



Coordinated Assessment 101: Understanding the Basics

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Homelessness**

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Topics



- Planning and Choosing a Model
- The Assessment Process
- Referrals
- Serving Subpopulations
- System Change

Definition of Coordinated Assessment



- *“Centralized or coordinated assessment system is defined to mean a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.” (CoC Interim Rule, Section 578.3)*

Why Coordinated Assessment?



- Meet HUD requirements
- Prevent “calling around” and burden on consumer
- Create easier access to services
- Improve and streamline referrals
- Prioritize and target more effectively
- Improve system performance



Planning and Choosing a Model

Needs

- A steering committee or leading body
- Understanding of HUD and any other local requirements
- HMIS
- Guiding principles for the system on prioritization and eligibility



Key Questions: Planning



- Do you have an infrastructure in place that you can build on?
- What are the current access issues that exist in your system?
- Who will organize and lead planning and implementation efforts? (may be different agencies)

Potential Models

- Centralized
- Decentralized
- Telephone-based/2-1-1
- Mobile case manager
- Mixed





The Assessment Process

Assessment Needs

- Tool or tools
- Process for administering them
- Staff trained in doing the assessment
- HMIS (for tool storage)



Key Questions: Assessment



- Do you have a consistent, standardized process for determining consumer's housing needs?
- Does the assessment process lead to referrals that are informed by best practice, written standards, and bed availability?

It's a process...



- Example:
 - Prevention/Diversion Assessment
 - Shelter Intake
 - Housing and Prioritization Assessment
 - Vulnerability Assessment

Progressive Engagement

- Minimal assessment
- Gradual increase in amount of resources based on failure or success of first attempts





Referrals

Referral Needs

- HMIS
- Scoring process or other agreed-upon way to use assessment tool results
- Process for sharing information between providers and the assessment centers



Key Questions: Referrals

- What criteria will be used to make referral decisions?
- How will organizations know to expect a household once referral?
- How will you handle referral refusals by the consumer or by the program?
- How will your referral process work with HMIS?





Serving Subpopulations

Key Questions: Subpopulations



- Who are your prevalent subpopulations?
- How will the structure of your process take into account the access habits of different subpopulations?
- How will you train staff on the different needs of subpopulations?



System Change

System Change Needs



- Honest conversations: What does this all really mean?
- Conversations with other communities that have been through the process
- Data on who is not currently being adequately served by the system
- Momentum

Big, Important Questions



What is the end goal of all the work that we do?

How can we make things easier for the consumer?

How will coordinated assessment integrate with our system?

Key Questions: System Change



- How will you eliminate “screening out?”
- How will programs and resources change to become more effective and better accommodate need?
- How will you close “side doors” to accessing the system?

Resources

- **Coordinated Assessment Toolkit**

<http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/coordinated-assessment-toolkit>

- **USICH Crisis Response Toolkit**

http://www.usich.gov/usich_resources/toolkits_for_local_action/

