

Outline for “Retooling” Workshop

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This workshop will: a) provide background information that will help explain the events that led up to retooling; b) help answer the question “what is “retooling;” and provide c) motives for retooling; d) reasons for retooling; and e) options for retooling. In addition, f) “funding options for retooling” will also be presented as well as g) “starting your retooling process.”

A. Background Information

1. Continuum of Care System
 - a. Outreach/Intake/Assessment;
 - b. Emergency Shelter;
 - c. Transitional Housing
 - is to facilitate the movement of individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing within 24 months;
 - d. Permanent Affordable Housing including Permanent Supportive Housing.

2. Evidence-based Practices are
 - a. research based and time tested;
 - b. used to inform decision-making;
 - c. used to educate professionals in how to understand and apply findings.

3. Shifts in thinking
 - a. From managing homelessness to ending homelessness;
 - b. Ending homelessness—3 stages of ridicule, resistance, & reconciliation;
 - c. There isn't enough affordable housing;
 - d. Everyone is going to lose their housing once they are on their own—note difference between chronically homeless and non-chronically homeless

B. What is Retooling?

1. Retooling is a process which encourages transitional housing providers to take an analytical look at the resources that are currently being used to operate their transitional housing program(s) and think about how they might be used more effectively.

2. Such a process usually involves being open to technical assistance from agencies experienced with helping transitional housing providers use their data for cost comparisons for permanent housing exits to shelter and rapid re-housing models, length of stays and outcomes including exits to permanent housing, and recidivism rates.

C. Motives for Retooling

Motives for retooling include 1) meeting the primary Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act goal and 2) aligning with Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

1. Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act

Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act (2009) established a federal goal of ensuring that individuals and families who become homeless return to permanent housing within 30 days.

DEFINITION OF HIGH-PERFORMING COMMUNITY (from HEARTH Act)

(1) TERM OF HOMELESSNESS.—The mean (average) length of episodes of homelessness for that geographic area--

(A) is less than 20 days; or

(B) for individuals and families in similar circumstances in the preceding year was at least 10 percent less than in the year before.

(2) FAMILIES LEAVING HOMELESSNESS.—Of individuals and families--

(A) who leave homelessness, fewer than 5 percent of such individuals and families become homeless again at any time within the next 2 years; or

(B) in similar circumstances who leave homelessness, the percentage of such individuals and families who become homeless again within the next 2 years has decreased by at least 20 percent from the preceding year.

2. Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness (2010) encourages the transformation of homeless services into crisis response systems that prevent homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing.

- Objective 10: Retool the Homeless Crisis Response System - Transform homeless services to crisis response systems that prevent homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing
 - Encourage communities to transform transitional housing programs to permanent supportive housing or transition-in-place models where appropriate

D. Reasons for Retooling

Reasons for retooling include 1) the effectiveness of rapid rehousing; 2) the new federal regulation that requires transitional housing programs to have a signed lease or occupancy agreement with all residents; 3) meeting future performance measures.

1. Lease or Occupancy Agreements

The definition of transitional housing has been expanded to distinguish this type of housing from emergency shelter whereas all program participants must have signed a lease or occupancy agreement that is for a term of at least one month and that ends in 24 months and cannot be extended.

2. Rapid Re-housing

Rapid re-housing models are more effective in exiting persons to permanent housing, are cost efficient especially for families, and have lower rates of recidivism when compared to transitional housing.

- <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rapid-re-housing-successfully-ending-family-homelessness>
- http://b.3cdn.net/naeh/adc8b82e3d49a50252_7dm6bk8te.pdf

3. Meeting Future Performance Measures

Compare present with future

Performance Measure	Current	Future
Length of Stay	Up to two years	30 days or less*
% of residents placed in permanent housing	65%**	85%???
% of residents employed at exit	20%**	75%???
% of residents receiving non-cash benefits at exit	20%**	75%???

* Emphasis will be on locating housing and providing short-term rental assistance; Emphasis is no longer getting people “housing-ready

**National average

4. Participating in Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System

- **Centralized or coordinated assessment system** means a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake assessment and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.

E. Options for Retooling

1. Retooling parts of the program

- a. Programs that are not ready for a complete model change should begin looking at parts of the program that can be retooled to increase your effectiveness and move closer to a rapid re-housing model
 - Adopt a shorter length of stay (HEARTH Act goal is 30 days or less);
 - Change target population (screen for low to moderate barriers
 - mental health issues that are stabilized;
 - Substance abuse history but not currently using;
 - Poor credit history;
 - Eviction history;
 - Limited education and/or language skills
 - Staff focus is on housing relocation and not housing-ready;
 - Provide short-term rental assistance

NOTE: To be done through repurposing which will be discussed in section E below.

2. Retooling to a new model

- b. Permanent Supportive Housing (owned or leased building, apartment style)
 - which primarily serves individuals or families with moderate to high barriers that prevent them from obtaining and maintaining housing
- c. Rapid Re-housing (scattered-site/leased apartments, homes in which households occupy a bedroom each/shared housing)

- which primarily serves individuals or families with low to moderate barriers that prevent them from obtaining and maintaining housing

NOTE: To be done through reallocation which will be discussed in section E below.

- d. Emergency Housing (owned or leased facility/dormitory style building)
 - which is interim housing (shorter stays) plus rapid re-housing support

F. Funding Options for Retooling

1. Reallocation

- a. means shifting funds from an expiring SHP renewal grant to a new project;
- b. must happen during the HUD CoC Homeless Assistance application process;
- c. only available to continuums in Hold Harmless Status.

2. Repurposing

- a. means modifying an existing program model to increase capacity and effectiveness;
- b. requires an amendment to grant agreement;
- c. can be completed anytime during the year.

G. Starting Your Retooling Process

There are three phases that you should consider in your retooling process.

They are:

1. Phase I: Assessment, Planning and Preparation (30-60 days);
2. Phase II: Develop the Implementation Strategy (4-6 months);
3. Phase III: Start the shift

See handout for details

Go to http://www.cceh.org/files/general/Retooling_TH_Conneticut_PPT.pdf
for a copy of the entire document