Coordinated Entry:
Best Practices to Plan and Implement a Rural Coordinated Entry System

Introductions

- Presented by Collaborative Solutions Inc.
- Funding for this project is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Rural Capacity Building Program.

What is Collaborative Solutions?

Collaborative Solutions, Inc. (CS):
- A nonprofit organization based in Birmingham, AL that specializes in community and organizational development strategies to improve the lives of low-income and vulnerable persons.
- Offers technical assistance, organizational capacity development, leadership development, community organization, local and statewide advocacy for special needs populations, research and evaluation services to communities and organizations.
- Program areas include: HIV/AIDS Housing & Health, Affordable & Rural Housing, Homeless & HMIS, Domestic Violence, Research & Evaluation.
What is the Rural Supportive Housing Initiative?

The Rural Supportive Housing Initiative (RSHI) provides capacity development to housing and supportive service providers in rural communities so they can meet the needs of vulnerable populations for safe, affordable, and supportive housing.

Logistics/Housekeeping

- Resource materials
  - PPT
  - Handouts
- Restrooms and telephones
  - Please silence or turn off cell phones.
- Questions (the “Parking Lot”)

Fresno Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[25 mins]</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[20 mins]</td>
<td>Agenda review</td>
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<tr>
<td>[30 mins]</td>
<td>Section 1: Basics of Coordinated Entry: Origins and Overview of CES</td>
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<tr>
<td>[95 mins]</td>
<td>Section 2: Core Components of a Coordinated Entry System (with 15 minute break built in)</td>
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<tr>
<td>[40 mins]</td>
<td>Section 3: Local Planning, Design &amp; Implementation: Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>[60 mins]</td>
<td>Lunch (on your own)</td>
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<td>[60 mins]</td>
<td>Section 4: Action Steps: Next Steps for your Local CES</td>
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<tr>
<td>[10 mins]</td>
<td>Section 5: Case Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>[11 mins]</td>
<td>Wrap-up and Closing</td>
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Learning Objectives

- Understand the fundamentals and origin of coordinated entry
- Identify the core components of coordinated entry and assess where your community is in the development and implementation of CE
- Identify ways to address common challenges faced by rural communities and to engage your local stakeholders in planning and design of CE
- Use best practices and case studies to support local planning efforts and develop a checklist and next steps for your community

Group Activity #1: Who's in the room?

Answer the question:

What is the current status of your local Coordinated Entry process?

- (1) I'm familiar with Coordinated Entry, but don't know what it looks like in our CoC
- (2-3) My community is just getting started and hasn't quite finalized a coordinated entry approach or design yet.
- (4-5) My CoC has implemented SOME aspects of a CE system, but we still have a lot of work to do.
- (6-8) My CoC has implemented MOST aspects of a CE system but we have room for improvement.
- (9-10) My CoC is fully operational, we are just interested in learning how we can improve adjustments.

Group Activity #1: Who's in the room?

- Introduce yourself
  - Name, organization
  - Role in the community and/or with coordinated entry
  - Where are you on the scale and why
Section 1: Basics of Coordinated Entry

Origin & Overview of Coordinated Entry

Background & Context: HEARTH ACT

- The call to action of the HEARTH Act
  - "Transform homeless services into crisis response systems that prevent and end homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing."
- Purpose of the HEARTH Act
  - Consolidate homeless assistance programs
  - Codify the Continuum of Care planning process
  - Establish a goal of ensuring that families who become homeless return to permanent housing within 30 days

Background & Context

- Establishing a Coordinated Entry System has been a requirement since 2012 (CoC Program interim rule)
- HUD has established a deadline of January 23, 2018 for CoC to establish or update their Coordinated Entry System (Notice CPD-17-01)
CoC Interim Rule

- Each CoC and ESG recipient operating within the CoC's geographic area must participate in the CoC coordinated entry process
- The same assessment approach must be offered at all access points
- A standardized assessment tool and process is used, regardless of where a client presents for service
- Homeless households are prioritized based on a standard set of criteria
- The referral process is standardized

Why Coordinated Entry?

Coordinated Entry is a way to coordinate and manage the crisis response system -
- Reorient service provision, creating a more client-focused environment
- Identify which strategies are best for each household based on knowledge of and access to a full array of available services
- Improves system efficiency
- Fosters more collaboration among providers

Why: Coordinated Entry – A Systems Approach

- Before CE
  - Project-centric
  - Many access points with multiple assessments
  - Ad hoc referral system
  - No strategy or process to prioritize
- After CE
  - Person-centric
  - Standardized access, forms, assessment & referrals
What: Coordinated Entry - Core Elements

- Access
- Assessment
- Prioritization
- Referral & Housing Placement

**Coordinated Entry**

- It is a systems approach to coordination
- It is inclusive of all CoC providers and resources
- It is a data-driven approach to homeless service delivery
- It will help the CoC make the best use of scarce resources
- It is using Housing First to end homelessness
- It will help the CoC make the best use of scarce resources
- It is using Housing First to end homelessness
- It is using Housing First to end homelessness
- It will succeed using a collective effort

**Coordinated Entry Is Not/Will Not**

- It is not a “program”
- It is not creating new units or beds
- A more effective referral process alone will not increase housing, services, or other resources
- It will not reduce the challenges of serving households with multiple barriers to obtaining or maintaining housing
- It is not first-come, first-served
- It will not happen without leadership
Section 2: Core Components of Coordinated Entry

Access, Assess, Prioritization, Referral and Housing Placement

Coordinated Entry -- Access

Your system must have a coordinated entry point(s) and standardized approach for homeless households seeking assistance.

- Basics of Access include:
  - Full geographic coverage
  - Easily accessible by individuals and families
  - Well advertised
  - Written policies and procedures to document and ensure fair and equal access

Access

- Access points can be a
  - Single point of access
  - Multi-site access points
  - No wrong-door system
  - Phone/Hotline
Your coordinated entry system may include separate access points for specific populations.

**Required: Same assessment approach at all access points**

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**Access**

- Additional Access Requirements include:
  - Ability to access emergency services with as few barriers as possible and ensure access isn’t limited to CE operating hours
  - Develop an Affirmative marketing strategy and accessibility policies to ensure all populations and subpopulations have non-discriminatory access to the CE process
  - Street outreach efforts must be linked to CE
  - Safety planning for those fleeing and seeking services from non-victim service providers
  - Ensure adequate privacy protections are extended and enforced throughout the process from the first point of access

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**Special Considerations: Access**

- Addressing special considerations and challenges for CE Access in rural communities
  - Access Points — careful consideration of the CoC geography, transportation, resources, and capacity in order to select your Access model/points
  - Fewer homeless system providers — particularly agencies that serve exclusively people experiencing homelessness
  - Wide distance between providers — they can be isolated and very spread-out geographically
  - Lack of connectedness or collaboration between partners
  - Limited visibility of homeless population
  - Limited jobs and affordable housing
  - Needs in one area of the CoC may be very different than needs in another area
Coordinated Entry -- Assess

The assessment phase of coordinated entry is a standardized process to document the needs and preferences of individuals and households accessing the system.

- HUD requires standardized assessment tools and activities.
- The Assessment process of coordinated entry should be progressive and include multiple phases, which may include:
  - Initial Screening/Triage: what assistance does this person/household need right now?
  - Prevention or Diversion: can this episode of homelessness be prevented or resolved quickly?
  - Initial Standard Assessment
  - Eligibility Assessment: what assistance does this household need to exit homelessness?
  - Comprehensive Assessment

Assess – Screening & Triage

Screening & Triage
An initial screening can be used to:
- Determine a household’s immediate needs and resolve immediate crisis, when possible.
- Inform the next step/type of referral a household receives.
- Determine if the homelessness system is appropriate for resolving the household’s crisis.

Assess – Prevention & Diversion

Assisting the household to avoid homelessness is always the best outcome.

- Utilizing prevention services to avoid homelessness and/or incorporating a diversion approach to examine existing resources and options to prevent entry into shelter are appropriate as part of the initial triage.
## Assess – Prevention & Diversion

**Prevention**
- Prevention is assistance to help a person or household maintain their current housing (usually financial assistance)
- May be one-time assistance
- May include short-term service provision (budget help, case management, landlord mediation)
- Case management can address the underlying issues of the housing crisis

**Diversion**
- Finding temporary alternate housing options outside of shelter when appropriate and safe
- Prevents unnecessary shelter entry
- Happens when an individual or household comes to the system to request shelter
- Requires service flexibility and light service provision (landlord mediation, negotiating)
- May or may not include financial assistance

## Assess – Standard Assessments

**Standardized assessment:**
- Documentation of participant’s needs, preferences, vulnerability
- Can happen in multiple phases (initial, eligibility, comprehensive)
- Determines a household’s housing and services needs and informs the ‘best-fit’ referral

## Assess – Requirements & Best Practices

**Other Requirements**
- Must use same standardized assessment process and assessment tool at all access points
- Written criteria used for uniform decision-making
- Allow for participant autonomy
- Provide training to organizations that serve as ‘access points’ or otherwise conduct assessments

**Best Practices:**
- The assessment is client-centered and collects only the information that is relevant at that point in time
- The assessment is progressive and phased, is trauma informed, and addresses safety and privacy
Special Considerations: Assessment

- Special considerations and challenges for CE Assessments in rural communities
  - When planning for your CE assessment process, consider:
    - What information will be collected
    - Who will be conducting the assessments
    - How you will train the assessors
    - Data-management and sharing
    - Privacy concerns

Coordinated Entry -- Prioritization

- What does it mean to prioritize?
  - A CoC must use a coordinated entry process to prioritize households for access to housing and services.
  - A CoC must prioritize the most severe service needs/highest vulnerability.
  - Prioritization must be defined by specific community-established principles and criteria that are publicly available and consistently applied.
  - Prioritization policies must be documented in written standards.

Prioritization & Referral

- The person’s assessed vulnerability will establish their level of priority for resources in the homeless system and lead to identification of vacancies at housing and supportive services projects that the person can be referred to.
  - Components of a prioritization process:
    - Determining priority level
    - Managing the priority list (priority list, master list, by-name list)
    - Using the priority list to fill all vacancies
    - Case Conferencing
Special Considerations: Prioritization

- Special considerations and challenges for CE prioritization in rural communities
  - Case conferencing – how to manage this in a large geography
  - Establishing a clear and formal decision-making process
  - List conversion – managing the process of converting multiple waitlists into one centralized priority list

Coordinated Entry -- Referral and Housing Placement

Once a person is assessed and their level of vulnerability or need is determined (based on the CoC prioritization standards), they will be referred to the appropriate placement.

Referral & Housing Placement Fundamentals

- The CoC must implement a referral process that applies to all beds and service projects funded by the CoC or ESG Program
  - The process also applies to other projects within the CoC that are participating in CE
- Referral can occur at various points in the CE process
- Households are referred to programs for which they are eligible
- Client choice informs the process
Referral and Housing Placement Requirements

- Other Requirements for Referrals for Housing Placement:
  - The group of persons with the highest priority must be offered housing and supportive services projects first.
  - Lowering barriers: Providers should remove barriers to entry into projects.
  - The referral process should be uniform across projects and must comply with nondiscrimination provisions.

Additional Elements of Housing Placement

- Avoiding long wait times for referrals
- Person-centered approach
  - Ensure participant choice regarding location and type of housing
  - Setting clear expectations for referrals
  - Process when a person is rejected by a project
- Programs use a Housing First approach to lower barriers and ensure that high-need households receive assistance
- Referral process should account for occasions when a referral is rejected by the potential participant or when the provider rejects a referral under established policies.
- Equal access and fair housing protections in place to ensure households are not steered to any particular program
- Referral data management and efficiency tracking

Special Considerations: Referral & Housing Placement

- Special considerations and challenges for CE referrals and housing placement in rural communities
  - Wait times – how you will eliminate long wait times for resources and identify alternative options (housing that may have less intensive services until other more appropriate housing is available)
  - Differing referral strategies
  - How to incorporate a person-centered approach (client choice)
  - Addressing provider concerns
Questions about the CE Core Components?

Break

Group Activity #2
Process Mapping Exercise
Section 3: Local Planning & Implementation
Infrastructure, Oversight and Engagement

Coordinated Entry – Structure and Oversight

Strengthening your CoC governance model to support system change during the design and implementation of CE:

- The CoC is responsible for establishing and operating the CE system:
  - Establishing policies and procedures
  - Appointing a designated entity to oversee/manage CE

- Planning for the management and oversight of your CES should include:
  - Identifying where decisions are made
  - Identifying who will be responsible for daily oversight as well as ongoing performance
  - Ensuring comprehensive and diverse stakeholders are involved

Considerations for CE Structure

During planning, design & implementation:
Considerations for CE Structure

- Establish CE system vision, values and guiding principles
- Define CE geography, participation, expectations and roles, oversight and management
- Identify your CE model (access points, assessment tool, etc.)
- Get community engagement and buy-in
- Develop your management/oversight plan and your operational policies and procedures

Considerations for Management & Oversight

Questions to consider when establishing your management and oversight structure:

- Who develops/adopts/revises policies?
- Who sets performance expectations?
- Who monitors performance?
- Who resolves conflicts?
- Who will operate CE?

Engaging Stakeholders

Coordinated Entry planning and implementation requires participation, buy-in and support from community stakeholders.

How to recruit and engage stakeholders across large geographies to support planning and implementation efforts -- Who needs to be at the table

HUD requires CoC to facilitate ongoing planning and stakeholder consultation concerning the implementation of CES. CoC must solicit feedback at least annually from participating projects and from households in CES. CoC must consider the feedback of households to identify gaps and to improve the quality and the effectiveness of the system.
Stakeholder/Partnership Engagement

Poll: How Ready is Your CoC or Regional Coalition to Move Forward with planning and implementation of Coordinated Entry?

- 100% ready; all the right people are at the table, including CoC and ESG providers, the VA and public housing authorities, emergency shelters and street outreach providers, the mayor’s office, and other representatives from relevant organizations
- 75% ready; we have an active Regional Coalition but membership is mostly CoC and ESG providers
- 50% ready; sometimes our full membership meets, but it’s typically a small group of providers
- 25% ready; I am the only provider in my region and I have difficulty engaging with other relevant organizations like local governments and faith-based organizations

Group Activity #3

Stakeholder Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Committee or Group</th>
<th>Role of the Committee or Group</th>
<th>Who is involved now (current members or attendees)</th>
<th>Who is missing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CE Planning, Implementation, Oversight</td>
<td>For example, is their role to make decisions regarding CoE</td>
<td>List the names and contact info of people that are involved in each committee and those that you believe are missing.</td>
<td>For each committee or group provide the list of names of people that are missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder or community groups</td>
<td>Help inform or provide input and feedback to other groups</td>
<td>List the agency and name of the person (if you can) that is involved in each committee that you identify.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Community</td>
<td>Stay informed/engaged by attending community meetings, newsletters, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Stakeholder Worksheet Template Example:

- Current Committee or Group
- Role of the Committee or Group
- Who is involved now (current members or attendees)
- Who is missing?
Special Considerations for Coordinated Entry Planning in Rural Communities

CoC must consider the geographic characteristics of the community when planning coordinated entry.

Rural communities can face unique challenges, such as:
- Expansive geography
- Natural barriers such as mountains or bodies of water
- Often fewer homeless system providers
- Providers can be isolated

Group Activity #4

Special Considerations for Coordinated Entry Planning in Rural Communities

Challenges & Solutions

Lunch
Section 4: Action Steps
Planning for Next Steps in Your Implementation of CES

Action Planning

- Action Planning – developing your checklist
  - The goal of this exercise
  - Review the Checklist template
  - Instructions
  - Get in to small groups

Group Activity #5
Group Activity #5

Step 1: Questions to think about/discuss
- What --
  - What are our short and long-term goals for CE?
  - What action steps will we take over the next 1,3,6 months?
  - What steps will ‘move the needle’ for our community
- Who --
  - Who will lead our planning and implementation process?
  - Who do we need to engage during each step of the process?
- How --
  - How will these action steps drive us towards our goal?

Step 2: Fill out worksheet (Coordinated Entry Next Steps Checklist)

Group Activity #5

Report out and Wrap up

Section 5: Case Study

Colorado Balance of State CoC
CoC Snapshot

- Major Challenge: Decentralized governance made it difficult to coordinate across the CoC to adopt HUD policy priorities and system planning efforts
- CoC Accomplishment: Strengthened centralized planning capabilities which spearheaded coordinated entry planning efforts across the CoC

How this was accomplished:
- CoC Governing Board revitalization
- Core group of leadership that increased knowledge of HEARTH and HMIS regulations and policy priorities
- Learning from successful communities within the CoC
- Met often and regularly

CoC Background

CoC Characteristics:
- Geography consists of primarily rural communities with a mix of several growing urban areas (Northern Colorado has a population of 500,000+)
- FY 2017 Award: $2,908,936
- 2017 PIT Count: 1,511 sheltered persons; 2,508 unsheltered persons
- CoC geography covers 56 counties grouped into 11 regions. Each of the 11 regions has its own regional coalition.

Governance and Decision-making:
- CoC Governing Board historically consisted of service providers. To diversify the Board they recently added new board members that represent different types of planning organization across the state.
- Limited top-down governance
- Governing Board consists of 25 members, now including at-large members
- Each regional coalition has one representative as a member on the governing board.

Challenges Explained

Primary Challenges Facing the CoC
- Regions operated with limited coordination across regional boundaries
- Limited systems planning based on HUD's new policy priorities (e.g., Housing First across the CoC)
- PSH and chronically homeless population concentrated in specific areas of the CoC
- Providers primarily served and had knowledge of one or two subpopulations per region
- Regional priorities might not reflect the larger CoC policy priorities

Potential Coordinated Entry consequences:
- Lack of knowledge of coordinated entry and its significance
- Different processes forming across regions
- Ad hoc development of policies and procedures over time
Solution and Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CoC operated in silos with limited systems planning</td>
<td>- Diversifying representation of the governing board by including other providers and stakeholders in the CoC planning process&lt;br&gt;- Gathering board members as a representative of the BoS vs. only their region</td>
<td>- Unified vision of achieving long-term goals like improving data quality and leveraging housing resources&lt;br&gt;- Increased connection to resources (subject matter expertise and financial)&lt;br&gt;- System-oriented planners now at the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning local priorities with HUD’s policy initiatives</td>
<td>- Recruited new members to committees&lt;br&gt;- Strengthened capacity through learning opportunities&lt;br&gt;- Learning from successful communities within the CoC</td>
<td>- Informed decision-making: Committees share knowledge at CoC meetings across the state&lt;br&gt;- Committees developed policies that brought the CoC outdated policies into HUD compliance&lt;br&gt;- Local providers and practitioners now at the table to push for evidence-based practices like Housing First</td>
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Effects on the Coordinated Entry System

- Strong Coordinated Entry Committee:
  - CE committee stayed informed of new HUD guidance and served as local CES advocates<br>- Used contacts to obtain expertise across different subpopulations (veterans, DV, youth)
- Informed development of policies and procedures:
  - Phased assessment approach<br>  - Uses VI/SPDAT Assessment tool
- Coordinated Entry Characteristics:
  - Full coverage: Access points from each region<br>  - Engagement with 211 for the first time<br>  - Assessment:
    - Phased assessment approach<br>    - Uses VI/SPDAT Assessment tool<br>  - Prioritization:
    - Housing first approaches; no maximum ‘score’ that would preclude people from getting access to housing<br>    - Uses RRH as a bridge
Lessons Learned

✓ Begin engaging stakeholders and your planning group as soon as possible to get started on CE implementation.
✓ Decision-making and planning can come from providers and not just the CoC lead, given they have the right platform to participate.
✓ Be patient and persevere through the lengthy discussions.

Ongoing areas of improvement for CoBos:
• Incorporating HMIS into CES
• Restructuring regional boundaries
• Evaluation of CES to ensure it operates consistently across regions

Section 5: Case Study
Anchorage, Alaska CoC

CoC Snapshot

- Major Challenge: Limited CoC resources dedicated to PSH projects required external stakeholders to participate in the coordinated entry planning process to ensure all system stakeholders were represented.
- CoC Accomplishment: Developed a comprehensive coordinated entry planning group and designed a participatory planning process across the community.

How this was accomplished:

- Engagement with service providers, community leaders, funders, and policymakers to develop coordinated entry processes.
- Facilitation by CoC leadership.
- Inventory of housing resources and gaps analyses.
- Established weekly and bi-weekly planning committee meetings.
- Developed capacity across federal, state, and local funding recipients.
- Used existing community plans as a starting point for planning efforts.
CoC Background

- Anchorage CoC Characteristics
  - Consists of the most populous city in Alaska as well as large rural areas
    - Approximately 300,000 residents across nearly 2,000 square miles
    - Only a very small portion of the municipality is densely populated, with all other areas sparsely populated
  - FY 2017 Award: $2,932,595
  - 2017 PIT Count: 973 sheltered persons; 155 unsheltered persons

- Engaging with stakeholders across sectors to support a community-wide planning process
  - Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) provides support to the CoC and Board
  - Shared interests and geography strengthened connections across sectors, organizations, and people
  - High rates of CoC participation from many diverse sectors

Accessing Resources

- HUD Funding
  - CoC Program: $2.9M
  - Emergency Solutions Grant: $150K
- Alaska Housing & Finance Corporation
  - Basic Homeless Assistance Program: $2.7M
- Providence Health & Services Foundation
  - Rapid Rehousing: $750K
- Total: $6.5M (HUD funding < 50% all funding)

Developing the Planning Process

- Coordinated Entry Component
  - System Flow
  - Access Points
  - Prioritization Process
  - Referral Process
  - Data Management
  - Service Delivery

- Policy and Procedure Development
  - Conducted surveys of agency leadership
  - Defined capacity and performance requirements for certain roles and functions within the coordinated entry process
Engaging Stakeholders

- Bringing resources to the table
  - Housing and service providers are assets
  - All have a role to play in ending homelessness
    - What: resources are available
    - Who: can access the resource
    - When: can the resource be accessed through coordinated entry
    - How: can the resource be used more effectively

- Bringing ideas to the table
  - Coordinated entry was not just a system for housing
  - Community leaders identified homeless prevention, family reunification, and mainstream supportive services as resources that should be accessed through coordinated entry
  - Different stakeholders had different ideas on:
    - How HMIS can be used to support prioritization and referral
    - The role of emergency shelter services
    - Implementing Housing First at the project and system level
    - Connecting street outreach to coordinated entry access points

Strengthening Partnerships

- Numerous organizations across different fields and sectors offer a type of homeless response program or service
  - Screening and triage, homeless prevention & family reunification, permanent housing referral and placement
- Organizations were engaged at each of the following levels
  - Political: Office of the Mayor and City Council
  - Population Type: VA (for Veterans); Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHYF), Anchorage School District, Department of Juvenile Justice, and Office of Children’s Services (for youth and young adults); Alaska Mental Health Trust and Alaska Psychiatric Institute (homeless persons with mental/behavioral health issues)
  - System Component: United Way 2-1-1 (resource, referral, and triage); NeighborWorks Alaska (referral coordination and); Institute for Community Alliances (HMIS Lead Agency and data manager); Cook Inlet Housing Authority (move-up strategies)
- Existing partnerships were strengthened through shared planning processes, system visioning, and outcomes development
- New partnerships were developed and codified through coordinated entry policies and procedures, adoption of the assessment and prioritization protocols, and participation in the CoC HMIS implementation

Lessons Learned

- Following the Process
  - Once the planning process was set, each subsequent planning effort followed the same
- Challenges
  - Developing coordinated entry by population type meant that different stakeholders were involved at different times
    - Created silos across the system
    - Planning efforts lacked continuity
- Successes
  - Established a pilot process allowed for continuous quality improvement
  - Single adults first, families and youth followed
  - Lessons learned were incorporated into subsequent planning efforts
    - Act > plan > do > study
  - Created community-wide buy-in for coordinated entry and systems change
Section 5: Case Study

Idaho Balance of State CoC

CoC Snapshot

- **Major Challenge:** Responding to differing opinions and changing needs across the CoC
- **CoC Accomplishment:** Utilizing CoC and CES governance structures to support system redesign efforts in their coordinated entry implementation

**How this was accomplished:**

- Knowledgeable and well-connected organizations serving critical roles across the CoC Board, Collaborative Applicant, and HMIS Lead
- Transparent and highly participatory regional structure for CoC decision-making
- Extensive network of information-sharing and training opportunities to keep providers informed of new policy priorities
- "Backbone" entity (Collaborative Applicant) provides infrastructure and administrative support
CoC Background

CoC Characteristics:
- FY 2017 Award: $2,801,256
- 2017 PIT Count: 1,398 sheltered persons; 639 unsheltered persons
- Boise CoC geography covers 43 counties, excluding Ada County which is part of Boise/Ada County CoC.

CoC Governance:
- Governance allows for full coverage of the CoC, represented by 6 regions across the state in Regional Coalitions and through the Idaho Homelessness Coordinated Committee.
- Inclusive and well represented governing committee (known as IHCC), which includes Boise CoC as a member of the board.

Coordinated Entry Planning and Decision-making Processes Explained

- System design, planning, and policy decisions were made using a CoC-wide, community-based, and transparent process.
- IHFA staff and CoC leadership developed detailed procedures to support the implementation of those policies.
- IHFA staffs a CES administrator to oversee the day-to-day of CES.
- IHFA has a professionalized and full-time staff dedicated to managing the CoC and homeless programs (4-5 FTEs), plus staff in regional offices.
- Helps to make linkages across regions and with the feedback loop back to the collaborative applicant and IHCC, the governing committee.
- The CoC-wide, community-based, and transparent process was activated again during implementation.
- Building capacity of access points.
- Resting assessment tool and prioritization policies and procedures.

Overcoming Challenges

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<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Result</th>
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<tr>
<td>Differing goals between the CES participating agencies, non HUD-funded community partners, and the CoC Lead</td>
<td>CoC held ongoing discussions with various stakeholders utilizing the effective governance structure already established</td>
<td>CES that has the input of all stakeholders, is appropriate to the CoC, and is sustainable long-term.</td>
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<td>At the point of CE implementation, certain policy decisions were no longer relevant to the CoC.</td>
<td>CoC responsive to change.</td>
<td>Transparent decision-making process to be used in any upcoming changes to CES.</td>
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Coordinated Entry Planning and Implementation Timeline

- April 2016: CE Committee formed.
- April 2016 – April 2017: Regular CE Committee meetings to develop CES and build local capacity.
- June 2017: Policies and procedures completed.
- October 2017: Reevaluation of CES components based on initial implementation.

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June 2017: Policies and procedures completed.
October 2017: Reevaluation of CES components based on initial implementation.
ID BoS Coordinated Entry Characteristics

- Full coverage:
  - CES covers all of the 6 regions. Each region has at least one physical access point.
  - 2:1:1 serves as virtual access point across the CoC

- Prioritization:
  - Separate priority lists for TH, RRH, PSH
  - Households prioritized by vulnerability score (for PSH, CoC adopted CPD-16-11)

- HMIS as the data management system for prioritization and referral

- CES Administrator responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of coordinated entry

- Regional coalitions manage locally:
  - Approval of access points, in conjunction with the CE committee
  - Case conferencing (with CES administrator participating in each call)
  - Distribute CES marketing materials
  - HMIS data entry timeliness standards (no longer than a week)

Lessons Learned

- It’s never too late to change your policies or approaches if that’s what meets the needs of your community – nothing is set in stone
- Transparency is key
- Long-term sustainability of your system is worth the difficulty in having the tough conversations with your community

Section 5: Case Study

Alaska Balance of State CoC
CoC Snapshot

• Major Challenge: CoC decision making and planning activities historically driven by urban hubs with limited coordination across regions.

• CoC Accomplishment: Regional planning bodies were able to coordinate together for the first time through utilizing data in the coordinated entry planning process.

How this was accomplished:
> Prioritized use of data to inform the coordinated entry decision-making process.
> Collaborative Applicant knowledgeable in HUD priorities and regularly engaged with different stakeholders.
> Core group of leadership represented from various geographies and backgrounds as homeless providers and planners in their community.

CoC Background

CoC Characteristics:
• FY 2017 Award: $798,651
• 2017 PIT Count: 578 sheltered persons; 139 unsheltered persons
• CoC geography covers all of Alaska, outside of the City of Anchorage. This area is over 660,000 square miles and includes 404 communities.
• Major hubs that receive HUD homelessness assistance funding include Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak, and Mat-Su Valley. The CoC includes many other communities that serve as hubs to neighboring villages but they have limited housing and services resources.

Challenges Explained

Primary Challenges Facing the CoC
• Large areas of land in the CoC with little to no housing resources - lack of inclusion in the CoC planning process
• Little coordination across regional planning bodies
• Regional planning bodies developed around areas with large urban hubs with CoC resources, leaving gaps in representing remote communities
• Limited staff capacity at the organizational level to support increased time and effort required by coordinated entry planning

Potential Coordinated Entry consequences
• CoC CES would not cover the entire CoC geography; particularly rural areas with no homeless or housing resources
• Each region developing their own CES process locally with little connections across urban hubs
Solution and Results

Primary Challenge #1
- Connecting regional planning bodies across large geographies

Solution
- Utilized the Coordinated Entry structure to get representation from each regional planning body to make decisions as a CoC
- Used data from HMIS to analyze homeless populations and trends across regional lines

Result
- Through a data analysis, the regions realized there was a lot of crossover between the populations they were serving in their regions
- CE committee and regional planning members were motivated to coordinate more and align policies across the CoC

Planning and Data Analysis Framework

Primary Challenge #2
- Attaining full CE coverage across the geography

Solution
- 2-1-1 serves as a virtual access/referral point
- Achieving full geographic coverage is a CoC priority

Result
- CoC is working toward fair and equal access in spite of resource limitations
- CoC continues to engage with non-HUD funded providers to increase participation and options for accessing the CoC coordinated entry process

Coordinated Entry Planning and Decision-making Processes Explained

AK BoS Coordinated Entry Committee serves as the primary planning body for coordinated entry
- Committee formed through leadership of the CoC Collaborative Applicant where different stakeholders from each region were brought together in early 2017.
- Stakeholders consist of leaders in main urban hubs where they have CoC and ESG funding. Representatives from Juneau, Fairbanks, Kenai Peninsula, and Matanuska-Susitna Valley.
- Held remote meetings regularly via conference call and screen-sharing. 1-2 on-site meetings held over the year to solidify CE planning efforts
- Implementation of coordinated entry and the management of the priority list facilitated by each regional planning hub
- Regional planning hubs formally recognized in their role through the policies and procedures, where they are known as a Designated Lead Agency or Organization.
AK BoS Coordinated Entry Characteristics

- Full coverage:
  - Physical access points from each regional referral zone; each region must have the ability to do assessments telephonically
  - 211 serves as virtual access point for prevention and diversion

- Assessment:
  - Phased assessment approach
  - Uses VI-SPDAT Assessment tool

- Prioritization:
  - CoC adopted HUD's Prioritization Notice for PSH (CPD-16-11)
  - Housing first and low barrier policies

- Data management:
  - Privacy policy allows for written and verbal consent
  - CoC uses HMIS to facilitate referrals

- Each referral zone, also called a Designated Lead Agency/Organization, manages the following locally:
  - Prioritization list
  - Ensure fidelity of local access points
  - Coordinate marketing efforts
  - Monitor system performance

Lessons Learned

✓ Meet often and regularly; in-person meetings are ideal but remote meetings can also be just as effective if you meet consistently and build rapport
✓ Data can substantially assist your CoC in identifying main barriers in your homelessness assistance system and how to work together to find a solution
✓ Make the best use of what you have
  - Take advantage of local leadership and maximize different skillsets

Ongoing areas of improvement for AK BoS:
- Strategic inclusion of geographic areas that part of the CoC but have no housing resources and sparse populations
- Ability to conduct assessments through the virtual access points
- Ensuring appropriate transportation for individuals to get to where the resources are located

Wrap Up & Questions
Resources

- HUD's Notice on Establishing a Coordinated Entry System
  - [https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5208/notice-establishing-additional-requirements-for-a-continuum-of-care-centralized-or-coordinated-assessment-system/](https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5208/notice-establishing-additional-requirements-for-a-continuum-of-care-centralized-or-coordinated-assessment-system/)
- Coordinated Entry Self-Assessment
- HUD's Coordinated Entry Policy Brief
  - [https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated_Entry_Policy_Brief.pdf](https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated_Entry_Policy_Brief.pdf)
- HUD's Continuum of Care FAQs
  - Select > Program Requirements > Coordinated Entry
- US Interagency Council on Homelessness Housing First Checklist
  - [https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/housing-first-checklist](https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/housing-first-checklist)

Upcoming Housing Workshops offered by RSHI

[https://csi.elevate.commpartners.com/Housing-Workshops](https://csi.elevate.commpartners.com/Housing-Workshops)

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- More information about RSHI and CS is available at [www.collaborative-solutions.net](http://www.collaborative-solutions.net)