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Candidate Outcome Indicators: Transitional Housing Program

Implementing an outcome monitoring process enables organizations to track progress in achieving the program's mission. With this information, program managers can better develop budgets, allocate resources and improve their services. This document includes the following suggestions for starting or improving outcome measurement efforts:

1. **Outcome sequence chart** – *Identifies key outcomes presented in the sequence that are normally expected to occur.* The chart illustrates how one outcome leads to the next and identifies specific indicators that might be used to track each outcome. Intermediate outcomes tend to be on the left, and end (or final) outcomes are on the right. The program description at the top of the chart is meant to encompass a range of similar programs.
2. **Candidate outcome indicators** – *Lists outcomes and associated indicators as a starting point for deciding which outcomes to track.* They were chosen based on a review of the program area and consultation with program experts. Only outcome indicators are included (not physical outputs, such as number of classes held; not efficiency, such as cost per counseling session; and not organization issues, such as success in fundraising or staffing). The focus is on program beneficiaries (clients, customers, citizens, participants) and what has been accomplished for them. A data source or collection procedure is suggested for each indicator.

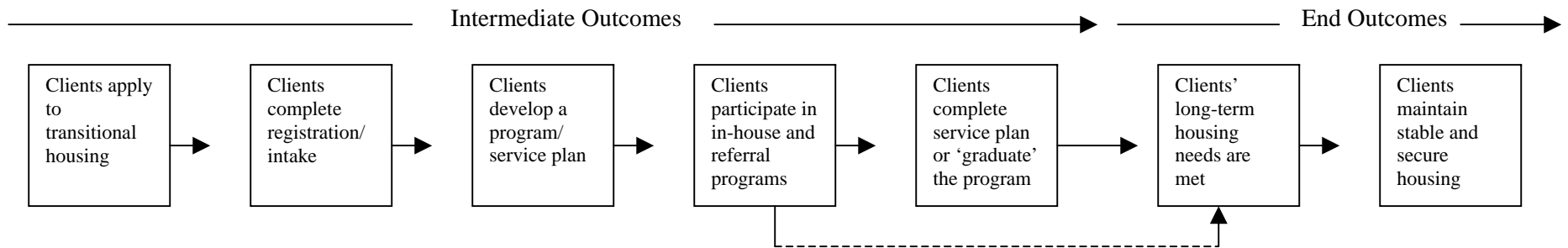
Suggestions and Limitations for Use of the Materials

- Involve others in deciding which outcomes and indicators to track. Obtain input from staff, board members, and clients. As an early step, prepare your own version of an outcome sequence chart—one that you believe fits the needs of your program.
- Review the project report for additional ideas on relevant indicators and additional resources: *Building a Common Framework to Measure Nonprofit Performance.*
- Tabulate the outcome information by various categories of clients to see if outcomes are different for different clients (e.g., gender, age group, income level, handicap level, and race/ethnicity). Use that information to help better target your efforts.
- Start with a small number of the indicators, especially if you have had only very little experience with such data collection and have very limited resources. Add more outcomes and indicators to the performance measurement system later, as you find that information is likely to be useful.
- Outcome information seldom, if ever, tells *why* the outcomes have occurred. Many internal and external factors can contribute to any outcome. Instead, use the outcome data to identify *what* works well and what does not. Use the data to determine for which *categories of clients* your procedures and policies are working well and for which they are not working well. To the extent that the program is not working as well as expected, then attempt to find out the reasons. This investigation process leads to continuous learning and program improvement.

Transitional Housing Program Description

To facilitate the movement to permanent housing of the homeless who are willing and able to work towards self-sufficiency by providing shelter and other services that may include meals, laundry, transportation, child care, and counseling/case management for housing, employment, substance abuse, public benefits, and referral to outside services. Also known as transitional shelter.

Outcome Sequence Chart



Indicators

1. Number of clients applying for transitional housing during the reporting period.

2. Number and percent of new clients accepted for services during the reporting period.

3. Number and percent of households/persons in transitional housing during the reporting period.

4. Number and percent of clients who have met with counselor/case manager and developed a treatment/service plan within X days of entry.

5. Number and percent of clients who, as a result of their service plan, participate in supportive services (in-house or by referral) within X days of entry.

6. Number and percent of clients in need of mental health/addiction treatment who enter into such treatment within X days of entry.

7. Number and percent of clients who complete service plan/shelter program.

8. Number and percent of clients who move to long-term housing within 24 months of entry.

9. Number and percent of clients who maintain safe and permanent housing for six months or more.

10. Number and percent of clients who do not re-enter the homeless system within one year of obtaining permanent housing.

Participant satisfaction

Satisfaction with program services is an outcome that occurs within almost every program area, yet does not necessarily have a sequential placement. The indicator may be: Number and percent of clients satisfied with transitional housing programs and services.

Sources Consulted: Developing Community-wide Outcome Indicators for Specific Services by Hatry and Lampkin (2003); Volunteers of America National Program Outcome Measures and Program Standards FY 2005 (Volunteers of America, 2004); Core Performance Indicators for Homeless-Serving Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by Trutko and Barnow (2003).

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING						
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	Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Notes	Outcome Stage
1	Increased Applications	Clients apply to transitional housing.	Number of new clients applying for transitional housing during the reporting period.	Internal program records See Note #1.		Intermediate
2	Increased Enrollment	Clients complete registration/intake.	Number of new clients accepted for services during the reporting period.	Internal program records See Note #1.		Intermediate
3	Increased Enrollment	Clients complete registration/intake.	Number of new households/ persons enrolling in transitional shelter during the reporting period.	Internal program records See Note #1.		Intermediate
4	Improved Participation	Clients develop a program/service plan.	Number and percent of clients who have met with counselor/case manager and developed a treatment/recovery/ service plan with in X days of entry.	Internal program records		Intermediate
5	Improved Participation	Clients participate in in-house and referral programs.	Number and percent of clients who, as a result of their service plan, participate in supportive services (in-house or by referral to community resources) within X days of entry.	Internal program records	Community resources may include housing assistance, job assistance, behavioral health assistance (substance abuse/mental health treatment), primary health assistance/medical treatment.	Intermediate
6	Improved Participation	Clients participate in in-house and referral programs.	Number and percent of clients in need of mental health/ addiction treatment who enter into such treatment within X days of shelter entry.	Internal program records		Intermediate
7	Improved Program Completion	Clients complete service plan or "graduate" the program.	Number and percent of households/persons who complete the service plan/shelter program.	Internal program records	Graduate means clients complete the shelter program that assists them in moving to stable housing.	Intermediate

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	Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Notes	Outcome Stage
8	Attain Stable and Secure Housing	Clients long-term housing needs are met.	Number and percent of clients who moved to safe (see notes) and permanent housing defined as rental house or apartment, public housing, Section 8 housing, Shelter Plus Care housing, homeownership, moving in with family or friends within 24 months of program entry.	Internal program records	Safe housing means a place of residence which provides access to trash removal, cooking facilities, heat and running water, and in which the individual has not experienced (had a confirmed incidence of) abuse/neglect or experienced other serious safety risks.	End
9	Maintain Stable and Secure Housing	Clients maintain stable and secure housing.	Number of clients who obtain safe and permanent housing within 24 months of program entry and maintain that housing for 6 months or more.	Internal program records/Survey of clients	See indicator 8 for definitions of 'safe' and 'permanent' housing.	End
10	Maintain Stable and Secure Housing	Clients maintain stable and secure housing.	Number and percent of clients who do not re-enter the homeless system within one year of obtaining permanent housing.	Internal program records/Survey of clients	Program may want to break out those who completed the program vs. those who did not for indicators 8-10.	End
Note #1: Breakouts by household size and severity of household barriers to permanent housing are likely to make the information from this indicator more useful.						
Sources Consulted:						
Hatry, Harry and Linda Lampkin, <i>Developing Community-wide Outcome Indicators for Specific Services</i> (2003)						
Volunteers of America, <i>Volunteers of America National Program Outcome Measures and Program Standards FY 2005</i> (2004)						
Trutko, John and Burt Barnow, <i>Core Performance Indicators for Homeless-Serving Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</i> (2003)						