

Austin/Travis County Rapid Re-Housing Best Practices Week 4

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What We Do



Policy and Programs

- Carries out the vital work of educating policymakers and the field about key strategies and policies for ending and preventing homelessness.
- Keeps federal policymakers and legislators informed of the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the programs serving them.
- Leads advocacy efforts on a grassroots level.

Capacity Building

- Supports efforts to end homelessness by offering training and technical assistance tailored to communities' unique needs.
- Helps design and implement crisis systems, improve systems' performance, and utilize data to end homelessness, particularly with an equity lens.
- Provides online courses, trainings, and webinars to inform the field of best practices to end homelessness.

Homeless Research Institute

- Analyzes data to identify homelessness trends on national, local, and Continuum of Care levels.
- Publishes research that ensures policymakers, practitioners, the media, and the public have the best information about trends and emerging solutions to the problem.
- Uses an equity lens to identify disparities in homelessness data.

Lived Experience Innovation + Strategic Communications

National Alliance to End Homelessness Statements for Participation

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.

Training Series Overview

Week One

- Effective Homeless Response Systems
- Role of Rapid Re-Housing
- Foundations of Effective Rapid Re-Housing
- Core Components of Rapid Rehousing

Week Two

- Housing First Principles
- Importance of housing identification in client success
- Creative housing solutions in a difficult housing market
- RRRH Rent and Financial Assistance Principles and Program Standards

Week Three

- Role of the Case Manager in providing financial assistance using an individualized and flexible approach
- Progressive Engagement
- Rapid Re-Housing Case Management Principles and Program Standards
- Role of RRRH Case Manager in housing stabilization
- Effective and Empowering RRRH Case Management Practices

Week Four

- Principles and Program Standards of RRRH data collection
- Using system and program data to inform practice
- How to collect and measure program level data, understand the “story” that it tells, and use it to inform performance improvement
- Develop Action Plans for continuous improvement and Wrap Up

10/22/2024



Virtual Session Logistics



Mute Button



Comment and Ask
Questions in Chat



Slides will be
provided at the end
of the series



Participation
encouraged



Camera's On



Breakout Rooms Who's Here?

- Your name
- Identities, Pronouns
- Role/Organization
- Favorite dish in cold weather?
- What is one thing that stuck out from any of the training sessions?



REVIEW

Remember Session One, Two and Three?

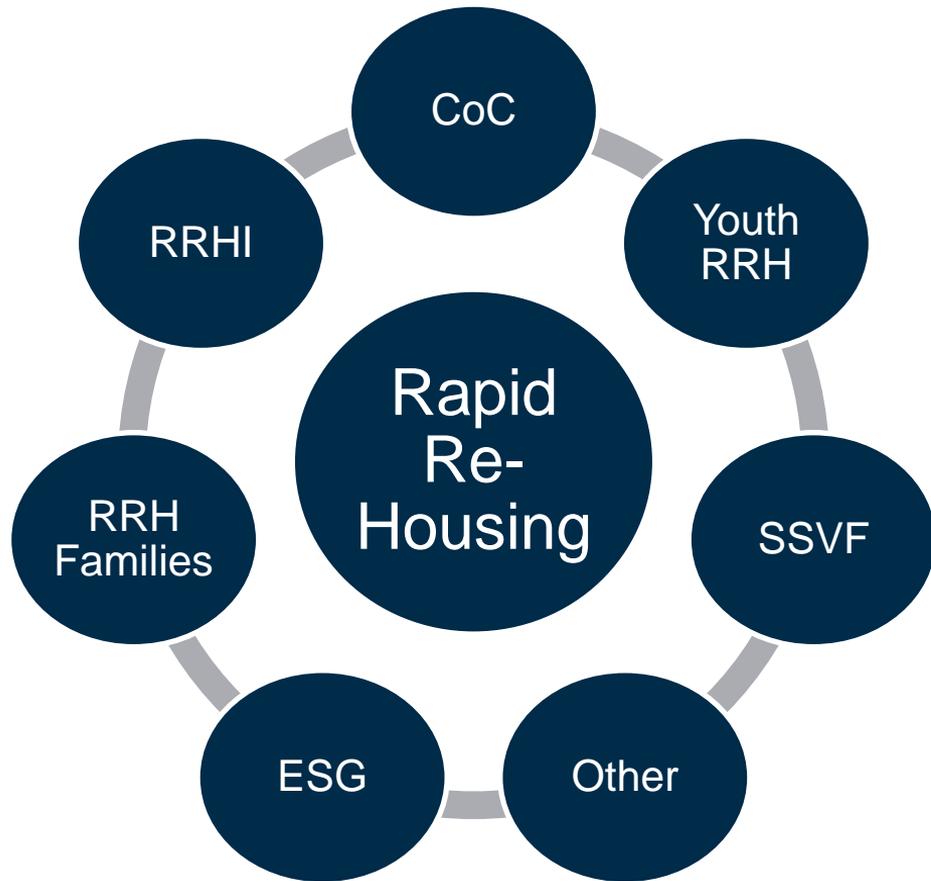


Homeless Response System: **ENDGAME**

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





The Foundation for Successful Rapid Re-Housing



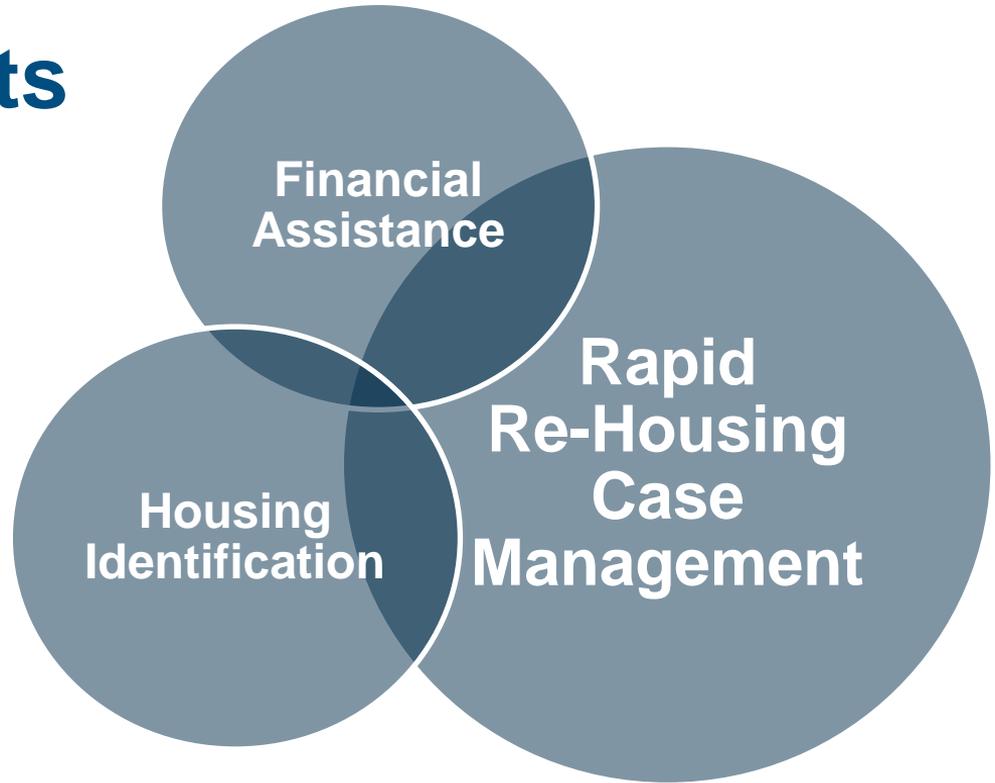
1. **Belief** that clients can be successful regardless of housing barriers
2. Positive **engagement** starts at first contact
3. **Empowering** clients

Housing First

HOUSING FIRST IS NOT	HOUSING FIRST IS
Just one type of program (not just PSH)	A system-wide philosophical approach to many types of homeless assistance interventions
One-size fits only	A philosophy that values flexibility, individualized supports, client choice, and autonomy
Housing only	Supportive services that people choose for themselves are a critical part of a Housing First approach
Setting people up for failure	The provision of a foundation of stability and health through permanent housing
A way to prioritize one population over another	A way to provide a housing intervention for everyone regardless of the severity of their needs

Core Components

- Not linear
- Each piece is critical
- Cannot work in silos
- RRH Case Management is an integral part of housing identification and financial assistance



FIND HOUSING

Help people quickly find housing within one month or less.

PAY FOR HOUSING

Help people pay for housing short term; longer-term help an option.

STAY IN HOUSING

Help access services so people can stay in housing.



FIND FAST HOUSING IDENTIFICATION



Build relationships with landlords to have access to as many housing units as possible.



Find and secure housing as quickly as possible after a person or family becomes homeless.



Limit the time a family or individual spends homeless. Move people into housing within **30 days or less**.

FIND: Housing Identification and Practice

Philosophy

- Everyone is ready to be housed immediately
- Households need assistance to locate housing
- Landlord recruitment is essential to successful rapid re-housing

Practice

- Actively recruits and retains landlords
- Provides support during housing search
- Identifies and mitigates barriers to entering housing
- Ensures “good fit” between landlord and client
- Assists client to realistically identify the “right” housing option
- Facilitates shared housing

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HELP PAY RENT AND MOVE-IN ASSISTANCE



Pay for security deposits, move-in expenses...

... and/or rent and utilities.

Length of assistance varies, but often **4 to 6 months**.

Financial Assistance in Practice

Summary

- Individualized assessment to determine the “right” individual financial assistance (only what’s necessary)
- Encourages client contribution from the start
- Focuses on the \$\$ amount that household needs to pay for rent
- Just because its an “eligible expense” doesn’t mean it’s the most effective use of financial resources
- Identifies all potential resources of \$\$ to pay towards rent
- Client assumes maintaining housing – identifies and pursues what is needed

TIP: Your job is to help them obtain housing – their job is to keep it; involve them in paying for housing from the start to increase *RAPID SUCCESSFUL EXITS*

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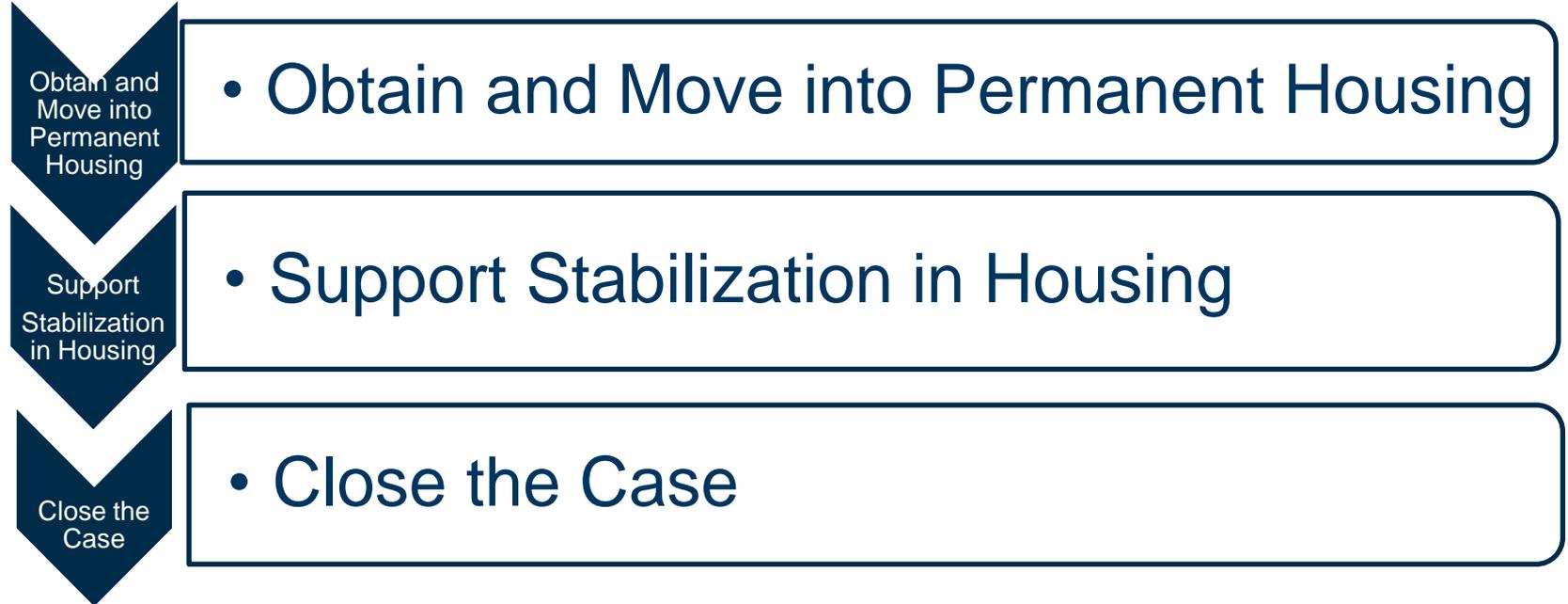
HELP STAY RAPID RE-HOUSING CASE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES

Connect families and individuals to services and supports in the community.

Help resolve issues that may threaten housing stability, including conflicts with landlords.



Case Management and Services Standards



Summary

An effective engagement starts with the first meeting

Focus on positive exit for sustainability from day one, NOT program compliance

Role of Case Manager is to help client problem solve

Every meeting is focused on maintaining the lease and taking over housing costs – “how will you pay the \$1500 for your rent in December”

Strengths and positive reinforcement

Belief in everyone's ability to make it

Live in reality

Pop Quiz



Breakout Three: Improving RRH

Seven Minute Brainstorm

- Group One – Housing Identification
 - Group Two– Financial Assistance
 - Group Three – RRH (housing stabilization) Case Management
1. Discuss and list what you are doing well as individual programs
 2. Discuss and list where you most need to focus for improvements in your program



Stretch Break!!!!



IMPROVING RRH PERFORMANCE

Why Data



Using Data to Improve Performance

Philosophy

- There is always room to improve



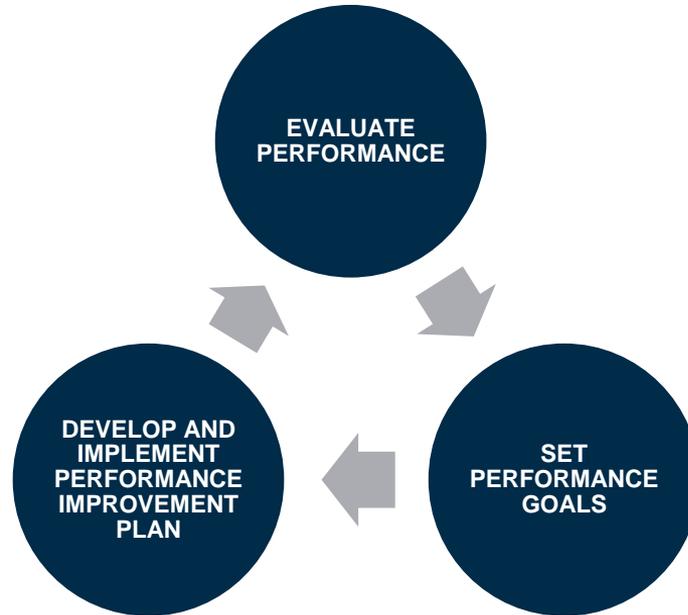
Practice

- Collect regularly and evaluate to determine how program is impacting homelessness across the community
- Use data to make program improvements
- Measure outcomes, not outputs
 - Decrease length of stay in homelessness
 - Increase exits to permanent housing
 - Decrease returns to homelessness

Why Data?

- Good data is essential to plan an end homelessness, evaluate programs, and properly (re-)allocate resources.
- System - wide data
 - Continuously collected and reviewed at minimum quarterly by governance board
 - Used to assess cost; to plan solutions; to implement prevention measures; and to measure outcomes.
- Program Level Data
 - Collect and review monthly – look for trends and respond to them quickly
 - Use to improve outcomes to increase exits to PH and decrease LOS
 - Identifies what programs are best in each intervention; where can reallocation be made

Programmatic Cycle of Performance Improvement

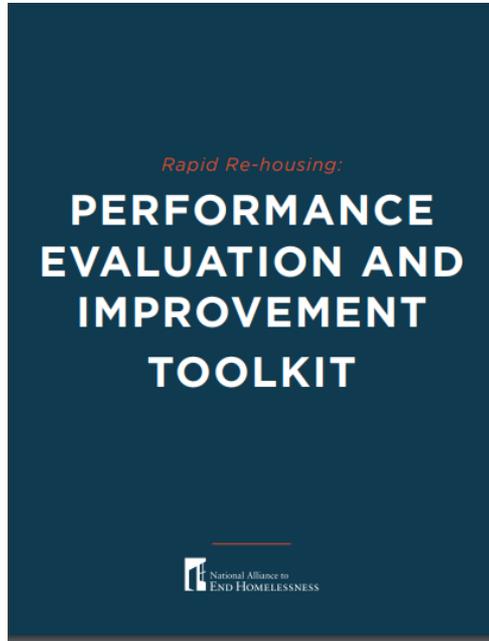


DATA MATTERS

Improving Outcomes to End Homelessness in the Travis County



Performance Evaluation and Improvement Toolkit



This document provides details on how to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of RRH practice, both in individual programs and across a system as a tool to help providers, funders, and other stakeholders understand how effectively programs are operating on their own and in comparison, to others.

<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/rapid-re-housing-performance-evaluation-and-improvement-toolkit/>

Rational for RRH Benchmarks

- The benchmarks are not based on performance data such as income, employment, criminal history, mental health history, medical history, or evidence of “motivation.”
- Programs assisting individuals and families with high housing barriers are able to achieve these outcomes
- The performance benchmarks provide a baseline from which funders can establish performance improvement goals and performance-based contracting standards.

Rapid Re-Housing Primary Goals

- 1** REDUCE THE LENGTH OF TIME PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS SPEND HOMELESS
- 2** INCREASE EXITS OF HOUSEHOLDS TO PERMANENT HOUSING
- 3** LIMIT RETURNS TO HOMELESSNESS

Rational for RRH Benchmarks

Data is valuable only if it is acted upon. Thus, program evaluation is important — but it is not enough. Programs and systems should use the information gained from evaluation to refine and improve rapid re-housing activities.

Program activities and following program rules do not indicate the success of an RRH program; outcomes are the only indicator that a program is functioning at a high level.

Poll

- Our RRH providers pull monthly outcomes for each case manager
- Our RRH providers pull monthly outcomes as a program and meets to discuss outcomes, identify trends and change practice to improve outcomes
- RRH staff/case managers use their own outcome data to improve their own practice
- RRH outcomes are publicly reported on the CoC dashboard monthly, by system and by project.

Why data?



Tells a story



Informs decision-making



Helps to set, track, and monitor goals



Measures Impact

DATA



SORTED



ARRANGED



PRESENTED VISUALLY



EXPLAINED WITH A STORY



RRH Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

- Benchmark: Households move into housing in an average of **30 days** or less from program entry

2. Permanent Housing Exits

- Benchmark: **80% of households** exit the RRH program in a permanent housing destination

3. Returns to Homelessness

- Benchmark: **85% of households** that exit rapid re-housing to permanent housing do not become homeless again within a year

4. Efficiency

- Benchmark: Determine based on local housing costs, comparison to other program types

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Reduce Length of Stay

2. Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. Efficiency

Benchmark

- Clients move into housing in an average of 30 days or less from program entry

How to measure

- Average length of time from program entry to residential move-in for households who moved into permanent housing

Standard Measurements

In the chat box – how is the date of RRH program entry determined?

When is move-in date recorded?

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Increase Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. Efficiency

Benchmark

- 80% exit rapid re-housing to permanent housing

How to measure

- Percent of clients who exit rapid re-housing to permanent housing

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Permanent Housing Exits

3. Decrease Returns to Homelessness

4. Efficiency

Benchmark

- 85% of households that exit rapid re-housing to permanent housing do not become homeless again within a year

How to measure

- Percent of clients who remain housed 12 months after program exit to permanent housing

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. **Efficiency**

Benchmark

- Determine based on local housing costs, comparison to other program types

How to measure

- Average cost per exit to permanent housing

Determining Cost Per Household

AVG LOS in
RRH = 330
days

TOTAL Program Cost

Total Households Exited to Permanent Housing

- Family Options Study: Avg. **\$6,578** per household
- SSVF: Avg. **\$4,793** per household (FY17)

Sources: <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/findings-and-implications-of-the-family-options-study/>
https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/docs/SSVF_FY2017_AnnualReport_508.pdf

Breakout Rooms:

Brainstorm practices that will increase positive outcomes.

1. What can we do/improve to shorten the length of time from program entry to housing placement?
2. What can we do/improve to increase exits to permanent housing?
3. What can we do to limit returns to homelessness?
4. What can we do to improve program efficiency – serve the most households effectively?



Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. Efficiency

How can we shorten the length of stay in homelessness? List in Chat!

- Robust landlord recruitment
- Embrace belief in each person's ability to be housed quickly
- Housing-focused messaging from entry into the system
- Positive engagement from day one

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Increase Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. Efficiency

How can we increase exits to permanent housing? In Chat...

- Match clients with units that work for them
- Creative solutions (roommates, SRO's, master leasing etc.)
- Flexible financial assistance
- Proactive housing stabilization case management and connection to services and natural supports
- Move clients if needed



Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. Efficiency

How can we limit returns to homelessness?

- Place clients in units they can eventually afford
- Prepare clients for program exit and housing stability
- Warm hand-offs to community services
- Pro-active follow up

Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay

2. Permanent Housing Exits

3. Returns to Homelessness

4. **Efficiency**

How can we increase our efficiency?

- Flexible financial assistance
- Leverage mainstream connections
- Evaluate case management ratio

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Programs with System Results



Using Benchmarks



Individual Staff
Outcomes



Performance
Evaluations



Racial Disparities
in Data



Internal
Brainstorming for
Improvement

Data tells the story

- Consistency in measures across programs and staff
- Review regularly and make adjustments for a better story outcome
- Use data – don't just report it
- Recognize challenges and celebrate improvements

What Is Qualitative Data

Qualitative data is non-numerical data. This means that it represents the aspects of experiences that are often difficult to measure through tools and assessments or are open-ended in nature. The overall objective of qualitative research is to:

- Capture snapshots of the perspectives,
- Characteristics,
- Experiences,
- Habits of communities.

Source: Qualitative Data 101



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Why Qualitative Data?

- There's more than meets the eye
- Correlation \neq Causation
- Lived Experience Perspective



Ways to Collect Qualitative Data



- 1 on 1 Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Surveys
- Observation*
- Ethnographies*
- Digital Storytelling
- Case notes
- Case Conferencing

NEXT STEPS



Breakout Two (7 Minutes)

Sam, is 54, and has significant history of homelessness both sheltered and unsheltered . Sam is diagnosed with schizophrenia and is adamant that his history of homelessness wasn't his fault and that "no one listened". Sam has used RRH before and said the case manager didn't listen to him, so he left the apartment. He will think about housing if his friends can join him or if he can get a camper. He reports the only time he has been stably housed was when he had a camper (2014) but lost it due to going to jail for a short time. He currently has no income but says he will be rich soon.

What will your first conversation be with this household? Where will you start? What might housing, financial assistance, and case management look like?

Reminder: The Goal of Rapid Re-Housing Is...

To move households quickly to permanent housing

- Reduce the length of time people experience homeless
- Exit households quickly to permanent housing
- Limit returns to homelessness
- Inclusive, equitable programs that house anyone, especially folks with greater barriers to tenancy

...and to do it as a system!!!



Wrapping it up!!

In chat box or raise your hand....

What is one thought or feeling that you have leaving this meeting? (in one word)

What is one thing you will try, do different , or improve after this training?



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Wrapping it up!!

Alliance's Thoughts and Recommendations

1. Continue Housing First focus and believe people can be successful
2. Creative Housing Solutions – Client Driven and Realistic (roommates and shared housing)
3. System training in Progressive Engagement, Trauma Informed Care, Harm Reduction Practice, and Motivational Interviewing
4. Continue RRH Work Group for **all programs to meet monthly** to ensure systemic practice and messaging
5. Align RRH practices for all providers (no matter the funding)

Q&A

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