The $22 Million Dollar Pyramid

One Community's Take on the Integration and Interconnectedness of Partnership, Policy, and Practice to Develop, Sustain, and Address Ever-Evolving Challenges to an Effective Homelessness Response System.

Close To Home
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Person-First Language

- Puts the person before the circumstance or diagnosis, describing what a person “has,” NOT what a person “is.”
- Currently Experiencing Homelessness vs. Homeless People
- Labels can generate strong emotional reactions that create barriers and reinforce stereotypes
- Homelessness is a temporary circumstance. It does not define someone.
- People experiencing homelessness are – first and foremost - people

HEARTH Act & Interim Rule

- Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act passed on May 20th, 2009
  - Consolidated three separate homeless assistance programs administered by HUD
  - Codified into law the Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process
- The Interim Rule was created through the implementation of the HEARTH Act.
  - Establishes a regulatory framework for the CoC program
  - Requirements for establishing a CoC planning process

What is the CoC?

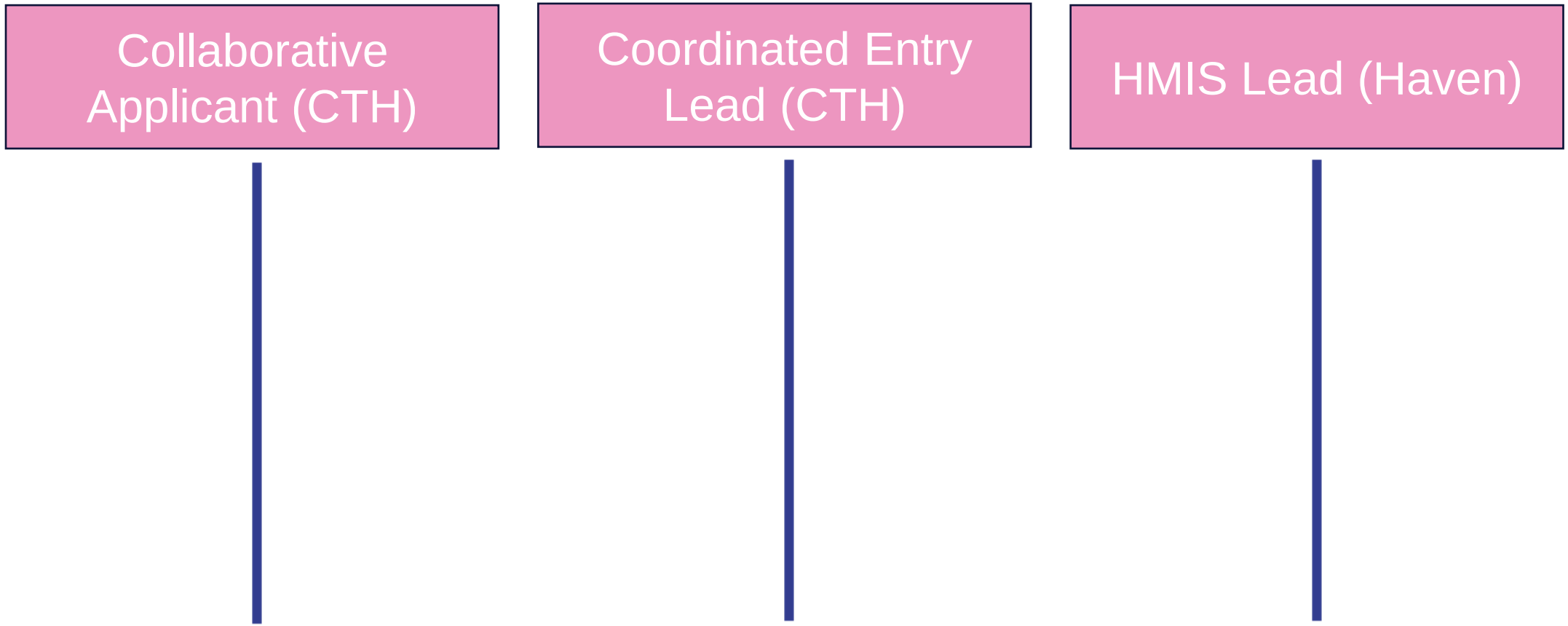
The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a program established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) intended to nurture a community-wide commitment to ending homelessness by promoting collaboration, providing funding, and supporting comprehensive approaches to helping individuals and families move from homelessness to stable housing.

Purpose of the CoC Program

Key Functions of the CoC

- Grant Funding
- Federal & Community Reports on Homelessness Gaps & Trends
- Homelink, our local Coordinated Entry System
- Technical Assistance
- Programs to Support Homeless Service Providers
- Creating Policy through Transparent Governance Structure
- Set Standards to Improve our Homeless Response System
- Comprehensive Services Model
- Facilitate CoC Coordination
- Community Planning
- Data Collection & Analysis

Components of the CoC Program



Collaborative Applicant

- Apply for the CoC Program Annually
- Consolidated Planning (Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reporting)
- CoC Funding Competition (Notice of Financial Opportunity – NOFO)
- Point in Time (PIT) Count Event
- Onboard, monitor, and support CoC and YHDP grant recipients
- Federal Reporting:
  - Housing Inventory Count (HIC) Reporting
  - Point in Time Count (PIT) Reporting
  - Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA)
  - System Performance Measures (SPMs)

Coordinated Entry (HOMELINK)

Requirements:

1. Cover the entire geographic area claimed by the CoC;
2. Be easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services;
3. Be well-advertised;
4. Include a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool;
5. Provide an initial, comprehensive assessment of individuals and families for housing and services; and,
6. Include a specific policy to guide the operation of the centralized or coordinated assessment system to address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers.

Coordinated Entry (HOMELINK)

Additional Requirements:

1. Full coverage;
2. Use of Standardized Access Points and Assessment Approaches;
3. Use of Standardized Prioritization in the Referral Process;
4. Lowering Barriers;
5. Marketing;
6. Street Outreach;
7. Emergency services;
8. Homelessness prevention services;
9. Referrals to participating projects;
10. Safety planning;
11. Participant autonomy;
12. Privacy protections;
13. Data security protections;
14. Assessor training; and,
15. Ongoing planning and vision holder consultation

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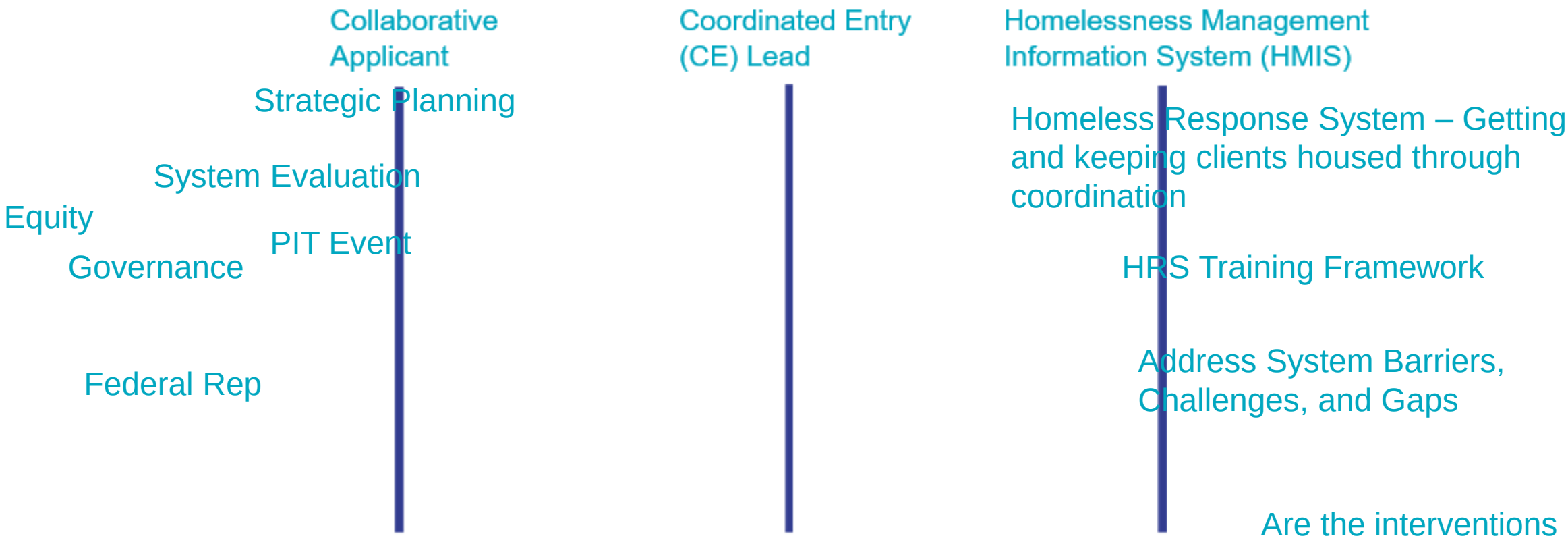
Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)

- HMIS is the system used to collect client-level and project-level data. The HEARTH Act requires that all CoC communities have an HMIS and collect information from their CoC and ESG-funded projects.
  - Data Collection and Management
  - Coordination of Service Delivery (client tracking through system)
  - Assessment and Prioritization (workflows)
  - Enables performance monitoring, measuring, and reporting
  - Provide data for Federal reporting
  - Provide Data for Research and Analysis

Components of the CoC Program

In Action



TX-500 CoC

Collaborative Applicant (CTH)

Coordinated Entry Lead (CTH)

HMIS Lead (Haven)

Close to Home vs The Alliance to House Everyone

Close to Home (CTH)

As the CoC lead, Close to Home supports the Alliance to House Everyone by securing and distributing funding, providing guidance, and implementing local policies and programs. CTH supports the delivery of services to people at-risk or experiencing homelessness through San Antonio and Bexar County's Coordinated Entry model, Homelink. Together, Close to Home and the Alliance work to improve coordination of the Homeless Response System to ensure everyone has a place to call home.

Alliance to House Everyone (ATHE)

The Alliance to House Everyone is a group of 60+ organizations collaborating to address and solve homelessness in San Antonio and Bexar County. Direct service providers and the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board of Directors, local government, and community leaders work alongside people with lived expertise of homelessness, to convene and share information, align resources, address service gaps, recommend coordination strategies, improve local policies and programs, and drive compassionate, data-informed change. Any housing agency, service provider, or other supporter of ending homelessness is invited to connect with The Alliance and join the effort to ensure that everyone in San Antonio and Bexar County has a place to call home.

close to home san antonio | bexar county → The regional coordinating agency for homelessness in San Antonio and Bexar County.

alliance to house everyone → Key partners and owners of the Community's Homeless Strategic Plan

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alliance to house everyone

The Alliance to House Everyone is a group of **60+** organizations collaborating to address and solve homelessness in San Antonio and Bexar County.

Close to Home
Who We Are

We **exist to ensure everyone has a place to call home in San Antonio and Bexar County.**

Values:

We are ***Empowering Partners.***
We meet people where they are, lead with trust, embrace differences, and elevate strengths.

We are ***Resourceful Problem Solvers*****.**
We embrace optimism, innovation, and dig deep to understand and solve problems.

We are ***Relentless Learners.***
We strive to be subject matter experts and recognize setbacks as opportunities for growth.

We are ***Systems Leaders*****.**
We cultivate collaboration and nurture the health of the whole.

We are ***All In.***
We go "all in" to end homelessness while supporting each other and our community.

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Key Functions

- Lead Strategic Planning efforts to address homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County with input and coordination from over 60+ partner agencies, the Alliance to House Everyone.
- Facilitate the funding process for over $22 Million in Housing & Urban Development (HUD) CoC Program funds into San Antonio/Bexar County.
- Produce federal and community reports on homelessness gaps and trends.
- Set community-wide policies, standards, and provide technical assistance to improve our local Homeless Response System.
- Manage the local Coordinated Entry Model, Homelink.
- Run programming to support direct service providers by coordinating housing vouchers and managing flexible funds for homelessness diversion.

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The CoC Board of Directors

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HMIS & Data Advisory Committee

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Homeless Response System Advisory Committee

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Lived Expertise Advisory Board (LEAB/YAB)

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YYA Homeless Subcommittee

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The Partnerships

(Who is at the table)

What is the CoC's Governance?

- The authority to conduct business to establish, refine, implement, and oversee the policy, standards, procedures, and functionality of our Homeless Response System and CoC program components.

Governance Terminology

- **CoC Board of Directors** is the collective of individuals designated to provide oversight and governance on behalf of the CoC. The CoC Board's responsibilities are defined by in the CoC's governance charter and outline the activities of overseeing the nonprofit side and CoC side.

- **Close to Home Nonprofit and CoC Governance Charter:** Establishes a system of operation for governance, describes how business is conducted, and lists rules and regulations for governance.

- **Advisory Boards** are groups established to guarantee the genuine participation of specific entities and individuals in formulating policies and decisions within the TX-500 Continuum of Care (CoC). These boards are member-elected and led.

Governance Terminology Continued

- **Committees** are created by the CoC Board of Directors to ensure essential functions of the CoC are community-led and driven. Committees are formal governing bodies and make policy recommendations to the CoC Board of Directors.

- **Subcommittees:** The purpose of a subcommittee is to complete work on a specific committee priority outside of the regular committee meeting schedule. Subcommittees are composed of committee members or other community members who have a special interest, experience with the group's focus. Established by Parent Committees.

- **Ad-Hocs:** The purpose of an ad-hoc is a temporary meeting space for specific work to be completed outside of the committee and subcommittee. Ad-hoc groups have a time-limited goal and often are seasonal. Established by Parent Committees.

Functions of the CoC Board

1. Collaborative Applicant	2. Coordinated Entry	3. HMIS Lead	4. Non-profit Administration
Approval of CoC Program Policies and Procedures & CoC, ESG, Local Written Standards	Oversight of Coordinated Entry System (CTH)	Oversight/Designation of HMIS Lead (Haven for Hope)	Oversight of CTH as a Non-profit Agency
Designation/Oversight of Collaborative Applicant & CoC (CTH)	Oversight of Homelink Policies	Oversight/Designation of HMIS Vendor	Approval of Annual CTH Budgets
Approval of HUD Data Reports	Oversight Homelink Procedures		

Lived Expertise Advisory Board (LEAB)

Comprised of adults who have lived expertise in homelessness or housing insecurity, with an emphasis of those with expertise in unsheltered homelessness.

Mission

The mission of the LEAB is to advise and inform the TX-500 Continuum of Care by representing the homeless community in San Antonio.

2024 Goals

- Recruit new Members to have an entire board of 12 People and build a community presence.
- Receive Various Trainings on the Homeless Response System to provide feedback and help with a gap analysis.
- Create and implement a self-care movement plan for direct service providers.

Apply Here

Youth Action Board (YAB)

Comprised of youth and youth adults ages 17 to 25, of whom the majority must have lived expertise in homelessness or housing insecurity.

Mission

The mission of the Youth Action Board is to advise and inform on the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) planning process as a way of representing the youth homeless community in San Antonio.

2024 Goals

- Recruit new YAB Members and have a full board by the end of 2024.
- Rebuild Community presence by hosting meetings and hosting 2 events by the end of 2024.
- Receive trainings on the Homeless Response System and Youth Homeless Demonstration Program to monitor YHDP funding and give feedback to the CoC.

Apply Here

Homeless Strategic Planning Advisory Board

Purpose

- This group works to ensure alignment in Five Year Consolidated Plans and executing strategic plans related to preventing and ending homelessness in San Antonio and Bexar County.

Members

- The CoC
- The City of San Antonio
- Bexar County
- TDHCA (Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs)
- United Way

Activities

•Develop implementation goals and monitoring process for strategic plans, including the Homeless Strategic Plan
•Coordinate and regularly review performance metrics for the community, including program grantees through HUD-funded programs
•Review and revise the community's Written Standards and ensure compliance of requirements with HUD program grantees
•Review data regarding homelessness to inform policymaking
•Coordinate funding to reduce service gaps
•Share information on upcoming grant competitions, RFPs, and funding announcements

Alliance Advisory Board (Membership)

Purpose

- As outlined in the CoC Interim Rule, the CoC must convene representatives of the CoC at least semi-annually to share information, provide training opportunities, and give space to recommend coordination strategy, service gaps, and resource needs to the CoC Board of Directors committees, advertising on the CoC's website, free training, and obtaining early information such as funding opportunities.

Members

- Chair: Scott Ackerson
- Co-Chair: Nikisa Baker
- Alliance to House Everyone Agencies

Application Process

•Fill out a Membership Council Application
•A confirmation email will be promptly sent to the designated Point of Contact (POC).
•An interview will be arranged with Close to Home and the Chairs of the CoC Membership Council.
•During the interview, inquiries will focus on the agency's programs and services.
•Following the interview, the CoC Board of Directors will evaluate the application and interview details during their upcoming meeting, where a decision will be made by vote.
•Applicants will receive notification of their application status following the Board of Directors meeting.

HMIS & Data Advisory Committee

Purpose

- The purpose of the HMIS and Data Advisory Committee is to manage the strategic direction, implementation, and administration of the HMIS. This committee will oversee the CoC's strategy to collect, analyze, and report data to HUD and to the community.

Members

- Chair: Phil Beckett
- Co-Chair: Jack Tsai
- 11 Voting Committee Seats

Activities

- Recommend the HMIS Lead Agency to the CoC Board for Approval
- Provide recommendation for selection of HMIS Vendor to CoC Board for Approval
- Provide monitoring and oversight of HMIS Lead and HMIS Vendor
- Review and approve all proposed HMIS Policies and Procedures prior to CoC Full Board Approval; and
- Create a venue for regular status updates from HMIS Lead to CoC Board
- Adopt policies and procedures that set baseline requirements for compliance with HUD Data Standards for the management and operation of HMIS, including but not limited to, Privacy, Security and Data Quality Plan
- Collaborate and support HMIS activities; and Create a venue for the communication of community needs and the setting of HMIS priorities
- Provide on-going constructive feedback regarding the Tiered Priorities as they relate to all agreed upon and approved HMIS Strategies

Homeless Response System Advisory Committee

Purpose

- The purpose of HRSAC is to ensure that the local homelessness response system meets our community needs most efficiently and effectively by identifying goals that support community priorities, addressing barriers by methodically evaluating challenges and then developing and implementing solutions as well as collaborating with program vision holders to identify and discuss community efforts that will improve service and housing connections for people at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Members

- Chair: Patrick Steck
- Co-Chair: Tyler Shoesmith
- 17 Voting Committee Seats

Activities

- Implement system-level priorities for improving the homeless response system, including equitable access to housing with no barriers; rapid placement into permanent housing; quick and efficient Coordinated Entry referral process; problem-solving service and resource gaps; coordinating amongst providers and funding sources; system performance
- Review and approve communitywide, universal definitions used for the homeless response system, including the Coordinated Entry referral system, which will be reflected in local CoC policies and procedures
- Ensure client access is coordinated, including local street outreach, to ensure equitable access for all people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
- Suggest revisions to local policies and Written Standards, including Coordinated Entry, as needed to improve the homeless response system, including system performance; and more activities outlined in the CoC Governance Charter

Homeless Response System Advisory Committee Subcommittees

Youth Homelessness Subcommittee	This group is focused on addressing YYA-specific barriers and enhancing the youth and young adult homeless response system.
Information System Support Subcommittee	This group is focused on recommending system improvements and revisions to community-level workflow system requirements.
Outreach & Access Subcommittee	This group addresses gaps, barriers, and priorities regarding street outreach and emergency shelter policies, procedures, and standards.
Providers Subcommittee	This group of housing and homelessness prevention providers addresses gaps, barriers, and priorities via policies, procedures, and standards.

Homeless Response System Advisory Committee Subcommittees

Coming in 2025

Domestic Violence Subcommittee → This group will focus on addressing DV-specific barriers and enhancing the coordination with other VSPs via the homeless response system.

CE Lead Ad-hoc → This group will focus on monitoring and making recommendations to the CoC Board on the Coordinated Entry lead agency.

HMIS & Data Advisory Committee Subcommittees/Ad-Hocs

Data Integrity Subcommittee	This group is focused on overseeing the components of data quality processes within the CoC. Its primary function is to ensure that accurate and reliable data is being entered and accurately reported. Additional functions include data-sharing initiatives, data limitations, and other policy-related processes.
HMIS Vendor & Lead Monitoring Ad-Hoc	This group is focused on monitoring and making recommendations to the CoC Board on the HMIS Vendor and lead agency. Currently, the vendor is Caseworthy, and the Lead Agency is Haven for Hope.
PIT Ad-Hoc	This group is focused on developing the methodology and time for annual Point in Time (PIT) Count

HMIS & Data Advisory Committee Subcommittees /Ad-Hocs

Coming in 2025

Performance Monitoring Subcommittee

This group will focus on addressing DV-specific barriers and enhancing the coordination with other VSPs via the homeless response system.

Equity and Inclusion

- Recruitment Strategies for diverse partnerships and organizations.
- Annual Equity Analysis
- “*Nothing about us without us*” Lived Experience & Expertise

What are they doing?!?!

- Developing Community Standards, Policies, and Procedures.
- Implementing strategies to accomplish strategic plans.
- Overseeing Performance and Evaluating Outcomes

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What Are they Working On?

- Outlined in Governance Charter

  Examples: Electing Members, Term Limits, Meeting Structure

- Strategic Plans

  (*CoC Board/HSPAB)*

  - CoC Plan
  - Homeless Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County
  - CoC Plan

- Item for Committee Consideration

  (Partners/Community)

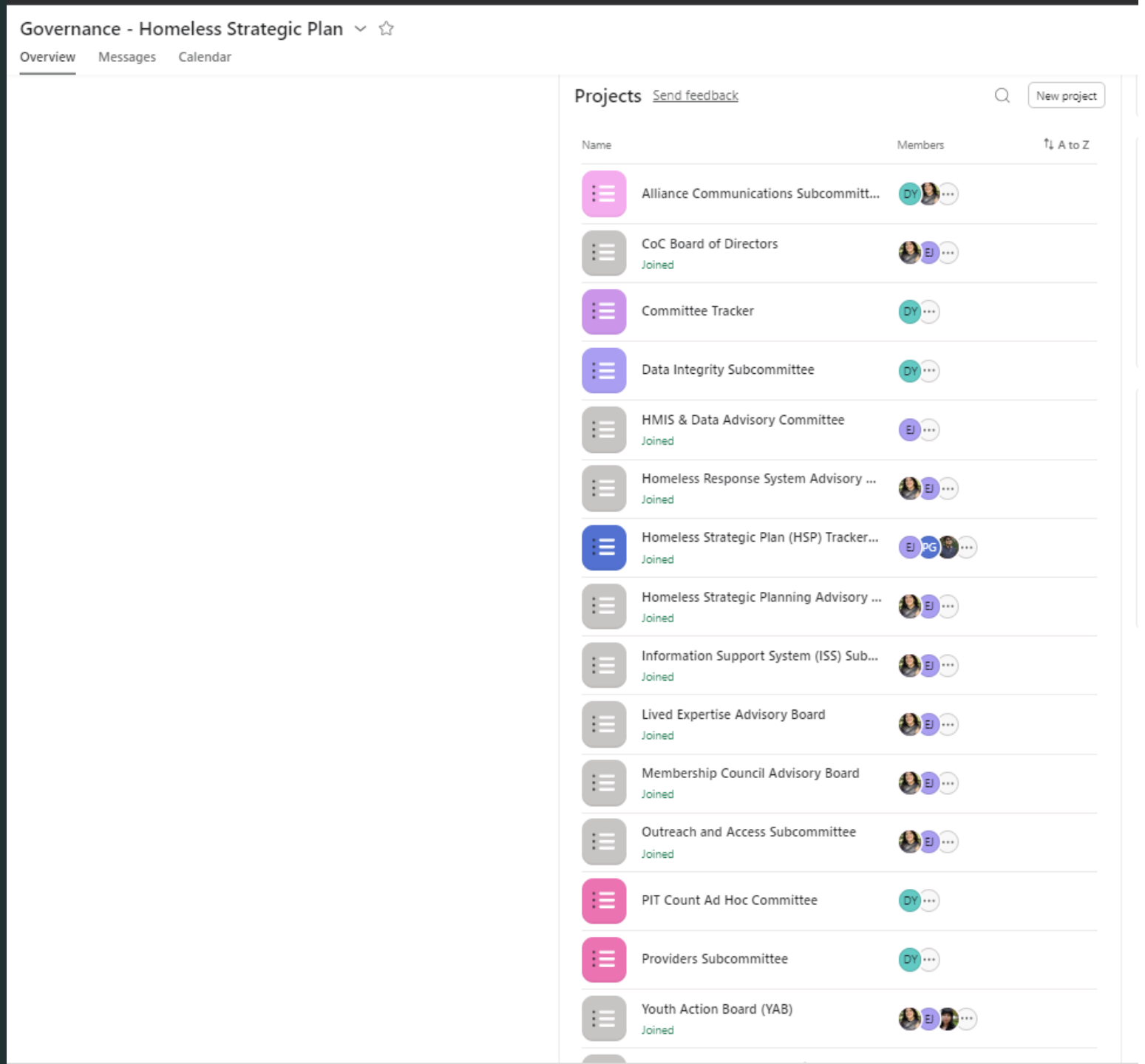
  Examples: Family Crisis, Priority Pool Composition

How Do they Work on These Things

The Problem-Solving Method

- Step I: Identify the objective *(Deep Dive to find root issues – evaluate data)*
- Step II: Identify the audience
- Step III: Evaluate the resources needed
- Step IV: Create action steps and timelines/milestones/Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Phase III: How Has Equity Been Considered in This Proposal
- Phase IV: Identify Potential Unintended Consequences
- Phase V: Input Summary, with Method and Date from Direct Users/Directly Impacted Vision Holders
- Phase VI: Input Summary, with Method and Date from Advisory Boards (LEAB/YAB)

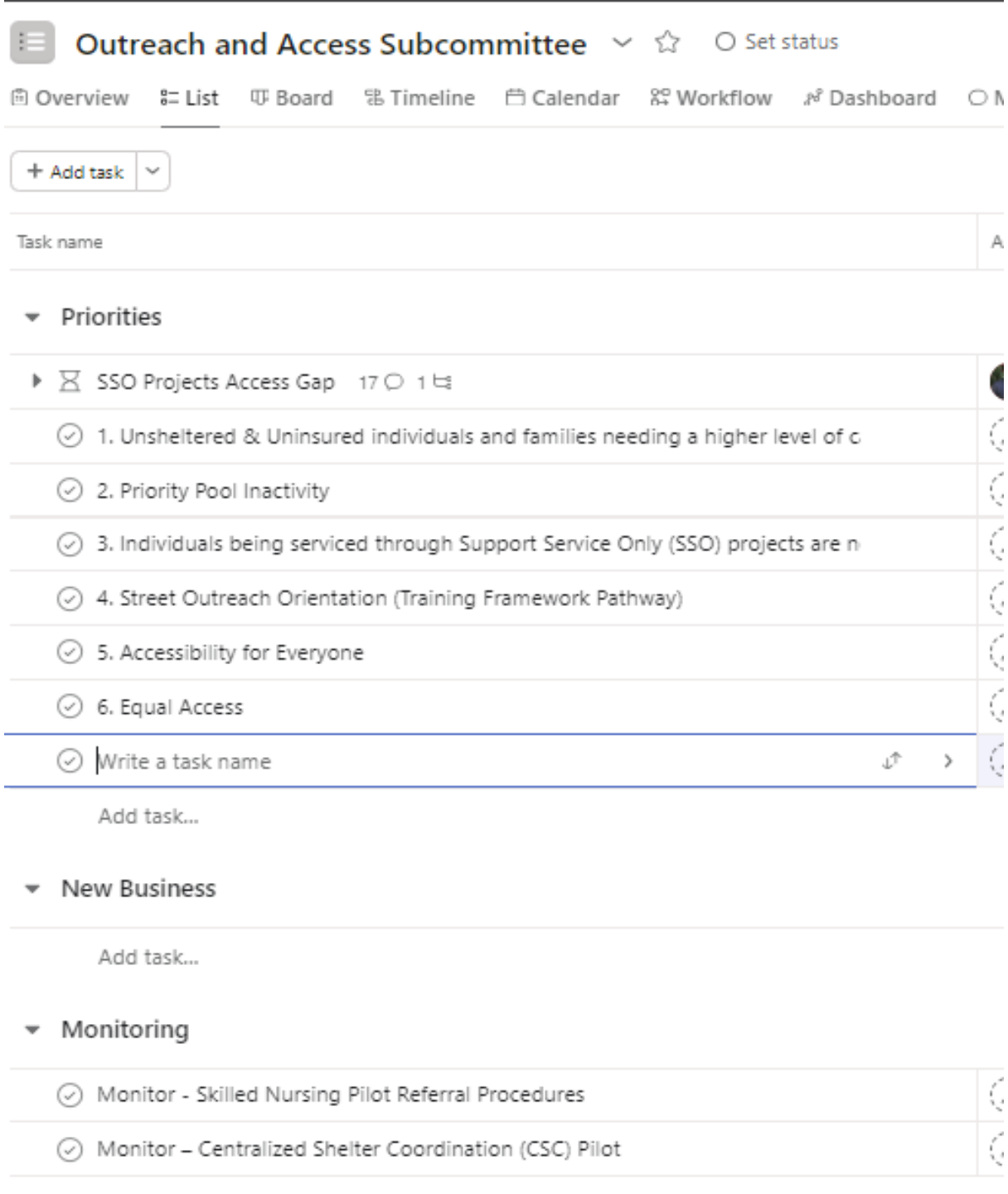
Tracking the work



Digging in & Setting Objectives

S: Specific
M: Measurable
A: Actionable/Achievable
R: Relevant/Realistic
T: Time Bond
I: Inclusive
E: Equitable

Tracking the work



Approval Process

	Policy	Procedure	Community Standard	Data Quality Plans	Strategic Plan/Community Priorities
Subcommittee	Proposes to Parent Committee	Proposes to Parent Committee	Proposes to Parent Committee	Proposes to Parent Committee	Proposes to Parent Committee
Parent Committee	Recommends to BOD	Approves	Recommends to BOD	Recommends to BOD	Recommends to BOD
Advisory Board	Recommends to BOD	Refers to Parent Committee	Recommends to BOD	Recommends to BOD	Prioritizes
The Alliance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Recommends to BOD
Board of Directors	Approves	N/A	Approves	Approves	Approves

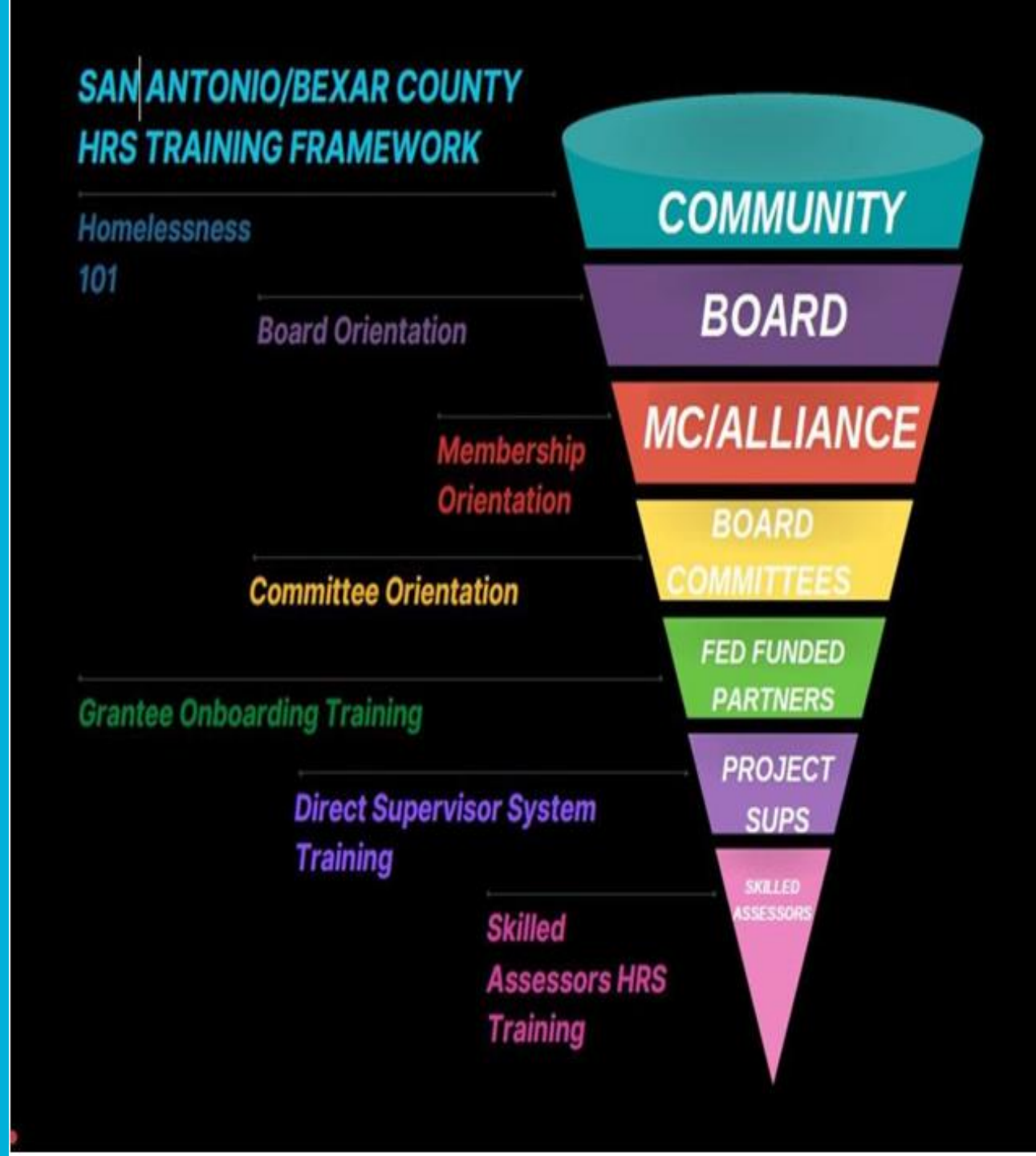
What does this look like in Practice?!?

1. Communication Strategy
2. Training
3. Performance Monitoring and Reporting
4. CQI – Continuous Quality Improvement

Communication Strategy: Awareness and Alignment

- ContantContact
- Newsletter
- Monthly Reporting
- Community Spaces (i.e., Skilled Assessors Meetings, Alliance Coordination Calls, Case Conferencing, etc.)

Alliance Training Framework



Alliance Training Portal

- Specific Trainings
- Training Pathways

Performance Monitoring & Reporting

- Homelink Performance Report
- Performance Monitoring Tools (Upcoming Monthly)
- Weekly Referral/Community Case Conferencing Reporting and Meeting

CQI/CPI

Evaluate the new policy and procedure at 3 months, 6 months, and one year.

- Did you accomplish the objective?
- Where were the challenges?
- Where did things go well?
- What does the data say?
- What does the qualitative data (from key partners, vision holders, and clients) say?

Where It Started ☺

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Thank You!

Any Questions?

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