to be kicked out the most?

- Decide which behaviors are a safety issue and which behaviors are a behavior management issue that was handled by asking the client to leave

Restrict “barring” or service restriction rules to:
- Matters of violence (including sexual violence)
- Excessive damage to property
- Theft
Re-tooling Rules

1. **Review** incidents resulting in clients being barred
2. **Recognize** similar issues that could be handled in other ways
3. **Meet** with staff and clients to discuss changing the rules and gather input
4. **Review** each rule for whether it helps people get out of shelter into housing - or whether it inhibits this from occurring quickly?
5. **Rules** that remained should be directly related to safety
6. **Post** new rules and let them take effect in 30 days
7. **Hold** frequent meetings with staff and clients to assess how the new rules are working and revise as needed
8. **Track** if the number of people barred decreases

-DESC
Re-tooling the Rules

The “Marvin” Rule
Rules vs. Expectations
A Few of the New Expectations

• Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
• Use the shelter space in a respectful manner.
• No weapons are allowed in the shelter, and nothing may be used as a weapon inside the shelter.
Key Component

Housing-focused Services
I tell my staff, ‘if you’re not talking about housing, you’re having the wrong conversation.’

Deronda Metz, Salvation Army, Charlotte, NC
How Can I Help You?

How Can I Help You Get Housed?

- Iain De Jong, “How To Be An Awesome Shelter”
Housing-Focused Services
Practice Shift

• Focus on permanent housing starts at the front door
• Requires a paradigm shift to believe that everyone is “housing ready,” meaning they are ready to be housed immediately
• It’s all about housing, not about healing or fixing
Housing-Focused Services

Practice Shift

- Focus on a “housing plan” vs “family plan” or “case plan”
- Identify barriers to housing and identify resources to address barriers
- Focus every in-person meeting on a quick move to permanent housing
- Create a clear “housing message” throughout the shelter
- Review and discuss the housing plan weekly at minimum
Housing-Focused Services

Practice Shift

• All staff need to be trained on the housing first approach
• Staff interactions must be housing focused
• Daily check-ins should be to determine progress toward housing goals
• Daily activities or workshops should be related to housing
• Diversion conversations need to happen regularly (especially for 1st time homeless)
Housing-Focused Services

Practice Shift

• Shelters are not primarily meant to be employment programs, substance use recovery programs, or mental health services – can these services happen later?

• Shelters are primarily there to resolve a housing crisis

• Mandatory program participation does not result in better housing outcomes
Are We a Housing-Focused Shelter? Questions to Ask

• What services are provided in the shelter, and what is the reason?
• Are all of the services focused on obtaining permanent housing?
• How often do staff talk to clients about housing?
• When does the conversation about moving to permanent housing begin?
Housing-Focused Services
Operational Shift

Staff job descriptions:

• Understanding of housing first principles
• Knowledge of housing resources in the community
• Understanding of client centered/client driven planning
Housing-Focused Services
Operational Shift

All written materials reflect housing-focused practice:

– Mission statement: is it about permanent housing?
– Re-writing policy and procedures
– Client handbook
– Voluntary service participation
– Clear messaging to community and clients
One Provider’s Experience

LA Family Housing – Los Angeles, CA

– Why?

• To coordinate and align service delivery more systematically
• To be more efficient and effective
• To ensure people experiencing homelessness did not fall through the cracks
• To manage caseloads
• To allow staff to become experts
One Provider’s Experience

– What/How?
  • Reorganized agency structure
  • Created a coordinated system rather than program silos
  • Created speciality program functions
  • Changed titles to include housing (e.g. case managers to housing coordinators/navigators) for consistency and messaging
The Old Org Chart
The New Org Chart

- Director of Stabilization
- Director of Housing
- Director of Engagement
- Director of Data

- Engagement Manager
- Intake Coordinator(s)
- Screener(s)
- Diverter(s)
- Grad Intern

- Housing Manager
- Crisis Housing Manager
- Housing Navigator(s)/Housing Coordinator(s)
- Grad Intern
- Resident Advocates
- Use of our Collaborative partnerships

- Housing Locator(s)

- Data Entry
- Data Analyst

- Housing Stabilization Manager
- Job Developer
- Employment Matcher
- Housing Stabilizer(s)
- Transition Coordinator
- Grad Intern
- Use of our Collaborative partnerships

- Slacker
- Complainer
- Unskilled
- Unsuccessful
Staffing

- Staff titles & job descriptions may need to be changed:
  - Housing Case Manager
  - Housing Advocate
  - Housing Stabilizer
  - Housing Locator
- Skills and functions of staff must be housing focused
  - Understanding of how housing and supports work together (strategic planners)
  - Understanding of how income relates to housing in terms of building a realistic housing plan
- Ability to engage and build rapport
- Ability to be solution-focused
Provider’s Results

• Service delivery is consistent regardless of which funding stream participants are receiving
• Staff caseloads went from 150+ to 50 and continuing to decrease (goal is 35)
• More effective and efficient which leads to an increase in positive participant experience
• Decreased grievances by over 80%
• Increased staff specialization
• Housing placement numbers have increased by 300%
• Allow us to create a real stabilization team tasked with keeping people **successfully** housed
• Stronger and happier specialized team
Activity

Do we have housing-focused services?

1. Complete the self-assessment
2. Next, identify actions you need to take to become more housing-focused.
Key Component

Rapid Exits to Housing
Rapid Exits to Housing
Practice Shift

What services do we need to increase rapid exits to permanent housing?

• Housing search services
• Rapid re-housing
• Connections to mainstream services
• Develop community partnerships
Rapid Exits to Housing
Practice Shift

Re-frame your messaging:

– Shelter is not a destination, it is a step to get you housed
– We are going to re-house you RAPIDLY
– You can be housed
Rapid Exits to Housing
Practice Shift

What services or requirements are slowing down rapid exits to housing that we should eliminate or that can take place after housing is obtained?

– Life skills, parenting classes, financial classes, job search classes

– If the clients wants these services, how can they happen later?
Rapid Exits to Housing
Operational Shift

• Staffing:
  – Housing Navigation or Housing Search position

• Budget
  – Rapid Re-housing
You’re navigators to housing now. And you have to understand where people are coming and see them through as strength-based lens to help them feel that they CAN be housed. Staff eventually will see how both they and the clients are now empowered so much more than before.
Activity: How Do We Increase Rapid Exits to Housing?

• Take the Rapid Exit Self-Assessment
• Develop a list of ways that you decrease lengths of stay (from shelter entry) to exits permanent housing?
Key Component

Measuring Outcomes To Improve Performance
Using Data to Improve Shelter

1. Measure Performance
2. Set Goals
3. Improve
4. Evaluate
5. Report
Using Data to Improve Performance Outcomes

- **DECREASE** Length of stay
- **INCREASE** Exits to permanent housing
- **DECREASE** Returns to shelter
- **INCREASE** Shelter utilization
This month there are three households in shelter.

One has been there for 7 days, one has been there for 30 days, and one has been there for 60 days.

Add together the total number of days each household has been in shelter.

Then divide by the total number of households in shelter.
Exits to Permanent Housing

- This month there are three households exiting shelter
- One exited back to homelessness, and two exited to permanent housing
- Add together the total number of households exiting to permanent housing
- Then divide by the total number of households exiting

\[
\frac{2}{3} = 67\% 
\]
## DHS Revised System Wide Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Exit Rate to Permanent Housing</th>
<th>Length of Stay</th>
<th>Return Rate to Homelessness</th>
<th>Entries from Homelessness</th>
<th>Utilization Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter</td>
<td>50% (S &amp; YYA) 80% (F)</td>
<td>30 days (S/F) 20 days (YYA)</td>
<td>8% (S/F) 5% (YYA)</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90 days (S/F) 180 (YYA)</td>
<td>8% (S/F) 5% (YYA)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Rehousing</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>120 days</td>
<td>3% (S/F) 5% (YYA)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Supportive Housing</td>
<td>90*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3% (S/F) 5% (YYA)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## DHS New System Wide Minimum Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Core Outcomes</th>
<th>Entries from Homelessness</th>
<th>Utilization Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exit Rate to Permanent Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter</td>
<td>40% (S) 65% (F) 35% (YYA)</td>
<td>90 days (S/F) 30 days (YYA)</td>
<td>10% (S/F) 20% (YYA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>150 days (S/F) 270 days (YYA)</td>
<td>10% (S/F) 20% (YYA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Rehousing</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>180 days</td>
<td>5% (S/F) 20% (YYA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Supportive Housing</td>
<td>90%*</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>5% (S/F) 20% (YYA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NEXT STEPS FOR RE-TOOLING YOUR SHELTER
Next Steps to Re-Tooing Shelter

• Identify a vision and core value that will drive the re-tooling and adoption of the new model

• Develop an organizational structure for the new model that includes a program flow chart

• Develop a plan to shift the organizational culture to adopt the new core values and vision
  – Identify what in the current culture will need to shift to adopt the philosophy of the new model
Next Steps to Re-Tooling Shelter

• Identify staffing and training needs, including revised job descriptions
  – Develop a plan for ongoing staff communication and training
  – Be prepared for staff turnover
  – Allow opportunities for open dialogue

• Update policies and managerial practices to accommodate the transition

• Obtain Board support and endorsement
  – Identify who is on your board that supports this retooling and how you can use them to engage the rest of the board
Next Steps to Re-Tooling Shelter

• Create an outcomes measurement plan
  – Include outcomes and benchmarks to be achieved
• Develop a proposed budget
  – Identify the current funding sources that may need to be modified and points of contact for those sources
• Identify community partnerships and outside resources that will be needed to support households
• Develop a clear communication plan
  – Plan for internal communication to board and staff and external communication to the community and funders
Make it Happen!

What is one thing that you will do in your shelter/community/program in the next week as a result of today’s training?
Anything We Missed?
Contact Us!

Cynthia Nagendra
cnagendra@naeh.org

Kay Moshier McDivitt
KMoshierMcDivivitt@naeh.org
OrgCode’s 10 Critical Questions For Shelter Providers

• Is shelter a process or a destination?
• Are the people getting shelter in your community those that need it the most, or those that were lucky enough to get in?
• Do you attempt to heal or fix people?
• Do you provide social service or exercise social control?
• Does the built form and layout promote dignity and decrease conflict?
• Do you believe homelessness should be infrequent & short in duration - and that shelters have a role to play in that happening?
• Do you restrict services only in limited circumstances? And for what purpose?
• Is there any group of persons that you automatically disqualify from services?
• Do you provide professional staffing with the right training?
• Do you measure what you do, and refine based upon available data?