



SACRAMENTO
STEPS FORWARD

Ending Homelessness. Starting Fresh.

2021 Sacramento CoC Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 26th, 2021 || Breakout Room 1 Discussion Notes

From your perspective what needs to be done to successfully navigate someone through the system?

(SY) Scott Young; Assistant Director of Homeless Outreach and Navigation at Sacramento Self-Help Housing:

- Helping people into the system starts with building rapport and relationships to better assess needs/services.
- We need to have a knowledge of resources and how to properly triage without over promising.
- Focus on having access points for navigators with drop in hours.

(GK) Gabriel Kendall, 2-1-1/Community Link:

- Trust/honesty are critical.
- We need to build a system that has more clarity about points of entry, meeting people where they're at.
- System level inconsistency of communication/clarity is eroding trust on the ground level.

What kind of resources have you helped people get into and what resources would be helpful that you haven't typically had access to?

(TK) Tahirih Ann Kraft, Sacramento Self-Help Housing:

- We need more accurate information about changes in programs and access across all levels at agencies.

- We need centralized access points where people can call/walk in to get clear answers.
- There's a need for resources for preventing homelessness - props to RAPS!

SY:

- We need more coordination, communication.
- A lot of closed loop services and silos so there's no one single system.
- Jurisdictionally bound services are limited.
- **We just need low barrier points of entry where people can walk into and start the process.**

GK:

- Accessibility in homeless services is the biggest issue.
- Emergency shelters have 2-6 month waitlists and there is a lack of places where people can enter the system and stabilize.

Stephanie Cotter: Fragmentation in services is based off necessary. Would like a transparent, easy to access coordinated county-wide system where jurisdictions can chip in.

How can we improve the relationships between shelter staff/system navigators?

SY: Clarifying relationships and defining roles for shelter staff and outreach workers.

TK: Clear media message for how to access prevention and diversion resources is needed with a flux in new people who have never been in the system after the eviction moratorium lifts.

What's the vision for 2-1-1?:

GK: 2-1-1 needs better integration into the system for more direct connection to care. RAPS allows 2-1-1 to have more bandwidth: complete assessments, diversion assistance, etc.

Do you think the recent coordinated entry investments made by the CoC (RAPS: 2-1-1, diversion) are on the right track? Why or why not?

With RAPS, service providers will get more calls with new programs and funding is necessary to provide the services, especially for families and subgroups.

Case conferencing allows us to get ahead so we can fill beds. Avoid what happened in 2014/2015 when we flooded coordinated entry with names that no one had contact with.

MaryLiz Paulson, SHRA: It is a step toward a coordinated effort so yes.

Stephanie Cotter - City of Citrus Heights: Yes, because they provide a single access point to multiple programs. No, because it doesn't solve the problem of "closed-loop systems" that do not provide information about who can access those program or how to access those program. The exclusion of access is a huge problem.

Jenna Abbott, COC Board Member River District: Yes, BUT we need the beds and housing on the back end. Simply adding people to a list that seems never ending erodes our credibility

Sarah Schwartz, SSF, RAPS Specialist: Yes, I think so (but I'm biased of course). But the RAPS project helps add another resource that hasn't always been available to the community (PS). It also provides diversion for those at risk of homelessness which we have very little resources for those folks!

Tara Turrentine She/Her SCOE : Perhaps the type of services are a good investment, appropriate funding to meet the need has to match the service. (ideal world I know)

Jill Fox: I think it is a start, but we need to figure out how to access more funding to ensure that it continues to become the robust system that is needed in the community. I still feel like the system is so overwhelmed.

Dennis Smiley, SSF, TAY Specialist: Absolutely, it creates structure in the system and a direct access point to great resources.

Nick Golling, City of Sacramento: They appear to be on the right track. It appears to me that a highly functioning CE system includes a robust 24 hour 211 call center who can quickly complete assessments, enter people into HMIS, and create an HMIS referral. Making this a requirement to access any homeless services in the CoC would help us to have a clear picture of what exactly homelessness looks like in our community and allow us to triage appropriately.

Bridget Alexander, Waking the Village : RAPS could be impactful, but it would have to scaled to a proper level, be well staffed, and have a clear physical front door (or many) or else it will just become one more place for a person experiencing homelessness to go to in the hunt for support. Also, without housing scaled to need, where are folks navigated too? We need safe ground at minimum so we can make sure to retain contact and traction made with folks. Otherwise, RAPS will be like the years when SSF had navigators and it simply packed CES with names no one had actual, meaningful contact with.

Gabriel Kendall: I think it's only a piece to the puzzle, but we're still very much lacking the low barrier shelter to back end the entry and walk-in facilities to improve access.

Hamid Bashiri - SSF, Data Analytics Mgr: They are good initiatives but need to be integrated with the Community Portal

Nick Golling (He/Him) City of Sacramento: I think that a highly functioning CE System is most critical to provide homeless services in general in a community. Certainly there are many other considerations such as shelter capacity, and others. But CE is the foundation of functional homeless services.

MaryLiz Paulson, SHRA : I think a coordinated system needs capacity, 1) of both staffing or a system for referrals and 2) of resources. The resources have to be able to respond to need so just beds or shelters or housing is not and will never be sufficient to meet the need. The system has to include safe parking or a place where homeless can go (as a holding area) and be safe until there is capacity in the system to absorb them.

Ejiro Okoro: I want to say yes, but there are many including myself to not know the entry points and all of the service systems where folks can get shelter, resources & PSH

Christina H.: Yes. I feel that there has to be a starting point. A place where a person can go and be directed to the services that are needed at that time.

What strategy or resource is missing that would improve the overall function of coordinated entry?

Large shelter campus that can be accessed 24/7 to be able to send folks.

Kyle Stefano: A centrally located triage shelter that anyone can go to every night - like "right to shelter" in nyc.

Nick Golling, City of Sacramento: I think that accountability, participation and transparency would improve the overall function of CE.

Tahirih Kraft, Renters Helpline SSHH: I like the idea of a central located triage center.

Tara Turrentine She/Her SCOE : Clear access points that assess and triage folks to appropriate services with a realistic timeline communicated to the end user IF there are services appropriate for the need.

Nick Golling, City of Sacramento: Campus models are very effective for that. They are expensive and take a lot of land, but when functioning, they are amazing.

Jenna Abbott, COC Board Member River District: ALL of the resources need to be in it. It's really a misnomer to call it coordinated entry with the majority of resources excluded.

Hamid Bashiri: It's important to change the community's perspective on CE. At the same time implement initiatives to improve communication, funding and resources, equity, and transparency.

Bridget Alexander, Waking the Village: Of course, capacity and a physical place to direct folks to start the navigation process. But also, we need highly skilled and knowledgeable navigators who deeply understand all the systems- shelter, child welfare, justice system.... Ideally RAPS would create a tool that all our housing case managers can use that helps triage folks and identify best fit and eligibility. It would allow folks to click on elements like length of time homeless, disability, age....and identify options and the process to access those options.

Stephanie Cotter, City of Citrus Heights: New HMIS/CES software where providers can enter a client and then directly refer clients to other providers based on what their needs are within HMIS so everyone knows where they entered and what their status is. Connect the systems so the navigators in each jurisdiction can see what programs are available to refer to and what clients other programs are working with within their coverage area.

MaryLiz Paulson, SHRA: Agreed. There has to be a place (or places) for folks to go who need help. One of the challenges that we all face is finding people. If there was a place that folks could go to be a beginning point for services. A place where people could be safe without limited capacity.

Christina H.: I feel that there should be collaboration with the courts regarding evictions. This is the biggest barrier that has not been addressed.

Magen Jack: Hello, I wanted to share Contra Costa County's coordinated entry systems online directory. This allows anyone to look up the current programs and services available throughout the county. This could be a great way to centralize all the different services offered throughout Sacramento. Each program available would include services offered, contact information and eligibility of each service or program available. I think it is worth looking into and implementing in Sacramento County.
[https://hmg.my resource directory.com/](https://hmg.myresource.com/)

Scott Young : I agree with Christina. It's virtually impossible to house someone with an eviction.

Marilyn Washington WRCS: VI-SPDAT is an inadequate tool that rules out a lot of homeless people.

If within the next year (12 months) the CoC could accomplish only one coordinated entry improvement, what should it be?

Focused efforts, providers working together to communicate about the best destination for clients.

Nick Golling, City of Sacramento: Get everyone experiencing homelessness who wish to access services into HMIS and on BNL

Marilyn Washington WRCS: improvement in the HIMS system

Jill Fox: Clear messaging on what how our community can access shelter

Ejiro Okoro : 2- more media coverage on access points and pathways to service

Tahirih Kraft, Renters Helpline SSHH: The moratorium does have some language about protections on evictions due to COVID but landlords can find other reason to decline the applicant. I am working with my staff to pull out an info sheet on this information.

Brenda Santiago LSS Program Coordinator: I would like to see the coordinated entry tell clients about the housing services they will be referred to since most of the clients I meet with don't understand who we are and what we do. So clear messaging.

Scott Young: Creating that much discussed "single point of entry." Services and outreach can still be provided locally, but equitable access for every homeless person in Sacramento County

MaryLiz Paulson, SHRA: A system to connect with folks in need. This could be a triage center where folks check in. Or a way to connect on a regular basis with folks through SMS or a phone number where they can check in and answer a few automated questions that would allow them to confirm they are still in need of assistance.

Bridget Alexander, Waking the Village: Integrating a process to ensure that every subpopulation has a meaningful by name list. This means we fill beds fast with best fit clients. This alone increases bed capacity. I've been in this CES conversation for 18 years and we are still on the same challenges. Case conferences has been one thing that seems to create immediate improvement.

Gabriel Kendall: The creation of a triage shelter to stabilize those working with navigators/case managers etc. in preparation for CES placement.

Stephanie Cotter (she/her) - City of Citrus Heights : Develop a detailed guide for outreach workers/providers that lists each program available, who can access, and contact information on how to access each one. I brought this up at the last CoC meeting, but here's a link to an example in Contra Costa County: <https://dn.cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/CES-P-and-P.pdf>

Christina H. She/Her: Find a way to coordinate with landlords and property managers so that there is an opportunity to address any possible eviction. If case management or aftercare could be provided to the participants after housed it can be beneficial to everyone.

Ejiro Okoro: A master mapping of resources available on the phone, social media

Tara Turrentine She/Her SCOE: 3- improving access points to create appropriate placements/services for available beds. Functioning CES increases accurate data for each subgroup, allowing data driven system flow/programming/funding