Homelessness 101

May 2020

Nastacia' Moore, C4 Innovations
Stephanie Reinauer, Abt Associates

About NHSDC

The National Human Services Data Consortium (NHSDC) is an organization focused on developing effective leadership for the best use of information technology to manage human services. NHSDC provides information, assistance, peer to peer education and lifelong learning to its conference participants, website members and other interested parties in the articulation, planning, implementation and continuous operation of technology initiatives to collect, aggregate, analyze and present information regarding the provision of human services.

NHSDC holds two conferences every year that convene human services administrators primarily working in the homeless services data space together to learn best practices and share knowledge. The past 3 events have been put on with HUD as a co-sponsor. Learn more on our web site www.nhsdc.org.

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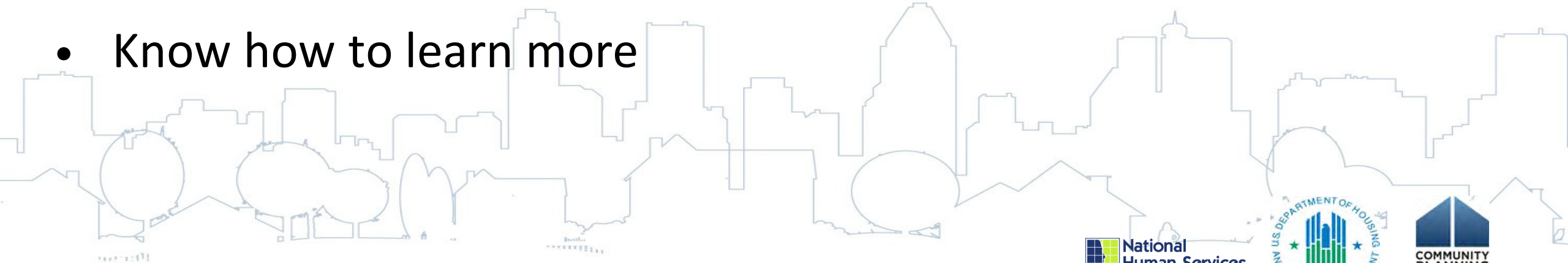
Learning Objectives

- Understand definitions and prevalence of homelessness
- Be familiar with national level initiatives to end homelessness
- Understand how homelessness is measured using HMIS
- Know how to learn more



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Key Questions We Want to Answer

- How do we define homelessness?
- How do we end homelessness?
- Who is working to end homelessness?
- How do we measure our progress in ending homelessness?

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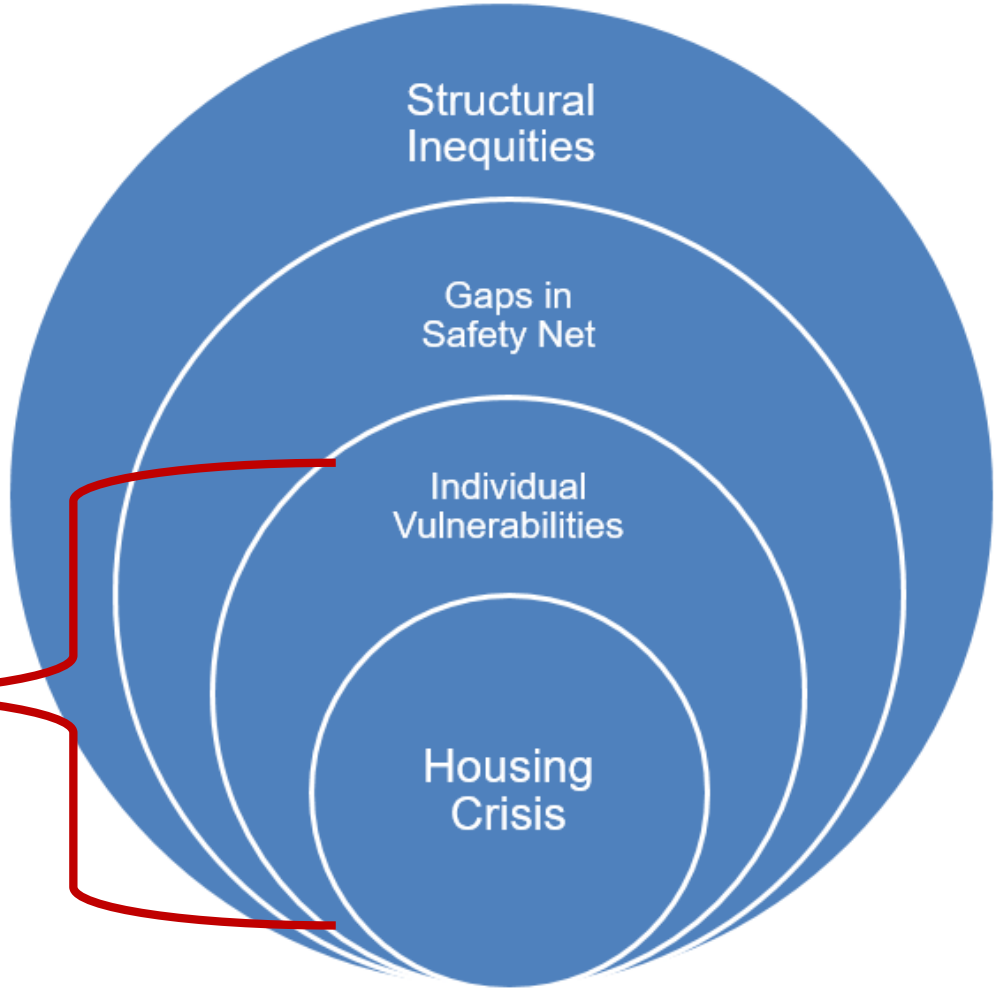
What factors lead to homelessness?

Our homeless crisis response systems are working here



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What Structural factors lead to racial inequalities in homelessness?

Structural Factors

MENTAL HEALTH

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HUD Homeless Definition

Category 1: Literally Homeless

I. Primary nighttime residence that is public or private place not meant for human habitation;

II. Living in a publicly or privately operated shelter (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotel/motel paid by another entity)

III. Exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for less than 90 days and who resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering that institution

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HUD Homeless Definition

Category 2: Imminent Risk

I. Residence will be lost within 14 days of application for assistance
II. No subsequent residence has been identified
III. Individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing

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HUD Homeless Definition

Category 3: Other Federal Statutes

Must have HUD approval to serve!

I. Homeless under other Federal Statutes;
II. Have not had lease in past 60 days;
III. Have experienced persistent housing instability; and
IV. Can expect to continue such housing instability for extended period of time

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HUD Homeless Definition

Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

I. Is fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including:
   - Trading sex for housing
   - Trafficking
   - Physical abuse
   - Violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation

II. Has no other residence; and

III. Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

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HUD Homeless Definition

Chronic Homelessness Definition

- Must have a qualifying disability
- Living in a place not meant for human habitation or emergency shelter
- Has been homeless for a year, or has experienced four episodes of experiencing homelessness in the past three years, adding up to one year

What is an “episode” or “occurrence” of homelessness?

- Episodes are separated by a break of at least 7 nights

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What does homelessness look like in the U.S.?

On a single night in January 2019*:

- **567,715** people experienced homelessness
- 63% stayed in sheltered locations --- 37% stayed in unsheltered locations
- 2/3 of were single adults ---1/3 of people were part of a family unit
- 40% African Americans experiencing homelessness (overrepresentation)

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EXHIBIT 1.1: PIT Estimates of People Experiencing Homelessness
By Sheltered Status, 2007–2019

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What does homelessness look like in the U.S.?

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What does homelessness look like in your CoC?

How is homelessness in your community similar or different than them national picture?

Is it on the rise or on the decline?

What about for subpopulations? (youth, veterans, families, chronic homeless)

Are more people in shelter or unsheltered?

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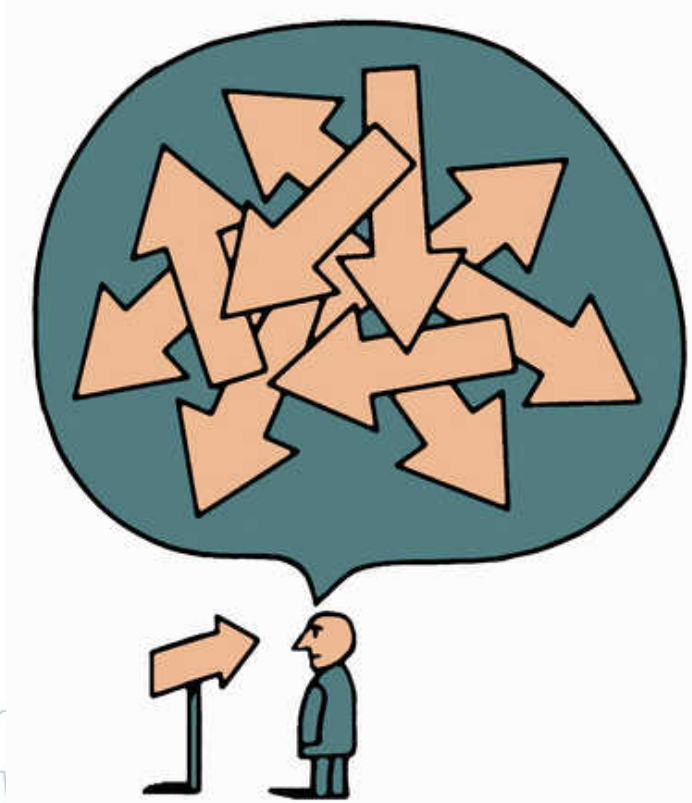
So what now? How do we end homelessness?



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How do we end homelessness?

Continuum of Care

Rapid Rehousing

Mainstream Services

Emergency Solutions Grant

HMIS

Affordable Housing

Transitional Housing

Workforce Housing

Rental Assistance

HOPWA

Permanent Supportive Housing

Emergency Shelters

HUD VASH

By Name List

Street Outreach

Section 8

SRO

Drop-in Centers

Grant Per Diem

SSVF

Case management

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Shifting to Systems Approach

Agency Performance → System Performance

Unique Agency Intake → Coordinated Entry

Planning in Silos → System Planning

Haphazard Decisions → Data Informed Decisions

Automatic Project Renewal → Performance-Based Funding

Outdated Program Models → Best Practices

Housing the Next In Line → Dynamic Prioritization

My Program → Our System

Measuring Outputs → Measuring Outcomes

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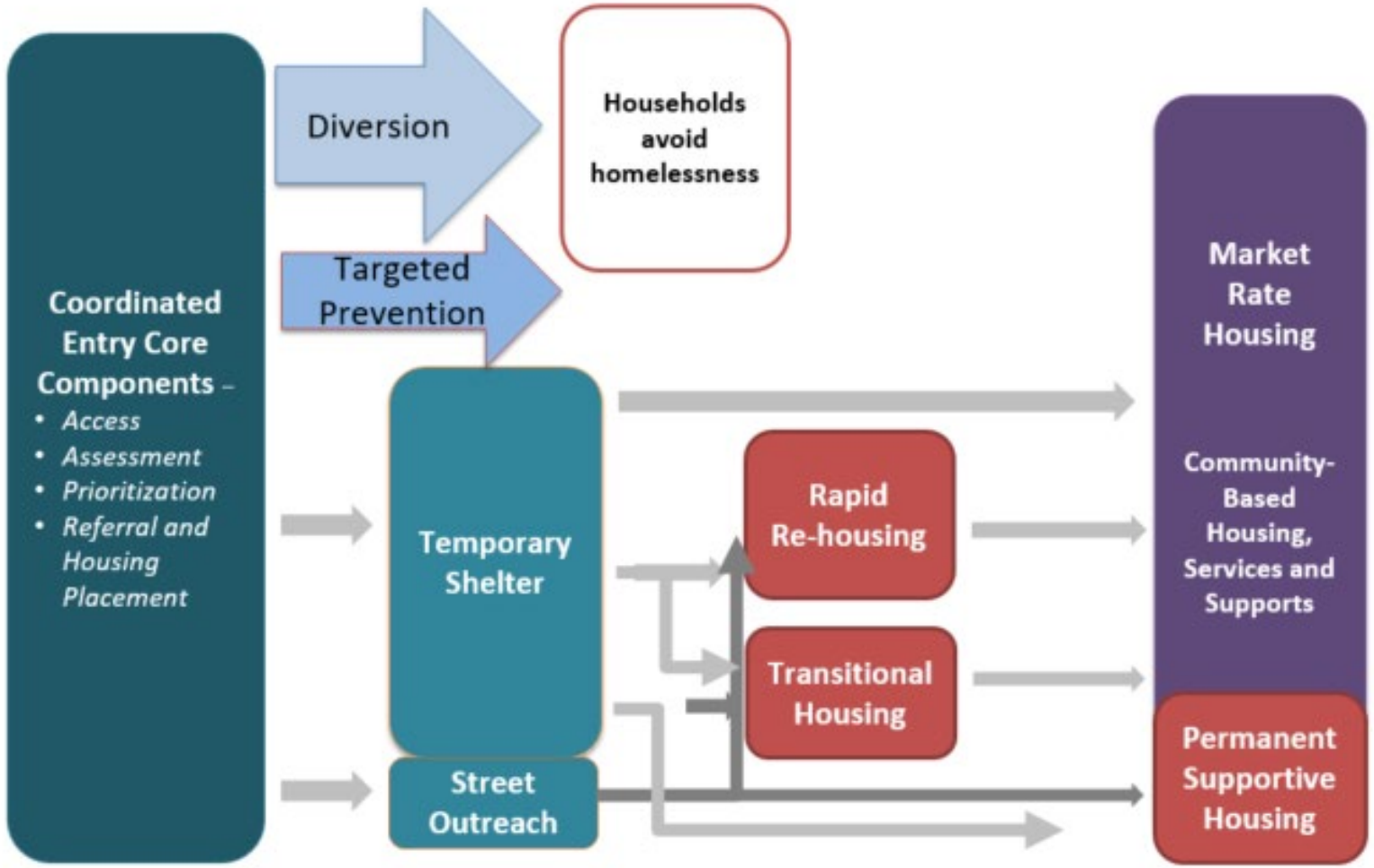
Coordinated Entry



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Systems supporting the end of homelessness

- Continuum of Care
  - Coordinated Entry Systems
  - Housing First
  - By-name lists
- Opening Doors
  - 10 year plans
- Mainstream systems
- Data & reporting – Homeless Management Information Systems
- Other community collaborations

A community's response to homelessness must shift from an accumulation of individual programs to *systems* designed to end homelessness.

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Who is working to end homelessness?

Federal Partners involved in ending homelessness:

- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Department of Veterans Administration (VA)
- United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

System Performance Measures

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System Performance Measures: 1

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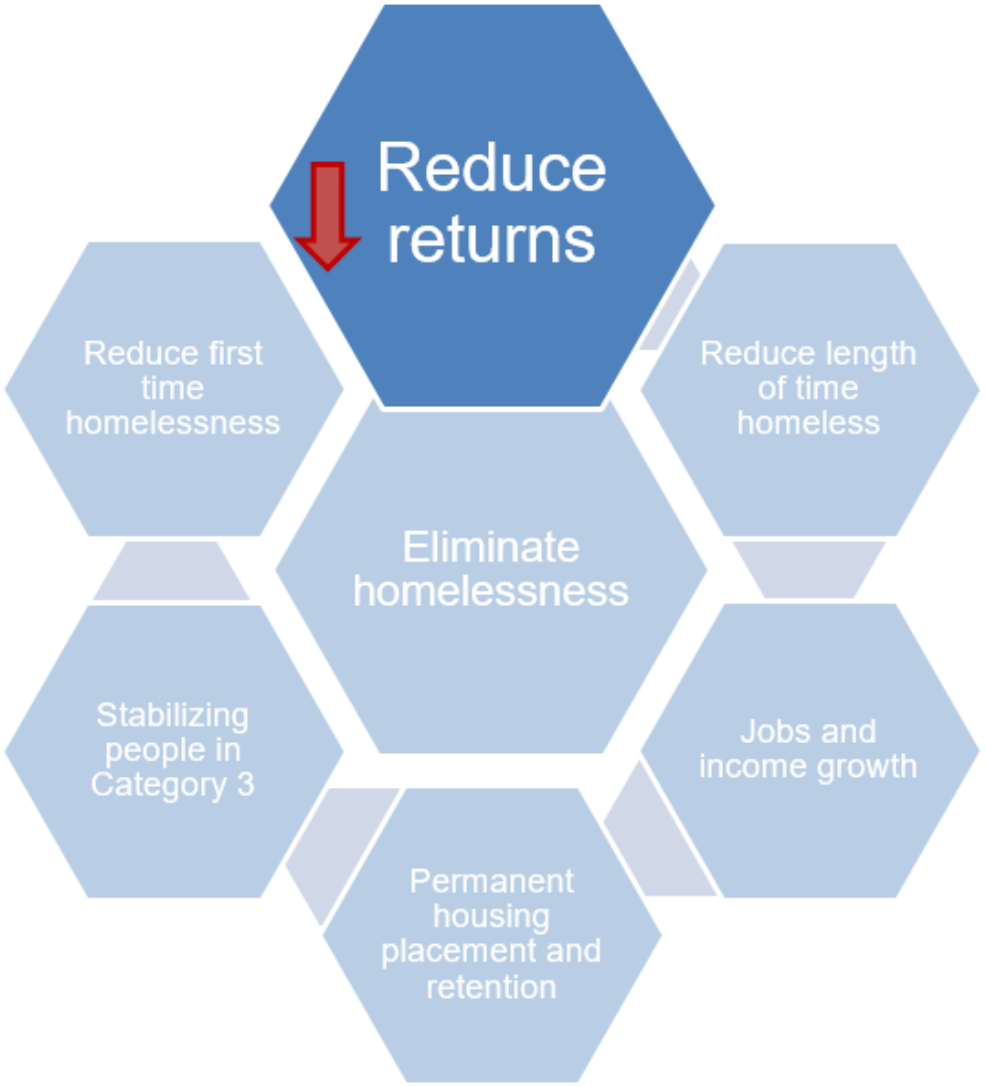
System Performance Measures: 2



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System Performance Measures: 3

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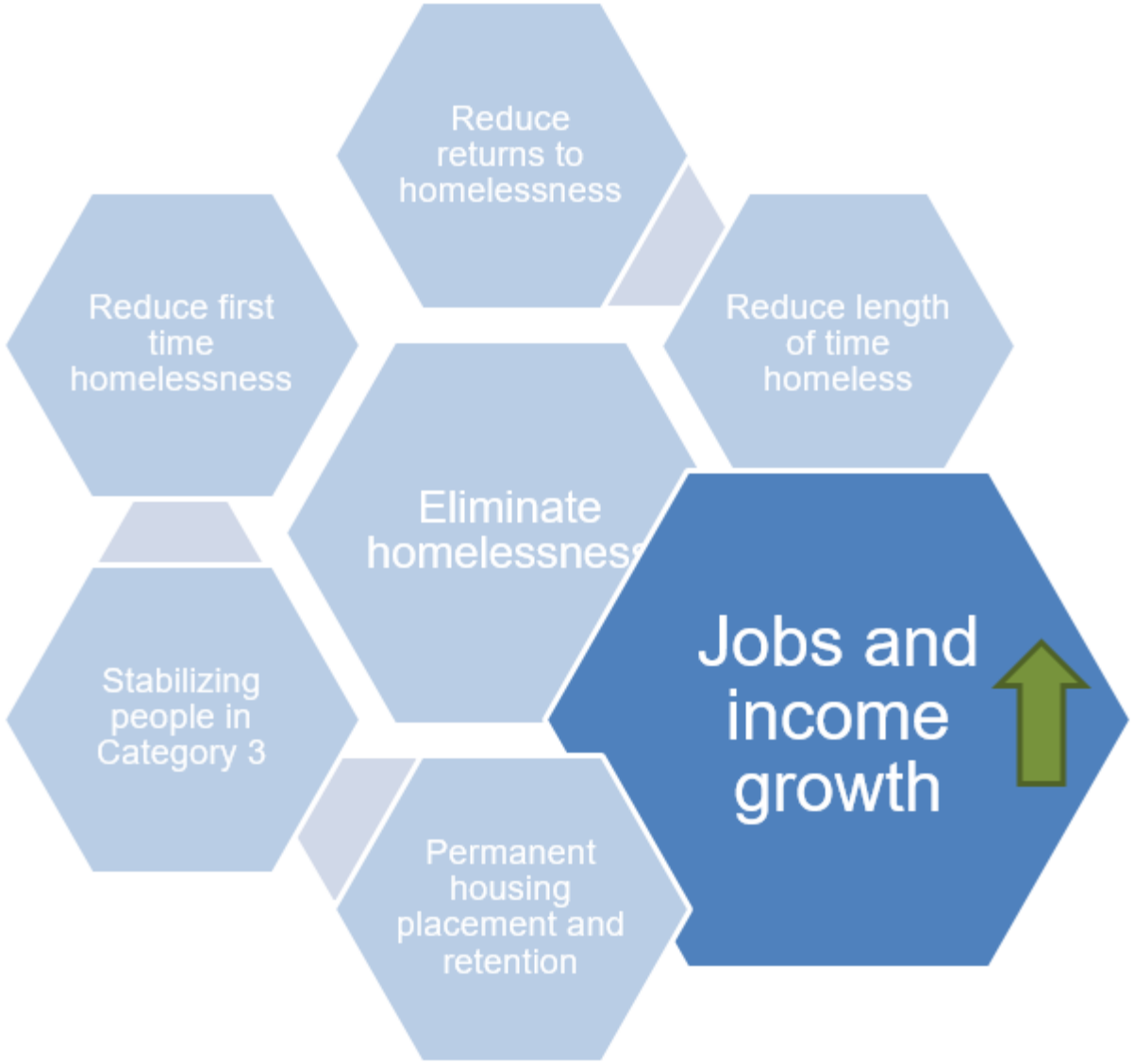
System Performance Measures: 4



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System Performance Measures: 5

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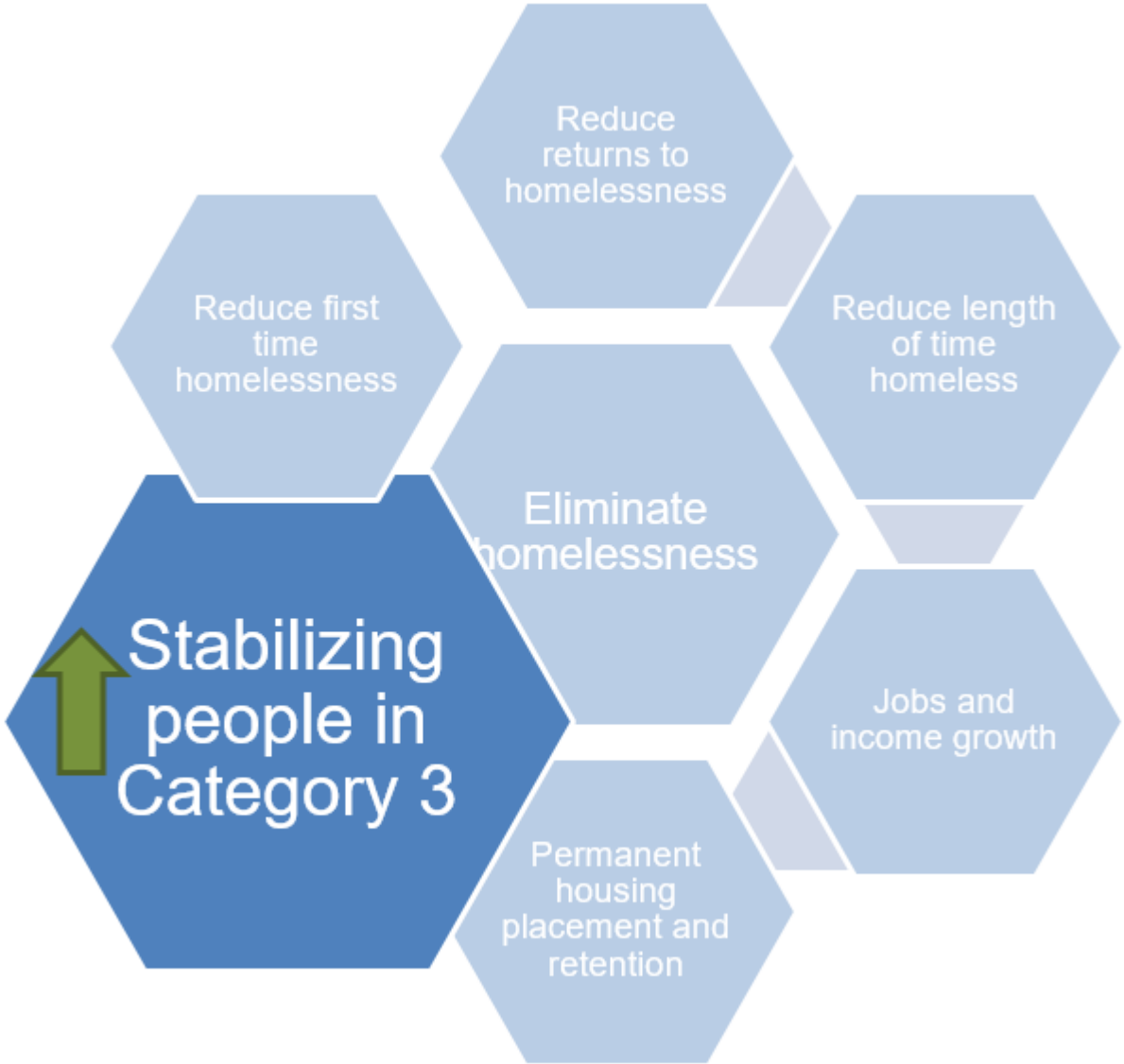
System Performance Measures: 6



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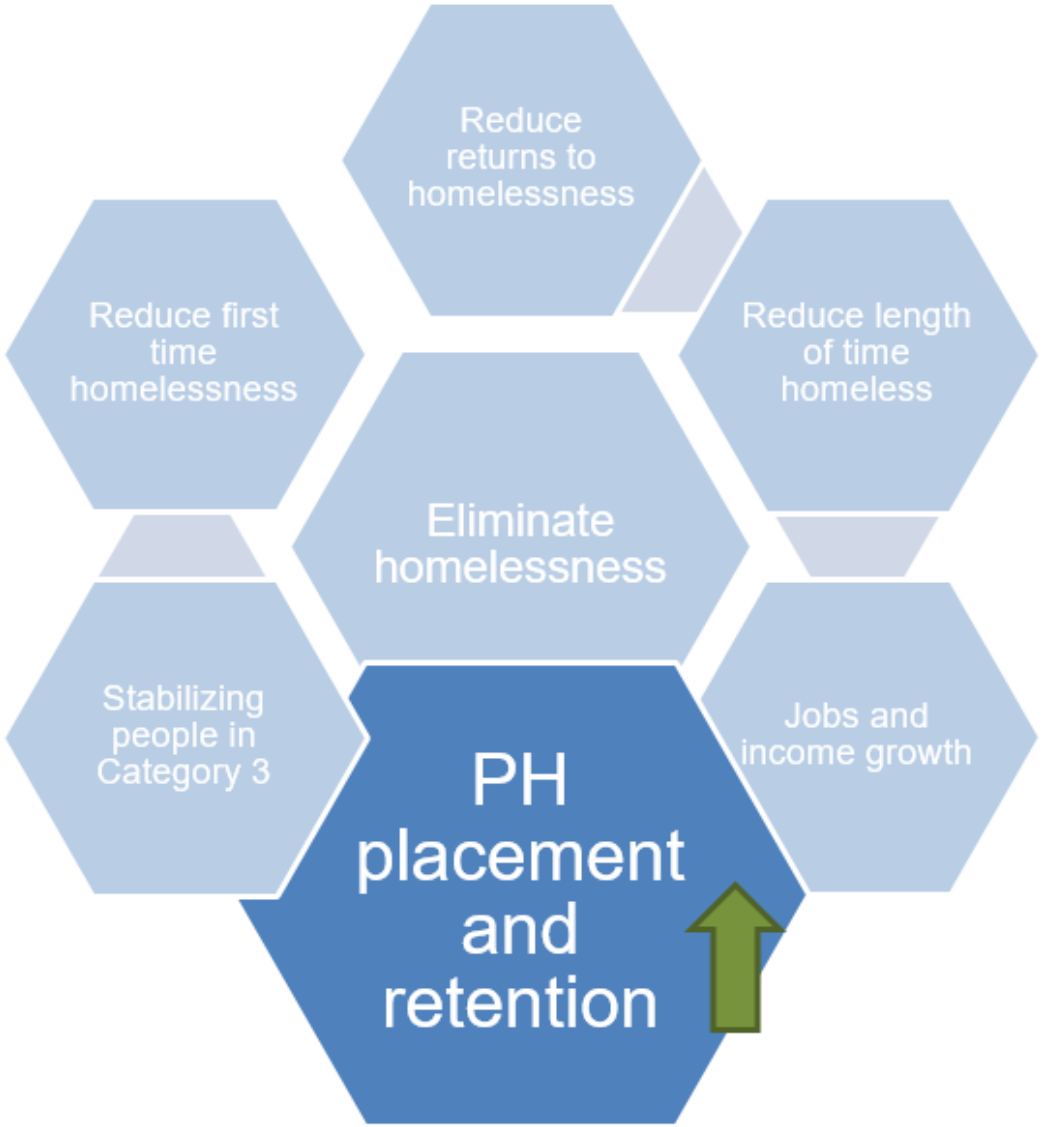
System Performance Measures: 7



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How do we measure our progress?

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How do we measure our progress?

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

- Information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness

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HMIS Across Funding Streams

- Continuum of Care
- Emergency Solutions Grant
- Housing Opportunities for Persons Living with AIDS (HOPWA)
- HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- HHS Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY)
- HHS Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)
- VA Grant Per Diem (GPD)
- VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- VA Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)
- Other funding streams

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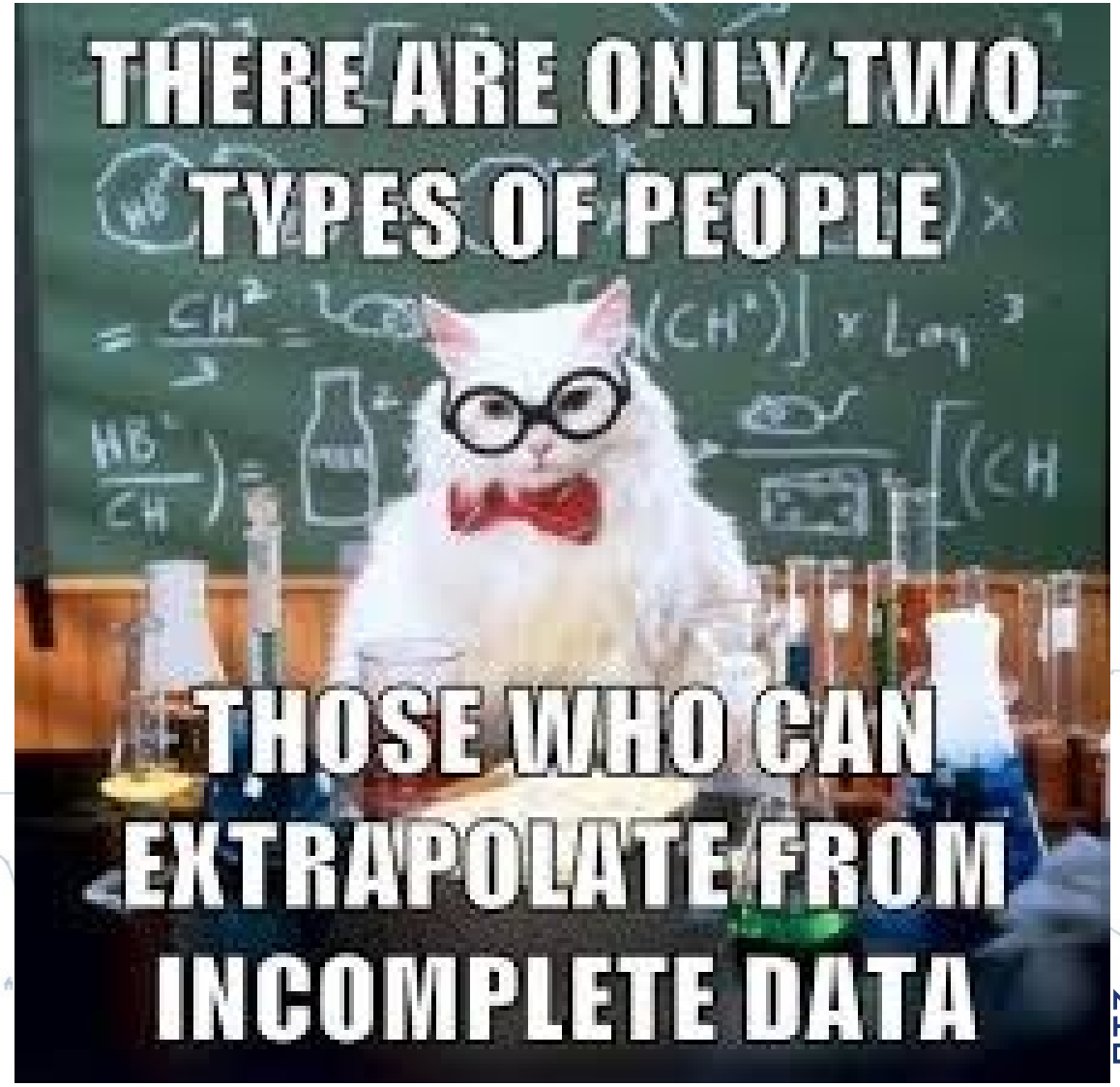

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Who does not use HMIS?

Domestic Violence Service Providers

- Comparable Databases: an alternative and separate database designed to collect client-level information for Domestic Violence Service Providers
  - No Personally Identifying Information (PII) is shared outside these closed databases; data only shared in aggregate form
  - Subject to additional privacy and security protocols through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

Other Service Providers

- Communities of Faith
- Privately-funded service providers

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Available HMIS and CoC Performance Reports

Understanding your projects:

- Annual Performance Report (APR)
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)
- CoC Performance Profile Reports

Understanding your systems:

- Housing Inventory Count (HIC)
- Point-in-Time (PIT)
- System Performance Measures (SPM)
- Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) & Stella P

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Learn more

Resources and assistance to support HUD's community partners

HUD Exchange

(https://www.hudexchange.info/)

Thank you!

Nastacia' Moore
C4 Innovations
Nmoore@C4innovates.com

Stephanie Reinauer
Abt Associates
stephanie_reinauer@abtassoc.com