

# Coordinated Entry and Systems Change



Center for Capacity Building  
September 8, 2015  
Cynthia Nagendra  
Anna Blasco



National Alliance to  
**END HOMELESSNESS**

# Today's Webinar

- Overview of Coordinated Entry Systems (CES)
- Why you should develop a coordinated entry system
- Use coordinated entry as a tool to make changes across your whole system
- Basic components of an effective system
- What things you can do to get started

# POLL: How are you feeling about coordinated entry?



**Terrified**

**Excited**

**Confused**

**Exhausted/Sad**

# POLL: Where is your community with coordinated entry planning?

- A) We have not started planning our coordinated entry system.
- B) We started planning our system by forming a committee but haven't made any concrete decisions.
- C) Our coordinated entry planning is well underway and we have a "launch" date.
- D) We have already launched our coordinated entry system (and it is going well/it is a disaster)!

# Coordinated Entry: What is it?

- A system that streamlines access and referral to services and housing
- Ensures that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access
- Uses standardized tools and practices
- Incorporates a system-wide Housing First approach to ALL types of programs
- Prioritizes homeless assistance for those with the most severe service needs

# A Systemic Approach to Ending Homelessness

- Opening Doors
- HEARTH Act
- CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8)

# Coordinated Entry: **Why?**

**Not just because  
we have to!**

# Coordinated Entry: **Why?**

Provides an opportunity for the re-organization of a community's entire homelessness system





# Coordinated Entry: A Tool for System Change

Coordinated Entry requires **changes throughout your whole system**

- Diversion
- Intake
- Assessment
- Prioritization
- Referral
- Program eligibility
- Outreach
- Crisis Services/Shelter
- Closing of side doors
- Governance
- Housing Resources



# Coordinated Entry: *Why?*

Multiple programs, ad-hoc processes, dozens of intake and assessment protocols, different eligibility rules resulting in duplication of services, lack of access to programs, and inefficient use of resources



# Coordinated Entry: Why?

Makes it easier to access housing and services immediately

Increases focus on shared goals

Increases exits to permanent housing for the whole system, creating system flow and reducing waitlists

Ensures that no matter where someone gets help, they receive access to the same services and housing that best fits their needs

Maximizes resources when people with the highest needs are matched with the most intensive resources



# Considerations for Designing and Implementing Your Coordinated Entry System

# Coordinated Entry: **Fundamentals**

- (1) Assess and prioritize people experiencing homelessness for housing and services
- (2) Provide expedited access to housing resources

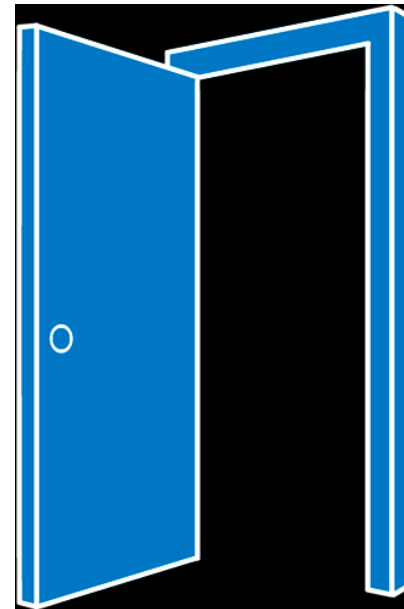


# Coordinated Entry: **Access**

**Standardized access:** All coordinated entry locations and methods offer the same assessment approach and referral protocol using uniform decision-making processes

Models include:

- Centralized Access
- Multiple “Doors”
- 211/Virtual
- Hybrid



# Coordinated Entry: **Diversion**

- Include a Diversion process at your access points
- 25%+ can be diverted from shelter

# Coordinated Entry: **Prioritization**

Prioritization is an important initial part of your coordinated entry planning and implementation process:  
Who Gets What?



**PRIORITY**



# Coordinated Entry: **Prioritization**

- **Decide** what factors are most important locally and use all available data and research to inform your community's prioritization decisions
- **Orient** your system towards one or two central prioritizing principles to help you allocate resources
- **Ensure** those most vulnerable or with the most severe service needs will be prioritized for assistance

# Coordinated Entry: **Prioritization**

## Examples of Prioritization:

- Length of homelessness
- Unsheltered
  - Chronically Homeless
  - Veterans
  - Youth
  - Families with young children
- Significant Health/Behavioral Health Challenges
- High utilization of crisis services
- Vulnerability to illness or death
- Vulnerability to victimization (e.g. physical assault, trafficking)



# Coordinated Entry: **Assessment and Prioritization**

- People who are prioritized for one type of assistance can use another type of assistance if the first intervention isn't available

# Coordinated Entry: **Assessment**

- Gather only the information needed to determine the best immediate next step for a person experiencing homelessness that will get them back into permanent housing

# Coordinated Entry: **Assessment**

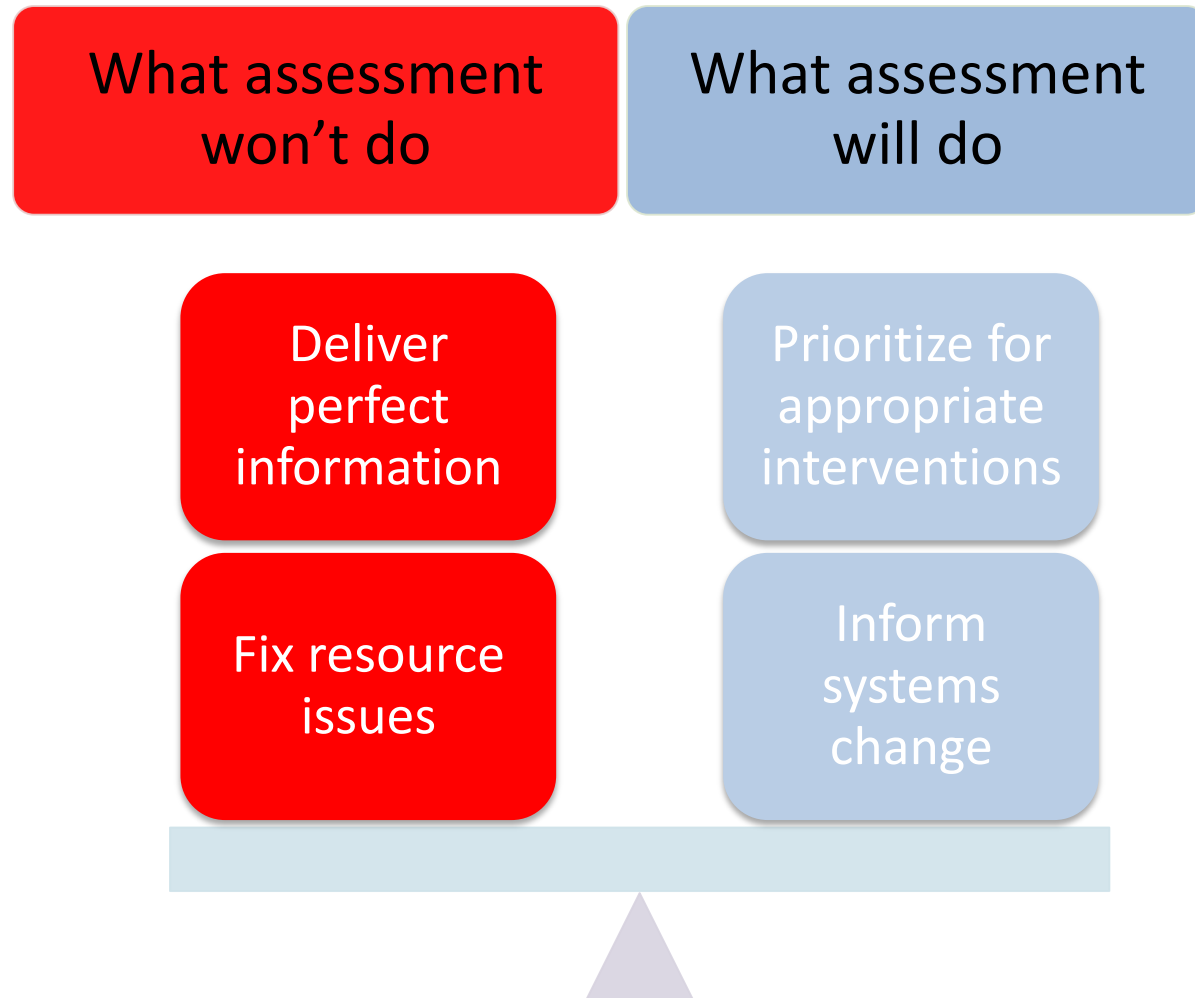
Assessment phases may include some of the following:

- Screening for diversion or prevention
- Assessing need for shelter and other crisis services
- Identifying housing resources and tenancy barriers
- Evaluating vulnerability to prioritize for intensive assistance
- Screening for program eligibility

# Poll: What can an assessment do?

- A) Deliver perfect information
- B) Tell you who will be successful
- C) Tell you what someone's barriers to housing are and prioritizes people for particular interventions based on their vulnerability

# What an Assessment Does and Does Not Do



# Coordinated Entry: **Assessment**

- Tools won't change your system on their own
- No tool is “perfect”
- So, look beyond the assessment tool to create positive outcomes



# Coordinated Entry: Referrals

- Referrals are focused on **housing navigation and matching** households to the best available intervention
- Participating programs accept all eligible referrals unless the CoC has a documented protocol for rejecting referrals
- Rejections are justified and rare
- Coordinated Entry has written standards for eligibility for all interventions
- Get provider commitment through changing funding requirements
- **Resource: Referral Process Checklist**  
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/the-assessment-and-referral-process-coordinated-assessment-checklist-addend>

# Coordinated Entry: HMIS

- Refer to HUD guidance
- Try to integrate HMIS
- If your HMIS does not have this functionality, you can use another system to collect data
- Make sure your HMIS is updated with the most recent Data Standards
- Use your data to **evaluate** if your system is working
- **Resource: HMIS and Coordinated Entry**  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4430/coordinated-entry-and-hmis-faqs/>

# Poll

True or False?

DV providers can participate in a CoC's Coordinated Entry System.



# Poll

**TRUE!**

DV providers can participate in a CoC's Coordinated Entry System.

# How Can You Get Started?

- Get started and make decisions
- Create a committee that is representative and can also make decisions for the whole CoC to:
  - Choose an assessment tool
  - Choose a model
  - Set referral protocols
  - Set a launch date
    - You can start with a small pilot and scale up later

# If you have already started...

- Use data to quantify housing need and start moving resources
- Commit existing housing resources and develop new ones through processes such as reallocation
- Create clear protocols between system and providers
- Work to require participation in coordinated entry as condition of funding awards
- Lower barriers of existing programs

**JUST GET STARTED!!!**

**You can always make changes as you develop the system**

# Examples of Effective Systems

- Tell us about the successes, challenges, and other lessons of your coordinated entry planning and implementation!

# POLL: Upcoming Webinar Topics?

- A) Assessment and Prioritization
- B) Prevention and Diversion
- C) Housing Navigation and Matching
- D) Evaluating Performance
- E) Governance and Getting Buy-In
- F) Community Examples



# Community Examples

- Hennepin County, MN  
<http://www.hennepinca.com/>
- Los Angeles, CA  
<http://ceslosangeles.weebly.com/>
- Snohomish County, WA  
[http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/Document Center/View/12699](http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/12699)
- Community SSVF providers and VA systems

# Resources

- **NAEH Coordinated Entry Toolkit**  
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/coordinated-assessment-toolkit>
- **HUD Coordinated Entry Policy Brief**  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Policy-Brief.pdf>
- **HUD FAQ Notice on Prioritizing**  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/FAQs-Notice-CPD-14-012.pdf>
- **Building Changes Coordinated Entry Toolkit**  
<http://www.buildingchanges.org/coordinated-entry-toolkit>