Bringing It Home:
Ending Homelessness in NC

An Introduction to the
Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks
and Program Standards

National Alliance to END HOMELESSNESS

Kristi Schulenberg, National Alliance to End Homelessness

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION • INFLUENCING FEDERAL POLICY • BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY

The National Alliance to End Homelessness is the leading national voice on the issue of homelessness. The Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, effective policy solutions. The Alliance works collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, leading to stronger programs and policies that help communities achieve their goal of ending homelessness. The Alliance provides data and research to policymakers and elected officials in order to inform policy debates and educate the public and opinion leaders nationwide.

Working with a strong network of innovators, the National Alliance to End Homelessness identifies and evaluates hundreds of policy and program strategies and their impact on homelessness. The Alliance's Center for Capacity Building helps communities replicate and customize the best of those strategies. The Center focuses on strategies that are cost effective, data driven, and can be implemented at a scale that can significantly reduce homelessness.

Session Overview

I.   Introduction to Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks & Program Standards

II.   Overview of Rapid Re-housing

III. Program Philosophy & Design Standards

IV.   Housing Identification Standards

V.   Rent and Move-In Assistance Standards

VI.   Case Management and Service Standards

VII. Performance Benchmarks

VIII. Questions

POLL

Who Is In The Room?

❑ CoC Collaborative Applicant/Board Member/System Planner

❑ Rapid Re-housing Provider

❑ Provider interested in or imminently starting an RRH Project

❑ Private or local government funding agency

❑ Technical Assistance Provider

POLL

What is your familiarity with Rapid Re-housing?

❑I am a new staff person/agency to RRH
❑I have provided RRH services for about 1 year
❑I have provided RRH services for 2+ years

Introduction to the Standards and Performance Benchmarks

- Purpose of developing RRH standards
- Process of developing RRH standards
  - Provider feedback
  - Benchmarks based on current practice – how to measure your performance
- Developed by National Alliance to End Homelessness and partners
- Endorsed by HUD, USICH, VA

How to Use the Standards

Funder, State Leaders, and Coalitions

- Use standards to increase the effective implementation of rapid re-housing
  - development of Requests For Proposals (RFPs) for a variety of funding streams
  - set performance and outcome goals for program
  - evaluate applications for new rapid re-housing programs
  - review current program performance.

RRH Providers From All Funding Streams

- Use standards to improve their own rapid re-housing practice and to evaluate possible rapid re-housing partner agencies

Continuums of Care (CoCs)

- Use standards during the process of developing written standards for how they plan to administer assistance through coordinated assessment

How to Use the Standards

P = Program Philosophy and Design Standards

H = Housing Identification Standards

R = Rent and Move-in Assistance Standards

C = Case Management and Services Standards

How to Use the Standards

- Principles

- Rationale

- Standards
  - Program Staff
  - Program Policies
  - Program Activities

Rapid Re-Housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards

- 3 Benchmarks

  - 30 days from enrollment in rapid re-housing to move into permanent housing

  - 80% of exits from rapid re-housing are to permanent housing

  - 85% of households do not become homelessness again within a year

- 53 Standards

  - 3 Core Components

  - Program Design and Philosophy

POLL

Do you think RRH works well to end homelessness for veterans?
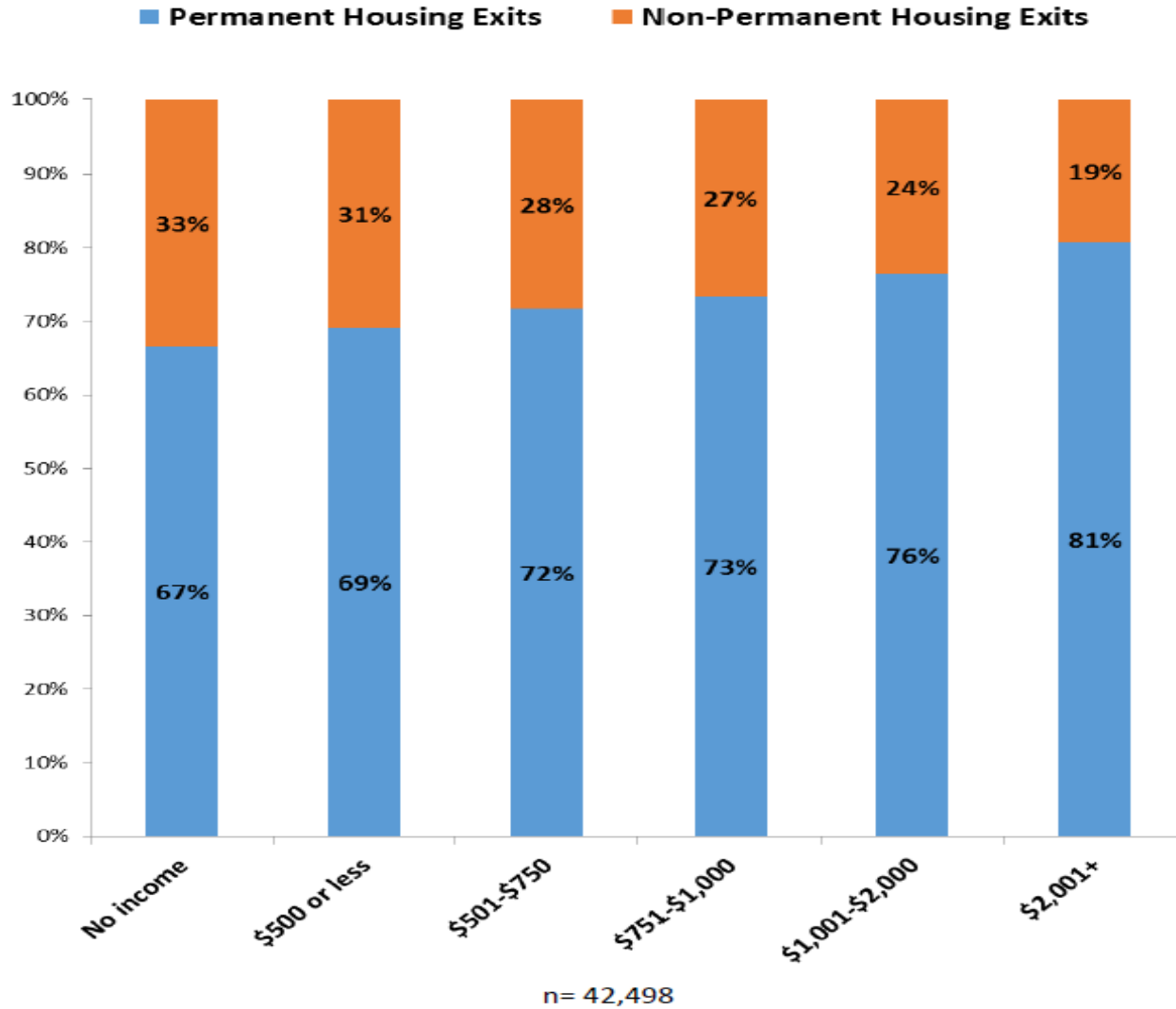
❑Yes, it works well for most program participants

❑No, most program participants do not succeed

❑I don't know

❑I am optimistic that it will work well

❑I am not optimistic that it will work well

SSVF National Data

- The median length of stay in SSVF among the 51,474 Veterans who exited during FY 2014 was 3 months (91 days).

- Sheltered and unsheltered homeless Veterans (at entry) who exited SSVF rapid re-housing services had similar success rates in obtaining permanent housing:
  - 78 percent (sheltered) exited to PH
  - 81 percent (unsheltered) exited to PH

- The cost of SSVF rapid re-housing was about $3,000 per household.

- 10 percent of families returned to homelessness after one year, and 14 percent of individuals.

Exhibit 22: PH Success Rates by Monthly Income at Program Entry Among Veterans Served, Excluding VASH Exits, FY 2014[35]

Legend: ■ Permanent Housing Exits ■ Non-Permanent Housing Exits

Income category	Permanent Housing Exits	Non-Permanent Housing Exits
No income	67%	33%
$500 or less	69%	31%
$501-$750	72%	28%
$751-$1,000	73%	27%
$1,001-$2,000	76%	24%
$2,001+	81%	19%

n= 42,498

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FY 2013 SSVF Veteran Participants with PH Destinations Avoiding Re-Entry into VA Homeless Programs

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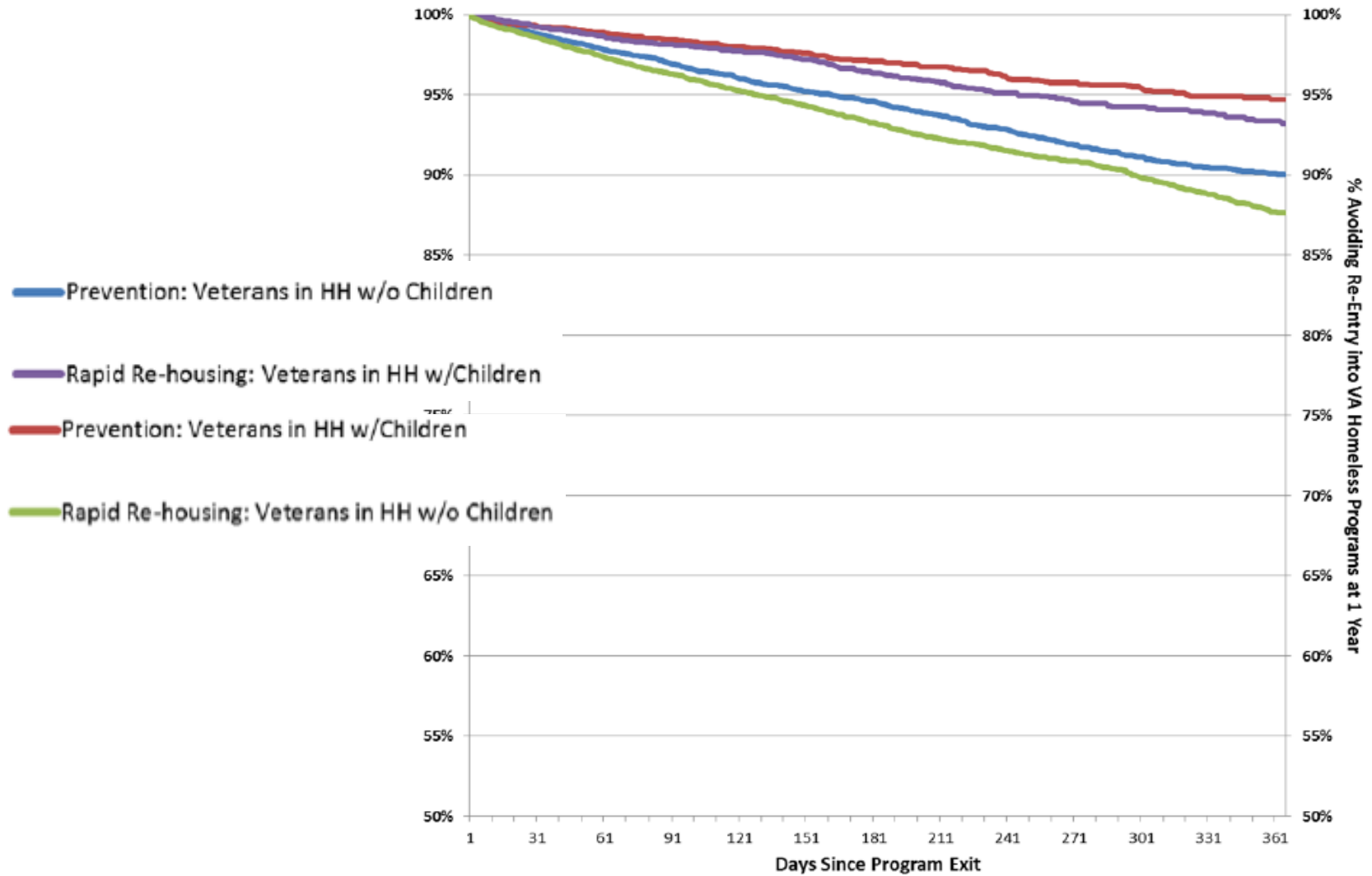
POLL

What is your biggest challenge in implementing effective RRH?

❑Challenging Housing Market
❑Lack of training on best practices in RRH
❑Connecting households to services
❑Helping households to increase income
❑Other

Core Components of Rapid Re-housing

Housing Identification

Rent and Move-In Assistance (Financial)

Rapid Re-Housing Case Management and Services
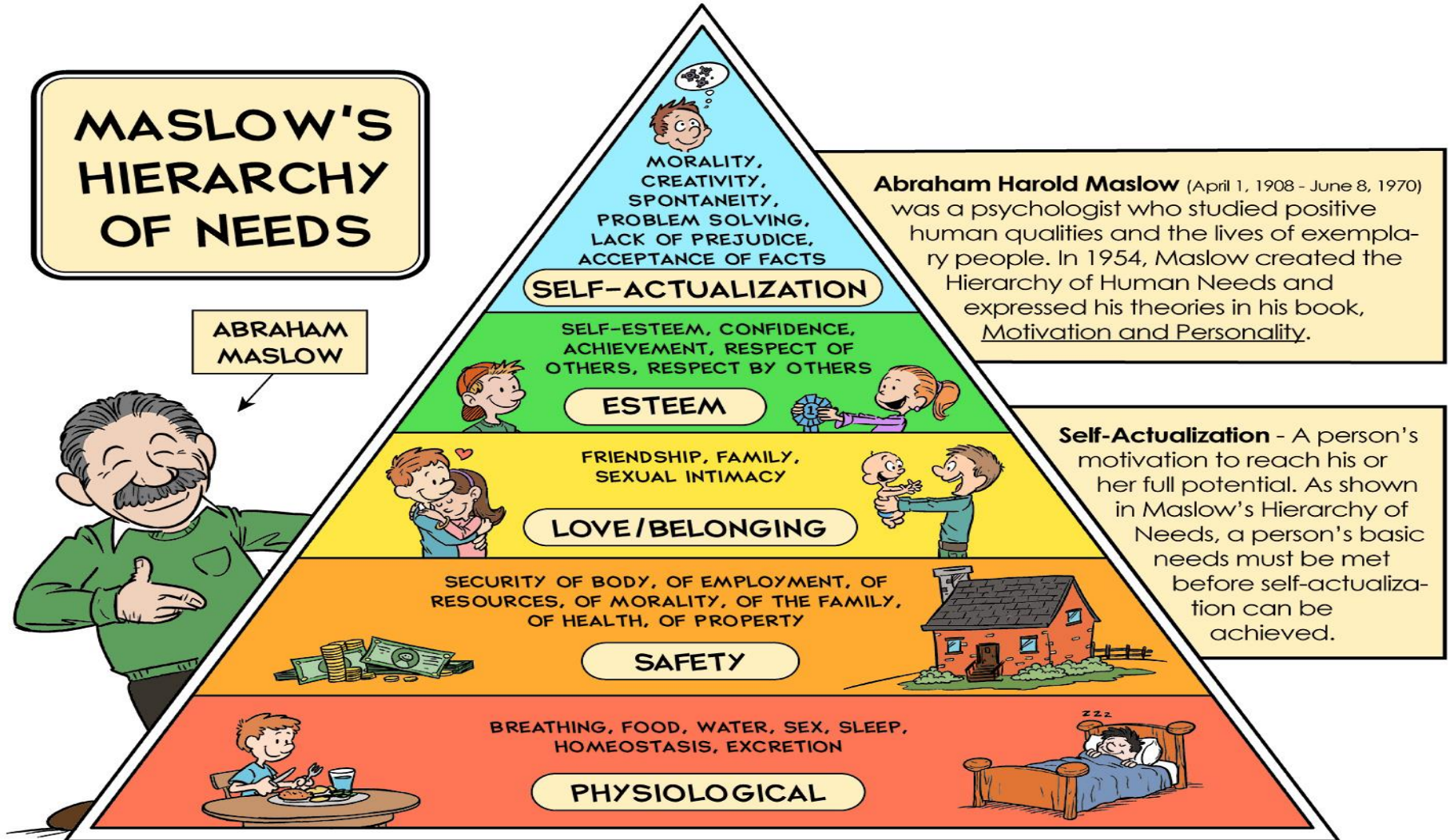
Goals of Rapid Re-housing

Rapid re-housing is designed to help individuals and families:

- ✓ quickly exit homelessness
- ✓ return to permanent housing in the community
- ✓ not become homeless again in the near term

Why Rapid Re-Housing?

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

ABRAHAM MASLOW

MORALITY, CREATIVITY, SPONTANEITY, PROBLEM SOLVING, LACK OF PREJUDICE, ACCEPTANCE OF FACTS
SELF-ACTUALIZATION

SELF-ESTEEM, CONFIDENCE, ACHIEVEMENT, RESPECT OF OTHERS, RESPECT BY OTHERS
ESTEEM

FRIENDSHIP, FAMILY, SEXUAL INTIMACY
LOVE/BELONGING

SECURITY OF BODY, OF EMPLOYMENT, OF RESOURCES, OF MORALITY, OF THE FAMILY, OF HEALTH, OF PROPERTY
SAFETY

BREATHING, FOOD, WATER, SEX, SLEEP, HOMEOSTASIS, EXCRETION
PHYSIOLOGICAL

Abraham Harold Maslow (April 1, 1908 - June 8, 1970) was a psychologist who studied positive human qualities and the lives of exemplary people. In 1954, Maslow created the Hierarchy of Human Needs and expressed his theories in his book, Motivation and Personality.

Self-Actualization - A person's motivation to reach his or her full potential. As shown in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a person's basic needs must be met before self-actualization can be achieved.

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Why Rapid Re-housing?

- Reduced length of shelter stays frees up crisis beds for others in need

- Reduces the negative impacts of long-term homelessness

- Improves household outcomes

- Increases a household's self-sufficiency

- Decreases overall veteran homelessness

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) **ends homelessness** for families and individuals.

RRH
HELPS

FIND HOUSING

Help people quickly find housing within one month or less.

PAY FOR HOUSING

Help people pay for housing short term; longer-term help an option.

STAY IN HOUSING

Help access services so people can stay in housing.

The **Core Components** of Rapid Re-Housing help people **find** housing fast, **pay** for housing, and **stay** in housing.

Program Philosophy and Design

Program Philosophy and Design: Principles

- Programs should take a Housing First approach and **should not screen out** households based on a score on an assessment tool or criteria that are assumed, but not shown, to predict successful outcomes, such as a minimum income threshold, employment, absence of a criminal history, evidence of "motivation," etc.

- Participants have all the **rights and responsibilities of typical tenants** and should sign a standard lease agreement.

Program Philosophy and Design: Policies & Activities

- P1. Staff regularly trained to basic program philosophy of RRH
- P3. Well-defined, written screening process using consistent and transparent decision criteria
- P4. Eligibility criteria does not require: sobriety, commitment to participate, or other "predictive" criteria
- P8. Participate in local HMIS
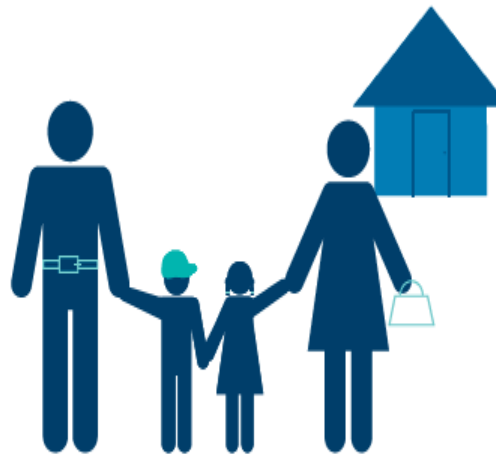- P9. Participate in and accept referrals from Coordinated Entry

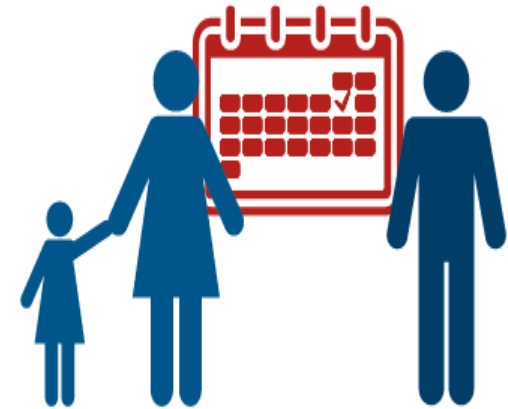# Questions

Core Components Standards

Housing Identification

FIND FAST
HOUSING IDENTIFICATION

Build relationships with landlords to have access to as many housing units as possible.

Find and secure housing as quickly as possible after a person or family becomes homeless.

Limit the time a family or individual spends homeless. Move people into housing within **30 days or less**.

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Housing Identification: Standards

- A rapid re-housing program's staff should help households **access units that are desirable and sustainable.**

- Program staff should **actively recruit and retain landlords** and property managers willing to rent to program participants who may otherwise fail to pass typical tenant screening criteria.

- Program staff should help participants to secure **shared housing** including, including negotiating landlord approval, shared rent, etc.

Housing Identification: Standards

- The landlord is a vital partner to a RRH program.

- The RRH provider must be **responsive to landlords** to preserve and develop those partnerships for the purposes future housing placements.

- The RRH provider should incentivize landlords to rent to program participants by offering tenancy supports that will make the landlord overlook barriers to tenancy such as evictions, poor rental history, zero to low income, criminal records, and poor credit histories.

Housing Identification: Standards

- Designate staff whose responsibility is to **identify and recruit landlords** and encourage them to rent to homeless households served by the program.

- Staff should have **the knowledge, skills, and agency resources to understand landlords' perspectives**, understand landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities, and negotiate landlord supports.

- Ideally, a program has **dedicated staff** for whom housing identification and landlord engagement is the primary responsibility *rather* than making this the case manager's responsibility.

Housing Identification: Standards

Make the "business case" to incentivize landlords

Understand landlord language

Market to landlords

Build relationships with property owners and managers

Housing Identification: Standards

Program Policies

☐ H4. Program offers a **standard, basic level of support** to all landlords who lease to program participants…. Program can negotiate **additional supports, as needed**, on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum…

H4a. **Respond quickly** (within one business day)…

H4b. **Seek to resolve conflicts…**

H4c. Whenever possible, **negotiate move-out terms…**

Core Components Standards

Rent and Move-In Assistance (Financial)

HELP PAY
RENT AND MOVE-IN ASSISTANCE

Pay for security deposits, move-in expenses...

... and/or rent and utilities.

Length of assistance varies, but often **4 to 6 months**.

Rent and Move-in Assistance: Standards

Principles

- Rent and move-in assistance should be flexible, individualized, and tailored to the varying and changing needs of a household while providing the assistance necessary for households to move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize in permanent housing.

Rent and Move-in Assistance: Standards

❑Provide assistance necessary for participants to **move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize** in permanent housing.

❑Provide participants with the **minimum necessary** to maximize the number of households able to be served.

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Rent and Move-in Assistance: Standards

Program Staff

❑ R4. A **progressive approach** is used to determine the duration and amount of rent assistance. Financial assistance is **not a standard "package" and is flexible enough to adjust to households' unique needs** and resources, especially as participants' financial circumstances or housing costs change.

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Core Components Standards

Rapid Re-Housing Case Management and Services

Case Management and Services: Standards

Obtain and Move into Permanent Housing

- Obtain and Move into Permanent Housing

Support Stabilization in Housing

- Support Stabilization in Housing

Close the Case

- Close the Case

Case Management and Services: Standards

- RRH case management should be client-driven and voluntary.

- RRH case management should be flexible in intensity— offering only essential assistance until or unless the participant demonstrates the need for or requests additional help.

- RRH case management uses a strengths-based approach to empower clients.

- RRH case management reflects the short-term nature of the rapid re-housing assistance…

Case Management and Services: Standards

Program Staff

❑ C1. Case manager's job descriptions direct case managers to focus on housing and to use strengths-based practices focused on participant engagement and meeting the unique needs of each household.

❑ C2. In programs that have specialized staff that conduct housing location, case managers work closely with housing locator staff to match the client to an appropriate unit as quickly as possible.

Questions
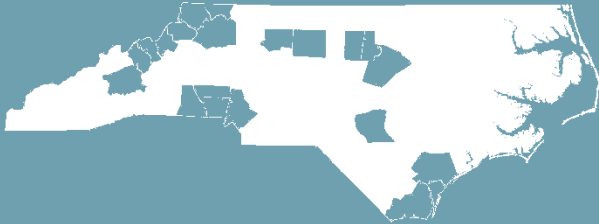
Incorporating RRH Standards into CoC Application Scoring

Nancy Holochwost, Project Specialist

Balance of State CoC

NC Coalition to End Homelessness

The BoS CoC uses the RRH standards in its CoC scorecard.

- Scorecard Committee creates the scorecard used to evaluate CoC project applications.
- In 2016, Scorecard Committee added the RRH standards.

- Previous scorecards:
  - PSH Key Elements (SAMHSA) for PSH projects
  - No comparable standards for RRH projects

Intended impact = improve performance

- Include core components of RRH in all programs
  - Look at program design & set expectations from outset (new projects)
  - Strengthen & improve existing programs (renewal projects)
- Make most effective use of limited CoC funds
- Best outcomes for households served

Scorecard includes high-priority standards.

- Scorecard Committee chose most salient standards from the 4 categories

- Focused on:
  - Dedicated & trained staff
  - Written policies
  - Progressive approach to providing assistance
  - Voluntary & client-directed services
  - Following Housing First model
  - No screening out for lack of income or "predictors" of success
  - Leases have no additional requirements

Applicants provide RRH program documentation with their application.

- Eligibility requirements

- Screening process for participants

- Sample lease

- Program policies & procedures

- Additional form created by NCCEH staff
  - Yes/no questions and descriptions of processes

Not meeting standards affects eligibility/ prioritization for CoC funding.

- New projects: must meet standards on scorecard
- Renewal projects: points in 2016, meet standards in 2017

- May be given extra review, not prioritized, or deemed ineligible by Project Review Committee if not met

Resources

- BoS 2016 application materials:
  www.ncceh.org/bos/2016cocapplication/
  - Scorecards
  - RRH form created by NCCEH

- Questions? Contact our staff at bos@ncceh.org

Performance Benchmarks

Performance Benchmarks

- It is important to remember that rapid re-housing **is a Housing First intervention** and programs should not be screening out households based on criteria that are *assumed* to predict successful outcomes, such as income, employment, criminal history, mental health history, medical history, or evidence of "motivation."

- The benchmarks are based on performance data of programs that *do not* screen households out on the basis of the above barriers.

- Measure performance using HMIS

Performance Benchmarks

Reminder:

A community may not yet have any programs that meets these benchmarks.

- Set alternate performance goals for the purposes of comparison between programs
- Set alternative goals for performance improvement, while programs work to achieve these benchmarks

Performance Benchmarks

RRH's three primary goals:

1. Reduce the length of time program participants spend homeless,

2. Exit households to permanent housing, and

3. Limit returns to homelessness within a year of program exit.

Performance Benchmark #1: Reduce the length of time program participants spend homeless

To meet this performance benchmark, households served by the program should move into permanent housing in an **average of 30 days or less**

$$\text{Average} = \frac{\text{Sum of number of days from program entry to move in date for all households}}{\text{Total number of households}}$$

Performance Benchmark #2:
Permanent Housing Success Rates

To meet this performance benchmark, at least 80 percent of households that exit a RRH program should exit to permanent housing

$$\text{Percent} = \left(\frac{\text{Total number of households exited to permanent housing during a time period}}{\text{Total number of households that exited program during same time period}} \right) 100$$

Performance Benchmark #3:
Returns to Homelessness

To meet this performance benchmark, at least 85 percent of households that exit a RRH program to permanent housing should not become homeless again within a year.

$$\text{Percent} = \left(\frac{\text{Total number of households who did NOT return to homelessness during time period}}{\text{Total number of households exited to permanent housing during the same time period}} \right) 100$$

Questions
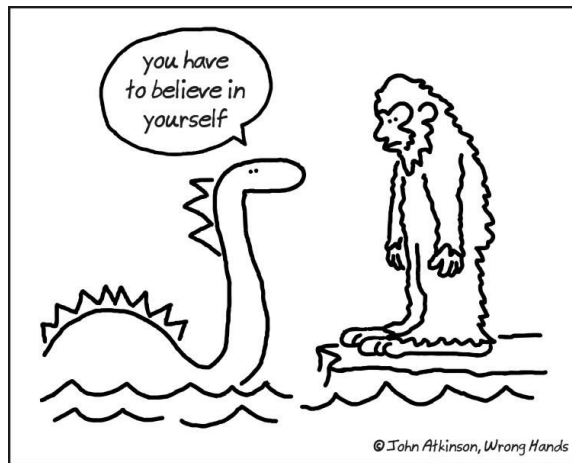
Identify the one thing that you will do differently to focus your rapid re-housing efforts in the next week.

QUESTIONS?
Kristi Schulenberg
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RESOURCES

- **Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards** http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rapid-re-housing-performance-benchmarks-and-program-standards

- **Rapid Re-housing "Know-How" Series** http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rrh-know-how

- **Rapid Re-housing: A History and Core Components** http://bit.ly/2pXUqU7

- **Rapid Re-housing Performance Evaluation & Improvement Toolkit** - http://bit.ly/2pHKoFO