

A7/B7. Diversion & Rapid Exit Practice

*Mediation, Conflict Resolution, &
Problem Solving*

2018 Rapid Re-Housing Institute

Session Objectives

- You will learn the guiding principles of delivering Diversion/Rapid Exit services.
- You will learn how to have a diversion/rapid exit conversation with households.
- You will learn the planning considerations for implementing diversion/rapid exit: staffing, funding, location, resources.
- You will learn from actual practitioners about their experiences in this work.



Agenda

1. What's happening in your community with Diversion & Rapid Exit?
2. Overview of Diversion & Rapid Exit Practice
3. Diversion & Rapid Exit Conversations with Households
4. Community Presentations & Panel
5. Planning for Diversion & Rapid Exit Practice in your community



Poll

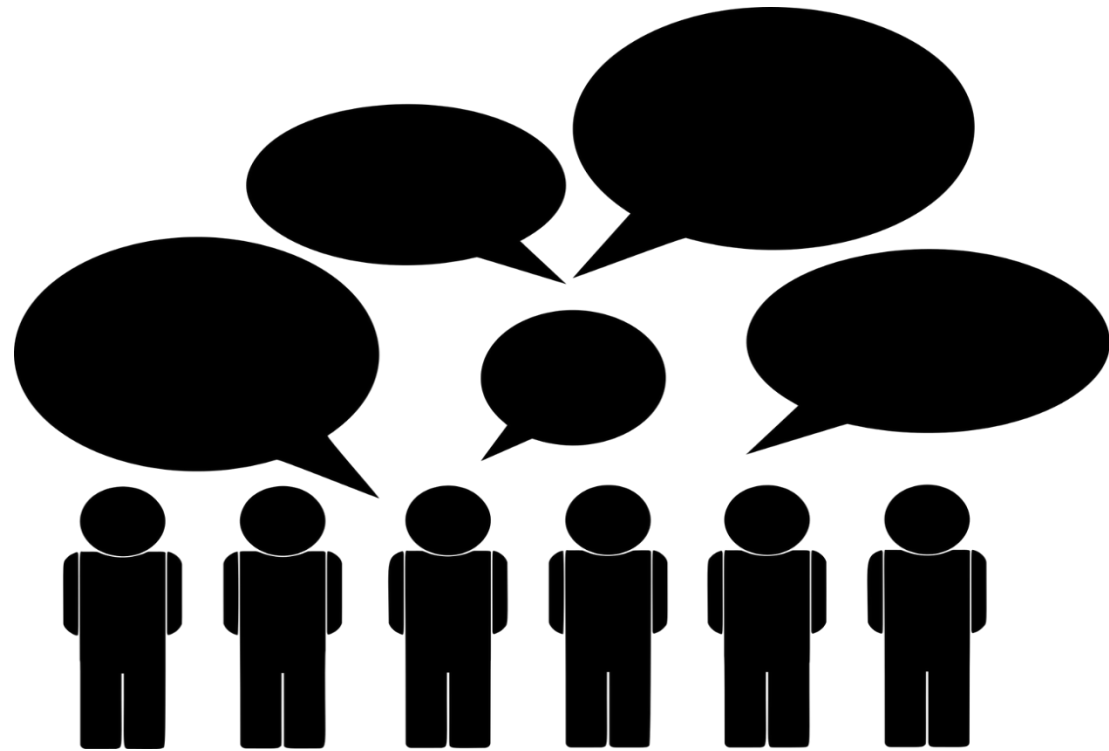


1. How many of you are doing some form of Diversion and/or Rapid Exit in your CoC or program?
2. How many of you have started planning to do Diversion and/or Rapid Exit in your community?



Let's Share

- What do you already know about Diversion and Rapid Exit?
- What questions do you have about Diversion and Rapid Exit?



What is Diversion & Rapid Exit?

- Diversion is a practice to prevent entrance to a shelter or the homeless system. Rapid Exit is a practice to help someone exit the homelessness system quickly.
- Diversion and Rapid Exit help people who are experiencing a housing crisis and are seeking shelter or have just entered shelter.
- Diversion and Rapid Exit aim to preserve their current housing situation or make immediate alternative arrangements.

Thanks to LAHSA for this slide



What is the challenge?

- Many of our participants have very low income.
- We don't have the resources for long-term rental subsidies.
- Many of us live in communities with extremely high rent and very low vacancy rates.
- Achieving shorter shelter length of stay requires housing options for very low-income individuals.



A Shift in Approach

BEFORE Rapid Resolution	NOW
Are you willing to enter shelter or receive a motel voucher?	What can we do to keep you from entering shelter?
What programs are you eligible to enter and who has a bed?	What would resolve your current housing crisis?
Assessment/eligibility	Brain Storming and structured problem solving conversation about household situation and resources.
Intake or put on waitlist	Support crisis resolution to avoid shelter entry. Allow for client centered empowerment.



Diversion & Rapid Exit Practice

**Who should we
try to help
rapidly resolve
their immediate
housing crisis?**



Guiding Principles of Diversion (NAEH)

Principle 1	Crisis Resolution
Principle 2	Client choice, respect and empowerment
Principle 3	Provide the minimum assistance necessary for the shortest time possible
Principle 4	Maximize community resources
Principle 5	The right resources to the right people at the right time



Where Does Diversion Happen?



**Diversion should happen
at the very first “door”
(literal door or phone call)
that someone seeks
shelter and housing
assistance. This first
“door” will vary by
community.**



SHOULD BE THE FIRST CONVERSATION

...

**And can happen again after shelter
entry for Rapid Exit**



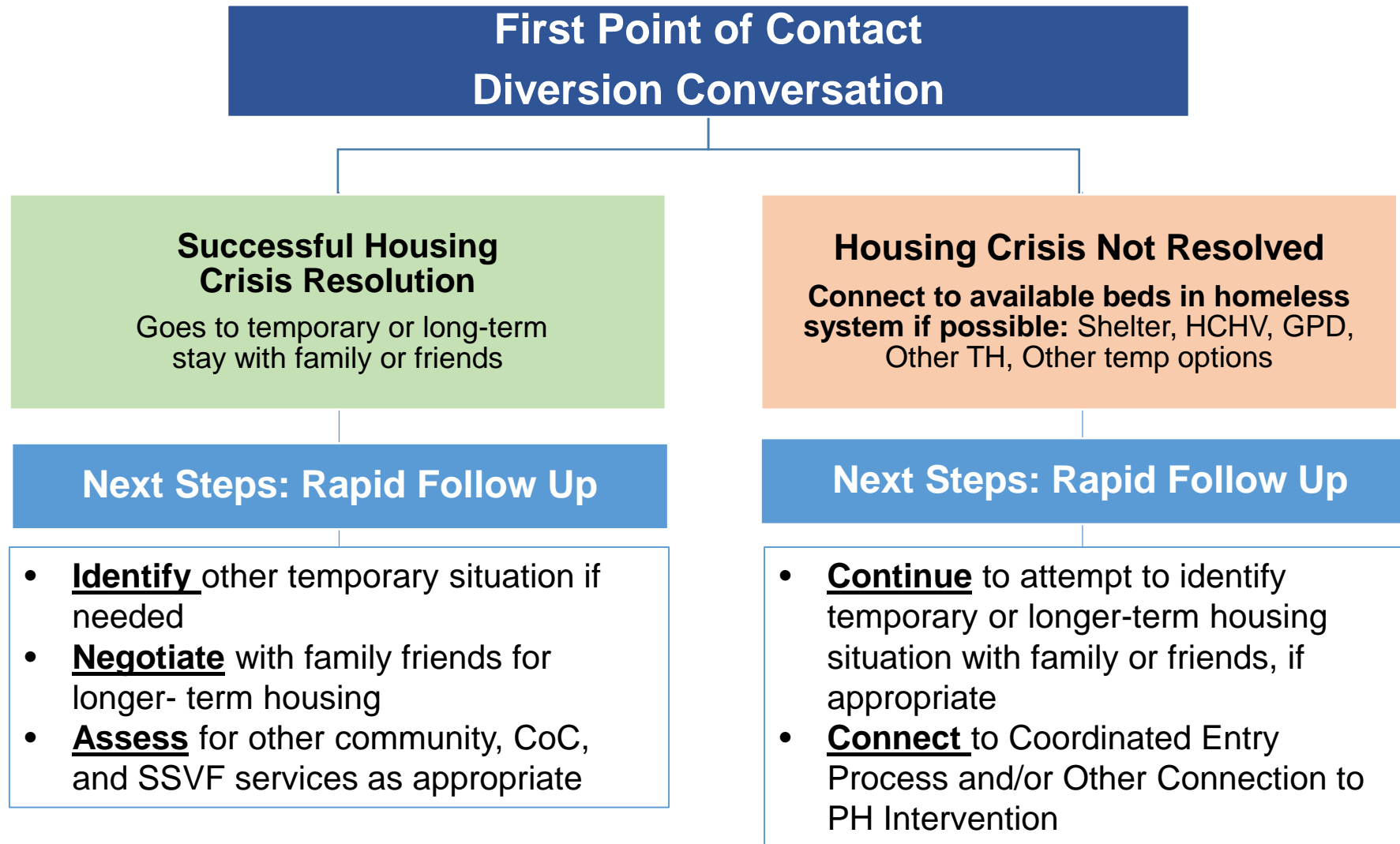
Identifying Diversion Locations

Gather information about where households are flowing into your system to identify where diversion needs to happen:

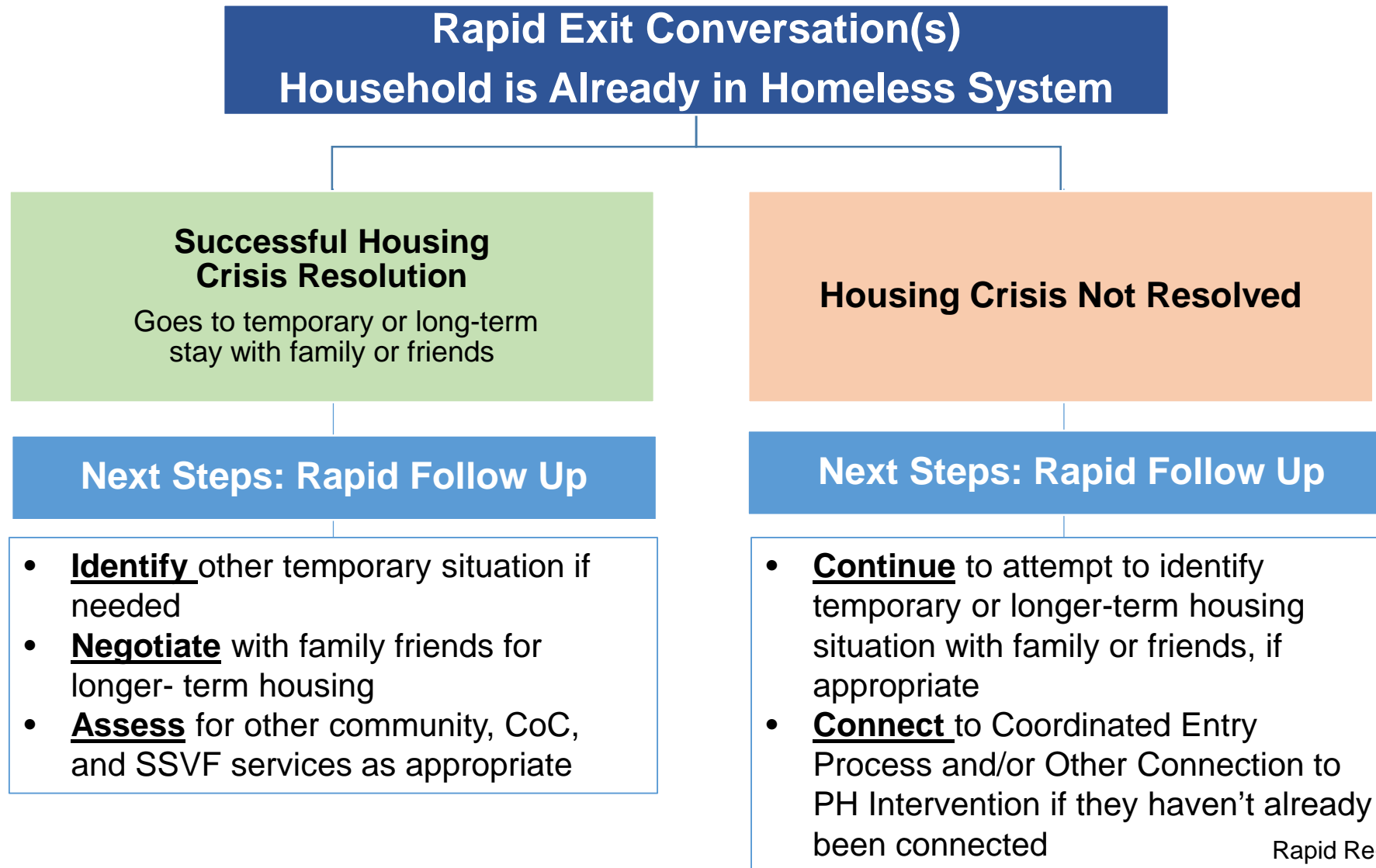
- Locations can look different depending on the community
- Use Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data
- Use other data sources: by-name lists, school system data on homelessness, etc.
- Talk with Continuum of Care (CoC) members and community partners to identify locations and information about sub-populations. Remember to consider non-CoC shelters & programs.
- Remember that locations can be a physical location or a phone call—like a 211 system or Coordinated Entry phone access.



Diversion & Rapid Exit Pathways



Rapid Exit Pathways



Diversion & Rapid Exit Practice



Diversion & Rapid Exit Services

- Coaching and Problem-Solving
- Conflict Resolution and Mediation with Landlords, Family, and/or Friends
- Connection to Mainstream Services
- Housing Search Assistance and Stabilization Planning
- LIMITED Financial, Utility, and/or Rental Assistance



What is in your Tool Kit?

- Make sure your staff know what is available to them to use while they are trying to rapidly resolve the household's housing crisis...
 - **Community Resources:** legal services, financial assistance, transportation vouchers, food banks, utility assistance, etc.
 - **CoC or SSVF specific resources:** Rapid Rehousing, Homelessness Prevention
 - When can you use **financial assistance** and what kind do you have



Diversion Conversations

- Through Diversion, a household is engaged in a deep conversation about safe, alternative housing options so that shelter can be avoided.
- The options could include:
 - Staying here they were last night
 - Finding another temporary place to stay
 - Could be for one night, several nights, a month or longer



Put the Person at Ease

- Create a private, quiet space
- Set up the space and your approach to foster trust-building
- Minimize note-taking
- Actively listen
- Work together in partnership to identify options and next steps

One of the most **sincere**
forms of *respect* is
actually listening to
what **another** has to say.

Bryant H. McGill



Listen to...

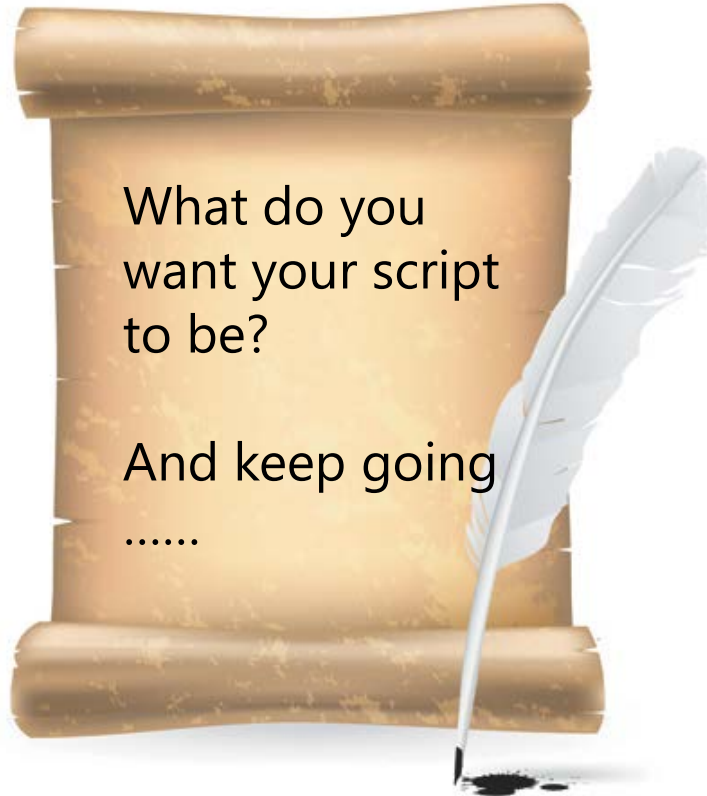
What is said and,



What is not said



Have the Conversation about what Diversion is



What do you
want your script
to be?

And keep going
.....

It's all about the conversation

SAMPLE: "Our goal is to learn more about your specific housing situation right now, and what you need so that together we can identify the best possible way to get you a place to stay tonight, and to find safe, permanent housing as quickly as possible. That might mean staying in an emergency accommodation tonight, but we want to avoid that if at all possible. We will work with you to find a more stable alternative if we can."



Conversation Tips

- Observe body language
- Use open-ended questions
- Questions should build on each other
- Your goal is to help identify a potential temporary housing location and natural supports that the person may have overlooked or written off



Conversation Tips....

- Assume you will be able to help find a better situation
- While this may not always be true, act and work as if it is a good possibility
- We want to help the person who is in very real crisis to be able to think creatively and positively about their temporary housing options



After gaining an understanding...

- The goal is to move to action with them
- To identify a safe and secure temporary housing location
- REMEMBER
 - First: a place for tonight
 - Tomorrow: we plan for longer term if needed



Pivot



- As soon as the conversation identifies a viable temporary housing (or permanent housing) option.....
- PIVOT to talking action steps with the person to confirm the housing is available



Not necessary

- It is not necessary to go through each step if housing is identified and can be secured now. This is crisis intervention, not an assessment.
- Later we'll talk about next steps to a more permanent resolution if needed.



Typical Diversion Questions

<p>What brings you to the office today?</p> <p>Why are you seeking services today?</p> <p>Do you feel safe?</p>	<p>Where did you stay last night?</p>
<p>What brought on your housing crisis?</p>	<p>Do you think that you (and your family) could stay there again temporarily if we provide you with some help or limited services such as...</p>
<p>Is there anything I haven't asked you that would be important for me to be aware of as we try to figure out the best situation for you moving forward?</p>	<p>If no, why not? What would it take to be able to stay there temporarily?</p>



Typical Diversion Questions

<p>What barriers or challenges are you experiencing that make it difficult for you to find permanent housing for you (and your family) or connect to other resources?</p>	<p>Are you unsafe or in an unstable relationship?</p>
<p>Do you owe money for rent? Are you new to the area?</p>	<p>Do you or does anyone in your family have special needs or a medical condition? If so how does this affect your housing situation?</p>
<p>Is there anything I haven't asked you that would be important for me to be aware of as we try to figure out the best situation for you moving forward?</p>	



Rapid Resolution Scenario: HUD Category 1-Literal Homeless

Situation: Susie walks into the office and states she is homeless sleeping on the streets and wants help. Susie states she has never been homeless before and wants to get into a shelter.

The Rapid Resolution specialist (RRS) begins the conversation and asking if she has any family member who can take her in. **(Open ended questions)**. Susie states she is feeling embarrassed, and no one in the family knows where she has been. RRS asks if there is any family member who she feels safe with and could reunify with. Susie states that she may be able to stay with her grandma but needs help talking with grandma. With Susie's permission the RRS contacts grandma. (Advocacy, mediation and conflict resolution begins).

Resolution: Grandma is willing to take Susie into her home.



Diversion Conversations Video from Los Angeles

Diversion Scenario 1: <https://youtu.be/q5YkDmLqKis>

Diversion Scenario 2: <https://youtu.be/xX3l6cOHEf0>



Staffing Appropriately

- Pick your staff who have the greatest ability to converse patiently and empathically with clients. Can they dig deeply into possible solutions for them?
- Staff who know community resources.
- Staff who are comfortable calling and mediating/advocating for the person seeking services.
- Do you need training in your community to launch diversion?



Summary



- Conversation, not an intake or assessment
- Deeply listen
- Remain positive
- Assist with options
- Don't assume something won't work
- Utilize your resources
 - Housing expenses
 - Connection to community resources
 - Mediation
 - Follow up next day for more in depth assistance as needed



System Level Activities

- Integration with the front door of the homeless crisis response system
 - Coordinated Entry Access Points
 - Other community access points and partners
- ALL households presenting engage in Diversion conversation
- Allows system to free up resources for more vulnerable households
- Adjust outreach, in-reach, and CE protocol to ensure diversion or rapid exit conversation immediately before or after shelter entry
- Not a “Program” – a System Level Orientation and Response
- Even for those not diverted or rapidly exited, housing plan and resource connection begins more immediately



Practice Level Activities

- Rapid engagement and conversation to explore alternative, safe housing options (even if temporary) instead of shelter
 - Households presenting for shelter are engaged in diversion conversation
 - Outcome of conversation drives further housing planning
- Focus on conflict mediation and creative problem solving
- Reconnection to previous housing, family, friend and other social networks that can offer place to stay
- Use Strength-Based Approach to leveraging resources



Panel Discussion with Presentations





Diversion and Rapid Exit Practice
2018 Rapid Re-housing Institute
Presented by: Erin Maus, Systems Manager

October 2, 2018



Community Shelter Board



@CommShelterBd



communityshelterboard

Shelter Eligibility



At first contact with Homeless Hotline, outreach or VA, first determine if:

- Currently unsheltered or will be unsheltered tonight if not provided emergency shelter, meaning the individual:
 - Has no safe housing and is staying or will be staying tonight in a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (e.g., a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground); AND
 - Has no other safe housing options or resources available to secure housing tonight, including other safe, appropriate temporary accommodations while they secure more permanent housing;
- Must continue to be eligible throughout stay

Successful Diversion/Rapid Resolution

Permanently back
with friends or
family

Return to their
own residence

Temporarily
diverted as they
seek new housing

Relocating
permanently to
safe place out of
town

When the Conversation Occurs

BEFORE SPENDING EVEN ONE NIGHT IN SHELTER:

CPOA conducts diversion screening

➡ CPOA refers to SSVF for prevention or RR pilot

Or VA Outreach Team identifies other options

➡ Calls SSVF to firm up RR plan

Upon presentation to shelter for admission, intake staff identifies other options

➡ Calls SSVF to firm up RR plan

The Conversation Continues...

AFTER SHELTER ADMISSION, when...


Vet expresses dissatisfaction with shelter

Vet mentions wanting to move to another city

Vet talks about missing a loved one

Vet requests an overnight pass

Others?

 Call SSVF to discuss Rapid Resolution

Contact Information

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Diversion & Rapid Exit: Reweaving the Safety Net

LaTonya Murray, Director of Emergency Housing

Luke Drotar, SSVF Program Manager

FrontLine Service

Seeds of Rapid Resolution in Cleveland

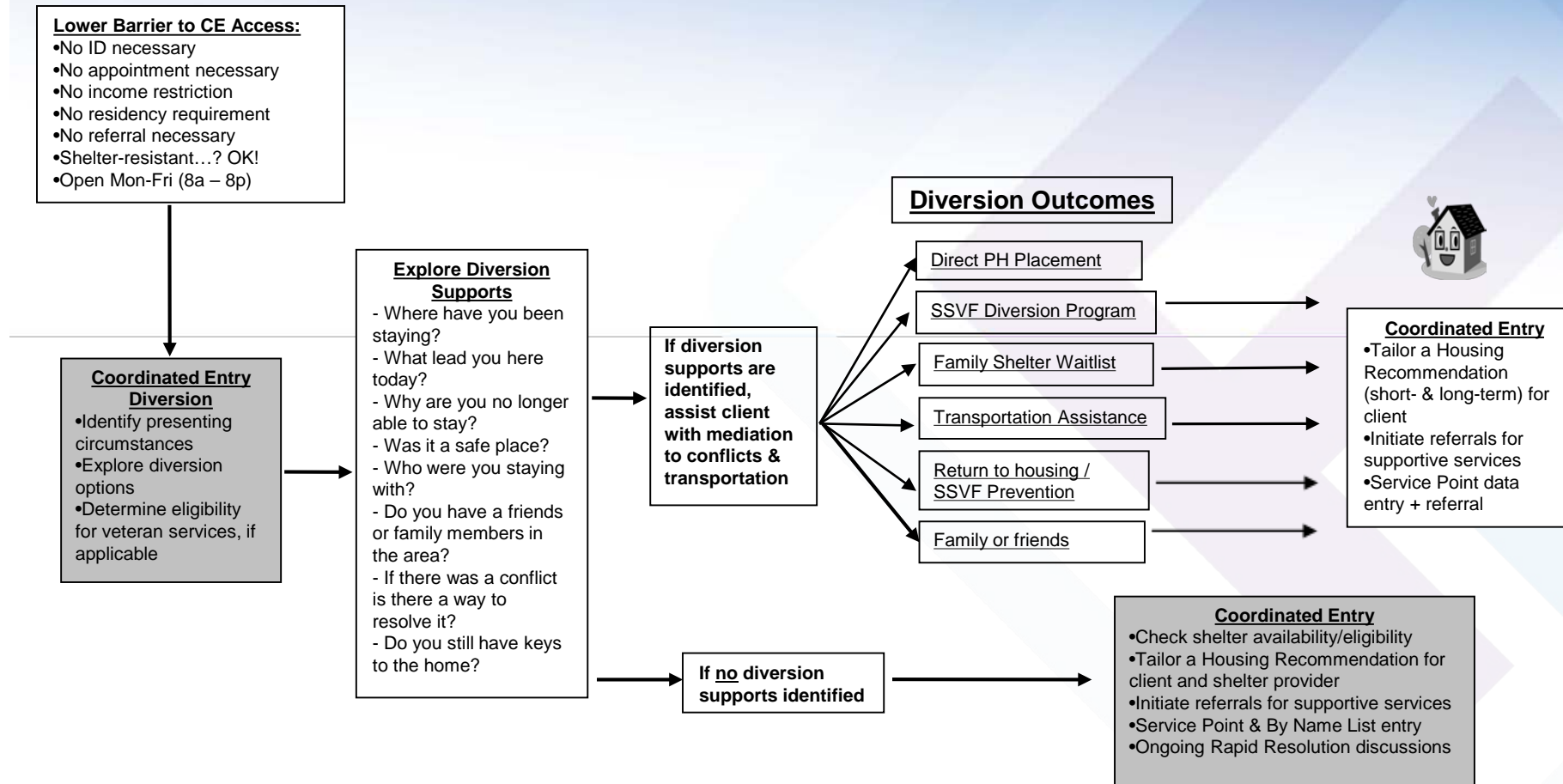
- Learned about Diversion Model from National Alliance session
- Successful pilot in 2009 at men's shelter
- Conflict resolution/empowerment approach
- HPRP funding, full implementation
- Changes to funding over time, and partners
 - Cleveland Mediation Center
 - Continuum of Care, SSVF
 - Foundation Support

Diversion: A Part of the System

Diversion/Rapid Resolution for All!!

- Not a separate system: ours, *reweaved*
 - Provided within the existing Coordinated Entry System
- Our way of doing business...Commitment
 - Part of the service design
- Leveraging existing resources
 - Collaboration and connections are key

Coordinated Entry & Rapid Resolution



How Does It Work?

Everyone is at the table!!

- Individualized, person-centered, quality problem solving
- Identification of other resources and supports
- Build on natural support systems: *reweave*
- Opportunities for mediation and conflict resolution
- Support creative, safe alternatives ... and outcomes
- Financial support helpful, but not necessary



Ongoing Rapid Resolution

- Training for shelter staff to support process
- Rapid Resolution exploration as part of the Housing Plan discussion
 - Recognizing shelter experience is traumatizing
- Trauma informed approach to empower creative rapid resolution prospects
- Family reunification and follow up
 - Engage, offer linkages to community resources



Contact Information

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Panelist Q&A Session



Planning Time

- 5 minutes to write down key take-away ideas and action steps for when you return home
- Break into small groups (your table) (10 minutes)
 - Share your ideas
 - Action steps
 - Generate questions for the larger group/panel
- Report Out to Full Group
 - Share ideas for next steps
 - Surface new questions

