



# Homeless Outreach: From Street Engagement to Housing Success

Presented by Abt Global in Partnership with  
California DHCS and CalMHSA





# Meet Your Presenters



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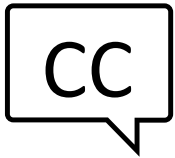


# Webinar Housekeeping

Tips to enhance the webinar experience

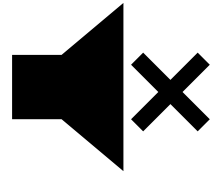
## Closed Captioning

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## Audio

We ask that all attendees remain on mute until the Q & A



## Questions

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## Tech Support

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# Agenda

- What is Housing Focused Street Outreach
- Community Spotlight: Nevada County Health and Human Services
- Impacts of Housing Focused Street Outreach
- Key Takeaways for Housing Placement Success
- Participant Survey
- Q&A





# Understanding a Housing Focused Street Outreach Approach

## Objectives of this training:

Identify the intersections between the behavioral health and homelessness systems, and provide practical strategies for building trust, maintaining continuity of care

BH outreach workers and organizations will understand cross-system coordination approaches that lead to successful housing placements.





# What is Housing Focused Street Outreach?





# What is the Goal of Housing Focused Street Outreach?

*Connect clients to housing navigation  
to end homeless episode.*

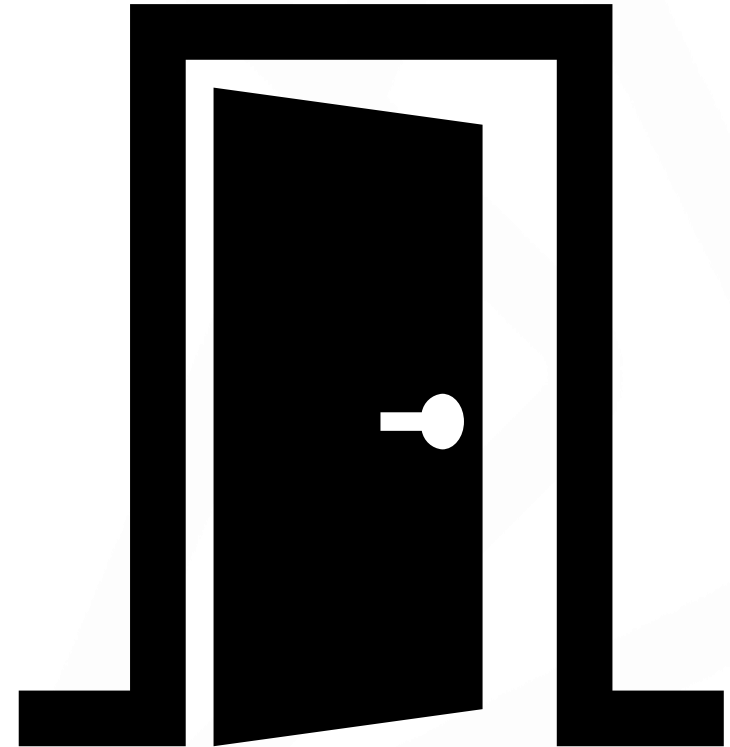




# Street Outreach as the Front Door

## Where does Outreach begin?

- Initial engagement and assessment
- Building trust and rapport
- Crisis intervention & harm reduction
- Documentation and data for system entry





# Behavioral Health and the Homelessness Response System



## GAPS IN SYSTEMS

Through our interviews with BH and CoC partners, we learned that there is often a disconnect between these two systems.

BH providers have a significant role in getting their clients connected to the CoC and should be an active part of the housing navigation process.





# Housing Focused Street Outreach Core Elements

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The first step of outreach is understanding the needs of an individual, i.e. Medication, Counseling, Employment Assistance, Car Repair.

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Outreach is coordinated with other local service providers, i.e. VA, CoC, Law Enforcement.

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Outreach is a process rather than a single engagement. Individuals can say no to support, but staff must continue to engage them and provide necessities during outreach visits.

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Outreach focuses on permanent housing placement. If an individual is reluctant to enter a shelter or transitional housing, they can move directly from the street to permanent housing.

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Outreach strives to reach vulnerable individuals who don't seek services on their own.

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First line of defense to keep unhoused people safe, particularly in extremely hot or cold weather.

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# Housing Focused Street Outreach Best Practices



## Team

Build a team that reflects or shares experiences with the populations being served, including peers with lived experience of homelessness and outreach staff that cross racial, gender and age lines.



## Coordinate across

Coordinate across partners to ensure full geographic coverage and connections to population-specific resources or staff.



## Share and coordinate

Share and coordinate schedules and coverage with mainstream outreach providers.



## Engage

Engage with day programs, meal centers, libraries, laundromats, and other places individuals experiencing homelessness may be found.



## Build

If at all possible, build partnerships with local law enforcement to support a coordinated, thoughtful response to addressing unsheltered homelessness and encampments.





# Housing Focused Collaboration



BH providers should request access to HMIS to enter data into that system



BH providers should be invited to attend CoC meetings and be a part of local CES Housing Case Conferencing





# Community Spotlight: Nevada County Health and Human Services' HOME Team





# HOME Overview

**Homeless Outreach and Medical Engagement (HOME)** is a multidisciplinary team embedded in the Nevada County Health & Human Services Agency.

HOME's focus is individuals experiencing **chronic homelessness**, many with **co-occurring behavioral health** and physical health conditions.

## Core Team Members:



4 Outreach Workers



2 Housing Navigators



1 Registered Nurse



1 Peer Specialist with lived experience





# Housing Navigation and Systems Linkage

## Housing Support Provided:



Connects to **Coordinated Entry System (CES)** for housing prioritization



Offers navigation services to help complete documentation, ID, income verification, etc.



Focus is on **getting people housed quickly.**





# Cross-Sector Collaboration



Behavioral health providers provide co-case management and treatment planning



Nonprofits and shelters provide housing placement and wraparound support



Hospital partners provide emergency discharge planning and field-based handoffs

## Why It Works:



**Shared accountability** across systems



Unified client information, reducing duplication by data sharing between two systems



Warm handoffs increase trust and follow-through





# Homeless Outreach Barrier Busting





# System Navigation Barriers



Complex eligibility  
requirements and lengthy  
waitlists



Conflicting program rules and  
expectations



Transportation barriers to  
accessing services



Documentation requirements  
when ID and records are lost





# Outreach to Housing Success

Housing  
Search and  
Application  
Process

Maintaining  
Engagement  
and Support

Preventing  
Returns to  
Homelessness

Managing  
Challenges  
and Setbacks





# Key Takeaways for Housing Placement Success





# Questions to Consider for Connecting Homeless Outreach to Housing Resources

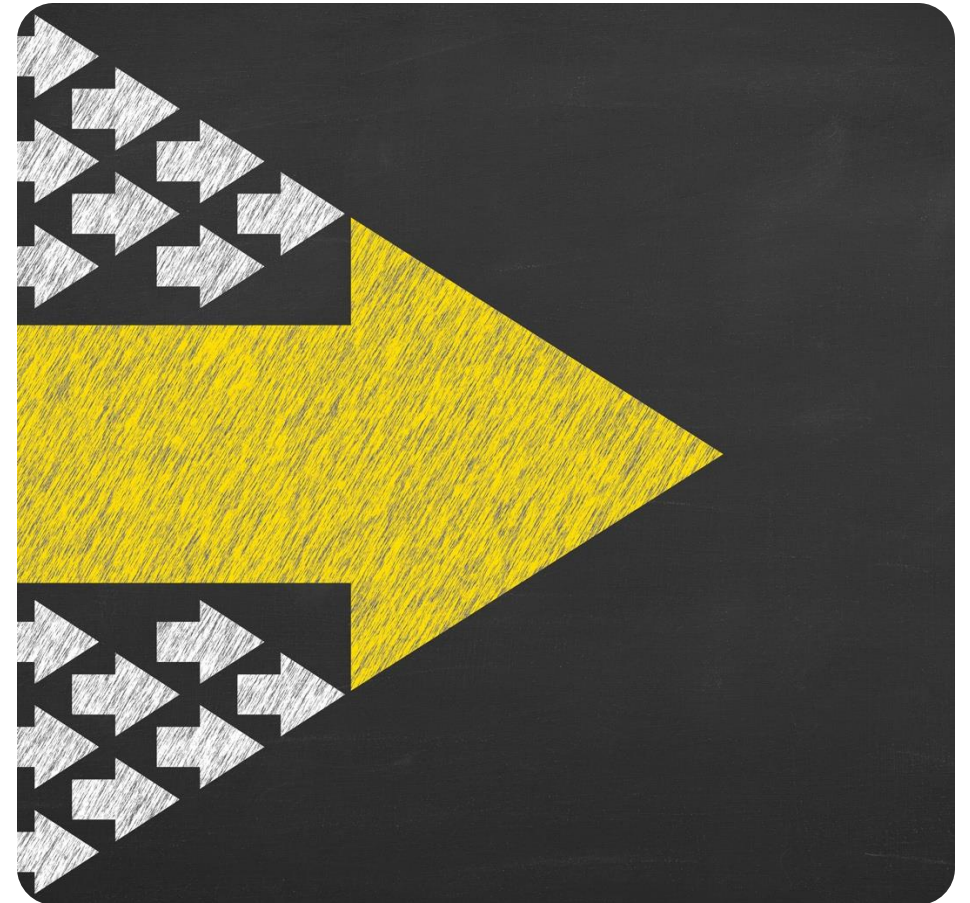
- Is the individual open to housing? This discussion should include their interest in all housing options as well as placement in transitional housing and congregate shelter.
- Are there steps that can be minimized to ensure individuals are housed immediately?
- What are the individual's permanent housing preferences, regardless of their interest in a temporary placement?
- Are there connections to housing navigation activities such as getting document-ready, gathering documentation to offset housing barriers, transporting, or accompanying to appointments?





## Next Steps

- Do you know who your local CoC point of contact is?  
Visit HUD Exchange online at:  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/grantees>
- Ensure you have access to your local HMIS
- Actively participate in CoC meetings, including any CES prioritization and housing navigation meetings





# Participant Survey - POLL

1. Overall, how would you rate this training?
  - Excellent
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor
2. This training improved my understanding of key topics around homeless outreach:
  - Yes, definitely
  - Somewhat
  - Not really
3. Do you feel more prepared to engage with homeless services for outreach vs engage with clients?
  - Yes, definitely
  - Somewhat
  - Not really
4. What part of the training did you find most helpful?
  - Open-ended





## Q&A





**Thank You!**

