

Taking Action on Equity: Evaluating Housing, Health Care, and Services for the Homeless

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Legal and Technical Assistance | Policy | Advocacy | Planning

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Evaluating the Racial (In)equity of Homeless Response Systems



Homelessness Disproportionately Impacts People of Color

- **2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)**
 - **40%** of people experiencing homelessness are Black or African American (compared to **13%** of the general population).
 - **22%** are Hispanic or Latino (compared to **18%**)
 - **3%** are American Indian or Alaska Native (compared to **1.3%**)
 - **1.5%** are Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (compared to **0.2%**)
- **Nov 2017 Voices of Youth Count report**
 - Hispanic, non-white youth had a **33% higher risk** of reporting homelessness compared to youth in other ethnic groups
 - Black or African American youth had an **83% higher risk** of reporting homelessness compared to youth of other races. Risk remains even when researchers control for other factors such as income and education.

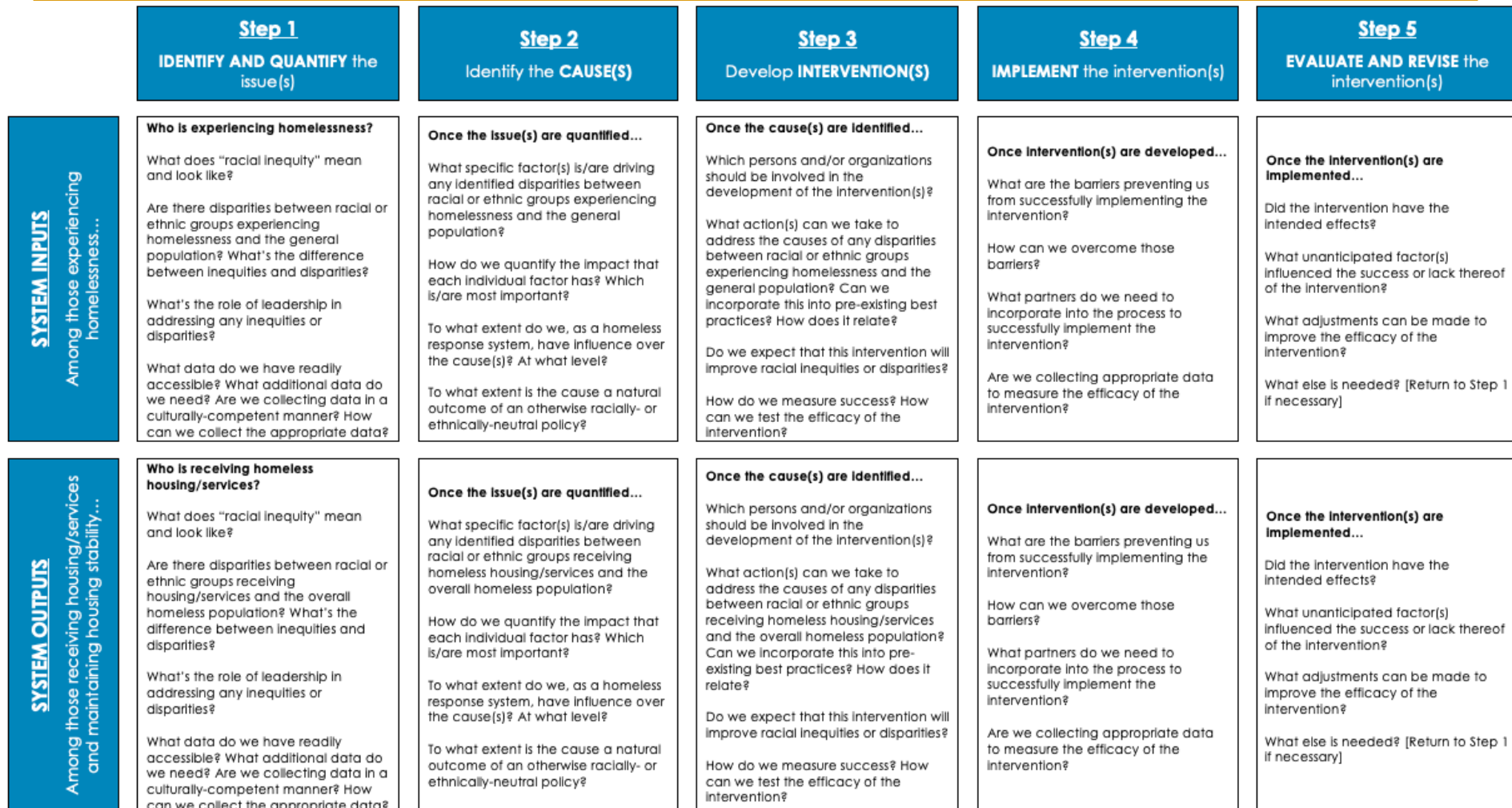


Increased Focus By CoCs To Ensure They Are Not Contributing to Disparities

- Availability of Nationwide and Community-specific Data
- CoC Program Competition
- Homeless Crisis Response System-focused tools and resources, including from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)



Toward a Framework for Addressing Racial (In)Equity in Homelessness and the Delivery of Homeless Housing and Services: Framework Schematic



Step 1: Identify and Quantify the Issues

System Inputs

Among those experiencing homelessness...

- Who is experiencing homelessness?
- Are there disparities between racial or ethnic groups experiencing homelessness and the general population?
- What data do we have readily accessible? What additional data do we need? Are we collecting data in a culturally-competent manner? How can we collect the appropriate data?

System Outputs

Among those receiving housing/services...

- Who is receiving homeless housing/services?
- Are there disparities between racial or ethnic groups receiving housing/services and the overall homeless population?
- What data do we have readily accessible? What additional data do we need? Are we collecting data in a culturally-competent manner? How can we collect the appropriate data?

Key Topics to Explore Further

- What racial equity means and looks like
- The role of leadership in addressing inequities or disparities

Resources and Reference Materials

- Race and Equity Tools' [Glossary](#)
- GARE & BARHII Webinar: [Applying the Racial Equity Tool](#)

Step 2: Identify the Causes

System Inputs

Among those experiencing homelessness...

- What specific factors are driving identified disparities between racial or ethnic groups experiencing homelessness and the general population?
- How do we quantify the impact each individual factor has? Which is/are most important?

System Outputs

Among those receiving housing/services...

- What specific factors are driving identified disparities between racial or ethnic groups receiving homeless housing/services and the overall homeless population?
- How do we quantify the impact each individual factor has? Which is/are most important?

Key Topics to Explore Further

- Most critical factors driving identified disparities
- Homeless response systems' ability to influence causes
- The extent to which disparities are natural outcomes of an otherwise racially- or ethnically-neutral policy?

Resources and Reference Materials

- Center for Social Inclusion's [Four Strategies to Advance Racial Equity](#)
 - [Racial Equity Tools](#) resources

Step 3: Develop Interventions

System Inputs

Among those experiencing homelessness...

- What action(s) can we take to address the causes of disparities between racial or ethnic groups experiencing homelessness and the general population? Can we incorporate this into existing best practices?
- How do we measure success? How can we test the efficacy of the intervention?

System Outputs

Among those receiving housing/services...

- What action(s) can we take to address the causes of disparities between racial or ethnic groups receiving homeless housing/services and the overall homeless population? Can we incorporate this into existing best practices?
- How do we measure success? How can we test the efficacy of the intervention?

Key Topics to Explore Further

- Persons and/or organizations that should be involved in the development of the intervention
 - Expectations that the intervention will improve racial inequities or disparities

Resources and Reference Materials

- GARE's [Racial Equity Action Plans: A How-to Manual](#)
- Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative's [Racial Equity Toolkit: 6 Step Approach](#)
 - Race Forward's [Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)

Step 4: Implement the Interventions

System Inputs

Among those experiencing homelessness...

- What partners do we need to incorporate into the process to successfully implement the intervention?
- Are we collecting appropriate data to measure the efficacy of the intervention?

System Outputs

Among those receiving housing/services...

- What partners do we need to incorporate into the process to successfully implement the intervention?
- Are we collecting appropriate data to measure the efficacy of the intervention?

Key Topics to Explore Further

- Barriers preventing successful implementation of new interventions
 - How to overcome any such barriers

Resources and Reference Materials

- [Racial Equity Tools](#) resources on communication strategies, sustainment strategies, and other strategies to achieve racial equity

Step 5: Evaluate and Revise the Interventions

System Inputs

Among those experiencing homelessness...

- Did the intervention have the intended effects?
- What unanticipated factor(s) influenced the success or lack thereof of the intervention?
- What else is needed? [Return to Step 1 if necessary]

System Outputs

Among those receiving housing/services...

- Did the intervention have the intended effects?
- What unanticipated factor(s) influenced the success or lack thereof of the intervention?
- What else is needed? [Return to Step 1 if necessary]

Key Topics to Explore Further

- Measuring an intervention's success in achieving intended effects
- Adjustments that can be made to improve the efficacy of the intervention

Resources and Reference Materials

- [Racial Equity Tools](#) resources on evaluating the work (allies, research questions, and theories of change), collecting data (methodologies that account for race, racism, and privilege), analyzing data, sharing findings, and additional data sources

Existing Data to Inform CoC's Racial and Ethnic Disparity Assessment

Data Measurements to Identify and Quantify Racial Disparities

- HMIS Data Elements and System Performance Measures (SPM)
- Coordinated Entry System (CES) evaluation by phase and decision point

HMIS Data Elements

- HMIS data entered in compliance with CoC Program requirements capture a significant amount of relevant data on racial and ethnic disparities
- Includes both Race (HMIS Data Element 3.4) and Ethnicity (HMIS Data Element 3.5)
- Communities can track and evaluate data elements, each broken down separately by race and ethnicity, to analyze data already being recorded

HMIS Data Elements: System Inputs

System Inputs		
Living Situation	Identify type of living situation and length of stay immediately prior to project start	HMIS Data Element 3.917
Income and Sources	Identify whether clients have any income at program entry, and number of sources; may further evaluate data by specific income sources	HMIS Data Element 4.2
Non-Cash Benefits	Identify whether clients receive any benefits at program entry, and number of sources; may further evaluate data by specific benefits	HMIS Data Element 4.3
Health Insurance	Identify whether clients receive or are covered by health insurance at program entry; may further evaluate data by source of insurance	HMIS Data Element 4.4
Disability	Identify disabilities, including Physical Disability, Developmental Disability, Chronic Health Condition, HIV/AIDS, Mental Health Problem, Substance Abuse	HMIS Data Elements 4.5-4.10
Domestic Violence	Identify survivors of domestic violence, and whether currently fleeing domestic violence	HMIS Data Element 4.11
Veteran Status	Identify those with veteran status	HMIS Data Element 3.7



HMIS Data Elements: System Outputs

System Outputs		
Project Type	Identify types of projects accessed	HMIS Data Element 2.4
Destination	Identify outcome for client immediately after exiting a project	HMIS Data Element 3.12
Housing Move-In Date	May use alongside Project Start Date to identify clients who entered project and time until move-in, or whether move-in ever occurs	HMIS Data Element 3.20
Income and Sources	Identify whether clients have any income at exit or update, and number of sources; may further evaluate data by specific income sources	HMIS Data Element 4.2
Non-Cash Benefits	Identify whether clients receive any benefits at exit or update, and number of sources; may further evaluate data by specific benefits	HMIS Data Element 4.3
Health Insurance	Identify whether clients receive or are covered by health insurance at exit or update; may further evaluate data by source of insurance	HMIS Data Element 4.4
Housing Assessment Disposition	Identify referrals following brief assessment.	HMIS Data Element 4.18



HUD System Performance Measures (SPMs)

System Outputs		
Length of Time Persons Remain Homeless	Measures change in average and median length of time persons are homeless in shelter, transitional housing, and some other situations	SPM 1
Extent to which Persons who Exit Homelessness to Permanent Housing Destinations Return to Homelessness	Measures returns to shelter, transitional housing, contact with street outreach, and some other situations among those with successful exit to permanent housing recorded in HMIS	SPM 2
Number of Homeless Persons	Measures change in PIT counts of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness, and change in annual count of sheltered homelessness in HMIS	SPM 3
Employment and Income Growth for Homeless Persons in CoC Program-funded Projects	Measures changes in multiple types of income for those in shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, or permanent supportive housing programs in HMIS	SPM 4
Number of Persons who Become Homeless for the First Time	Measures change in the number of people in shelter, transitional housing, and some other situations with no prior enrollment in HMIS	SPM 5
Successful Placement from Street Outreach	Measures change in placements from street outreach to permanent, temporary, and some institutional settings	SPM 6
Successful Placement in or Retention of Permanent Housing	Measures change in exits to or retention of permanent housing	SPM 7



Coordinated Entry System (CES) Evaluation

- CoC's Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) are evaluated on an annual and ongoing basis.
- Communities should review each CES phase (access, assessment, prioritization, matching, referral, program entry, timing) for disparities, examining the inputs and outputs by race and ethnicity.
- Subpopulation data (e.g., for domestic violence survivors, transition-aged youth, single parent households, veterans, and/or others as relevant to the community) is also valuable.
- Note: System and community demographics (using census or other data) should be included in this evaluation.

CES Evaluation: Planning

Inputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)

- Who is designing the CES?
- Who is monitoring the CES?
- Who is/are the matchmakers?
- Who is participating regularly in case conferencing?
- Who are the system's decision makers (e.g., collaborative agency lead personnel; community based organization stakeholder lead personnel; CoC and ESG-funded provider lead personnel)
- What training on race and equity is provided to those involved in CES, including planners, service providers, intake and referral personnel, and other decision makers or stakeholders?

CES Evaluation: Access

Inputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)	Outputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)
Types of diversion resources offered to client? (services, funding, etc.)	# of successful diversions from homelessness
Types of diversion resources accepted by client? (services, funding, etc.)	# of successful diversions from homeless system of care
Types of diversion resources rejected by client? (services, funding, etc.)	# using emergency shelters
Types of prevention resources offered to client? (services, funding, etc.)	
Types of prevention resources accepted by client? (services, funding, etc.)	
Types of prevention resources rejected by client? (services, funding, etc.)	
	# reached by outreach
	# calls in to 2-1-1
	# who accesses each access point in the system

CES Evaluation: Assessment

Inputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)	Outputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)
	# of assessments conducted
	Average assessment score
	Median assessment score
	Score distribution
Which access points are conducting reassessments?	# of re-assessments conducted
	# of reassessments with change in assessment score
	# in each housing intervention range (e.g., PSH, RRH, etc.)
	# of people identified as chronically homeless



CES Evaluation: Prioritization

**Inputs for Evaluation
(by race and ethnicity)**

**Outputs for Evaluation
(by race and ethnicity)**

Who is at the top of the prioritization list?

Who is at the bottom of the prioritization list?

of people identified as members of other priority populations (e.g., subpopulations: disabled, TAY, senior, veteran, etc.)

CES Evaluation: Matching

Inputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)	Outputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)
Who is matched to each housing intervention?	
	# able to self-resolve without intervention of from homelessness system
	# matched to housing navigation services
	# matched to prevention services
	# matched to diversion services
	# matched to Board and Care programs or nursing homes
Are there differences in who is matched to population-specific resources (e.g., behavioral health programs, domestic violence survivors, veterans) vs. resources open to broader population?	

CES Evaluation: Referral

Outputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)

- # of referrals to each housing intervention (PSH, TH, RRH, etc.)
- # of referrals to housing navigation services
- # of referrals accepted by service providers
- # of referrals rejected by service providers
- # of referrals declined by client

CES Evaluation: Program Entry

Inputs for Evaluation (By race and ethnicity)	Outputs for Evaluation (By race and ethnicity)
	Length of time to contact client for program referrals
	# of attempts to contact client for program referrals
	# successfully enrolled in programs to which they were matched and referred
Of those matched but not enrolled, what were the reasons they were not enrolled?	
	Rate of retention by program
	Rate of retention by project type



CES Evaluation: Timing

Outputs for Evaluation (by race and ethnicity)

Average and Median lengths of time...

- between First Contact and completion of the Assessment
- between completion of the first Assessment and first Match/Referral to housing
- between completion of the first Assessment and first Match/Referral to non-housing services (such as shelter or other interventions)
- from making a Match/Referral to housing to Enrollment in that housing program
- between Match/Referral to non-housing services and Enrollment in that program
- between Enrollment in a housing program and Housing Move-In Date

Additional Resources and Reference Materials

- HUD's [CoC Analysis Tool on Race and Ethnicity](#)
- NAEH's Racial Equity Network [Toolkit](#): a simple dashboard measuring key portions of a homeless program system
- GARE (Government Alliance on Race and Equity) Racial Equity Tools
 - [Racial Equity Toolbox: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity](#)
 - [Racial Equity: Getting to Results](#)
 - [Racial Equity Action Plans: A How-To Manual](#)
- [Greenlining Institute Racial Equity Toolkit](#): step-by-step guidance on how to implement racial equity principles and provides case studies on racial equity processes in action
- [Seattle Race & Social Justice Initiative Racial Equity Toolkit](#) to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues
- Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs)'s [Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization](#)
- California Newsreel's [Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race](#)
- Look up your community's [census data](#) to determine each race's and ethnicity's percentage of the overall population to compare to the percentages in the population of people experiencing homelessness.
- [SPARC \(Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities\) Phase One Study Findings](#)
- SPARC San Francisco [Initial Findings from Quantitative and Qualitative Research](#)
- LA Homeless Services Authority [Report and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness](#)



Thank You!



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