

RRH Roundtable Series Session 4

Rapid Exit Session

0:00:00.2 Kira Zylstra: Welcome in everyone. Welcome. We will give it a moment as folks join into the section. We are glad you are here. Welcome back for those who have been a part of the discussion series already, we are in week four of a five-week rapid re-housing Roundtable Series, and really glad that we continue to see such an amazing turnout. Yes, happy February 22nd, I didn't even think about that date. We've had a pretty packed room every week, and I can already see us taking right up to that meeting cap, so we're glad you made it in for those... As you're joining in, just a reminder that we do have the recordings available, and we'll make the recording, this session and our next final session available on the HUD Exchange, we'll make sure to share some links for you. But really glad to see you all here again. Give me just a moment as we fill up the room. A happy Tuesday everyone. Welcome, welcome. I see folks coming from all over...

0:01:26.9 Michael Raposa: Well, if they got in, there's only a thousand places for 2300 people wanting in, so if you got in, you're one of the lucky ones.

0:01:35.4 KZ: That's right. I saw a note about no recording, so we will make sure to put the links in the chat, the recording should be available for the previous three sessions, and yes, we will be posting the recordings for today and for the final session next week as well. And I think numbers are taken up, I will go ahead and welcome everybody, and again, this is the fourth of a five-week series on rapid re-housing, and this is a discussion series, we don't have a presentation for you, we're just gonna talk about rapid re-housing and our experiences and today's focused on rapid exit and rapid resolution strategies. And just as a reminder about the series, our final session is next week, so do continue to tune in and tune in early knowing that we've had a lot more demand than we have capacity in the room for, but next week will be the final session. We're inviting back all the panelists from the previous sessions to really tie the conversations together, talk about some of the themes that have lifted up and talk about innovation and Rapid Re-Housing, why we need to continue to innovate and what that means.

0:02:52.6 KZ: What does rapid re-housing in the future need to look like? And how do we strive for that? So we are eager to be continuing the conversation with you all, and again, for folks just jumping on, we do have recordings from the previous sessions posted on the HUD Exchange, and we'll be posting the recording from today, and then of course, when we complete next week as well. So welcome in. Great to see you all here. I think we'll go ahead and get started. One clear take away I just wanna name from these conversations is that there is a ton of interest in having these discussions and really just having some real talk about rapid re-housing and the challenges that we face, the challenges that just continue to compound in our communities. And we can't cover all things in 90 minutes, I just wanna name that as we begin, there is no one solution and there's plenty to talk about. We do encourage your questions, please use the question and answer function, Q&A function to post your questions for the panelists for the group that you're hearing from today, and again, we won't be able to get to all those questions, but we definitely wanna hear them and lift up as many as we can in this space. So remember questions to the Q&A, the chat, continue to use to share your comments, share resources with one another, there's been some great dialogue in the chat every week as well, and we really appreciate everyone's participation and engagement.

0:04:21.8 KZ: So welcome in, and we're gonna start just with some introductions and myself, I will begin with. My name is Kira Zylstra. I use she/her pronouns. I'm based in Seattle, Washington, and I work for ICF as a HUD technical assistance provider, and I'll help to facilitate today's conversation, and we're gonna go around and do introductions of our panelists today, asking folks to

share their name, their pronouns, the community that you work and live in... And I'm asking the folks to share, and I think this is a repeat from our very first session, but it's a great way to get to know each other a little bit better, just share one word or phrase that describes the energy or approach that you bring to ending homelessness, and I will share for myself a word that comes to mind for me is curiosity. I know that I don't have all the answers, and I continuously learn from those around me, and the only way that we can really better understand what we need to do and how we need to respond in our communities and in our work is with curiosity and asking what folks need, what we're doing right? What we need to change. So I try to continue to bring in curiosity in my work. And that was much more than one word, but I'm not a good model of this, but I'll let others chime in. So Michael, do you wanna go next and introduce yourself.

0:05:45.7 MR: Unmute. Hey, everybody. I'm Michael Raposa, I am the CEO with the St. Vincent de Paul CARES. My pronouns are he and him. And St. Vincent de Paul CARES does rapid re-housing services along the west coast of Florida, just South of Ocala, about halfway down, all the way down through Collier County. We work with 16 separate counties in 10 separate continuum of CARES in our community, and we're currently maintaining about a 1250 to 1300 open case load for rapid re-housing clients at the agency. And the one word that I use is zeal, and a lot of people consider me a real pain in the ass when I come into a room, and especially when I see systems or see things that are not in the best interest of the client, but I think that the word zeal, a great energy and a level of enthusiasm and pursuit for the cause, which my cause in my life is ending homelessness.

0:06:55.9 KZ: Thanks so much, Michael. I'm glad your zeal is here. Todd, how about you?

0:07:04.0 Todd Walker: Hello everyone. I'm Todd Walker, Executive Director with Judeo-Christian Outreach Center in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Pronouns are he and him. We provide a variety of services from day support emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and of course, rapid re-housing. We also provide a variety of services to combat hunger as well in our programs. My word probably would be empowerment. Empowerment means to invest. I think it's important to not only invest in your staff, but your clients and your community as well, and with this being Black History Month, I will share one of my favorite quotes that I utilize every day when I come to work, by Maya Angelou, and that's "nothing works unless you do." And so when I come, my approach is to turn every stone to help provide a solution for the person going through homelessness or dealing with food insecurity.

0:08:04.6 KZ: Thanks so much, Todd. Alisha?

[foreign language]

0:08:09.5 Alisha Gehlert: So I'm Red Lake Band of Ojibwe, that's my tribe and so I always take the opportunity when I can to present myself in the language. My name is Alisha Gehlert. I use she/her pronouns, I'm the Vice President of Operations for the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center. We're based out of Minneapolis, but we serve primarily the seven metro counties within Minnesota, but we can offer services across the entirety of the state as well. I know that you guys said one word or one phrase, but one thing that I try to bring with me every day is the seven grandfathers teachings, so that's humility, bravery, honesty, wisdom, truth, respect and love. And so with that approach to everything, we can kind of make some big changes.

0:09:09.4 KZ: Thank you so much, Alisha. Much more than one word and I'm glad. Thank you for sharing that. Mikaela, how about you?

0:09:18.8 Mikaela Lanford: Sure. Hi, my name is Mikaela Lanford, I am the Program Manager at Your Way Home in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. We're a suburb right outside of Philadelphia. And technically, I also work for the Office of Housing Community Development, we're kind of the lead CoC agency, and I am our program manager for our housing and homeless services program, so all of our client-facing Rapid Re-Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Emergency Shelter programming, I use she/her pronouns, and my word is consistency. I want to help everybody, and I have to remind myself that I need to be consistent and I need to apply policy evenly. And I need to know people I can help, but I need to be consistent in the way that I help otherwise, my heart gets too big for my brain.

0:10:13.5 KZ: Thank you, Mikaela, and Denise.

0:10:18.8 Denise Neunaber: Good afternoon. I'm Denise Neunaber. I work with Redesign Collaborative, and we are a really small group that we've recently formed to embed ourselves with other teams, we love working with other teams and working towards a new system and re-designing systems. Currently doing most of my work in North Carolina with the State of North Carolina with their ESG-CV funding and building and re-housing system. I use she/her pronouns. And the word that I came to was solutionist. So I love to solve problems. I love being part of a team that's solving problems, I love being focused on the solution, and for me, really at almost 20 years of working in homelessness, housing continues to be the solution that I wanna work on. So I also wanna join Todd with a quote you inspired me, you know, I think my favorite quote is John Lewis "Get in good trouble." so I think I would pair solutionist with get in good trouble.

0:11:21.5 KZ: I love that. Thank you, Denise, I really appreciate you all sharing a little bit about yourselves. And I love to lean into the conversation a little bit starting with just what we're discussing today. So today's session is about rapid exit and rapid resolution, and we use a lot of jargon in our world, and sometimes the words mean different things in different places, so the first question I wanna pose to you all is just why talk about rapid exit in the context of rapid re-housing and what does that mean to you and how have you embraced rapid exit strategies? I think I'll turn to Mikaela first, if you wouldn't mind.

0:12:00.5 ML: Absolutely. Rapid exit is actually a really sort of a pivotal piece of our understanding of rapid re-housing, it feeds into the mission statement of our entire agency, which is that we would like to make homelessness rare, brief and one-time only. We wanna make sure that people who experience homeless aren't homeless for long and they're only homeless one time, so we abide by a model of providing services that people need when they need them, if they need less service, we will get them less. If they need more services, we will give them more services, and it's all under the same umbrella of rapid re-housing, but we have sort of developed a system-wide program, we call it Rapid Re-Housing lite, which is essentially just moving fees. Unless you enroll a household in Rapid re-housing, you have to get an inspection and do all of the HUD mandated requirements, but it doesn't have that ongoing case management piece for your households who don't need that much help, who they just need some... Get them up off their feet and they can maintain on their own, so we saw a way to help further our mission and not give people more than they need to help them be successful and feel independent on their own. It's very sort of ingrained in what we do all across every facet of our system.

0:13:24.8 KZ: Excellent, thanks for sharing that, Mikaela. Others wanna share how your approach to rapid exit might be a little different, or what resonates with you and what Mikaela said.

0:13:39.9 TW: Mikaela, so the funding that you're using for lite, is that coming from the grant, where the case management could be there if necessary?

0:13:51.1 ML: Correct.

0:13:52.8 TW: Okay.

0:13:53.8 ML: Lite is essentially an opportunity for a household who doesn't need long-term assistance, for lack of a more efficient way to bypass our waitlist, and we can provide moving funding, and it's all funded the same way your normal rapid re-housing programs are funded, but you're just giving that household what they need, and you're able to give them what they need more quickly, because you don't have to also supply case management and you don't have to supply rental assistance, you're able to just, Here's money, move into a house, pay a rent on your own, and then you can move on to the next household in need.

0:14:34.5 TW: That's a good approach, we're actually doing that too, but we've never called it rapid re-housing lite. I think we're doing it in the sense that we're bringing in faith-based organizations, because you have a lot of faith-based institutions that wanna help but may not know how to do it, and so we've kind of been the... We're the go between... As far as between the client and the faith base to provide us with the funding, and then we provide that light touch, whether it's a security deposit, first month's rent to get more movement, especially for individuals that may not score high enough to get referred to rapid re-housing in our coordinated entry process, so I guess we may need to add rapid re-housing light too.

0:15:21.8 ML: All in a name.

0:15:23.0 TW: But I do think it's extremely... And I went out [0:15:26.9] ____ and I think it's extremely helpful in helping people move, because I think one of the things that we've seen on our end is when we let them know... Let our clients know our class know that that funding would be available, it motivates some of them to actually go out and find some of the housing on their own, and then we just have to come through to just inspect, make sure the lease is right and make sure the property is livable before we cut the check to be able to move them in.

0:15:56.5 MR: And I think that it's a stroke of brilliance, because one of the things that the pandemic... There's a lot of gifts that the pandemic has brought us, but one of the things that the pandemic has kind of forced us to do is to figure out solutions for people who are experiencing situational poverty versus generational poverty, and the homeless solutions for those that are experiencing generational poverty, and for clarity, what I mean is that the client is living in poverty, their parents have lived in poverty, and their grandparents in all likelihood lived in poverty, and it's that third generation of systemic dependence that we're dealing with. But when the pandemic happened, and the moratorium happened, and all of these people were out of work, and all of these people were not paying rent, and all of these people were facing eviction, a lot of the systems where we were, were saying, They're all going to show up at the homeless shelter, and I kept saying, No, they're not, and they're not, because those that grow up... Experience in situational poverty have a

different resolution opportunity than those that grew up in generational poverty.

0:17:13.8 MR: And the way that they are approaching it in Pennsylvania, to separate those and almost in a way, filter those off of the whole nine yards of the system is really important because if we burdened our case loads and our high intensive care case loads, when we were prepping for this, I really went away and reflected on it a lot, and it's not unlike an emergency room uses emergency room lite or fast care or rapid care through the emergency room, where they go to a back of the house, but they don't go to that back of the house that has the heart attacks and the bleeding and the chest pains, and the high trauma unit, they go to like the runny nose in the flu unit. And so I think the systems across the country, we can begin to develop these strategies. You don't need a full-blown RRH process For people that don't need a full-blown RRH process. And we have to figure out a way to gather that information and triage that at the front door. Good job...

0:18:26.0 KZ: I hear what you all describing is a triage type approach, and I'm curious, and I think we've already got some questions about what does that mean in relation to coordinated entry and who is getting served, how do you determine that this is the needed approach, and how do you utilize an equity lens when embracing this type of approach, especially with that, the question about coordinated entry and who is served in this manner.

0:18:58.5 DN: I think so far, it's interesting to hear, and everybody really talk about also rapid exit as an approach, not just its own program, and I think rapid exit is really something that has been developed because our work, we have been yearning for something that goes faster than rapid re-housing that you don't have to wait and what we've... Which is a shame, there's nothing that says that Rapid Re-Housing can't work for everyone, in fact, I've seen lots of data that shows that it can work, but what we're seeing is people at coordinated entry be placed into buckets and ending up waiting. I think that's really where a lot of the rapid exit started to be again, was, Well, we know you've got to wait for 45 days or 60 days for rapid re-housing.

0:19:44.3 DN: So what else could we do? And I think, you know what really shifted for me was our state experience to hurricane, and working in the disaster space just shifted my whole thinking about how we have created programs and really siloed programs, and so I think it was different in that we had one shelter where we actually...

0:20:11.3 DN: Had several shelters across the state, but when you think about it, it's just this disaster shelter that has been set up where people have had to evacuate, they come into shelter, most people are able to leave on their own, they're able to either go back to the housing that they were in, go back to a situation that they could make work, or to Michael's point, really have other options to piece something together to go back to another living situation, and of course, we have folks who are pre-disaster homeless, they'd been experiencing homelessness before the disaster, and it was just a really different mindset, I think, because we didn't decide that we'd already tried other options and we couldn't try Rapid Re-Housing, we used a rapid re-housing approach, and we were really intentional about just saying it's an approach without the boxes that...

0:20:56.3 DN: A lot of our federal funding comes in of you have to have a particular living situation or meet a particular definition, but it all just boiled down to... And that's what I hear other folks talking about too, is it all just boils down to financial assistance, what kind of financial assistance do you need to help take care of maybe past debt, financial assistance to help you get into a unit, deposit, whether it's pet deposit or security deposit or maybe some financial incentives,

something that I can help you get past a barrier that you're facing in the system, like a criminal background check, how do I use an incentive to help get past that criminal background check. Or... And then, of course, ongoing rent, ongoing rental assistance is a huge piece, and when I look at our system, I think everyone that's coming in contact with our system could use some type of rental assistance. I hope that we are moving towards universal housing vouchers. I'm really excited about that prospect. I think that would change our work across the board, but it's really that financial assistance, housing navigation, Can I help you find a unit? And what I hear the three of you talking about is that some folks don't need us to them a unit they can find a unit on their own, and we saw that in the disaster shelter too, where Red Cross was willing to say, here's the money for a deposit.

0:22:13.6 DN: Go use it on an apartment, and then of course, the support and services, and so when I think about all of our programs and all of the silos we create, whether it's, I'm gonna help you with homeless prevention or I'm gonna help you with diversion or rapid exit... Rapid Re-Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing. To me, I've really started to think about that differently and that they're all some combination, of financial assistance, housing navigation, and those support services, and ones that I can ratchet up the intensity or watch it down the intensity with the need, so just thinking about it really differently, than thinking at the assessment will know what people need, but really problem-solving along the way.

0:22:53.7 MR: So one of the questions that I saw in the chat that I was... In the Q&A that I thought was great, how do you get to the point that you identify these people, and of course, if you only have a singular list for RRH, how are you gonna jump through the first 2200 people to get the 2201, which is... What the answer is for communities is we really have to look at coordinated entry and need to look at the screening process at the front door as people are coming in, and questions need to be asked like What do you need? And we run shelter services, and we... Over the years, we've come across a lot of people that have income but are in shelter, have jobs but are in shelter, would like to get out of shelter, they just need that connectivity for perhaps the bridge out of the front door of the shelter to get themselves into a unit, maybe a little bit of help in security deposit, and they even have the means to pick up the rent, but our community for the longest time has been handicapped with the ability to rapidly pull these people out of the system.

0:24:01.4 MR: And so the answer to the question about how to triage, is we've gotta get more multi-faceted, there should not be one BNL, and if communities are doing that, and you're gonna start to add... Programs are gonna target specific populations, this is an easy one to do, is to designate a piece of funding that could rapidly move them out, establish your local criteria to get them to that point. And then maybe at that point in time, it's a first come first serve, 'cause they were all gonna be kind of light and easy and equal, but maybe it's just a first come for serve process and see how many... And that would up your discharges from shelters, so system performance measures people listen carefully, you would be discharging a department at housing out of shelter within a matter of a day, two days or four days, and think about what that could do to your system performance measures.

0:24:52.3 ML: First time perspective, I was pulling our data in preparation for this meeting, and in 2021, 20% of our street outreach cases were exited from the program without any ongoing assistance or intervention of any kind, just utilizing sort of those self-identification conversations and diversion conversations and having the resources available for, if you find an apartment that you can afford, we can get you into that apartment. 21 in 5 of our street outreach cases we were able to resolve in some way or another without ongoing help, so it does work, it's just... You have to do

it. All of our shelters, also emergency shelters, also know about this program, so as they're doing housing-focused case management, if they're working with people who know like, Hey, I can pay a rent on an apartment, I just need help moving in, they can reach out to our rapid providers who can then set up, get all the paperwork and the inspection done and everything, so yeah, it is really important that it's a coordinated entry all through your entire system approach, that everybody sort of knows what the expectations are and what's available, and you're able to kind of roll this out from the bottom up is important so that everybody is able to provide input and help and direction for those in need.

0:26:23.2 KZ: Alicia, I saw you nodding and coming off mute. You wanna add something?

0:26:28.1 AG: Yeah, I was just gonna say, I think I'm in a little bit different of a situation than some of the other panelists because I work for a smaller community, culturally specific based non-profit, and so one of that kind of luxuries that we get afforded is that we can usually acquire funds that are a little less restrictive maybe, than what some of your other larger system providers may have, and so what we've kind of done is we've tried to partner with different county entities, city entities, other non-profits, and really just kinda get the word out that we have some of these resources available, and so to the same point that some of the other panelists have made that we've had individuals come in one day in our shelter environment and our out in housing the next day. So it can happen, and it's always nice when it does, 'cause you definitely don't want those situations to be prolonged or those experiences for the people that are experiencing them so...,

0:27:35.4 KZ: Thanks, Alicia. You raise a really great point about leveraging the strengths of different organizations and entities in the community, that sometimes it can be seen and can be experienced as being really difficult to be a small organization because of capacity challenges and being under-resourced, but yet you bring a very particular strength that when leveraged with the organizations that may have a lot of more mainstream resources, that's a good partnership and connection.

0:28:03.2 KZ: All of what I'm hearing takes a lot of flexibility and nimbleness, and I'm curious about the strategies that you all use that help you embrace that and the things that might make it difficult as well, but how do you... How do you work on that?

0:28:21.0 DN: I think I have started to think about what we can offer differently, so I said this a little bit before of the siloed programs, I see it become a problem that we create multiple by name lists or that we create scores and buckets, and you have to wait for a particular thing, because we haven't right sized the system, we don't have enough case management, we haven't been able to scale up even with additional resources, we're still really struggling to meet the need. And so one of the things that I think about is, I have two restaurant analogies, one is thinking about coordinated entry as I'm a hostess at a restaurant, and I have to make sure that everyone is seated, and I have to make sure that there's gonna be wait staff to come and take their order, and so there's things that we can do, and I think we're doing that with rapid exit of speeding up the service where we just...

0:29:19.9 DN: What we're delivering is not a fine dining meal, we're now doing some hamburger and fries or something. Something very quick. But when I think about... So one thing I'm thinking about how do we deliver these services and the assistance that people need, and then I'm also just thinking about how do we even think about our menu. So when we think about... Mostly when we start to look at HUD money and VA money and other sources of money, we start to see, okay, what

are eligible activities in this, and I think we kind of stop at rapid re-housing or permanent supportive housing or transitional housing. And emergency shelter, we stop at that, and I think if we go one level deeper and deconstruct, what do those things mean? It might mean a temporary stay, it might mean a security deposit, it might mean financial... Ongoing financial assistance, low intensity case management, high intensity case... But it's all the same things that we group into these different program umbrellas. Now, what's difficult is when we group it into these program umbrellas, we start to think in that way that people need rapid re-housing or they need permanent supportive housing, when really when you boil it down, people need help locating a unit, people need money to get into the unit, [chuckle] and to keep the unit and need various types of services, but everything is access to affordable housing, appropriate services and supports and adequate income.

0:30:49.1 DN: So for me, I think when I think about being nimble, I think instead of saying, I'm gonna give you these packaged meals, like a burger and fries and a salad with grilled chicken, I might say, No, I wanna do more a la carte, so we can meet people where they're at and meet their needs. So for a lot of people, burgers and fries is a good meal, but some people may want burgers and broccoli or... I will admit, I like fries sometimes when I order a salad, but it is thinking about it just a little bit differently to mix it up but really also get back to basics of the ingredients, not the full umbrella and package that we package it in for funding, it's been, I think we really... We've oriented our system towards funding and ease of administration instead of what people need, and what people need is financial assistance, housing navigation, those supportive services, how can we re-orient our system to what people need.

0:31:53.5 AG: I just wanna say, Denise, I love that you use the restaurant analogy because we've started using that in our agency as well, so we call it buffet style though, so then people get to pick and choose, but a la carte it's all kind of synonymous. So I think that's great, and I think for us, what we try to really focus on too is like what you're saying, like why are we trying to silo these services when they all kind of boils down to the same needs, and so it's cross-training staff sometimes staff are working within different systems or across the different funding agencies that we may have received funding from.

0:32:35.1 AG: Sometimes we have people who work in totally different departments and we just collaborate as much as possible just to stop that kind of run around or the siloed approach for even accessing services, other places, and I think as much as we can try to be person-centered, it's just important because it's one gonna keep the person in the unit for longer if somebody doesn't have access to housing that they actually want, you're not... You could have somebody fill out a housing that would have otherwise stayed if they were in a different unit, in a geographical area that they wanna be, in an apartment that has their one amenity that is really critical to them wanting to stay in. I think sometimes that fails to be seen by the system, that choice is highly important for every person that we're trying to exit from a shelter or from unsheltered homelessness in other forms. And that's kind of one of the things that I see a lot. I'm sure you guys do too.

0:33:42.2 ML: I love that because you're also... I think you're also describing the dynamic system that we need to have, that you don't end up in one program, and that's it with a problem with silos, if you're not doing that collaboration like you are across your team, then you get stuck in a silo, not only do you first get put into it, but you get stuck there, whereas I know a lot of us are thinking about ESGV money, and not only are we thinking about spending it and using it to the best of its ability to give people housed but we're also thinking about it ending, and what does it mean for people who have... Who maybe need something to continue, and I've started to see with some folks

in the program, as we are looking at deadlines start to go out, I'm not sure if I wanna put this household into this program because I think they're gonna need more than the eight months we can give them at this point, and really that's on us for designing funding streams that way, we should be thinking about how do we pair that with something else, and I know...

0:34:43.5 DN: I respect all of the funding streams and how we got here, and I remember when we didn't have rapid rehousing, but we've also created some barriers, and I think if we think creatively, what I've been enjoying is thinking creatively about how do we pair these things up so for instance, that dynamic piece that you were talking about, we've now got a rapid re-housing program, we actually called it a rapid re-housing approach because we are using ESGV for both homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing, but we're doing the same thing for everyone. It's really not people who are in leases, that's been an easier divider for us, people who are in a lease that you wanna keep them in a lease and people who need help getting into a lease, but we've been really serving that precariously housed, trying to keep them out of shelter, or folks that are going in and out because... How do you guys must have these... The ones that are in the shelter one night, three nights later, they're on somebody's couch, they don't qualify for rapid re-housing so we're using this rapid re-housing approach serving everyone, including some of the higher... The folks that are facing higher barriers, but we know we have to have an exit ramp.

0:35:56.6 DN: So we've just started to partner with the emergency housing vouchers, and really, I don't know if it's... We just started in the last month, but we put no judgment on it, just a time of if you've received rapid re-housing for 10 months or more, and it looks like you're not gonna be able to pay next month's rent, you're eligible to be referred over to that, EHP, it's just the idea of time that we've tried, and that's what I've heard Michael and Makaila and Todd, you guys talk about too, like get these solutions to people and see what works, and it really is about get solutions to people, see, offer the rental assistance. And see if they're able to find a place on their own, and if for those that aren't, that's where we spend our staff time, we don't spend our staff time on folks that have scored in, but just starting to try it, which was so different that was just so different in the disaster that we really just... Everyone was offered the same thing, and you see people really... Like you were saying, Makaila where you can see 20%... Really, what they need is that financial assistance, they don't need the staff time, I think we could probably break out different groups, you all could probably help me do that, break out the different groups of when we finally get down to a 10% or 15% that really do need that high intensity services, and the longer term Permanent Supportive Housing approach.

0:37:22.4 TW: I think as agencies we're required to be creative and innovative just because we're at a point now where we need coordinated entry, we need the system, but we know the system is not gonna meet all of the needs of the people that we're serving. It's one of the reasons why I started to think about, okay, you know, sometimes when you write grants to some of these foundations, they're asking you, What for. But I always felt like if I asked for the money to go specifically to help people get into housing, it'll be an easier sell, if it's not going toward staffing where you can utilize maybe some of your ESG or your HUD funding to cover your staffing there, and then just have that extra pot of money to be able to help individuals, not just either... And sometimes it's not even just a security deposit and first month's rent, we might have helped you with that, and then eight months later you're struggling financially, and then you may be able to tap back into that [0:38:20.3] ___ funds because we don't have the restrictions that you would have with the grant, because somebody is asked to have to be in your program, that gives you the flexibility to be able to do those things, 'cause we also tie that into getting your identification or birth certificates or other

things that you'll need to be able to access the housing in most cases, and then also employment as well, to be able to maintain the housing long-term, and that's...

0:38:49.5 TW: Shared housing is one of the... One of the things we utilize to get people in housing because we knew you're not gonna be able to go out and just create affordable housing all over the place, and Virginia Beach, this is a military area, so the cost of living is much higher probably than it would be in some other areas. And we just saw that, okay, we can take current inventory and create more inventory by doing the shared housing piece, and so as we began to engage the landlords and we did it in a variety of ways, that could be me just going out and speaking and just kind of putting it out there that if you're a landlord, you can actually be a part of somebody's solution to end their homelessness, and I've got many landlords that way, and we've also done engagement meetings where we've had landlords come in, and they wanna be a part of it, of course.

0:39:40.5 TW: They're looking at the check as a part of it, you gotta dangle the carrot to bring them in, but I think once we brought in former clients that had been in... And landlords that we have been working with long term, that was the biggest sell of all to new potential landlords was hearing how the landlords just felt proud that they were able to help people get back on their feet and be able to begin that healing process because really when you're working with clients, I've doing this for a long time, the healing doesn't start until you get into housing, that's when the healing starts. Running an emergency shelter, we made mistakes for years, trying to force people to go into classes and all kind of stuff, but you're trying to teach somebody money management, they don't have a job yet.

0:40:26.4 TW: And their biggest need hadn't been addressed, you know what I mean? So we just felt you gotta have, as Alisha said, a buffet of options to be able to have people pick from, get them in, and we've seen a ton of success with shared housing, putting the leases on rooms versus just one lease and then having a shared common space and then private space as far as their bedrooms as well, and tie in the utility stuff. Now funny story, we didn't do the utilities back in 2015, we kept those in the client's name... What a mistake. Everything was getting cut off. And so we learned from that to now tie in the utilities with the rent, and we've just seen it work long-term, so a lot of people... And also with people who score a low PSA, and I bring up scores a lot because our court, and I know everybody is different around the country, but we utilize us for that to kinda help guide housing solutions for individuals that come into the system. So those that are scoring that low PSA, we all know generally, if your inventory is low, where are they gonna get housed?

0:41:36.4 TW: You know what I mean? They're not gonna get that PSH call, but now I think our CoC has taken the lead as far as wanting to see if we can do some of those low PSH and rapidly re-house them, but also keep them on some of those voucher lists that they're on, so they can kind of maintain their status, so if their name comes up and we've seen that be a solution, and it works as well.

0:42:03.7 KZ: Thanks, Todd. I'm curious about how we find this balance when we're talking about these refer interventions that may not carry long-term support, but knowing the importance of relationship, you've all talked about the partnership and the community connections, and I saw in the chat the issues of generational poverty being raised here. How do these things play with one another and how do we really remain person centered and equity focused when only offering in these instances more brief and short-term assistance?

0:42:42.1 AG: Well, for me, I guess when I think about equity, it's giving people what they really need, right, so if somebody just needs the money for a damage deposit or for a first month's rent, or for some furniture or something like that, then we bend to assist them and then from there, you kinda reassess and just make sure the door is open. We've maintained contact with everybody that we've housed and every single person that has had a saying where they've been housed in the last year has maintained that housing... 100% success. And we have smaller numbers that we work with, so I'll say that, 'cause I know some of you guys work in larger systems, but I feel like that's still pretty cool, so yeah, we bend to what the need is, because that is equity. When you look at equity, that's what it is.

0:43:37.7 TW: And I think Alisha has a great point, you find that out by establishing that rapport in the beginning, you know that first meeting those first couple of meetings where you establish a relationship with the person and a rapport to determine what the need is, and I think, you know, I know in years past, some of our failures might have come because we weren't doing that as well as we could have been doing. I think we were just kind of looking at the system and waiting on the system, versus us being able to provide a variety of options based on what we're learning from the client... One of the things we learned early on with shared housing is we had a lot of people leaving shelter going into shared housing, but we technically weren't calling it shared housing, but they were doing handshake agreements. They would go into housing and then two months later, they're back in the system because they didn't have a lease, so they didn't have supportive service tied into with some of them, they were just finding places, a friend that they work with and then moving in with them, and then something didn't work out, and then they're back out on the streets.

0:44:43.9 TW: So that was one of the things... One of the lessons we learned early on to be able to look at how can we keep people in those housing situations, is educating them on leases and those type of things, but having that conversation about housing as soon as they come through the door, versus having them come in and then just tell them, Hey, here's a bunch of rules and here are some services that you gotta participate in, and then you're not even focused on the reason why they're there which is housing.

0:45:16.7 DN: I love to hear you all talk about this and it made me think about, there's so much more creativity and fluidity at the agency level or the program level sometimes, especially when you have that private money, but also honestly, at the household level, the household is figuring out how to piece... I can get this from here and this from here, and how do I piece it together? And I think for us to really create an equitable system, we have to think about our system differently, and we have to think about it as we are here to provide what households... What individuals and families need, and if right now what they need is just some quick financial assistance, we have to have a system that can deliver quick financial assistance, and if right now what they need is deeper services than more support, then we have to have a system that can deliver deeper services and more support, and we've got to make sure that we're not setting up funding for artificial cliffs for people and for barriers to not be able to get in and out, and...

0:46:18.4 DN: I could keep going with the restaurant analogy and go further and further, but it's like we've set up a food truck that I can go get something, or maybe we mean more of food truck but where I can go get something quick and fast or quick dining fast food, and then we've got these fine dining establishments too, we've got a permanent supportive housing where you're gonna go and for a long time, but I've got to be able to make all of those different restaurants talk, so I think there's better analogies for it than restaurants...

0:46:53.1 DN: Maybe it's a food court where if I choose today, I need something else, let me hop over here and get something more, I also think about it... I used to think about it as more of a Coast Guard triage. I know we talked earlier about emergency room triage, which I think we are all much more familiar with healthcare and systems, and then thinking about beds. Even just thinking about beds and the health care system in ICU beds that we all now have in our minds, what if we had a map of beds for our shelters and when do we hit that overflow and where are we max, there's all those different dynamics that you see here, but I used to think about it as a coastguard of like, Okay, we have a sinking ship, the ship is sinking, We've got to get everybody to shore. I'm a social worker, I would love to have everyone have a beautiful helicopter ride off of the sinking ship, maybe we do a tour of the island to see the beautiful greenery, we can debrief our experience and unplug from the trauma, that's not the situation we're in.

0:47:55.3 DN: The reality that we're in, is we are in a crushing economic situation, rents were bad before the pandemic, they're worse now, there are only so many ways we're gonna be able to make sure that that rent is affordable, higher wages, rental assistance, building units, all of these are important. So we are in a disaster rescue situation, so I think about like, Hey, if you know how to swim, swim, if you... We wanna get everybody's work, you know how to swim, swim, if you need a life jacket, let me give you that life jacket, maybe that's that one month deposit, you know, or something. Swim, can you row your own boat... Here's a boat, row your own boat. I'll row the boat for you, okay, now you row I'm tired so taking over and then maybe we do need a helicopter, we do need that expensive service for folks that really are to weary and too tired or whatever, I don't wanna put it as much subjective language on it, that need more help getting to shore, but we also have to have a system where if I've sent you in your own boat to get to the shore that I'm looking out, and if you start to drown in that boat, that I can come and get you back out. So I can exit you from Rapid Re-Housing and if you start to struggle again, that I can pick you back up and give you some more financial assistance or services for what it is.

0:49:13.7 DN: So I really think to Alisha's point, equity is about making sure that people have what they need, which means we have to re-orient and really think about how do we make sure that we equip ourselves to be able to move flexibly with what people need.

0:49:30.5 KZ: Thanks, Denise, and just adding to just seeing some questions that we're hearing about equity, and you shared really well, how equity means being responsive to each individual, how do we address that within a CoC, particularly when we're... There's different agencies. How do we ensure that equity is embraced throughout the community rather than community A... And I think the way it was framed, Agency A will get you what you want, but you don't go to agency C, they take too long. How do we really embrace and embody equity fully throughout a continuum of care, how do we embrace what you are talking about.

0:50:15.6 DN: I see someone in chat saying, centralize the programs, which is somewhat, I think of where my mind is, or at least centralize accountability.

0:50:24.9 TW: And standards.

0:50:27.3 KZ: Standards.

0:50:28.0 MR: And I think that that's... We work across 10 CoCs, so we see 10 different

interpretations to coordinated entry, 10 different interpretations to shelter standards, 10 different interpretations to RRH standards, 10 different... And I could go on and on and on and on, and on, and on and on. I'm finding that the communities that are doing in moving the needle are actually have taken the silos and put them sideways, and they're actually doing a lot more lateral work than an inter-agency work and system work. And I think another barrier is that I think a lot of the lead agencies are ignoring that their first name is lead, [laughter] and they're almost waiting for someone to hand them the power or give them permission to be assertive and to act like a leader. We had a lot of debate in some of the communities is we don't have the stick that we need to make the system do what we need the system to do.

0:51:35.1 MR: And I thought to myself How simplistic to think that you would even need a stick and you... Nor do you need a card. You need general consensus, you need general buy-in to some core energies and then help people see that the work that we're trying to do is not about any of us that slept in a bed last night, it's about those people who did not sleep in a bed last night, and if we could begin to see the clients and those that we serve as our bosses, that we work for them, regardless of what agency we work for, if we could put them first and begin to kind of twist things sideways and upside down and I think that part of the challenge that we face is the system today, and one of the pressures that the pandemic put on us is...

0:52:26.8 MR: And I'm not gonna ask the crowd to raise their hand, but how many systems across the United States were faking coordinated entry? Like how many were actually faking it? On paper, it looked like it was a system, how many people... How many CoCs across the country are faking the fact that they have a system. When you ask them for a system map, they look at you like, What does that even mean? Well, those that are truly functioning as a system have done that hard work to map the system by cohort, and it's a dynamic process and they can put output and they could put... They could put numbers and coefficients and they could see flow and they could see problems much faster. The communities where we work that have been able to ramp up at a very, very almost unrealistic rapid rate because of the CV infusion into communities, were the ones that have the more developed systems and it's put in an [0:53:25.3] _____ pressure on providers like us that have been doing RRH for a number of years, and just to increase that capacity literally overnight. When do you need this by? Well, you only got four months to spend \$2 million, well, who the hell can do that? I mean, you just can't do that.

0:53:40.6 MR: And then it got extended and then extended... But anyway, I mean, I can't imagine trying to begin rapid re-housing under a COVID deadline as an agency that's never done it before, because that's where the money is. I wanna tell you, it's virtually impossible, and what we're seeing now is re-allocation from agencies that don't have a strong model, but one of the things why I wanted to talk about prior... We do a lot of work with Bridges Out of Poverty and Dr. Ruby Payne in the aha process and she... We can debate all kinds of constructs and stuff, but one of the things, one of the aha moments for me in this process regarding equity of all kinds is that we're in a system that is dealing with symptoms of a greater disease and the greater disease in our nation is poverty, and homelessness is just the symptom of that, and I would propose to you that the equity issues are more tied to the disease than just the symptom. And one of the things that aha has taught me is that there are very few communities in our country that have solved or even began to take really good steps into the four causes of poverty. Some will work on one, or some will work on two, but there are very few systems that actually have taken a look...

0:55:02.5 MR: And done a good study on the absence of human and social capital in their

communities. Putting up clients with \$10,000 worth of ems cote debt. Who could have \$10,000 worth of emscote debt and looking at the political structure and the behaviors, if we could get energy around solving poverty and not us doing it because we're too busy dealing with homelessness, I really think that you could start to take a look and have a better understanding of how to fix it upstream from where we are, because it's frustrating, I mean... It's just really, really frustrating. And the one-size-fits-all does not work, and that's everything that we're talking about is the one-size-fits-all does not work, and when I looked at the title of our round table today, it's almost like the two rapids are backwards because the Rapid Resolution piece should have been first in my mind, logically in looking at system flow, because that energy is a concerted effort to keep people either away from the system or if they've already somehow snuck through the front door and they don't need to be here, they're gracefully uninvited to not have to fall into a complete shelter all the way through the system and exited.

0:56:29.0 MR: And then the other concern is the rapid exit to me is once they have entered is how quickly could we get in and get out, and those are two for my mind just two really really different energies. And I just did a three-hour workshop yesterday here in Florida for the Florida Coalition to End Homelessness, and I thought that this was the most boring topic ever, I was thinking I was gonna have four people in my workshop.

0:56:54.0 MR: It was a three-hour workshop, I started with 76, and three hours later I had 80 people sitting in the room. And so, there's a lot of interest on how to get people through quickly and how to keep people from coming into the system, and how to be nimble and recognize the fact that one size cannot fit all, and if a system is set up with only one methodology, you're actually causing trauma to the people that are coming through, because you're giving people... Can you imagine going to the ER for a strained wrist, and all of a sudden you wake up with open heart surgery? I mean, who does that? But a lot of our systems are set up, are making people become homeless to get our services. That's ridiculous. And we've gotta fix that.

0:57:41.5 TW: Michael, just a quick... Just handling 10 CoCs, has that created a hurdle in you trying to rapidly exit people in the house? It just seems like that would be a hurdle in itself, if you had 10 different guidelines that you gotta follow in regard to how are you getting your people and housing them.

0:58:04.8 MR: So we've not seen it as a huddle, we've seen it as an opportunity to gain collaboration regionally. So I don't know about you all, but the defining line between one of our COCs is a roadside along a major highway, that a homeless person who's transient, traversing up and down that highway does not know that they've crossed over. And even east or west along the top end, I mean, there's benchmarks that create these barriers. So, when we started to do the SSVF work, we're an SSVF provider for 13,000 square miles over this entire area, which means that my... Someone on my staff has access to 10 different HMIS systems. And when we started to look at BNL lists, we started to see the same name, on two, three, four, five BNL lists. And I joked about this in the workshop yesterday. We confronted a couple of them, like, we had a rapport, it wasn't like, you're in trouble because you're doing this. They said, Well, I thought if I went to each county and I registered and I got my name on the list, I'm willing to live in whichever one will move me into housing faster.

0:59:14.4 MR: And what popped for me was how resilient of you and how creative of you to come up with a solution, because some of the lists are a lot longer. And they're like, Please don't tell

anybody, and they're like, Well, I will tell you that the list here is half the size of that list, so can I at least take you off that one and stay focused on this one? But the homeless are pretty shrewd once they know how to do the system. We had some that were teaching a class in shelter on how to throw the spidad, and charging people packs of cigarettes on how to throw the spidad. I'm not kidding. That we... They had a whole deal where they were teaching them how to throw the spidad, and they were making cigarette money off of it.

1:00:00.9 S?: And this is the right... This is it. Like...

[chuckle]

1:00:04.9 S?: This is it.

1:00:05.2 DN: People will get what they need, or they will work to get what they need, and I think for... I don't know how you guys really... We haven't talked about this. I don't know how you fared over the last two years. I transitioned where I was working. I had been working for the North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness for 17 years, and now I can say I was there for a long time. And we were the CoC lead and HMIS lead and help support programs, and before that, I was in the shelter and doing Safe Haven work, and I think I was burned out before the pandemic. I was burned out before the hurricane, then the hurricane happened, and we started to work in a new way, and I was like re-energized and everybody was saying like, This is the way it should work all the time, this is the way it should work all the time. People, we should just be able to get... Like, get people what they need and have the right flexible resource to what people need, and then the pandemic hit, and we thought, Okay, this is our opportunity to really change the way we've been thinking about things and do it differently.

1:01:05.7 DN: And at some point it was... Didn't it become so clear that housing is healthcare, like within the first month, it was so clear that housing is healthcare, because how can you wash your hands if you don't have a place to go and wash your hand? How can you stay six feet away if you don't have a home? How can you stay at home, if you don't have a home, right? It just became so clear immediately. And then I think the... It was like a... We had stepped into a hard but opportunity before with the hurricane, and I felt that energy again, it's like, okay, let's take a deep breath and go. And I know you all and folks that are listening have been go, Okay, deep breath, go for now two years. And I do think at some point, for me personally, it just really hit like, Oh wait, is this my role in capitalism? Is this my role is to help some people, like, just really hang on to survival, to help other people reach literally... Quite literally, reach for the moon, is this my role?

1:02:15.0 DN: And I really just had to take some space to say what is my role in this system, and how do we keep taking a deep breath and keep going? And I know that people who are experiencing homelessness every morning take a deep breath and keep going, and you all are doing this work every day, you're taking a deep breath and keep going, and we've got to figure out something different. And why I still have hope and why I tried to pivot and move over and just formed redesign collaborative, to really recognize every system is designed perfectly to get the results it's getting. These are the results we're getting. This is how our system was designed, if we wanna get different results, we've got to design it differently, which is... I'm just so encouraged when I get to talk to other folks who are thinking about it differently, who want to pivot, who want to say, Okay, yeah, let's take... We've got HUD regulations, we're happy for HUD regulations were happy for ESG-CV and HOME-ARP and ERA money.

1:03:22.4 DN: And could we put it in any more pots of money and make my braiding job any order, but okay, we've got all of these pots of money, but how can we think about it differently to get back at that household who just must... You know what, have so much judgement of us for designing the system that I'm gonna go get on five different lists to make sure that I can get what I need. We've got to really figure out... And I know that we are, but we've got to figure out how to do this differently with the landlord engagement group, when they're talking about, last week's call, where they're talking about doing this as a system. When I hear Alicia, you talk about the different programs who are talking, collaborating even in a small community, some things make that harder when you're in a small community, and sometimes that's easier when you're in a small community and you know who runs everything. And then Michael, and I think when I hear you talk about 10 systems all running things differently, I'm interested in how those systems that you see performing better, how you said they turn the silos on the side.

1:04:27.6 DN: It seems to me like when I hear each one of you talk, there's some of that that like, John Lewis "Get in good trouble." Like, how can we take what have and push it and make it work more for people?

1:04:41.5 MR: Well, I think... In how many of your systems do the shelter providers actually meet on a local basis together in a room? In how many of your systems do your RRH... And at two levels, I mean, at a service provider at front line staff level, and also at a higher level, like a mid-level management or maybe at a strategic session. We have CoCs where we're very actively involved in, but the people at my level have never been invited into the room at the same time, to just to sit and get to connect the face with the organization. It's almost as if... And I love what you just said, because the fact of the matter is, if nothing changes, nothing changes. And if we're gonna continue along this path, we gotta stop complaining about it unless we're willing as a community to begin to demand change.

1:05:34.3 MR: Because the end result in the front line that we don't wanna see in 2024 is the fact that \$100 billion went out in homeless services and the homeless number or across the United States hasn't changed, or it's changed so minimal that we're now embarrassed to be part of a system that we didn't make the most of it. Because we've gotten to the point in a lot of these communities that it's about spending down money and it's not about caring for people, and those are just two very different energies, spending down money and caring. The fact is that I think that... In my experience, a lot of people will ask what's the straw that breaks the camel's back between people that are poor and then people when they become homeless, and in my mind, that last straw is the lack of relationships in their life. Like, they've severed almost all ties to their family, the relationships go last, so the relationships almost have to come back first if you did it in a logical... In reverse order.

1:06:29.2 MR: And this is very, very Bridges Out of Poverty constructs, because the relationships are the foundation of life for those that are trying to survive in poverty. Well, in the work that we do, how are we supposed to effectively function as a provider, as a funder, as a CoC lead, if we're not focusing on establishing relationships and recognizing the fact of how I'm impacting another organization or another impact is... Another organization is impacting ours? And Denise, what I heard you say, the word that came to mind, and it's the word that I almost chose was fatigue for my word, not zeal, because we're wiped out, we're getting to the point that by the time this current round of funding is being released on a local level, there are very few providers that are even submitting, because many are so tired, we're tired, but we don't dare not to let it go away because

we don't want it to get back that we don't need the money because we still need the money.

1:07:34.1 MR: But who the hell had the capacity to grow by 400%? I mean, it's been a daunting task, and we're tired. Through the pandemic our organization has put a whole internal team in place, that all we're concerned about is employee wellness and employee engagement. A whole team that all that they're doing is developing office-based strategies for each field office to strengthen the employees within those offices, 'cause I... 'Cause when a case manager walks out the door, it takes us six to eight weeks to get that replaced, and then another two or three weeks on top of that to get the new one up to capacity, that's a 10-week gap in service. We gotta fight to not lose the people we have, and they're tired. They're so tired.

1:08:23.5 KZ: Alicia, I saw you coming off me a couple of times.

1:08:24.3 AG: Yeah, I totally agree with everything you guys are saying. And when we talk about systems, one of the things that I work with, and I know you guys do too, and especially 'cause I saw Denise do her braid analogy, right? Is all of these funding requirements have different reporting tools, and like, why are we doing this? If they're coming from the same agency, like same general agency, if it's HUD, if it's from your state, if it's from your CoC, why do we have to have so many different places where people are having to put information in, and we're re-traumatizing the people that are coming in the doors because we have to ask them, five different assessment tools or get... I'm exaggerating a little bit here, but maybe not for some of you guys, but why are we doing this? And if we really wanna look at the system as a whole, I heard others say this too, we have to focus on prevention, and we have to just trust that people who need a resource to prevent them from losing their housing, that's what they actually need.

1:09:32.5 AG: Why do we need so many assessments for this? And the concept of affordable housing, I mean, everybody uses that term, whether you are in a place where you are un-sheltered, whether you're working, affordable housing has to be affordable for the person that is receiving the housing. Why is this such a big concept that it's like, Oh, we have to find affordable housing, but affordable housing is like, \$1500 a month for this one family. That's ridiculous. It's crazy, and I'm sorry, I just had to throw that in there, 'cause the whole... What did you say? The get in good trouble, that's how I perceived getting in good trouble is like, Let me just get in this little soapbox here for a couple of seconds because it is crazy, and if we just had some consistency with all of these different things, we wouldn't have the staff fatigue like Michael's talking about, you know? I see it from my staff having to enter things into five different systems or three different systems, it's not working.

1:10:37.1 MR: Well, I wonder how many communities actually defined when they begin to develop coordinated entry, by the way they faked it, just in case you didn't hear me say that the first time, 'cause it's really evident that it's faked. Did they define what coordinated and coordination is going to look like in that community, and how much power are they willing to do? We have one system that put CES after shelter, because we couldn't get the shelter providers to allow... To give up control of who's gonna get a bed in shelters? So, one of the lines that I love that the Alliance... National Alliance gave me at that time, 'cause I was the chair of the CoC board at that time, said, You know, Michael, this train's gotta leave the station, get as many on as you can, but God just get that train out of the station. You can circle back around the loop and figure it out later.

1:11:29.8 MR: So we left the station with Coordinated Entry after shelter, only dealing with the

housing intervention. And now comes the struggle because of the pandemic, because of an inordinate amount of inflow, inordinate amount of numbers. No capacity to sort it out and do the emergency room or the hostess model that we've talked about today. How do you push that back upstream and get the system to renegotiate the fact that all along, if we had had coordinated entry into shelter, shelter would have gone to those that need the housing intervention work first. And what we see, and this is the part that's problematic, is we see... I see a lack of commitment to the core concept of Housing First. And one would think that all these years later that we should have been past this debate, but the fact of the matter is we're still stuck with systems that have an out-of-sight out-of-mind management of homelessness, like, get him out of this area so the tourists don't see him, especially in Florida. Get them off the beach, get them out of Downtown, put them somewhere, so people don't see them.

1:12:36.2 MR: Or if you are going to embrace them, embrace them with a housing readiness approach and fix them so you can put it into housing. Both of those two things are cancer, complete social cancer. In both of those two things in my mind are contributing greatly to the inequity that we see in the system.

1:12:55.7 TW: Michael, What was the... I mean, myself being a shelter provider, that was one of the things I had to give up, was control of how we brought people in, because I knew in order for us to be serving the most vulnerable in our community, it's gonna have to go through that approach versus them coming straight to my door, I had to... I'm just curious to how... And I know one of the ways the conversation kinda went along as far as money, you know that if you're getting a specific part of money coming from, whether it be HUD or from the state level, that this was something that you were gonna have to buy in for your application, but suffer, I'm just curious of how those shelters had the power to be able to do that, 'cause they don't make a better sense at all to put it on the back side of shelter as far as coordinated entry? I'm just curious.

1:13:44.8 MR: It was fear, it was complete fear. And you know what it was fear of? Does it mean, you're gonna have to tell me that I'm gonna have to take a homeless person in shelter that's altered through either alcohol or drugs? Yeah.

1:13:55.4 TW: I was wondering that. I thought that might be the...

1:13:58.8 MR: That's what we mean, we're not gonna be housing focused, we're not going to be... We're going to be... We'll cherry pick the people we want. We'll screen and our shelter was the first shelter that went basically [1:14:11.0] _____. Like, we'll take you if you're intoxicated, we'll take you if you're this. And we were criticized. You know, I had one...

1:14:17.6 TW: We were too, Michael, we were too. And I hear you...

1:14:19.7 MR: I heard one municipality that said, I'm not paying you to run a shelter to house these people, I'm paying you to run a shelter to keep them out of downtown on the weekends. And we said, Well, you know what, I'm gonna house them anyway. [chuckle] I'm gonna do what I wanna do, because housing is the only solution to this, and there's too much of that, you know? Corralling them in one place just for the sake of keeping them out of sight, out of mind, I mean, we have to start to call that out in our community when we're seeing an out of sight, out-of-mind approach to Homeless Management Systems, it's wrong. It's wrong.

1:14:56.6 DN: That makes me think that it takes... Like, it takes a certain confidence to say like, Yeah, this is what I'm being told to do or being judged to do, and I'm gonna do it... We're gonna figure it out. You don't think it's gonna work. We're gonna figure it out. Like, some of that's, when I said solution is, that's problem solving, right? And that is starting... Whether you're starting as a system, how are we gonna solve the problem, or whether you're starting with a household, how am I gonna solve this individual household problem and working together? When I hear people... I think some of that comes from fear. I think some of the... I can't serve these folks, some of it is fear and really not being equipped. I think some of it is not being equipped, and we need to make sure that we're respecting that too, that you don't know how to handle this situation. So let's figure out how we help equip you to handle this. And I think I've been around long enough where I've seen both cherry-picking and... Which I think it really comes from a good place. I think it comes from a good place of like, we know there are so many people in need, we know everyone need... We want...

1:16:05.0 DN: We have so few resources, we want it to go to people that we know we can help... I really think it comes from a good place. Unfortunately, it ends up with a bad result of people who languish in the system because we decide we can't help them, and I've also seen it swing the other way, where we end up so focused on chronically homeless and really high acuity folks that we have no flow to our system. And I think it's gotta be a both and instead of an either or, and I think we are... I think people are figuring this out and doing this, but that is some of where you can't get stuck in one place or one silo and you have to work together to really think about... 'cause in no way I [1:16:50.2] ____ want to say. Make it sound like focusing on chronic homelessness was a bad decision, it was an amazing decision, we really were able to hone some skills and programs and get people who had been on the streets for decades off of the streets... So we've really been able to create a lot of innovations, and in some of the same communities that I've seen that really that number drive down, I haven't seen.

1:17:15.4 DN: The same type of energy and problem solving put at different places in the system, 'cause if we're being honest, you have to go through first falling into homelessness, literal homelessness to then we couldn't even start back there, right, you're first probably precariously housed and a different type of homeless before you had literal homeless.

1:17:37.6 DN: Before you meet this definition, before you meet... And we've gotta figure out how to really invest in financial assistance services, housing navigation all along the pathway, so we're not just putting all of our resources in one place or another for one type of population for another, and so much of that is on us to design and not on us to equip us with enough resources, because that's another piece that's been leading to the fatigue, is that we were... To take the resources that we have that have not been to scale, try to design things, and here we are now with much more resources for those of us who thought, Oh, we need us more resources to take it to scale, like, well, clearly that's not the only thing we need, we also need workforce development, we need to make sure we've got more staffing capacity, we need... My gosh, do we need financial assistance, administration backbone, how do you get money out the door...

1:18:39.0 DN: Very quickly, but I think when I start to think about... I think it's both things cherry-picking and an over-emphasis on You have to have a certain score for us to even be able to serve you, that's why I get excited when talking to you folks who are also doing rapid accident, coming up with solutions all along the way. And let's try something, and if it doesn't work, step it up into something else, and if it's too much, step it down into something else, but we've gotta be more dynamic and be able to provide those same types of assistance at different levels at different times.

For all folks.

1:19:14.5 KZ: Thanks Denice. With the time that we have left, I'd like to lean into that both and Makayla, I'm wondering if you might kick this off again and just, especially having you describe, you described earlier how you... The Rapid Re-Housing lite is just a part of your Rapid rehousing right?

1:19:32.2 ML: Yeah.

1:19:32.9 KZ: And you're using the state and federal money, how do you... What has helped you embrace this both end approach and how are you tackling that?

1:19:43.6 ML: I think it works, sort of hitting on things that we've talked about throughout this 'cause I think a lot of what Michael was saying in that we are kind of a unified COC our agencies work together, or everybody... We have buy-in for coordinated entry, I now realize how lucky I am to have that, so we are able to both... And throughout the entire length of someone's stay and someone's interaction, so from the moment they meet a street outreach worker to the moment they sign a lease, everybody that they encounter along that stretch has the same sort of end goal and understanding in mind.

1:20:22.0 ML: And oftentimes, we'll have clients who have recently started working and they have been picked up for a coveted full rapid re-housing spot, and they run their income when they had guidelines, strict income restrictions. All that kind of fun stuff. They run their income when it's time to do rapid, start apartment hunting and in taking all of that fun stuff, realize they make too much money for Rapid, but we have this fall back into something less... We can help you with Rapid Re-Housing lite and they can get them moved into somewhere and then they can maintain on their own, and we've had clients working either with street outreach or in the shelter who think I can manage this... I'm working full-time, you're looking for apartments, they're submitting applications, and then they lose their job, so then we have to put them back on the Rapid Re-Housing waitlist and prioritize appropriately from them from there.

1:21:15.3 ML: So we're able to meet people where they're at because everybody has the same base knowledge, because the entire up and down of our system knows the programs and knows expectations were able to give them what they need. We're hoping in the next year to be able to roll out [1:21:32.5] ___ fellow subsidy for our rapid households, those who are of higher need can come in with a guarantee of a year's worth of rent in that case management, so that we can meet both the very bottom of the needs level plus the very top of the needs level, like PSH lite for a lack of a better descriptor, but knowing that everybody has the same knowledge is really helpful.

1:22:00.7 KZ: So we only have about 8 minutes left. I'm wondering if we can do a quick round-robin with a question, maybe we've brought up both a lot of opportunity and a lot of challenges, the realities of the pushback we still see on Housing First, the fear, the financial constraints, the requirements that we're all faced with, the landlord capacity, landlord engagement struggles, I would love to hear from each of you just what gives you hope that we can achieve the both end, that we can truly address the need in our communities in new ways? What brings you that hope? And Todd, do you wanna start?

1:22:42.8 TW: Yeah, for me, I just think it's the belief in Housing First, Housing First has to be the

foundation of everything that you do, and I think everything else kind of follow suit. So when we began to make that shift as a shelter provider to try to figure out different ways than what we were doing, adopting housing first, and that has to start with your leader of your organization. So me being the executive director, it had to start with me and then disseminate down to everybody else, and I saw the change, I kinda use... Kinda going off you, Denise, when I remember speaking to our board about drugs and alcohol, that was like one of the... They looked at that as tough love. And I remember likening it to using analogy of a mutual fund, so you put a mutual \$100 in a mutual fund and you lose \$25.

1:23:31.6 TW: Are you gonna pull that money out and then lose more because you're being taxed because it's not ready to be pulled out. Or you're gonna leave it there to try to get back the money you lost, and then some. So I said, But that's money we're talking about people. So if somebody comes in, they test positive, we were putting them on the streets, and I'm thinking our job is to end someones homelessness, not put them out on the streets. So that was a conversation that kinda led to a shift in changing how we were doing things here, and then we saw our numbers elevate.

1:24:00.5 TW: So trying to take that opportunity to teach somebody who makes a mistake in shelter instead of putting them out, let's look it as a teaching moment, and then begin to continue to make their progress toward housing in the shortest amount of time possible, and we saw our numbers elevate. We are in this as far as access department of housing, and you know what that leads to is you're serving more people, so now you're getting more off of the streets. So I would just say that if you're using that as your foundation, it's gonna guide your thought process and your decision making, and everything else that you do... I think one of the things I love that Michael said is that we work for the client, and that's the mentality that I take into this job every day is, what can I learn from the client, how can I get closer to the client to establish what their needs are, and then begin to come up with something innovative and creative to create a rapid access strategy. It's a little bit long Kira, I apologize but...

1:25:00.6 S?: [1:25:02.1] ____.

1:25:04.4 KZ: So Kira for me it's trying to stay focused in on the successes, on the positive outcomes that we're seeing. Our organization put arbitrary tracking date of the date that the world ended on March 17, 2020 and the pandemic began, and I don't know how we picked the 17th, but it was on or about that Monday that everything shut down. And our staff have housed 2190 households since the beginning of the pandemic.

1:25:33.9 TW: Awesome. Wonderful.

1:25:36.0 MR: 2190. Our St. Petersburg and Pinellas team did 600 in 600 days and they're on target to hit a 1000 in a 1000 days, that's one a day, and that's including Saturdays and Sundays. And what this does for us is it gives hope to the 1275 open households that we're working with today, that there is hope and that there is a solution that's out there, it's really easy to focus on the negative, it's really easy to focus in on what was wrong, but I honestly believe that we can build more focusing in on our strengths and what's going right, then if we focus in on the barriers and what's going wrong, both personally, organizationally and community-wide, we have to stay focused on the successes is the only way forward.

1:26:28.0 ML: I feel a little bit like a cop out, but the thing that keeps me going is knowing that

there are 1000 people five weeks in a row willing to get together and talk and have these conversations and ask the tough questions and be willing to change what they've always done, because they know it's not best practice, and willing to adopt Housing First and adopt all of these rapid exits and increase their landlord engagement practices. I think knowing that I'm not alone in these thoughts is really encouraging for me.

1:27:01.0 KZ: Not a cop out at all Macayla I love that...

1:27:12.4 DN: I think what makes me hopeful and think that we can do the both end is that each year we learn more and become more and innovate more. So my first experience with rapid re-housing now, was at almost 13 years ago with HPRP. That is really not that long ago. And back then I was having to explain what rapid re-housing was, and now that I can really think about tweaking and really everything we've talked about for the most part is tweaking and how do we get it more right, and how do we really make sure it's working for everyone, and how do we make it go faster? And so I think that that gives me hope that we have a strong enough foundation that we can talk about the tweaks and getting better, and I...

1:28:00.9 DN: I think we're really at a point where we've learned a lot, we've gotten a ton of resources to really build out some things that I'm very hopeful that we will keep... That the pandemic will end and that we won't go back to being the same, we will be better, we'll figure out some probably some better health strategies for all of us that we probably should have had in place before the pandemic. But I think we're really on the verge of creating a different system, and that's what we need, and my big hope is that in 10 years, the system that we created right now, that in 10 years. There's advocates saying, Why does it work this way? Why can't we make it even better than... That keeps me hopeful.

1:28:47.4 AG: Yeah, I wanna end with just a couple of things here, 'cause I know we did kinda go into this space where we were talking about the problems, which we all know the problems, everyone who is even in the chat knows the problems, every single person that has touched this system understands the problem, and so for me, trying to be more solution-oriented, I think it's important that we build rapport with the people that we're working with, make sure that we have their trust and that we are trusting them, so that's our super cool relationship.

1:29:18.6 AG: I think it's important to utilize the partnerships that exist within your communities because there may be providers or smaller agencies that can do some of this work a little bit quicker than what these larger systems can... And that's totally fine. We're here to support each other. I think it's important to get creative, and then what gives me hope is after talking with all of you guys, I think we have... Everybody has a little bit of a rebel side, and I think that gives me hope because I think that's what we need, we need the voice of people who are saying This isn't right, and we can change this and we can make it better.

1:29:58.2 KZ: Alicia you gave me the chills, that was a great way to end this session today. Thank you so much, especially, I love what you said about the reciprocal relationship of trust, we often talk about building trust and making sure that we're thinking about both directions. Thank you everyone, all our panelists, all our participants, and just really appreciate everyone's time here, don't forget, we have one more session next week and the today's sessions, recording will be posted as soon, and we just would really like to see you all back here next week. So thank you all so, so much. Have a wonderful Tuesday, everyone.