**Maine’s Coordinated Assessment: Next Steps**

***What We’ll Accomplish in 2014: Design Phase***

* A Coordinated Assessment (CA) Committee, including members of both the Maine and the Portland CoCs, met four times between August and December to:
	+ Review HUD requirements for the CA
	+ Consider and recommend to the full CoCs for their review, amendments and approval, options for a statewide CA system that would build on existing strengths and resources
* CA Committee members met with the Portland and Maine CoC full memberships in September to present initial recommendations
* In September, applied to the Betterment Fund for a grant to hire a staff person to help implement the CA system. Application was funded and will allow the hiring of a staff person in January/early February.
* The CA Committee will present final recommendations to the CoCs in December.
	+ Outline recommendations after CoC meetings
* Finalize in writing the design of Maine’s CA system
* In December, the CoCs should submit proposal to the Elvira Sewall and (possibly) a letter of inquiry to the Sam L Cohen Foundation for their spring rounds.

***Next Steps for Maine’s CA System: Implementation Phase***

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| January | * Obtain CoC approval of CA recommendations, if not already received at December meeting
* Hire a staff person with Betterment Fund award
* If invited, proceed with application to Sam L Cohen Foundation (February 1 deadline)
* Expand CA Committee membership to include consumers and broader representation from Maine and Portland CoCs and establish (in writing) its authority and decision making process
	+ - Key participants: shelter operators, ESG recipients, government officials, CoC lead agencies, funders, housing providers
		- Identify subcommittees to assist with specific implementation tasks and protocol development
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| Jan - June | * Expand data sharing protocols statewide and document timeline for data sharing implementation with each participating program
* Require use of HMIS by participating agencies and arrange for licensure
* Add functionality required to support CA (CallPoint, empty bed module?, others?)
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| Mar - June | * Develop implementation timeline
* Develop budget and identify long term funding
* Develop metrics & dashboard for tracking provider and system performance in diversion, access, assessment, and assignment
* Identify pilot sites/regions/populations for pilot
* Implement pilot, measure and report results
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DETAILED TASK LIST:

* Adopt guiding principles and shared values for Coordinated Assessment system
* Determine scale of coordinated assessment pilot
	+ Subpopulation? (Singles, families, etc),
	+ Geography area?
	+ CA Committee recommends that DV resources and households be phased in a later date
* Set a ‘Go Live’ date
* Develop Policy and Procedure manual for system access, assessment and referral activities
	+ Include detailed steps from initial household interaction through post-referral follow-up
* Identify and train access, assessment and referral staff- for pilot sites/pops
* Identify funding and/or staff resources for pilot to carry out access interviews and assessments, make referrals, manage data system and monitor and evaluate system
* Define Coordinated Assessment duties needed to maintain and enhance system
* Determine process for identifying the entity that will manage the coordinated assessment process and be responsible for future referrals and referral reconciliations
	+ Using this process, choose the CA managing entity
* Develop and implement plan and timeline for implementing data sharing between providers and/or develop non-HMIS system for managing coordinated assessment process until data sharing is active for all mandated and participating providers
	+ Develop a data map detailing how information will move from one step of the process to the next (Suggest requesting expansion of Cloudburst TA to accomplish this task)
* Develop a public communication plan and promotional material to distribute after pilot
	+ Develop a plan that leverages existing communication networks and conveys a consistent message about system access across several channels
* Create a plan for how the Coordinated Assessment will be ‘Switched On”
	+ A written plan should be established that includes dates, times, and contingency plans in case of problems
* Implement the pilot
	+ Measure and share reports on implementation with Committee and CoCs
* Determine steps needed to implement system Statewide
* Work with funders to change contract language to require participation in Coordinated Assessment process
* Develop a coordinated assessment-specific budget and financial plan
	+ Costs should be considered with both CoCs in mind and should be considered when discussing ESG allocations, CoC program applications, CoC reallocation processes, CoC planning dollars, etc.
* Develop plan for ongoing system monitoring and quality improvement adjustments
	+ Develop other benchmarks for monitoring performance
* Create a communications plan to notify key partners and stakeholders about how the coordinated assessment system works and their role in making it successful
* Develop and implement internal and external process to review coordinated assessment system function and effectiveness

**ACCESS:**

* Improve system for shelter providers to refer literally homeless households to each other
* Choose shelter access points
* Determine resources required to successfully implement CA system at each access point
* Determine shelter system diversion and referral protocols for households not entering shelter
* Work with identified access points and consumers to determine protocols
* Determine 211 system protocols for diversion and referral
* Work with OA on cross-referencing 211 system with proposed CA system
* Determine current and projected demand on crisis response system based on available data on client demographics, housing inventory and utilization
* Obtain resources for funding prevention
* Develop written standards for prevention programs
* Develop training for staff at access points
* Explore possibility of longer Release of Information timeframe to coordinate referrals

**ASSESS:**

* Diversion
* Finalize prevention/diversion questions and request additions and edits to CallPoint content to accommodate changes
* Implement a standardized diversion/prevention tool among homeless system access points
* Determine Housing Barrier Assessment questions using VI-SPDAT questions as base and request inclusion in HMIS
* Implement standardized housing barrier assessment for shelter and outreach workers
* Determine when HMIS UDE’s will be collected
* Determine at what point it should be administered, and by whom
* Develop written protocols for assessment

**ASSIGN:**

* Promote system-wide Housing First Philosophy
* Housing Prioritization
	+ Verify VI-SPDAT inclusion in HMIS and global access plan for all assessment providers
	+ Implement VI-SPDAT to assist with housing resource allocation to eligible households
* Develop and implement prioritization policy and procedures for housing resource referrals
* Develop and implement referral system, preferably electronic, to provide household information to matched housing programs for further eligibility screening
* Define referral
* Define process for referral, e.g., definition, steps, responsibilities, acceptance/denial of referrals
* Create waitlist protocols
* Determine prioritization strategy for housing resources beyond LTS initiative
	+ Examine implementation of LTS initiative to determine best practices and system improvements
* Provide training to providers on prioritization of HUD-funded housing and the LTS initiative
* Develop process for monitoring and improving accuracy of referrals
* Develop process/functionality for keeping and updating vacancy info in HMIS
* Work with programs to remove admission barriers
* Develop written protocols for Assignment