Madison/Dane CoC Reimagine Coordinated Entry Phase III (1) - 6/5/24

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Reimagine CE Workgroup Overview

Dane CoC's Current CE System

Access	Assessment	Prioritization	Referral

- Emergency shelters
- Street Outreach at unsheltered locations
- CE staff at the Beacon (call, walk-in, CE contact form on HSC website) and other strategic places

For households who have been literally homeless (residing in emergency shelters or unsheltered locations) for 7 or more days
  - VI-SPDAT
  - Length of time homelessness (capped at 3 years)

- For RRH: non-chronically homeless by the highest score, VI-SPDAT score plus years homeless (up to 3 years)
- PSH: chronically homeless by the highest score, VI-SPDAT score plus years homeless (up to 3 years)

When openings become available at RRH, PSH, and other PH programs accepting participants through CE, the CE Manager uses HMIS to run the Single or Family Housing Priority List and refers the households ranked at the top of the list.

Background: Why was the workgroup formed?

- In response to local and national criticism of VI-SPDAT and OrgCode discontinuing support
- HUD's encouragement for CoC's to re-examine the CE process
- 2020 Dane CoC CE evaluation recommendations included building consensus on prioritization strategies and addressing racial equity
- Built for Zero group, HSC Core Committee, Lived Experience Council, and Board of Directors have tried to assess existing disparities and better way to prioritize housing program openings
- HSC Core Committee decided to establish a workgroup with wider community representation that is tasked with proposing a new way to prioritize individuals and families for RRH and PSH opening in Dane CoC to the HSC Board of Directors.

Workgroup Development

Structure

- Reached out to HSC members and specific non-HSC providers for recruitment
- Started the workgroup meetings in December 2022
- Chara Taylor (LEC) and Sarah Lim (City of Madison) co-chair

Workgroup 3 Phases

- Phase I (December 2022 - July 2023): Establishing the foundation by reviewing the current Dane CoC system, other community examples, and various local data
- Phase II (September 2023 - March 2024): Crafting specific recommendations
- Phase III (Starting soon): Working on policies and procedures and the implementation plan

*Phase I and II workgroup materials can be found on the HSC website committee page:
https://www.danecountyhomeless.org/reimagine-ce-workgroup

Key Takeaways from
Phase I System and Data Analysis

Key Takeaways from Phase I Analysis

1. **Low Assessment Completion Rates:** Many potentially eligible households did not complete the VI-SPDAT and thus were not referred to Coordinated Entry (CE).
2. **Limited Impact of CE Housing Interventions:** CE housing interventions only resolved a small percentage of homelessness episodes. Within a one-year period, only 17% of families (41 out of 239) and 5% of singles (60 out of 1,172) referred to CE moved into housing through CE.
3. **Disparities in Housing Outcomes:** While significant disparities exist in homelessness rates among people of color, we did not find system-wide CE-specific disparities based on race and ethnicity. However, specific population groups experience worse housing outcomes at certain stages, warranting ongoing monitoring post-implementation of changes.

    See the Dane CoC CE Data Review Report for details.

Phase II: Objective for Change

Objective for Change Statement

Background:

In Dane County, the implementation of a Coordinated Entry (CE) system in 2016 marked a significant milestone in the journey toward addressing homelessness. This system aimed to ensure that individuals assessed as highly vulnerable gained access to the vital but limited housing resources they needed. Initially, like many Continuums of Care (CoCs) across the nation, Dane CoC adopted the VI-SPDAT as its primary prioritization tool.

However, over time, concerns and criticisms regarding the VI-SPDAT emerged. These criticisms included the intrusive and potentially stigmatizing nature of some of its questions and the emergence of racial disparities in VI-SPDAT scores, where whites tended to score higher than people of color.

In response to these concerns, Dane CoC initiated an overhaul of the CE prioritization process for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Rapid Rehousing Program (RRH) to better align it with local needs and priorities.

Objective for Change Statement (cont.)

Objective for Change:

Enhance the Coordinated Entry System in Dane County to better identify and prioritize households **who are most likely to experience significant harm from homelessness**.

Guiding Principles:

- **Equity-Centered**: We commit to an equity-centered approach that recognizes and addresses disparities, promoting equitable access to housing resources.
- **Trauma-Informed**: We embrace a trauma-informed approach to create a supportive and safe environment for those seeking housing resources.

Phase II Workgroup Change Recommendations - approved by the HSC Board

Recommendations

General Direction: Transition towards utilizing third-party data for assessments in the long-term, with an interim approach due to limited access to such data at this time.

1. **Implement a Two-Tiered Assessment.**
2. **Retain the VI-SPDAT Tool for Tier 2 Assessment for the time being.**
3. **PSH and RRH Prioritization**

#1. Implement a Two-Tiered Assessment

- **Tier 1 Assessment**: Automate an HMIS report-based assessment for all emergency shelter and street outreach program participants using shelter and outreach intake questions and HMIS utilization records.
- **Tier 2 Assessment**: Conduct a full assessment for a smaller group identified through the Tier 1 process.

Tier 1 Assessment

Existing info to be used:

- History of homelessness (frequency and length of homeless services utilization)
- Income
- Age

To be Added to Shelter and Outreach Intake:

- Eviction
- Criminal legal system involvement
- Domestic violence shelter use
- Family size
- Behavioral health crisis program utilization
- Medical crisis

Tier 1 Assessment Link (v. 3/8/24)

#2. Retain the VI-SPDAT Tool for Tier 2 Assessment for the time being.

- Continue using the VI-SPDAT tool for Tier 2 assessments initially.
- Begin the discussions on the subsequent phase, incorporating more third-party data in assessment and revising VI-SPDAT, six months after implementing the Tier 1 assessment.

#3. PSH and RRH Prioritization

PSH Prioritization

- Identify households with high Tier 1 PSH assessment scores and administer VI-SPDAT.
- Prioritize chronically homeless households with the highest VI-SPDAT score.

RRH Prioritization

- Identify households with high Tier 1 RRH assessment scores and administer VI-SPDAT.
- Prioritize households who are newly homeless but have not been able to self-resolve within 6 months, with additional consideration for current shelter use.

Positive Impact Envisioned

- Assessing all eligible households.
- Reducing time and emotional burden on CE staff and participants for completing VI-SPDAT.
- Potential for reallocating CE staff time for more housing navigation.
- Addressing certain discrepancies in CE referrals by race and ethnicity.
- Facilitating more outflow to permanent housing from highly utilized emergency shelters.

Phase III Workgroup Plan

Objective: Develop policies and procedures and set implementation plans for the new system

Tasks:

1. Start data collection for Tier 1 assessment: Develop immediate next steps to start collecting additional data (eviction, criminal legal system involvement, etc.)
2. Finalize Tier 1 assessment with brackets for families
3. Develop draft policies and procedures:
    - Tier 1 and Tier 2 assessment workflow
    - Prioritization
    - Referral and connection to housing programs
    - Chronic homelessness documentation
    - Staff training
    - Marketing and outreach
    - Evaluation
4. Develop Implementation plan including logistics, milestones, timeline, training and communication

Phase III Workgroup Plan

Meeting Schedule and Structure

Meeting Schedule:

Meeting twice a month for 1.5 hours (1st and 3rd Wednesdays 11am-12:30pm), June-December 2024

Meeting Structure:

- Read through the drafted section and approve
- Look at the next section titles, provide initial feedback on specific topics and questions that the planning group identified
- Identify a small group of volunteers who will be writing that next section draft

Phase III Workgroup Draft Schedule

Date	Topics
6/5	Phased III Orientation, Tier 1 assessment & discuss new data collection
6/19	(No meeting - Juneteenth)
7/3	Tier 1 assessment & discuss new data collection, Accommodation for DV only clients
7/17	Tier 1 and Tier 2 assessment workflow
8/7	Prioritization
8/21	Chronic homelessness documentation for PSH
9/4	Referral and connection to housing program
9/18	Staff training
10/2	Marketing and outreach
10/16	Evaluation
11/6	Implementation plan and review
11/20	Implementation plan and review (if needed)
12/4	Implementation plan and review (if needed)
12/18	Implementation plan and review (if needed)

Tier 1 Assessment & New Data Collection

[Tier 1 Assessment Link](#)

New Data Collection Discussion

1. When should we start new data collection for participants newly enrolling in shelter or outreach programs?
2. Do we need to go back and collect data for existing participants? If so, who should be asked these new questions among existing participants? When and how?
3. What communication is needed for shelter and outreach participants regarding the new data collection?
4. What shelter and outreach staff training is needed?
5. Who can volunteer to draft the written policy on this topic?