

Respondents Meeting: Q&A's

August 19th, 2019

Q: Where do ancillary supports, like food programs, fit into the larger homelessness system of care? As an eligible activity under the Reaching Home directives, why was it not included as an eligible part of the application process?

A: We are not saying that food programs are not important in the overall work of ending homelessness. We are not saying ancillary programs are restricted from applying. In your application, tell us how the foodbank program directly links to housing and the systems- planning framework. All applications require that interventions meet their identified fidelity and KPI targets set out in the guidelines.

Q: Upon reviewing the flowchart with all the interventions, how is the value of client-centred incorporated?

A: This is a chart that helps to distinguish the various intervention types. The client pathway is described through the Coordinated Access model, and that is where client-centred approaches are imbedded in the system

Q: How is prevention determined through this process?

A: Through an assessment process tied to the Reaching Home definition of “imminent risk”.

Q: What about people who are not captured on the By Name Priority List, such as youth in youth transitional programs?

A: The transitional housing for youth should be part of the process through Coordinated Access. They are a referral on the other side of the Coordinated Access process. Coordinated Access is a work in progress. There must be an acknowledgement that we will never know every single person experiencing homelessness in the community. However, who is on our BNL now already exceeds program resources.

Q: The proposal is in a specific stream in a specific intervention, but there are some priorities that don't fit into these criteria that don't fit in (i.e. coordination role). How do we go about seeking resources for those kinds of functions? I'm hearing it's possible, but I don't quite understand how.

A: What we suggest: be more deliberate about how that coordination needs to exist. For each population type it might be different. If you want to have a coordinator that wants to facilitate practices that get people to housing, that can live in any one of the specific housing intervention types. Please articulate where that fits into the system and what their function would be. If that coordinator will be helping to improve standards of practice in the community with all the housing support programs, for example, they may want to be focused on diverting people that will save shelter space. It's about how you frame what they do within the system of care.

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Q: Has there ever been a conversation about creating housing, or more transitional housing?

A: There are restrictions around what we can fund and how we can fund those sorts of things. For example, IAH funds that sort of work, and that's outside of the call.

Q: Housing allowances and other tools of affordability are not something we put in our proposals?

A: The last round did have some dedicated housing allowances. We are continuing to be committed to ensuring that housing must be affordable and mechanisms that must be doing that in the future. Unfortunately, I don't have a specific answer on that one today, but we will post that on the website in the future.

Q: Could some of the supportive money be used for other intervention models?

A: Yes, we're not just focused on ICM supports. Depending on what funding we use for housing affordability that will determine how we allocate it. That's something we're working through internally.

Q: Based on the current state of the housing market, if there is another turn for the worse, can we revisit our targets as a community?

A: Yes. Our BNL allows us to see the trends and the data in real time. Having data and other quantitative evidence, will allow us to have supportive argument to make that case.

Q: If we are putting together a joint application, how would we explain that in the application? For example, say we are applying for one staff would we say 0.5 and 0.5? My worry is that one would get a yes, and one would get a no, but it was decided by the community that the two were needed.

A: Put in one application and put one agency as the lead agency. There are options for secondments or partnership questions. We can also talk about setting up separate contracts as needed if the applications are successful.

Q: Youth diversion and prevention, this often happens in the shelter and staff will do all these tasks with our clients... Can we include with shelter?

A: Operationally, this could occur. Theoretically, prevention/Diversion/shelter are three distinct services meeting people's needs in different ways. Imminent risk is the 60 window to housing, diversion is immediately became homeless and presents at shelter and shelter services are block funded to provide core services exempted from this Call.

Q: In terms of our community planning tables, are they to be funded? How do we support that level of coordination in the community? The larger question is what's contemplated for coordinated access. What's better for the case conference mechanism is that they would look like?

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A: That's now the role of the City of Hamilton through the case conferencing community. We're not seeing success on the unit vacancies from our end, and not just assigning people to the vacancies (case conferencing).

Q: Could you attach that to one of the applications (case conferencing)?

A: Yes. What we're asking you is what you can do in relation to the fidelity. What we're seeing is, as we move through the system, we're moving to permanent housing with support options. Historically, HF teams would go out and look at people and do a separate assessment process. Now we're saying that assessment must be at the point of intake, not at the program point. There would be a priority list for people in each intervention type that will then be eligible to receive service for the program.

Q: Can we expect people to spend more time in the inflow part of the system?

A: Typical that anytime a community implements Coordinated Access in that way there is a short-term lag, and then there is an accelerated process past then. Eventually, flow through will happen, but not immediately that way.

Q: Question under systems goals, please describe how much of a reduction to homelessness do you mean to provide? – is this question referring to an overall contribution on behalf of the program?

A: There is a target in the Systems planning framework globally, what is your contribution to make sure that people who are homeless do not return into the homelessness serving system (e.g. so that no more than 10% do not return into the system).

Q: In an application, can we use a tool that is not currently part of Hamilton's system but is a recognized SPDAT tool?

A: Yes, so long as it aligns with the intervention you will be providing. Eventually the entire suite of tools will be incorporated in our system.

Q: With Youth, we find there is considerable rehousing. For our outcomes it can be challenging. What is recommended in the youth context?

A: I hear you about Youth specific challenges for housing and re-housing. It is not uncommon in other areas. The re-housing is not directly linked to recidivism. In terms of that piece, we are not doing enough to understand needs and preferences to understand the escalation of re-housing over the years. We'll be looking operationally to see how that works. From a systems perspective, if you continue to work with them within 30/60 days it is not part of the recidivism rate. That's why we look at it from a global perspective. Some may choose 15%, some may say 5% which leads us to the 10% globally overall. That will help us to frame out the system of care through the guidelines system.