

**Improving the Homeless Response System in Maricopa County
Responses and Recommendations from the Continuum of Care Planning Subcommittee**

What about the homeless response system would you like to “fix” or improve by retooling?

- Create a coordinated “open door” system for entry and improved service delivery. *(This work is being done through the CoC technical assistance action plan.)*
- Create a real-time housing availability database that is connected to the centralized intake system. *(This work is being done on a state-wide level through the Arizona Commission on Homelessness and Housing.)*
- Create a system that screens people in rather than screens people out and has the resources and programs available to help people with a high needs.
- Create a low-demand shelter for homeless youth ages 18-25.
- Housing and services available for LGBT youth ages 18-25.
- Better understanding of all services and programs in the community (HUD funded and non-HUD funded).
- People are more quickly transitioned to permanent housing creating increased availability of emergency shelter beds.
- Shorten the length of time people are homeless.
- Create a cohesive homeless service delivery system that is client-driven.

What strategies have you considered as an agency? Have you experienced barriers when applying these strategies? If so, what are the barriers?

- HUD requirements can be a barrier for providers who would like to change who they are serving in their programs and the types of services the programs can provide.
- There is a lack of medical coverage for the single adult population.
- There is not an incentive for providers to serve the homeless population with a high needs.
- Program eligibility requirements can be a barrier by screening out clients with high needs.
- Funding requirements at the federal, state, and local level are not in alignment.
- The Housing Arizona’s Youth funding from the Arizona Department of Economic Security was highlighted as a success regarding setting outcomes and program requirements for the high-risk youth population.

What resources within the community could be leveraged to achieve the goals?

- Collaboration with Public Housing Authorities.
- Coordination of other funding sources such as ESG, CDBG, HOPWA, HOME, etc.
- Leverage funding from targeted tax-credit projects within the community.
- Leverage SAMHSA funding.
- Broaden the funding base beyond federal funding sources by outreaching to foundations and the private sector.

What partnerships within the community should be strengthened?

- Relationships with the following groups:
 - Public Housing Authorities
 - Among providers
 - Community Action Programs
 - Homeless School Liaisons
 - Faith-based community

- Hospitals
- Jails/Prisons
- Foster care
- The crisis system
- Mental health community
- The business sector

What skills, information, or other support does the community need to “retool”?

- Research of best practices from other communities and a process for implementing best practices locally.
- A common language within the community.
- An assessment of the population being served by providers and an assessment of the population that is not being served by providers to gain an understanding of the unmet need.
- It is very important to focus on the present when working with clients.
- Analysis of data to determine the baseline for the community on HEARTH goals. Evaluation of data to determine project and CoC performance on outcomes through a depiction of graphs.
- Leverage other resources such as a partnership through Arizona State University.

What three next steps should the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness consider pursuing?

- An analysis of data to determine baselines for the Continuum of Care.
- Develop a program monitoring methodology and process.
- Conduct an evaluation of Continuum of Care Committee membership and bring in new members to strengthen key partnerships within the community.