

**Santa Clara County Continuum of Care
Coordinated Assessment Working Group Meeting Notes
11.14.19**

- **Attendees**

- Janel Fletcher, Bitfocus
- Lesly Soto Bright, Bitfocus
- Danielle Creer, West Valley Community Services
- Laura Foster, Bill Wilson Center
- Kerry Lao, YWCA-SV
- Beile Lindner, Homebase
- Cody, LifeMoves
- Maria Magallanes, VA Palo Alto
- Elizabeth Olvera, Family Supportive Housing
- Hunter Scott, HomeFirst
- Channy Singh Abode Services
- Kelly Sumner, HomeFirst
- Leila Qureishi, OSH
- Julie Nguyen, Goodwill
- Katherine Cance, Sacred Heart Community Service
- Kathryn Kaminski, OSH
- Kelsey Main, Downtown Streets
- Rebecca Siqueiros, WFC
- Koto Pierce, LifeMoves
- Kerry Lao, YWCA

- **Coordinated Assessment Data Updates**

- 21,408 unduplicated assessments from November 15, 2015 to September 30, 2019
 - 7,592 scored in the PSH range with 1,802 referred
 - 10,305 in the RRH range with 4,294 referred
 - 3,511 in the minimal assistance range
- 1,063 transition age youth (TAY) have taken the Individual Adult Assessment and 428 TAY have taken the Family Assessment, increasing the percentage of TAY who have taken a VI-SDPAT assessment from 6% to 13%
- The group would like to see more percentage data – OSH will incorporate these into presentations moving forward.
- OSH will also think of a way to present how many people on the queue are getting referred to PSH/RRH.

- **Annual Coordinated Assessment System Evaluation**

- We are in the process of conducting the annual CAS evaluation required by HUD, including engaging key stakeholders.
- Last evaluation brought to light issues regarding locating clients, how to better serve DV survivors, etc.

- The Prioritization Subcommittee identified focus areas for the evaluation:
 - Access for LGBTQ+ folks, particularly youth. Community doesn't collect sexual orientation and gender identity information very thoroughly.
 - Latinx and Asian and Pacific Islander subpopulations aren't as represented as one would expect, how can we more effectively reach those groups?
 - Our assessment system can improve how it identifies persons with disabilities, alcohol and substance use issues, and mental health issues. There is a discrepancy between reports at assessment and intake.
 - Referral—how do we support matchmakers to ensure consistency?
 - Reached out to staff from health care and criminal justice system, matchmakers, and agencies that have a specific focus on serving identified subpopulations
 - Upcoming outreach:
 - Lived experience focus group and targeted meetings with the Lived Experience Advisory Board
 - Targeted meetings with outreach staff
 - Web survey for housing and service providers
 - OSH & Homebase will present findings and recommendations to the CAWG for feedback and help with implementation – identifying long, medium and short-term goals and prioritizing actions that would have the greatest impact.
- **Issue in Focus: Determining Family Status for Matching and Referral**
 - The system needs accurate information regarding the status of children/family composition so that matchmakers can match clients to appropriate programs and programs can efficiently house families.
 - Issues discussed
 - Limited custody makes an individual ineligible for family housing
 - For young adults, not all the HMIS users are savvy about adding or removing individuals from the household composition
 - Not all children are entered into HMIS
 - People don't take the time to complete an intake process regarding children
 - Programs receive referrals for single adults because they were screened using the Family VI-SPDAT
 - This could be because the family composition changed since assessment
 - Do you hold off on housing a client in a studio when they're going to be reunified with their children months down? They're locked into a year lease and it's not going to work for them once their children reunify with them, but do you just deny them the housing in the interim?
 - Concern that single adults who are referred to family programs and then rejected are just sent back to the queue as opposed to being referred directly to singles programs
 - Comment: There are more family programs, sending an individual to a single program isn't in line with the prioritization scheme.
 - Question for the group: How do your programs determine family status? What questions do you ask?

- *Matchmakers don't look into HMIS information regarding if there are dependents in the family, just check what VI-SPDAT assessment was administered.*
- *For PSH, a lot of our resources are vouchers— have to have custody at least 50% of the time*
- *Legal and physical custody of the children required for PSH*
 - *What is the custody split?— Four nights of the seven, the child has to stay at the shelter.*
 - *With programs specifically designed for parents, if it's a split custody situation then the schedule over the next couple of weeks or months is looked at.*
- *In TH, where houses are specifically for parents, will accept clients with less than 50% custody, if they have a plan to renegotiate the custody. There is follow up on how close they are to being on track to gaining shared custody (check ins with case worker, appeals, etc.)*
- *Policy regarding family unit size: even if they have 30% or 40% custody, you still have to take that child into consideration when locating a unit because the landlord certainly will be. From a budgetary standpoint, figure out what makes sense within program subsidy and what works for the client.*
- Question for the group: when and how is this information verified?
 - *This is done while processing the referral and verifying eligibility*
 - *Policies aren't documented but they're clearly communicated*
 - *Always a conversation with the client on where their case is at and would you feel comfortable being in a situation where you're locked into a lease with special permission from your landlord even though your family composition is up in the air and may change.*
 - *Conversation with caseworker to verify, court order showing custody.*
 - *Don't specifically ask for all the information to prove that you're a parent but if there was a custody situation and we're concerned, might then probe and ask to see documentation.*
 - *Some clients don't have court documentation so there's a phone call with the other parent.*
- Discussion on Example Policy: Pre-screening questions to determine assessors should administer a single adult or family VI-SPDAT.
 - *Every single additional question can feel intrusive even before they get to the VI-SPDAT*
 - *Train everyone to ask: many people are in your household?*
 - *May run into situations where someone is temporarily caring for family members— nieces, cousins, grandchildren.*
 - *Need to develop a process that doesn't disqualify them or screened out when that family situation is in flux so often. Don't want to add barriers and make a bunch of referrals where they end up being ineligible*
- Other thoughts
 - *Can look at the utilization of the one existing program targeted for reunification—explore expanding the capacity of that program*

- *Put the local questions at the beginning before you get into which version of the VI-SPDAT is administered. These are softer innocuous questions.*
- *Is there a place in the local questions to add these screening questions?*
- *Potential questions to ask*
 - *Rather than talking about custody, because people can get defensive with that framing, “do you anticipate persons under the age of 18 living with you?”*
 - *Where do your children spend most of their time?*
 - *Do you want to be living with anyone else who is not currently in your household?*
 - *Do you have a plan to reunify?*
- Generally, not a fan of administering both the single and family version of the VI-SPDAT
- Need to be especially cognizant of not making it longer because already doing additional DV screening

- **Community Process for Monitoring Assessment Consistency**

- Scores should be the same regardless of who is administering the Vi-SPDAT assessment.
- Is there a way to monitor assessment data to identify outliers/red flags with assessors?
- Group reviewed and discussed de-identified data report pulled by Bitfocus showing VI-SPDAT scores by assessor
 - Based on a one-year time frame
 - Scores vary quite significantly (average 6.5-12)
 - There should be some variance because some agencies are solely dealing with target populations where higher scores are to be expected (I.e. subpopulations will severe mental health conditions)
 - For the outliers, need to look at how many assessments they’ve administered
 - Comparing between agencies isn’t particularly effective because agencies have such different programs
 - Need to set up a process for following up if scores are outside of typical ranges within agency programs so there’s fidelity to the model. What’s the tipping point? 10%?
 - System administration team can pull this data and identify outliers and then work with managers.
 - Managers would like a canned report on every staff member and have the ones that are outliers flagged, manager can then confirm whether that makes sense or not
 - Managers would like system administration to notify them of red flags in a scheduled report but would also like the capacity to run assessment themselves during the interim and monitor it before system administration flags it again
 - What’s should the minimum number of assessments administered be before being subject to flagging?
 - 10?

- Note that this report tracks the person who entered the VI-SPDAT, not necessarily the person who gave the assessment.
 - System administration team to work with BWC and Abode on this because some agencies have centralized data entry

- **Pop Quiz: How Well Do You Know the Coordinated Assessment System?**

- **Next Meeting: January 9, 2020 – Location TBD**
 - Potential January discussion topics:
 - Housing quality data standards
 - Follow up on coordinated entry annual evaluation
 - Combination of HMIS admin and this group