

Adult Coordinated Entry Refinement Workshop Summary

Overview

On November 1, 2019, LAHSA hosted a full day, Adult Coordinated Entry System (CES) Refinement Workshop aimed at exploring each component of the LA Region Adult CES and developing a more complete understanding of the operations and effectiveness of the current system design. The goals of the workshop were to (1) identify the challenges experienced by providers, agency staff, system partners and households experiencing homelessness when utilizing the current CES, (2) generate solutions to the identified challenges, and (3) produce a refined system design that will serve as the next iteration of LA's Adult CES.

Staff from all eight (8) SPA's were invited, with approximately 60 in attendance. Participants included CES infrastructure staff, CES staff supervisors, system partners (service providers, County department leads, Domestic Violence staff, and etc.), people with lived experience, and LAHSA staff. The workshop was facilitated by staff from Abt Associates, ICF, and Clutch Consulting Group. Clutch Consulting Group (CCG) is an independent consulting firm dedicated to transforming social systems and solving complex social issues. Abt Associates and ICF are HUD Technical Assistance providers working with LAHSA, LA City and LA County.

Common Themes and Recommendations

Themes emerged throughout the day related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the current Adult CES design. Participants emphasized the need to explore refinements that result in 1) enhancing efforts to divert individuals through problem solving 2) re-tooling the current assessment process and 3) achieving continuous throughput, ensuring every person who enters the homeless response system has an effective and efficient pathway to exit. Below are some of the major takeaways:

- Develop a documented Diversion/Problem-Solving process
Large numbers of inflow are inhibiting providers from being able to effectively and efficiently identify and serve high acuity individuals. Participants reported the need to develop a more intensive and consistent problem-solving process to establish an extensive Diversion pathway. This would allow for more effective inflow management and meet the needs of Adults with a moderate to low service need to exit the homeless system on a defined "robust mainstream services" pathway. This pathway needs to include direct access to workforce/income services and other mainstream resources.
- Electronic triage/referral for external partners
External system partners are a significant referral source and workshop participants reported challenges with the quality/appropriateness of the referrals. An electronic referral system that has the capacity to support external partners engaging in problem solving conversations and the ability to manage decision making for appropriate referrals was recommended.
- Purposefully located Adult Access Centers with dedicated Adult CES Assessors
Workshop participants clearly stated the value of Adult Access Centers and the services offered on/near these sites to enhance the effectiveness of the intervention pathways and improve Adult outcomes. However, participants also identified the need to more clearly define and standardize the primary objectives and services to be offered at Access Centers across the adult system. Workshop participants recommended the following when considering additional Access Centers in the LA Region and when siting for appropriate locations:

- Equip each SPA with the number of Access Centers appropriate to geography and volume of need.
 - Fund Access Center locations that provide access to specific services such as;
 - Diversion/Problem Solving services and/or specialists
 - Adult CES assessments
 - Housing Navigation
 - Employment and income services
 - Legal services, DPSS services
 - Prioritize locations that demonstrate the opportunity to leverage other nearby infrastructure/resources such as; Mental Health, Education and Employment, Public Health, Medical, SAPC, food pantry, transportation, showers, etc.
- Re-tool Assessment Process
 In the current Adult CES, a variety of stakeholders and agencies have the ability to conduct assessments. This often results in inconsistent and low-quality assessments, a wide variance in scoring, and duplicative client assessments being entered into the system. Participants recommended reducing the number of assessors and moving toward dedicated CES Assessors by instituting a certified training process with a focus on non-biased, trauma-informed staff. Other recommended refinements to the assessment included considering multi-lingual assessments, income matching questions, a shorter tool, and to align the assessment process with subpopulation systems such as the Veteran and Domestic Violence systems. Additionally, the development of a policy for prioritizing those unable to be assessed (e.g., high need individuals with severe and persistent mental illness) and a clinical assessment to ensure appropriate PSH matching was recommended.
 - Standardize housing inventory matching in a real-time system
 Participants reported that PSH property management providers and landlords are not entering vacancies into the online inventory management system in real time as it was initially intended. This results in underutilization of the system's current unit/slot inventory and exacerbates the length of time for those waiting for a unit/slot match. Participants recommend a streamlined property management and landlord engagement process that includes CES education and training to support real-time housing inventory management. In addition, there isn't real-time management of the Rapid Rehousing slots to ensure maximum utilization of this resource.

Lastly, it is important to note that the scale of the refinements identified throughout the workshop will require a significant amount of continued community engagement and necessitates a strong communication and project management structure to accomplish the solutions and recommendations that have been identified. An Implementation Infrastructure allows for continued community input as additional design decisions are made and adjustments are considered.

This infrastructure should consist of:

- Project Managers that lead the work and manage workplans, ensure that tasks are completed, convene and lead workgroups, etc. These Project Managers will likely be staff from the LA Region's lead agencies; LAHSA, DHS, DMH, etc.
- Work groups made up of relevant stakeholders throughout the community that guide the work, write policy, test policy, drive implementation, etc.

Families Coordinated Entry Refinement Workshop Summary

Overview

On the week of August 12th, 2019, LAHSA hosted four (4) full day, Coordinated Entry System for Families (CESF) Refinement Workshop aimed at exploring each component of the LA Region CESF and developing a more complete understanding of the operations and effectiveness of the current system design. The goals of the workshop were to (1) identify the challenges experienced by providers, agency staff, system partners and households experiencing homelessness when utilizing the current CES, (2) generate solutions to the identified challenges, and (3) produce a refined system design that will serve as the next iteration of LA's CESF.

The four CESF Refinement workshops were attended by approximately 200 people representing every SPA. To maximize the time and allow for a robust discussion, each workshop was attended by two SPAs and the co-located staff from partner agencies (i.e., DCFS, DMH, Etc.). SPAs 1&2, SPAs 3&7, SPAs 4&5, and SPAs 6&8 were paired and engaged together. Participants included CES infrastructure staff, CES staff supervisors, system partners (service providers, school/education, County department leads, Domestic Violence staff, and etc.), people with lived experience, and LAHSA staff. The workshop was facilitated by staff from Abt Associates, ICF, and Clutch Consulting Group. Clutch Consulting Group (CCG) is an independent consulting firm dedicated to transforming social systems and solving complex social issues. Abt Associates and ICF are HUD Technical Assistance providers working with LAHSA, and LA City and the County.

Common Themes and Recommendations

Themes emerged throughout the day related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the current family CES design. Participants emphasized the need to explore refinements that result in 1) enhancing efforts to divert individuals through problem solving and 2) achieving continuous throughput, ensuring every person who enters the homeless response system has a pathway to exit. Below are some of the major takeaways:

- Build and scale Diversion/Problem Solving
Workshop participants consistently reported that CESF has “too many front doors”, and that staff at FSC's are not able to adequately manage inflow. In addition, referring agencies and partners are not adequately problem-solving with clients prior to referral which unnecessarily inflates the homeless response system's inflow. Participants recommended the need to develop the problem-solving capacity of referring agencies and other external partners. Participants also recommended the development and implementation of an intervention pathway in CESF that matches appropriate families to Diversion/Problem Solving with a robust mainstream services package.
- Develop and implement an electronic triage and referral tool for pre-screening into CESF
During the workshops, participants reported the need to standardize the triage and pre-screening approach across all Access Points within each FSC. Referring agencies and partners are not accurately screening clients prior to the referral which results in clients getting referred that are not appropriate or eligible for CESF and/or homeless services generally. Participants recommended the development of an electronic referral system used by both external and internal partners that has the capacity to support and manage decision making for appropriate referrals.
- Develop and implement real-time management of electronic housing inventory
Participants consistently reported challenges related to data quality and the management of units/slots within CESF. Currently, there is no efficient or standard process for waitlist management across the 8 SPAs'. The

creation of a workgroup to build out the full capacity of real-time unit/slot availability for the purpose of being able to manage vacancy in real-time and “push” referrals to available units/slots was recommended.

- Increase the standardization of the Coordinated Entry System for Families to achieve continuity across all FSCs
The need for standardization throughout CESF was a major focus of discussion throughout all four workshops. Participants reported the lack of continuity across FSC's hinders their ability to streamline access to CESF, ensure uniform service delivery standards across all FSC's, and achieve the highest utilization of resources across all SPA's. Workshop participants identified various components of CESF that would benefit from standardization; e.g. the assessment process, prioritization and matching, and performance dashboard and targets.
- Enhance the collaboration of co-located services at FSCs
During the subsequent co-located refinement workshop, participants reported the need to enhance collaboration between co-located services and FSC's to offer more robust services to support housing stabilization and economic sustainability. The most significant recommendation was the need to partner with the Public Workforce System to provide direct access to workforce and income services. Participants in the Family CES workshop reinforced the need for enhanced collaboration and coordination between FSCs and co-located services expressing the need to standardize the “menu of services” offered at FSC's as much as possible (with consideration for populations served within a given SPA).

Lastly, it is important to note that the scale of the refinements identified throughout the workshop will require a significant amount of continued community engagement and necessitates a strong communication and project management structure to accomplish the solutions and recommendations that have been identified. An Implementation Infrastructure allows for continued community input as additional design decisions are made and adjustments are considered.

This infrastructure should consist of:

- Project Managers that lead the work and manage workplans, ensure that tasks are completed, convene and lead workgroups, etc. These Project Managers will likely be staff from the LA Region's lead agencies; LAHSA, DHS, DMH, etc.
- Work groups made up of relevant stakeholders throughout the community that guide the work, write policy, test policy, drive implementation, etc.

Youth Coordinated Entry Refinement Workshop Summary

Overview

On October 11, 2019, LAHSA hosted a full day, Youth Coordinated Entry System (CES) Refinement Workshop aimed at exploring each component of the LA Region Youth CES and developing a more complete understanding of the operations and effectiveness of the current system design. The goals of the workshop were to (1) identify the challenges experienced by providers, agency staff, system partners and households experiencing homelessness when utilizing the current CES, (2) generate solutions to the identified challenges, and (3) produce a refined system design that will serve as the next iteration of LA's Youth CES.

Staff from all eight (8) SPA's were invited, with approximately 50 in attendance. Participants included CES infrastructure staff, CES staff supervisors, system partners (service providers, school/education, County department leads, Domestic Violence staff, and etc.), people with lived experience, and LAHSA staff. The workshop was facilitated by staff from Abt Associates, ICF, and Clutch Consulting Group. Clutch Consulting Group (CCG) is an independent consulting firm dedicated to transforming social systems and solving complex social issues. Abt Associates and ICF are HUD Technical Assistance providers working with LAHSA, and LA City and the County.

Common Themes and Recommendations

Themes emerged throughout the day related to the efficiency and effectiveness of the current Youth CES design. Participants emphasized the need to explore refinements that result in 1) enhancing efforts to divert individuals through problem solving and 2) achieving continuous throughput, ensuring every person who enters the homeless response system has a pathway to exit. Below are some of the major takeaways:

- Develop and scale Youth Intensive Diversion/Problem-Solving
Despite efforts to increase Youth dedicated inventory and resources, there is a significant demand or “in flow” of clients that are seeking services. Participants reported the need to scale up a more intensive Diversion pathway to manage inflow and meet the needs of Youth with a moderate service need to exit the homeless system.
- Electronic referral for external partners
External system partners are a significant referral source and workshop participants reported challenges with the quality/appropriateness of the referrals. An electronic referral system that has the capacity to support and manage decision making for appropriate referrals was recommended.
- Purposefully located Youth Access Centers with dedicated Youth CES Assessors
The location of Youth Access Centers and the services offered on/near these sites are critical to enhancing the effectiveness of the intervention pathways and improving Youth outcomes. Workshop participants identified the following recommendations when considering additional Access Centers in the LA Region and identifying appropriate Access Center locations:
 - Equip each SPA with an Access Center/s.
 - Fund Access Center locations that provide access specific services such as;
 - Diversion/Problem Solving services and/or specialists
 - Youth CES assessments
 - Housing Navigation
 - Youth employment, income, and education services

- Legal services, DPSS services
- Prioritize locations that demonstrate the opportunity to leverage other nearby infrastructure/resources such as; Mental Health, Education and Employment, Public Health, Medical, SAPC, food pantry, transportation, showers, etc.

Workshop participants also reported that the assessments completed by system partners (DCFS, Probation, etc.) are frequently inaccurate. Participants recommended that dedicated Youth Assessors would be critical in improving the quality of assessments.

- Right size youth housing and service interventions to support exits from the homeless response system.
The current Youth interventions are not in alignment with or reflective of the client volume and service needs. In addition to scaling up an intensive diversion pathway, there is a need to retool other housing and service pathways to ensure the system is achieving desired throughput. The specific pathways recommended for refinement include; Youth RRH, PSH, and the inclusion of access to income and education services.

Lastly, it is important to note that the scale of the refinements identified throughout the workshop will require a significant amount of continued community engagement and necessitates a strong communication and project management structure to accomplish the solutions and recommendations that have been identified. An Implementation Infrastructure allows for continued community input as additional design decisions are made and adjustments are considered.

This infrastructure should consist of:

- Project Managers that lead the work and manage workplans, ensure that tasks are completed, convene and lead workgroups, etc. These Project Managers will likely be staff from the LA Region's lead agencies; LAHSA, DHS, DMH, etc.
- Work groups made up of relevant stakeholders throughout the community that guide the work, write policy, test policy, drive implementation, etc.