

# QUESTIONS YOUR COMMUNITY SHOULD ANSWER TO DESIGN OR RE-DESIGN PREVENTION SERVICES

## 1. What is your mission? What do you want to accomplish? Is everyone in agreement?

- Prevent homelessness today or long-term?
- Stabilize housing in same unit (prevent mobility)?
- Reduce utilization of community crisis resources?
- Reduce homelessness in the community (system goal) vs. reduce homelessness for specific people?

## 2. What resources do you have to work with?

- What restrictions are attached to the funding?
- What is the organizational capacity to do more or to perform better or to serve differently?
- Can you get new, flexible funding to fill important gaps?
- Can you accomplish your mission with your resources?
- What compromises/changes are necessary in the mission when resources are not adequate?

## 3. Who are you targeting for intervention?

- People who are “most in need”?
- People with the best chance of success?
- Given your mission, what population should be targeted?
- Given your resources, how many can be served?

## 4. How will you find your target population?

- What stage in their lives or their homelessness, incarceration, etc?  
Early intervention, mid-stage, late?
- What geographical location? What community, what locations within that community?
- How much can you allocate for outreach to find the target population? If funds are limited, what is the most cost-effective way to locate the population?

## **5. How “deep” vs. how “wide”?**

- Will you invest a large amount per person/household, to achieve your mission (e.g. deeper subsidies, ongoing services/assistance)? Or will you invest a smaller amount per person/household and target a broader group of clients? How does this choice affect your mission?
- What is the mix of cash vs. services you want to offer? This will vary, depending on your mission and your target population.

## **6. To what extent will you use mainstream vs. homelessness-specific resources?**

- Will you add expertise to existing resources, such as employment, mental health, child protection, etc.?
- Will you create parallel specialized resources based on homelessness status? How will those coordinate with mainstream resources?
- How can you tap mainstream funding as well as specialized funding?

## **7. How will you know when you’ve accomplished your mission?**

- What will you measure?
- What are unintended consequences of the measures you select?
- How can you minimize misuse/abuse of data?
- How will you use your outcome data to improved performance?

Housing and Homeless Initiatives  
Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health  
Minneapolis, MN  
[Marge.wherley@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:Marge.wherley@co.hennepin.mn.us)  
612.348.4829