Achieving the Goal of Ending Chronic Homelessness

Presenters

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Lindsay Knotts, USICH Policy Director

Sharing the Vision

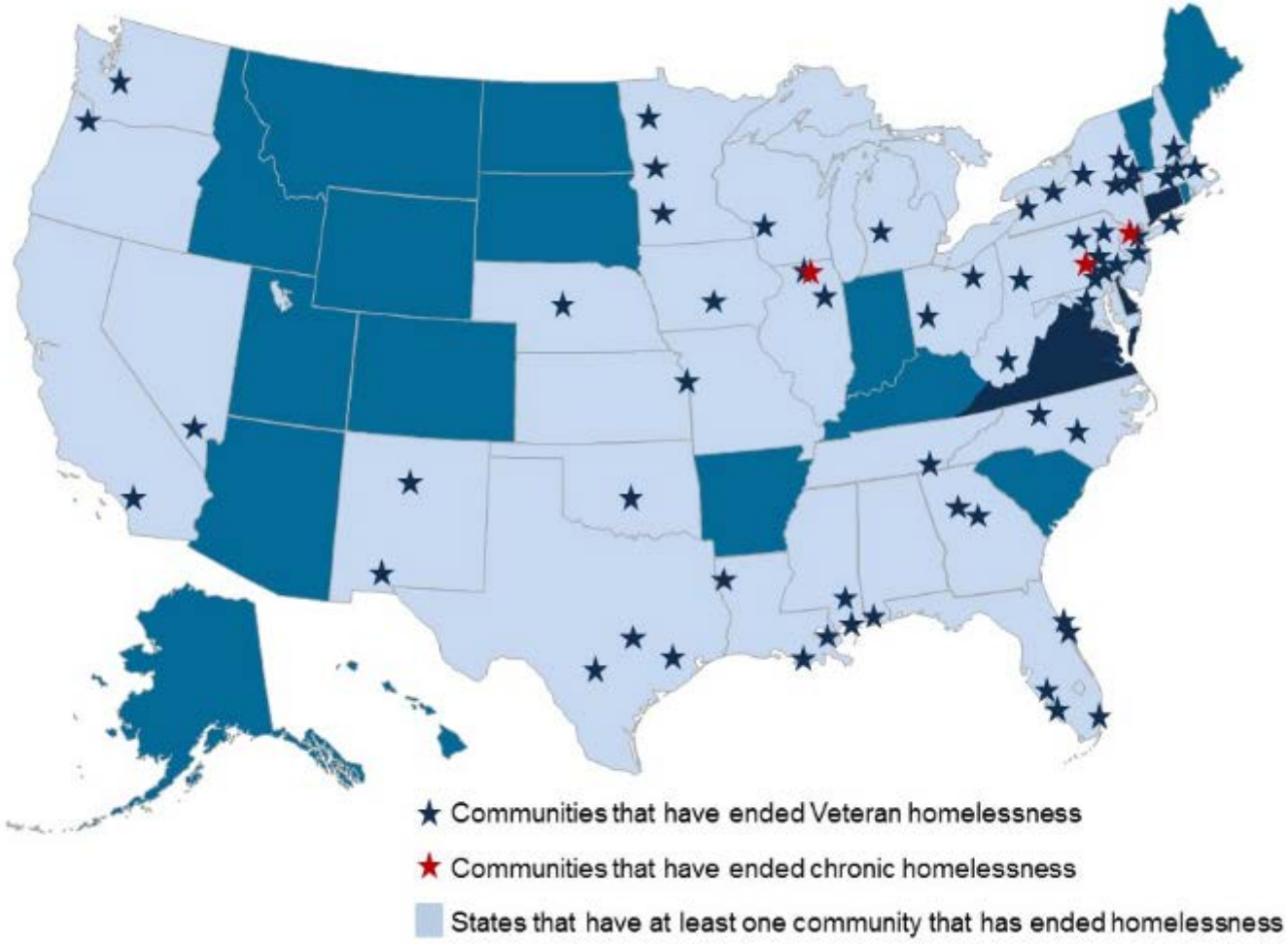
Home, Together:
THE FEDERAL STRATEGIC PLAN TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS

UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

- ❑ **End chronic homelessness among people with disabilities**
- ❑ End Veteran homelessness
- ❑ End homelessness among families
- ❑ Ending homelessness among youth
- ❑ Ending homelessness among all other single individuals

Criteria and benchmarks work together to provide a complete picture of a community's response to homelessness.

Communities That Have Ended Homelessness



Criteria

1. The community has identified and provided outreach to all individuals experiencing or at risk for chronic homelessness, and prevents chronic homelessness whenever possible.

2. The community provides access to shelter or other temporary accommodations immediately to any person experiencing unsheltered chronic homelessness who wants it.

3. The community has implemented a community-wide Housing First orientation and response that also considers the preferences of the individuals being served.

Criteria

4. The community assists individuals experiencing chronic homelessness to move swiftly into permanent housing with the appropriate level of supportive services and effectively prioritizes people for permanent supportive housing.

5. The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to prevent chronic homelessness from occurring and to ensure that individuals who experienced chronic homelessness do not fall into homelessness again or, if they do, are quickly reconnected to permanent housing.

Benchmark

All individuals known to be experiencing chronic homelessness have obtained permanent housing with appropriate services (e.g. permanent supportive housing)

Or, if not all…

The number of individuals that remain chronically homeless does not exceed 0.1% of the total number of homeless individuals reported in the most recent point-in-time count or 3 persons, whichever is greater.

Note: For the purposes of the benchmark, formerly chronically homeless persons that are in transitional housing must continue to be counted as chronically homeless until they have been connected to permanent housing.

Determining When the Goal is Reached

Specifications

- How to measure progress against benchmark
- Claims to be made at the CoC level
- Universe includes persons currently experiencing chronic homelessness and persons previously identified as chronically homeless who are now living in transitional housing

Questions to Assess Against Criteria

- Closed-ended questions to determine if a CoC has met each of the specified criteria
- A CoC meeting the goal should be able to answer affirmatively to each question
- Should be considered in conjunction with calculation of benchmark

BERGEN COUNTY
New Jersey

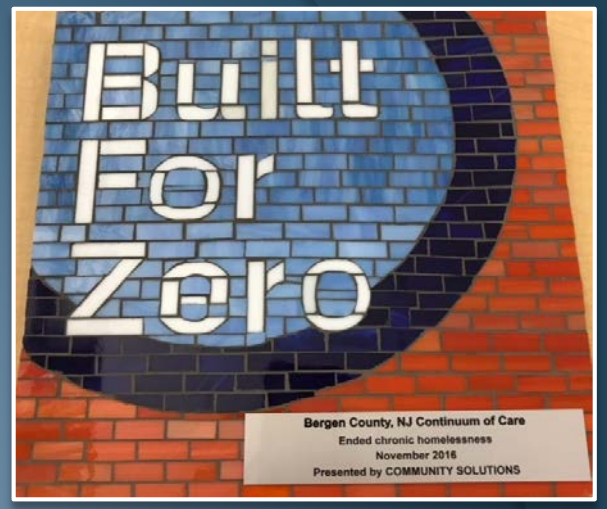
A COLLABORATIVE MODEL TO END HOMELESSNESS

Permanent Housing with Support Services

One-Stop Location and Single Point of Entry

Prevent Homelessness / Rapidly Re-house Individuals

Bergen County CoC Overview



- This array of 32 county wide providers creates the **solid** foundation from which the County's homeless assistance and prevention programs serve the **entire continuum** of clients; from the **precariously** housed, at-risk of homelessness, or homeless to **permanently** housed and in need of services to remain housed.

- The CoC system includes the **entire spectrum** of support services and housing options targeted to the different levels of the homeless population.

- This collaboration has enabled the County to coordinate efforts and resources to **maximize benefits** for any household experiencing a **crisis** in the County.

2008 Bergen County 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness

Focus Groups 2007: 200 community participants

- **Analyze the shortfalls / barriers in the current system**
  - Develop strategies to reorganize/recreate a system to quickly respond to those experiencing homelessness.
    - Permanent Housing
    - Services Provision
    - Discharge Planning
    - Education and Advocacy
    - County Level Re-organization of Homeless Services Dollars

Model Project: BCHHH Center (Bergen County Housing, Health and Human Services Center)

Funding is provided by a combination of Federal, State and local funds, also a wide range of shared and donated services provided by governmental and non-profit organizations all coordinated by or applied for through the CoC.

- Develop and expand Housing First
- Create a rapid re-housing program for individuals & families
- Develop a One-Stop Center

BCHHH KEY DESIGN CONCEPTS

- **Objectives:**

  End chronic homelessness,

  prevent homelessness & successful re-entry

- **Approach:**
  The Housing First Model

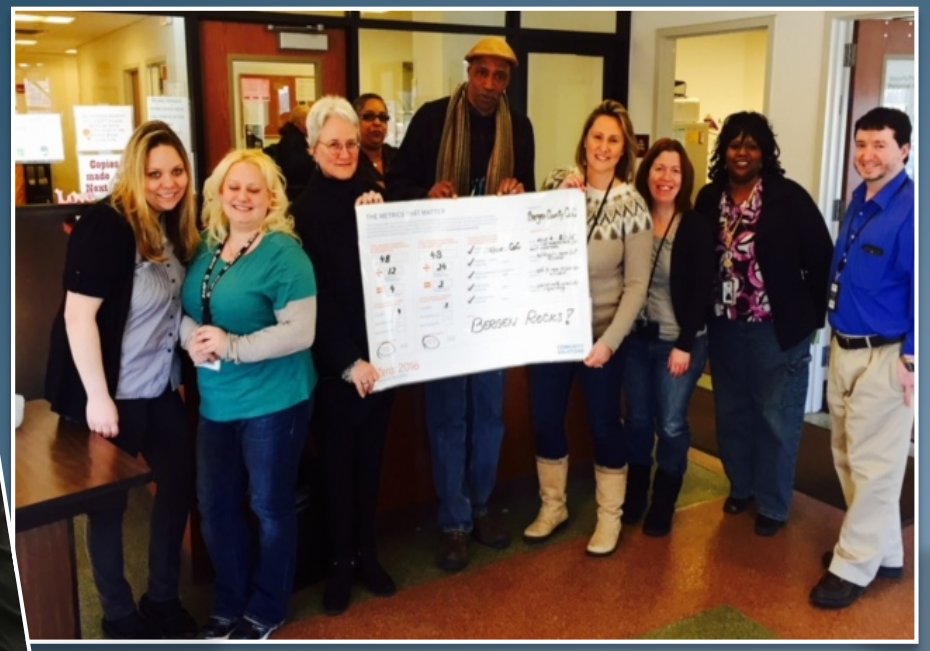
- **Process:**
  Engagement, Collaboration, Integration

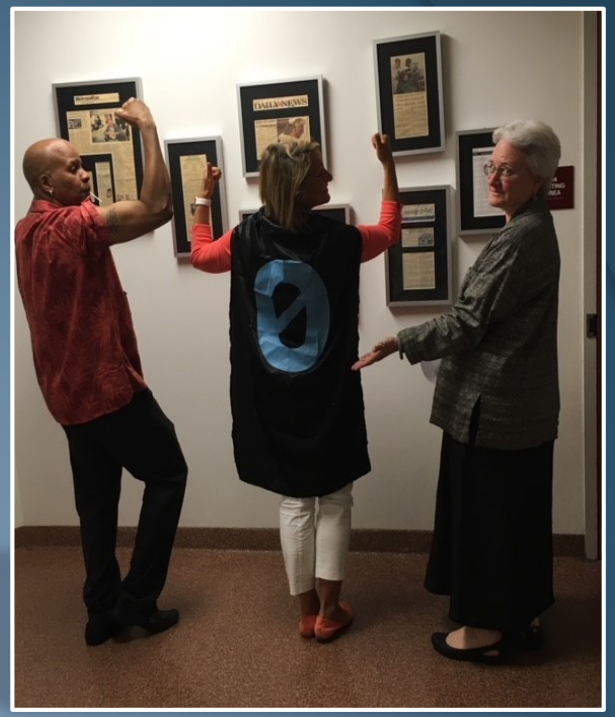
Culture of Collaboration

- Because of its mission and organizational structure, the BCHHH provides a unique opportunity to nurture a **culture built on collaboration, learning and shared services.**

- The Center is a focal point and single location for a broad range of services directed to people who are homeless or need assistance connecting with services needed to ensure **successful reentry** into society.

- It offers the opportunity for agencies to craft collaborations that **improve the effectiveness** of their efforts while **reducing their cost**.





GETTING TO ZERO

Criteria & Benchmarks for Ending Chronic Homelessness

Critical Factors in Getting to Zero

- Political will and on-going commitment to sustainable goal of ending homelessness
- Aligning resources-prioritizing most vulnerable
- Housing Authority commitment and leadership
- **By-name list**/monthly meetings
- Effective Collaboration with Veteran Services
- **Coordinated Assessment** and strong CoC Leadership
- Widespread Outreach into the Community
- Quarterly Meetings with Local leaders
- **Low-barrier** and **Housing Focused** Shelter
- **One Stop** Location to communicate and partner
- Housing can be accessed from anywhere in our system
- Diversion is critical

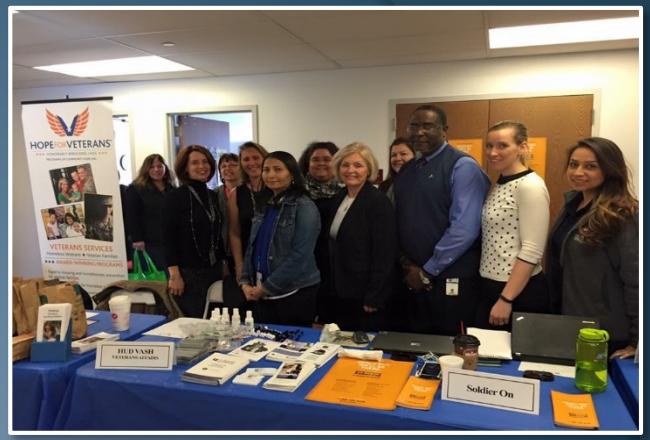
WORKING WITH THE CRITERIA

What Are The Tools We Used?

CRITERION #1

1) The community has identified and provided outreach to all individuals experiencing or at risk of chronic homelessness, and prevents chronic homelessness whenever possible

Outreach, In-Reach & Engagement



Coordinated Community Points of Contact:

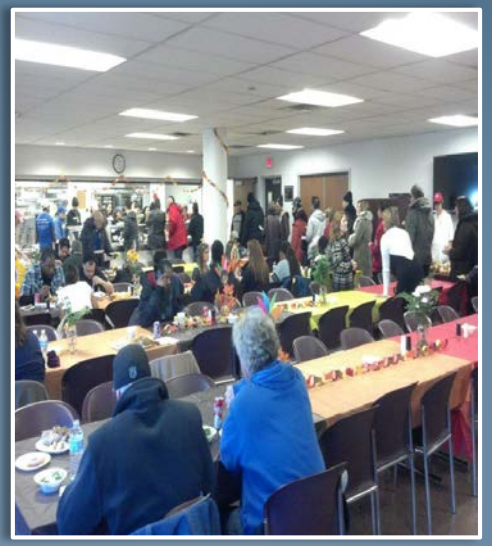
- Law Enforcement
- Libraries
- Hospitals
- Bergen County Jail
- SSVF Agencies (Veterans)
  - Faith-based Agencies
- Diversion Programs
- DCP&P
- 211
- Dept. of Human Services
- County Veterans Services
- Drug Court
- Annual PIT Survey
- PATH
- Bergen County Housing, Health & Human Services Center

All have access to the Housing Prioritization Questionnaire as a Coordinated Assessment Tool

Assessment Tools

- **The Housing Prioritization Questionnaire** utilized by all emergency shelter, transitional housing, care agencies and street outreach teams-can be completed anywhere
- The **VI-SPDAT** is used to collect information to evaluate the individual health and social needs for the most appropriate housing intervention
- **The Housing Prioritization List (By Name List)** is used to identify which clients in the CoC are most vulnerable and the most in need of housing

CRITERION #2



2) The community provides access to shelter or other temporary accommodations immediately to any person experiencing unsheltered chronic homelessness who wants it

Emergency & Temporary Shelter

- Shelter needs to be low to no barrier for chronic homeless individuals
- Have to shelter with companions and together if possible
- Shelter rules have to be modified-
  - Curfew
  - SA requirements
  - Managing bad behavior
- Outreach Team can access local respite resources to provide temporary shelter until another option is available
- Next Step Drop in provides resources for temporary shelter - and document recovery and access to benefits
- Diversion is a priority

* Make sure all your available resources are obtainable for your most vulnerable population

CRITERION #3

3. The community has implemented a community-wide Housing First orientation and response that also considers the preferences of the individuals being served.

Resources for Housing Assistance:

- **HABC Vouchers:**
  - **Shelter Plus Care Vouchers**
  - 20% CoC voucher set aside
- **Supportive Housing**
- **Board of Social Services:** GA / TRA
- **RRH and Homeless Prevention:** (ESG and HOME)
- **Center for Food Action:** security deposits
- **United Way:** Compassion Fund, beds and one-time assistance
- **SSVF:**
  - Eligible for HUDVASH and/or other PSH

CRITERION #4

4. The community assists individuals experiencing chronic homelessness to move swiftly into permanent housing with the appropriate level of supportive services and effectively prioritizes people for permanent housing

Navigation, Re-Housing & Stabilization Assistance

Navigation: Case Management Services

- ICMS, ICM
- Transition Services (forensic)
- Housing Works
- PATH
- PACT
- Rapid Re-Housing for Families & Individuals
- AOTS
- SSVF Agencies (Veterans)

***All work from Centralized Housing Prioritization List**

Stabilization Resources

Mental Health Agencies

- Alliance Against Homelessness
- New Bridge Services
- Care Plus New Jersey
- CBHCare
- Advance Housing
- Vantage

Other:

- Community Engaged Landlords
- Long Term, Higher Level of Care facilities
- SSVF Agencies (Veterans)

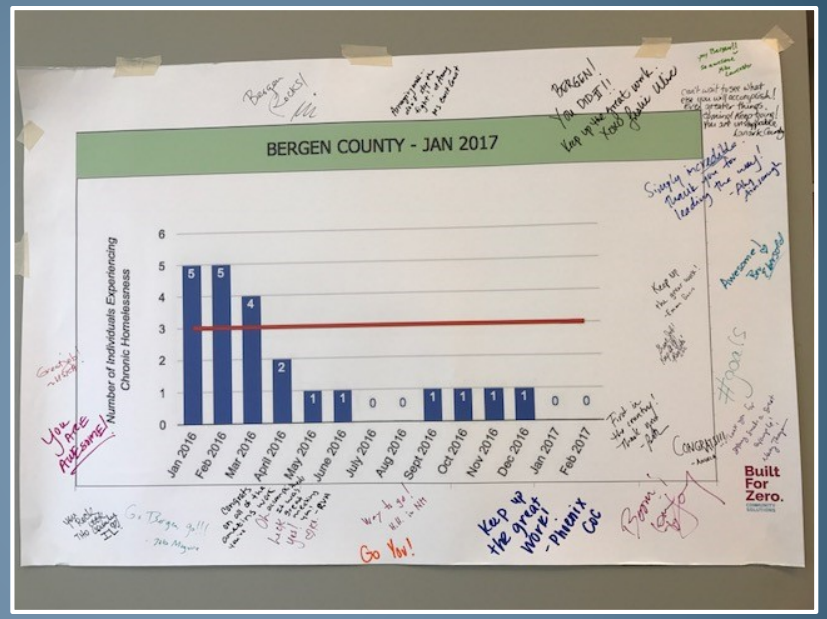
CRITERION #5

5. The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to prevent chronic homelessness from occurring and to ensure that individuals who experienced chronic homelessness do not fall into homelessness again or, if they do, are quickly reconnected to permanent housing

Sustainable Practices

- Continue Monthly At-Risk Committee Meetings
- Quarterly Collaborative Outreach meetings
- Monitoring the Next Step Drop-In Program and meal services to identify those in the community who may be in need of services
- The PATH Program continues to participate in the coordinated entry process through training on any revisions to the tool used
- Bergen County outreach and in-reach is governed by and central to our Coordinated Access System
- All partners are currently engaged in our efforts
- Successful outcomes are part of the requirement to secure on-going funding

BENCHMARKS



All individuals known to be experiencing chronic homelessness have obtained permanent housing with appropriate services (E.G. Permanent Supportive Housing)

Or, if not all… The number of individuals that remain chronically homeless does not exceed 0.1% of the total number of homeless individuals reported in the most recent point-in-time count or 3 persons, whichever is greater

CoC Outcomes: Policy and Procedures

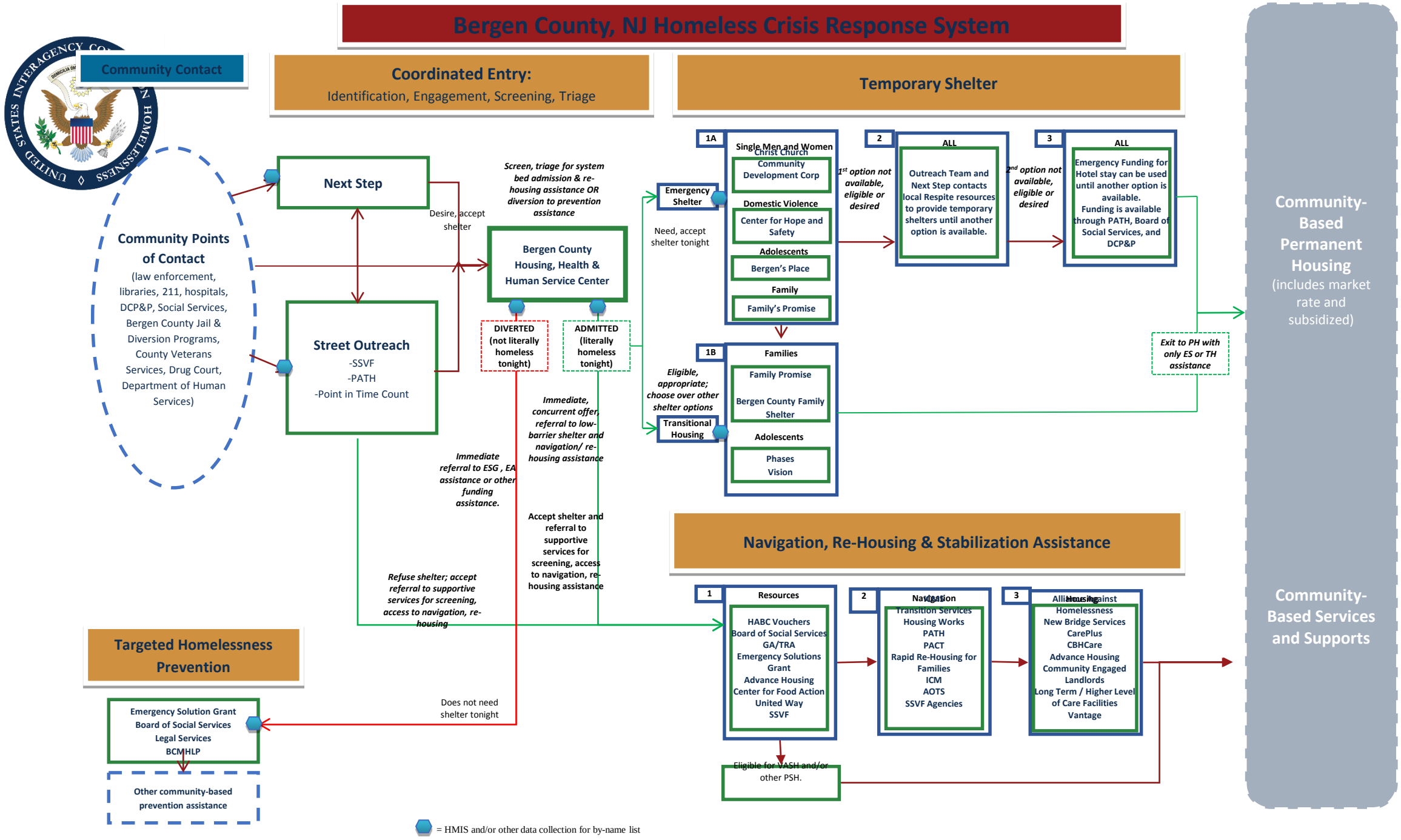
As a managing entity, the CoC tracks and measures outcomes related to the Coordinated Assessment Process. The following are analyzed to ensure the system is working:

- **Agency Participation**
  - Tracking which projects are submitting information for the HPL, through HMIS or separately
  - CoC Lead will track which CoC and ESG funded projects are taking clients from the list to ensure that no one is being skipped over
- **Tracking Length of Time on the List**
  - The goal is to help clients obtain permanent housing quickly
- **Destination of Clients**
  - Goal of Coordinated Assessment System is to assist households in finding permanent placement based on their appropriate housing needs – this determines the effectiveness of the CAS and the Bergen County CoC

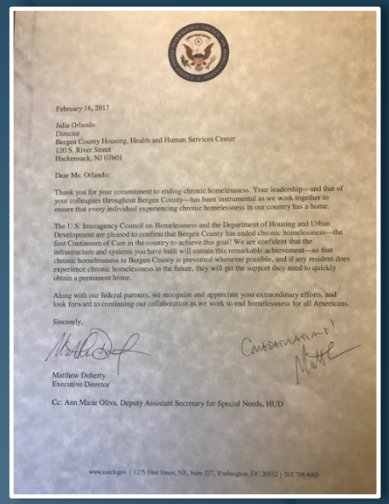
Confirmation Process

- Approximately 6 months (because we were guinea pigs), and 2 months from submission
- Make sure all data is available
- It helped to develop a chronological narrative introduction to attach with submission
- Develop a flow chart as a visual aid (Next Slide)
- Be prepared to provide case examples of individuals who have failed the housing process
- Back & Forth – Be patient
- Use a point person /coach. They <u>want</u> to confirm your community…consult often

Bergen County, NJ Homeless Crisis Response System



Confirmation & Sustaining: What Does it Mean?



February 16, 2017

Julia Orlando
Director
Bergen County Housing, Health and Human Services Center
120 S. River Street
Hackensack, NJ 07601

Dear Ms. Orlando:

Thank you for your commitment to ending chronic homelessness. Your leadership—and that of your colleagues throughout Bergen County—has been instrumental as we work together to ensure that every individual experiencing chronic homelessness in our country has a home.

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Department of Housing and Urban Development are pleased to confirm that Bergen County has ended chronic homelessness—the first Continuum of Care in the country to achieve this goal! We are confident that the infrastructure and systems you have built will sustain this remarkable achievement—so that chronic homelessness in Bergen County is prevented wherever possible, and if any resident does experience chronic homelessness in the future, they will get the support they need to quickly obtain a permanent home.

Along with our federal partners, we recognize and appreciate your extraordinary efforts, and look forward to continuing our collaboration as we work to end homelessness for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Congratulations!

Matthew Doherty
Executive Director

Cc: Ann Marie Oliva, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Needs, HUD

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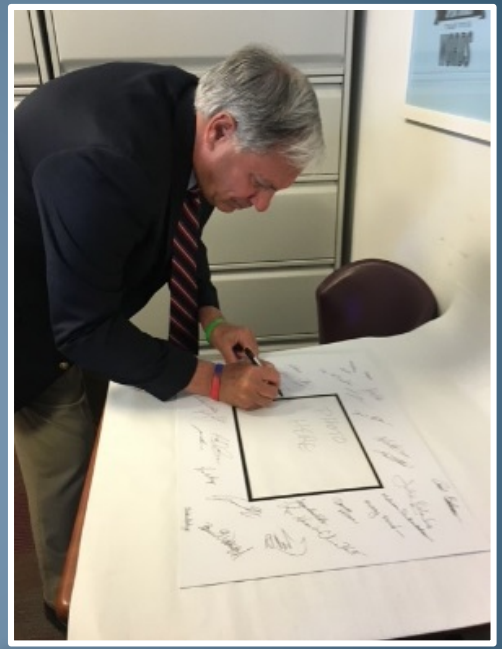
- It's a proud day, and reinforces the hard work and collaboration
- We fulfilled a major component of our 10 Year Plan
- Ensures that the system is set up to address not only chronic individuals, but can be modified to address other populations (Veteran, Youth, Seniors)
- Improves relationships with law enforcement and local businesses
- You must identify your "at-risk" group to sustain functional zero
- Paying it Forward. Sharing what you know with others
- Who is the gate keeper?
- Effective CoC, manageable size, represents the same catchment area

Key Center Partners

- Advance Housing, Inc.
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Alliance Against Homelessness
- Bergen Community College
- Bergen County Community Development
- Bergen County Dept. of Health
- Bergen County Dept. of Human Services
- Bergen County Division of Veteran Services
- Bergen County Board of Social Services
- Bergen County Prosecutors Office
- Bergen County Sheriff's Department
- Bergen County United Way
- Bridgeway
- Care Plus NJ
- Children Aid and Family services
- Christ Church CDC
- Comprehensive Behavioral HealthCare, Inc.
- Eastwick College
- Family Promise
- Homeless Trust Fund
- Housing Authority of Bergen County
- Making-It-Home
- Mental Health Law Project
- Northeast NJ Legal Services
- North Jersey Friendship House
- One Stop Career Center
- Parisian Beauty Academy
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension
- SSVF Agencies (Soldier On, NHCAP, Community Hope, Catholic Charities)
- Transitions Professionals
- Hackensack Upper Main Alliance
- Valley National Bank
- Vantage Health Services
- Wilson Life Skills Institute
- Women's Rights Information Center
- YWCA

Bergen County Government Leadership

- County Executive James J. Tedesco, III
- Freeholder Chairman Thomas J. Sullivan
- Freeholder Vice Chairwoman Germaine M. Ortiz
- Freeholder Chair Pro Tempore Mary J. Amoroso
- Freeholder David L. Ganz
- Freeholder Steven A. Tanelli
- Freeholder Dr. Joan M. Voss
- Freeholder Tracy S. Zur
- Housing Authority of Bergen County Executive Director Lynn Bartlett



Contact Me

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orlando@habcnj.org

Review and Confirmation

Stages of Federal review will involve:

- CoC self-assessment with support from TA (including sign off from CoC membership),
- TA provider review and recommendation, and
- Federal confirmation or denial for CoCs who choose it.

Next Steps and Resources

Next Steps

In the coming months, HUD and USICH will release additional guidance and tools.

Existing Resources

- Criteria and Benchmark for Achieving an End to Chronic Homelessness
- 10 Strategies to End Chronic Homelessness
- HEARTH: Defining “Chronically Homeless” Final Rule Webinar Slides
- HUD Notice on Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness
- Ending Long-Term Homelessness for People with Complex Needs
- Supportive Housing Opportunities Planner (SHOP) Tool