PRESENTERS

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Housekeeping

- Please use the Q&A feature to ask questions
- Please use the chat feature to engage in conversations during the presentation (be sure you are sending it to all panelists and attendees)
- This webinar is being recorded and it will be sent out to all registrants and posted on our website
Agenda

• Overview of the Project
• Survey Methodologies
• Findings
• Discussion/Q&A
Overview

- Beginning in April 2020, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) started conducting national surveys of Continuums of Care (CoCs) to understand the impacts of COVID-19 and how communities have responded.

- This has been a continuous project throughout the pandemic with three previous survey efforts (previous survey results are available for review on NAEH’s website: http://endhomelessness.org/covidsurvey)

- Like earlier surveys, this fourth round of surveys asked questions related to health, housing, resources, and other topics related to the pandemic.

- New for this round: An additional survey outreach effort to service providers and advocates.
Methodology-CoC Survey

• CoC Contacts listed on the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Grantee Contact page received an email invitation from NAEH on February 23, 2021, to complete the 4th round of surveys

• Deadline for completion was March 5, 2021

• The data collection platform used was Survey Monkey

• Follow up personal emails were sent to two groups on March 17th: 1-Contacts at CoCs who responded to earlier surveys and 2-Contacts who never responded to any of the previous surveys

• Responses collected through March 31, 2021

• After removing duplicates and empty records, 147 unique CoCs (37.5%) responded to the survey at a 50% completion rate
Methodology-Service Providers & Advocates Survey

• NAEH invited service providers and homeless advocates to complete a survey similar to the CoC survey on March 2, 2021

• The survey invitation was included in the Alliance’s weekly newsletter

• Surveys were originally due on March 16th, but the deadline was extended to March 19, 2021

• There were 630 total responses, but some were neither service providers nor advocates and were therefore disqualified

• Of the 566 qualified responses, 113 were from advocates and 453 were from service providers

• Received responses from across the US and its territories, including every state except Mississippi
Focus Areas

• Consumer Health
• Crisis Response Housing
• Permanent Housing
• Unsheltered Homelessness
• Resources
• Staffing
• Advocate Insights
**Consumer Health: Vaccinations**

**Priorities**
- 25 States prioritized people experiencing homelessness
- 56% of CoCs

**Plans**
- 49% of CoCs had mass vaccination plans

**Tracking**
- 44% of CoCs had plans to track vaccinations in HMIS or elsewhere

**Implementation**
- 61% of service providers said at least some of their clients had started receiving vaccinations
- Service providers play vital roles
Consumer Health: COVID-19 Cases

• Overwhelming numbers of service providers were impacted by the crisis.

• More than 1 in 4 had experienced a breakout among their clients.
Crisis Response Housing: Common, Persistent, Limited

Non-congregate sheltering was a common response (the most significant growth was in this category)

79% of CoCs said programs still up and running

- Funding still available
- Prevention efforts

Some CoCs ended programs

- Limited COVID-19 cases among people experiencing homelessness
- Limited cases in the community generally
- Funding limitations

Evidence points to a limited number of people being able to access this resource—average of 66 beds added and previous results.
Crisis Response Housing: FEMA Aid

Reasons for not taking advantage of FEMA aid:

- Being left out of the decision-making process by other city and county government officials.
- Perceptions that such programs are not needed.
- Bureaucratic concerns like the speed of reimbursements and reporting requirements.
- Insufficient staffing to manage efforts.
- Motels/hotels not wanting to serve people experiencing homelessness.
- Availability of other funding sources for these efforts.
- Insufficient information about the FEMA offer or how to apply.
Permanent Housing

• CoCs, service providers, and advocates all agree: More permanent housing is needed.
• 76% report spending at least some CARES Act funds on these beds.
• Small sample says PSH grew by 7% and RRH by 16%
• However, only 42% (estimated) are going to permanent housing when they leave motels/hotels.
Unsheltered Homelessness

Pre-COVID-19 there was a 7% increase in unsheltered homelessness that impacted most subpopulations.

47% of CoCs say they have reason to believe their communities have experienced growths in unsheltered homelessness since the beginning of the pandemic.

But count efforts were disrupted. . . . Roughly 1 in 3 didn’t conduct and unsheltered PiT and 85% of the others altered their methodology in some way.

Other ways tracking the population:

- HMIS
- By-Name lists
- Drop-In Center Data
- Encampment Mapping
- Quarterly "mini PiT Counts"
- Vehicle Counts
Resources

CARES Act of 2020
- Directed $4 billion to the Emergency Solutions Grant program.
- 41% of CoCs say they have unspent and unobligated funds.
- Directs money to a variety of needs.

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021—funds not flowing directly to homeless services

Service Providers
- 1 in 4 had lower than typical fundraising outcomes
- 35% say increased demand for services outstrips new funds they have received
- Challenges:
  - Canceled fundraising events
  - Decreases in state and local revenues leading to cutbacks in contracted services
  - Reduced income from billable services
  - New expenses (e.g., PPE and hazard pay)
  - Future funding uncertainties
Staffing

Consistent reports of employee shortages:
- Frontline shelter staff (72%)
- Case managers (69%)
- Street outreach workers (62%)

Ongoing challenges include increased stress, exhaustion, and decreased morale.

Implemented Supports:
- At-home work options
- Work schedule adjustments
- Financial incentives (e.g., hazard pay, bonuses)
- Paid leave
- At-home work options
- Appreciation events
- Employer-provided lunches
- Financial incentives (e.g., hazard pay, bonuses)
- Virtual exercise and wellness activities
- Paid leave
- Virtual team building activities
Identified Success Areas:

1) Street Outreach
2) Reach and Serving Unsheltered People
3) Vaccination Planning and Delivery

Identified Challenge Areas:

1) Vaccination Planning and Delivery
2) Placements in Permanent Housing
3) Reaching and Serving Unsheltered People
THANK YOU
# Contact Info & Resources

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Discussion & Q&A