



North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

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Coordinated Entry Council Meeting

April 17, 2023

Attendees

Coordinated Entry Regional Leadership: Gretta Worley (Region 1); Rachelle Dugan (Region 2); Michele Knapp (Region 4); Teresa Robinson (Region 5); Maxcine Barnes & Andrea Wiley (Region 6); Jeff Rawlings (Region 7); Shawanda Barnes (Region 9); John Apol (Region 10); Michele Welsh (Regions 11 & 13); Lynne James (Region 12)

Statewide Representatives: Fredrika Murrill; Cassie Rowe; Angela Harper King

NCCEH staff and other participants: Bonnie Harper; Adriana Diaz; Nicole Purdy; Laurel McNamee; Ashley Von Hatten

Core Team Draft Assessment Tool

Ashley Von Hatten gave an overview of the Core Team and their work to date. NC BoS was selected in 2021 to take part in HUD's Coordinated Entry Equity Initiative. The initiative's goal is to support communities in improving housing outcomes and the human experience for Black, Brown, Indigenous and all people of color. From October 2021 – October 2022 NC BoS met bi-weekly with HUD coaches and completed the following:

- Developed an inclusive Core Team with a diverse range of local stakeholders to ensure the process is rooted in equity-based decision making.
- Developed an overall results statement: All Black/African Americans experiencing homelessness in North Carolina Balance of State are swiftly assessed and connected to safe, stable, and suitable permanent housing and housing resources.
- Developed a targeted goal statement: By December 2023, North Carolina Balance of State aims to proportionally increase the high scores of Black/African Americans assessed through a revised assessment to 43%.

HUD CE Equity Initiative ended October 2022, but the Core Team is still working towards the end goals of creating an equitable assessment tool. The Core Team did not want to re-create or update the current assessment tool, did not want to re-traumatize people who are being assessed, and wanted to only ask questions that held value for HUD-funded permanent housing.

Core Team next steps include (with the CEC and Racial Equity Subcommittee simultaneously voting on the final assessment):

- Revision with Stakeholders (January – March 2023)
- Pilot Phase (April – June 2023)
- Analysis and Revision with Community Phase (July – August 2023)

- Training Phase (September – October 2023)
- Launch Phase (November 2023 – January 2024)

Ashley presented a review of the draft assessment, which includes four sections: Housing and Homeless History, Risks, Health and Wellness, and Family Unit.

Housing and Homeless History questions:

- How long has it been since you lived in your own place?
- How many months have you been without a home, such as living outside or in shelter?
- Where did you sleep last night?
- Where will you sleep tonight?

Bonnie Harper asked a question regarding the definition of “own place” specifically in reference to stable housing, as many people have been living with other persons (couch surfing/room sharing) for many years. Teresa Robinson stated this question will likely lead to a conversation to dig deeper into the client’s housing history. Specific guidance will also be given during the training period and in the training materials.

Risks questions:

- Did you leave your previous or current living situation because you felt unsafe?
- Have you experienced violence since becoming homeless?
- Have you ever experienced violence with someone close to you?
- Are you currently experiencing or feel you are at risk of experiencing violence?

Health and Wellness

- Does anyone in your household have any physical or mental health conditions that are treated or have been treated by a professional?
- Do you have lung cancer, kidney or liver failure, heart disease, or a substance use disorder?
- Is the lack of housing making it hard to get to a doctor’s office or take prescribed medications?
- Do you have health insurance?

Discussion with Lynne James to ensure there is a general question around physical and/or mental health conditions. Health and Wellness section does include a general question prior to asking about specific diagnoses (lung cancer, kidney or liver failure, heart disease, substance use disorder) linked to mortality.

Family Unit

- What is the date of birth of all family members?
- Is anyone in the household pregnant?
- How many children under the age of 18 are not currently staying with your family, but would live with you? (if you have a home)
- How many adults 18 or older are not currently staying with your family, but would live with you? (if you have a home)



Shawanda Barnes asked if the client needs to provide verification of homelessness prior to completing the new assessment. Ashley responded by stating the client will likely already have verbally verified their homelessness status prior to the assessment tool being administered and written verification would not be required (but would be required if the person was referred to HUD-funded housing).

Rachelle Dugan stated during the stakeholder engagement meeting there was conversation around the weight and/or point value of each question. If the weight of the question is determined after the pilot phase, how will this data be updated for households who completed the new assessment prior to the weight/point determination. Ashley and Jeff Rawlings discussed how the weight/points of each question will be determined after the pilot phase, in order to use the data to determine where additional points are most equitable. Jeff also stated the new assessment tool will not be in HMIS during the pilot phase and will only be used as additional information for case conferencing. Rachelle asked if the new assessment would eventually replace the VI-SPDAT. Ashley confirmed.

Lynne James made a motion to approve the new assessment tool for the pilot phase in NC BoS CoC. Gretta Worley seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Unsheltered PIT Updates & Next Steps

Adriana Diaz provided an update on Unsheltered PIT data, as of April 6, 2023. 1393 persons have been identified as living unsheltered on the night of 1/25/2023, with all BoS regions confirming their final numbers. As a reminder, the goal of the Unsheltered Access Coordinator (UAC) is not to count unsheltered households on the night of PIT but to ensure unsheltered households are connected to coordinated entry, services, and permanent housing. CE leads should encourage agencies to follow up with clients living unsheltered and working to get the households assessed and connected to resources. If contact cannot be made after 90 days, persons should be exited from the appropriate HMIS project(s).

UAC terms are May through April and regions should be having active conversations around identifying the most appropriate person for this role. The goal of UACs is to ensure all people living unsheltered are connected to services, build trusting relationships, collect contact information for follow-up, assess and refer to the by-name list, and refer to emergency shelter when possible.

2023 CE Evaluation Reminders

Ashley provided a reminder about the 2023 CE Evaluation process, as HUD requires CoCs to solicit feedback at least annually from participating projects and from households that participated in CE during that time period. The CoC began its evaluation process on April 3, 2023. The timeframe for PSH surveys is April 3, 2023, through May 26, 2023. Timeframe for Shelter and/or Street Outreach is May 15, 2023, through May 26, 2023. As a reminder, all clients housed by a rapid rehousing program in the CoC must receive the CE evaluation survey within 30 days (before or after) they are housed.

Updates & Reminders

Nicole Purdy provided a BoS staffing update and informed the CEC her last day with NCEH is April 28, 2023. Nicole has provided unmatched CE HMIS support and will be greatly missed.

The next CEC meeting will be on May 15, 2023, at 10 am.

