

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Coordinated Entry Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 26th, 2023
8:30AM – 10:00AM

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81502556398?pwd=akRLZDh0ZWpXbGFhTFh0aTZaaC84Zz09>

AGENDA

1. Introductions and Announcements (10 min)
2. Discussion on Assessments for Prevention CE **[VOTE]** (35 min)
3. Discussion on Screening for Suicidality (35 min)
4. ~~Other Business~~ Changes to CE/HMIS ROI for AHS (10 min)
5. Discussion on having Co-Chair of the CE Committee – Sarah Russell

NOTES

Announcements:

- Travis Poulin – CVOEO's home heating and fuel programs end this Friday.
- Linda Amante – We have around \$10,000 in HOP funding remaining. We have been awarded an additional ~100K. We have restricted back rent to 1 months rent.
 - Sarah Russell – Is there any capacity for COTS to process community homelessness prevention funding?
 - Sophia Senning – We do not have the capacity. We just hired an agency coordinator. Not sure when we will be able to do prevention services, but it would not be what the community needs.
 - Kerry Duquette-Hoffman – AHS funding has been exhausted
 - Travis Poulin – We do have some United Way funding left. We also have a \$20,000 donation from two years ago that is to be used for housing related assistance. We have not had to use it previously because of VERAP. We are leveraging all resources we have access to.

Discussion of Assessments for Prevention Coordinated Entry

- Stephanie Smith – Travis Poulin, Will Vilardo, Sophia Senning, Jennie Davis and I met to discuss what this assessment should look like. I wanted to have an assessment so we have a system to follow when we start implementing Prevention Coordinated Entry. At the last meeting, some folks felt like the other assessment was not pertinent to people who would be accessing Prevention Coordinated Entry. We kept some questions I felt were important. We also added some questions from the Sustainability Assessment.

1. Where are you currently living? (1 Point for Bold Answers)

In an apartment I am leasing that is an appropriate size for my family.

In an apartment that is overcrowded.

On a friend's/family member's couch.

Self-paying for a motel.

An institution, which I am in the process of leaving.

Other _____.

2. How long has it been since you lived in permanent, stable housing? _____ (1 point for 1 year or more)

3. In the last three years, how many times have you been homeless? _____ (1 point for 4 or more times)

4. If you were homeless before, did you ever receive temporary assistance to help you move back into housing, such as temporary rental assistance, deposits, help with moving costs, etc.? (1 Point for Bold Answers)

Yes, more than once Yes, once No

5a. Have you had any previous evictions? (1 Point for Bold Answers)

Yes – Go to question 8. **No – Skip to question 9.**

5b. If yes, how many times?

One or two Three or more

6. Do you owe any money to a landlord from the past 7 years? (1 Point for Bold Answers)

No Yes, less than \$1,000 Yes, \$1,000-\$3,000 Yes, more than \$3,000

7. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (1 Point for Bold Answers)

No.

Yes, Just a few minor offenses such as moving violations, a DUI, or a misdemeanor

Yes, Drug offenses or crimes against persons or property.

Yes, Arson, Placement on Lifetime Sex Offender Registry, Production of Crystal Meth.

- The questions are as follows:
 - “Where are you currently living?”
 - Respondents receive a point for responding “On a friend/family member’s couch”, “An institution, which I am in the process of leaving”, or “Other”.
 - “How long has it been since you lived in permanent, stable housing?”
 - Respondents receive a point for answering one year or more
 - In the last 3 years, how many times have you been homeless?
 - Respondents receive a point for 4 or more times.
 - If you were homeless before, did you ever receive temporary assistance to help you move back into housing, such as temporary rental assistance, deposits, help with moving costs, etc.?
 - Respondents receive 1 point for answering “Yes”

- Have you had any previous evictions?
 - Respondents receive 1 point for answering “Yes”
 - Do you owe any money to a landlord from the past seven years?
 - Respondents receive a point for answering “Yes”
 - Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
 - Respondents receive a point for answering “Yes, drug offences or crimes against persons or property” or “Yes, arson, placement on the lifetime sex offender registry, production of crystal meth”.
- Sarah Russell – Should we add in a question around if respondents feel that they have experienced discrimination around being a part of a marginalized group?
 - Stephanie Smith – This is not really a vulnerability assessment. I do not know how we would ask this question. I think that a lot of people would answer “Yes”.
 - Sarah Russell: It may still be interesting to ask and see what data we get from that. If this is not a vulnerability assessment, what are the points on the assessment for?
 - Stephanie Smith: - The points are around their ability to be rehoused and their housing barriers.
 - Travis Poulin – Phrasing the question “Do you feel...” is more interpretive than other assessment questions.
 - Sarah Russell – We can ask Jess Hyman (Associate Director of the Fair Housing Project at CVOEO) about phrasing.
 - Stephanie Smith - I feel like a lot of clients would say yes even if they have not.
 - Lindsay Mesa – Maybe “have you ever accessed legal services”? Have other communities encountered this issue? Is the idea that the points are going to be used for prioritization?
 - Stephanie Smith – When we created the vulnerability assessment for people fleeing domestic violence, the wording drastically changed how people scored. We might not get accurate data if we are not asking the question
 - Linda Amante – I agree that a lot of client say that they are being discriminated against. We will have to be careful about phrasing.
- Sophia Senning – I thought that the first questions was unscored and just for data?
 - Lindsay – I agree with Sophia, questions 1 should not be scored. It is not enough information to tell us about someone’s vulnerability.
 - Sarah Russell – Does the Balance of State use scoring for their Prevention Coordinated Entry Assessment?
 - Stephanie Smith – Not right now but they will be.
 - Stephanie Smith – We can remove scoring from that question.
- Travis Poulin – I think it looks great. WE can evolve it as we go. People wanted something short and to the point and I think we achieved that.
- Vote
 - COTS – Aye
 - CEDO – Aye
 - AHS – Aye
 - BPD – Aye

- Pathways – Aye
- Howard Center – Aye
- SHHC – Aye
- CHT – Aye
- CVOEO – Aye
- BHA – Aye
- SSVF – Aye
- CVSD – Aye

Motion passes

- Discussion on Screening for Suicidality
 - Linda Amante – We are not clinicians.
 - Stephanie Smith – This feels like a big ask of my staff.
 - Sarah Russell – I do not think this is clinical. We can train staff. I see it as a very basic requirement of social workers.
 - Linda Amante – People come to CVOEO looking for assistance and they may not want to disclose that information to a new person.
 - Stephanie Smith – I cannot train on this. We do around twenty assessments a week, we have about 50 people waiting on our waitlist. We do not have the time to engage in crisis situations with everyone we do an assessment with.
 - Will Towne – This assessment is for prioritization. Yes, suicidality is an important issue, but it does not affect prioritization.
 - Travis Poulin – If this question does get added, we will need to discuss what services we are referring to. A referral needs to have been made. Such a serious question, I want to make sure it is not just a data point.
 - Stephanie Smith – Skyla found that the National Health Care for the Homeless Council states that when communities are developing vulnerability assessments, they should not collect data from individuals that is unnecessary for matching with appropriate services or directly linked to community needs.
 - Lindsay – My general sentiment is that this question is important, but I would hesitate to add a question where we would be referring people to the hospital.
 - Stephanie Smith – I have managed to get as many people on the periphery of coordinated entry to do assessments. I would not be able to ask them to continue to do assessments with this question on there. This could be a barrier to getting people in CE.
 - Kerri Duquette Hoffman -Benefits workers are doing CE assessments but they are not social workers. The other questions on the assessment are invasive because they are connected to resources. Maybe this is a question that case managers ask of their clients, but it does not get put on the vulnerability assessment.
 - Sarah Russell – What is the current question on the assessment related to self-harm?
 - Stephanie Smith – “Have you threatened to or tried to harm yourself or anyone else in the last year?”
 - Sarah Russell – If someone answered “yes”, would that trigger a follow up?
 - Travis Poulin – There is no follow up baked in

- Sarah Russell – To me this is a larger than CE assessment question. It is a community need.
- Stephanie Smith – My staff know how to respond, but I do not want to set them up to be constantly receiving this information.
- Will Towne – Just because we do not want it in the CE assessment does not mean we do not think it is important. When someone discloses suicidality – it goes from CE to case management. I think there has to be clear understanding of Howard Center and UVMMMC’s capacity and role in this.
- Lindsay – What kind of community do we want to be for each other. I do not want to shy away from asking hard questions. I see harm being done when this is disclosed and then someone is referred elsewhere.
- Stephanie Smith – The Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, 988, has had some negative outcomes. My staff does not have capacity, we do 10-20 assessments a week. Also, I need to be able to train people to do assessments on the fly.
- Paul Dragon – For CVOEO, for me, this is not the right time. I do not even get asked this question at my doctor appointments. I do think we should all be trained for self-disclosure.
- Sarah Russell made a motion in the chat to continue to discuss and work on adding the question to intake
 - Crystal Jones seconded the motion
 - VOTE:
 - STEPS – Aye
 - CHT – Aye
 - BHA – AYE
 - CEDO – Aye
 - AHS – Abstain
 - CVOEO – No
 - BPD – Aye
 - SHHA – No
 - SSVF – No
 - Howard Center – Yes
 - Pathways – abstain
 - COTS - No

Motion does not pass

- Stephanie Smith – We should still have training around supporting people who are experiencing suicidality.
- Travis Poulin – This might be something to bring up at CCHA.
- Will Towne – Maybe we can have a system where case workers step up if someone says “yes” to that question during an assessment.
- Changes to CE/ HMIS ROI for AHS
 - Stephanie Smith: We need to be specific about which offices from AHS are on our ROI. Just having AHS on there is too broad.

- Sarah Russell – Should we also discuss adding CVSD?
- Stephanie Smith – We would need to write up an agreement with them. I have not had time to do that.
- Stephanie Smith made a motion to break AHS into Field Services, Hireability, VCCI, OEO, and ESD
 - Sarah Russell seconded the motion
 - VOTE via Zoom Chat:
 - Steps- Aye
 - AHS – Aye
 - Pathways – Aye
 - CEDO – Aye
 - CHT – Aye
 - BHA – Aye
 - BPD – Aye
 - Howard Center – Aye
 - SSVF – Aye
 - CVOEO – Aye
 - SHHC – Aye
- Discussion on having Co-Chair of the CE Committee – Sarah Russell
 - Not enough time to discuss – this will be discussed at the May 2023 CE Committee Meeting