

ROSS Service Coordinators Webinar Series

Resident Engagement Strategies, 6/14/18

Tremayne Youmans: -- We look forward to sharing, as well as hearing Q&As from you all.

Colleen Moore: All right. Thanks Trey. Hi, everyone. My name is Colleen Moore. I had spoken with some of you regarding getting access to the webinar. I'm with Abt Associates, and we help support HUD in providing technical assistance to the ROSS Program, as well as some other programs. I'd like to just give a few housekeeping notes. If you have not participated in one of these before, please note that all of the participants are muted. So we're not going to do questions and answers verbally, but you'll notice two things on the right side of your screen.

If you are at your computer and looking at the title slide right now, there's a chat box. And that should be set to "all panelists."

We'd appreciate if you'd use that chat box if you're having any technical difficulty. And we'll try to resolve that here. I have a colleague here with me, Anna Mahathey, who I think some of you have talked with as well. We'll try to resolve any technical difficulties. If you have questions regarding the content of the presentation, please click the Q&A box. If you don't see that on your screen, look up at the right top corner and you should see a Q&A icon. If you click on that, you should get that Q&A box on your screen. So we can use that for all of your questions. If a question occurs to you during the presentation, you can go ahead and type it in there. We'll try to get our panelists to answer that.

We're hoping to leave a good amount of time at the end of the presentation to respond to those questions. And we'll also log those questions so that we can make sure that if there's any we don't get to, we'll try to answer them and maybe make some arrangements with Trey to get those responses out. Okay. We have lots of really good presenters for you this afternoon. So I think we'd like to get started with the content. First off, let's talk about the agenda. The whole purpose here is to try to help all of you improve your engagement with your residents. So that's what we're all about here this afternoon. We're going to first talk about identifying and overcoming barriers to engagement.

And for that you're going to hear from Melissa Nordel-Earp, from the Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency. Then we're going to talk about proactive individual engagement. And that's going to be with Vivian Diaz, from Maricopa County in Arizona. And then we have three participants from the Denver Housing Authority, who will talk about putting residents at the center of your engagement strategy. And I think you're going to get some different aspects of this from all of those presentations. And hopefully, it will help you in improving your engagement with your residents.

Just a little overview about resident engagement -- there are a variety of methods for resident engagement, as I just mentioned. We tried to take into account all of those in planning today's session. I think probably all of you do some form of marketing. There's obviously lots of

different ways to do marketing, whether it's printed flyers, information in new resident packets, and newsletters or the housing authority website. I'm sure all of you use some form of that.

The other thing which I mentioned the Denver folks will really focus on today is using resident leaders and your residents. These are key allies in your efforts to engage other residents. The other thing is community partnerships. And I believe that probably all of our presenters will touch upon that in some way this afternoon. Those community partners that bring people to your site to provide services are really key allies in not only initiating engagement, but keeping residents engaged.

And then finally, this other aspect that I mentioned with respect to Vivian's presentation is proactive individual engagement. And that can take many forms, whether it's coordination with staff, or that initial engagement with new residents. We'll touch on that this afternoon. And connecting them potentially to other participants, there's a variety of ways that you can approach that. I just wanted to give you a little bit of context for the presentation this afternoon. And with that I think we'll move to Melissa and get started with her presentation.

Melissa Nordel-Earp: Good afternoon, everyone. As Colleen said, my name is Melissa Nordel-Earp. I work with the City of Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency. I was going to share a little bit of background about me because I think that will help you understand my work experience and who I've served in the past. I've served in various capacities, and have served diverse populations. I bring about five years of experience working in the healthcare setting for intermediate care and sub-acute care. I have five years' of experience working with refugees and immigrants in an educational setting. And in that position, my role was career development coordinator.

And when I joined the city several years ago, I actually started out as a family self-sufficiency coordinator for two years and then moved on to be a program manager for the City of Des Moines Community Action Agency for over 12 years. In regards to the ROSS Program at the City of Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency -- and we're talking about engagement strategies -- I think engagement strategies are often developed based on our existing infrastructure. So I want to at least share with you our infrastructure, which is we have 34 scattered site homes in the community, as well as where my office is, we have a public housing site called Royal View Manor, which has 200 units in it.

So that's a little bit about our structure, which drives a lot of my resident engagement. I'm going to go ahead and talk about who I serve with the focus being Royal View Manor. The demographics of the scattered homes are a little bit different. But at Royal View Manor, we have a very diverse adult population. A lot were homeless before coming up here, or doubled up. I serve refugees. Many of the residents at Royal View Manor are disabled and/or have mental illness. And individuals who are employed -- not all -- but a lot of them have unstable hours and low wages. There are other standing barriers to engagement or why discuss lack of engagement?

Well, I think it's very important. I think it's probably, and can be for some service coordinators, one of the largest challenges for the population they're serving. Barriers to engagement -- I always kind of look at it as or relate it to Maslow's hierarchy. And most of you may be familiar with that. There is a graph on there that shows it's a progression. If you look at the basic needs,

which are the physiological needs and the safety needs -- and when I think safety needs, we're talking financial stability. That's a huge issue.

Is a person employed? Do they have resources? Do they have the financial stability to weather the storm or if a car breaks down, or for whatever reason, which happens often. And so a lot of the clients that I'm working with are experiencing that instability. And when I'm working with them, I really try to focus on how do I improve that stability by linking them to resources that stabilize them hopefully so that we can down the road see more engagement.

I think a good example that I would bring up is we could have a person working. And I'm sure you've all experienced that, someone who's working. Maybe they're traveling. Their workplace is not on a bus line. Their car breaks down. They don't have a support system or a limited support system. And maybe their support system, a family member doesn't have the financial resources to help them pay for their car repair. So as a result -- and there's not a lot of community resources for car repair -- they can't take the bus to work. They don't have money to repair their car, so they start missing work. Well, then they lose their job.

So what a normal car repair or your car breaking down for someone further along in Maslow's hierarchy, it would be viewed as an inconvenience, because they can still create a plan, even maybe use a rental car during that transition of getting car repair. But for a lot of our individuals, that level of instability can set them back and even just have a spiral effect. So instability or triaging crises, one, it's very stressful. And it's living day-to-day in that moment. So it's hard to create a plan for engagement or participate in things that they know may benefit them. But they're just trying to make it through the day. And that's a hard thing to do some days.

Other barriers to engagement in the ROSS program may be mental health trauma. A lot of the residents that I serve will share their stories and have had trauma, maybe ongoing trauma or throughout their life. Disabilities -- many of the residents I'm working with that have disabilities may not make their appointments or even call me and say, I couldn't do what I needed to do because I'm in so much pain this week. So disabilities can have an impact, whether medical or physical. Limited English proficiency, I think, can be a barrier for just comfort level. To give you an idea, which I'll talk about accessibility, my office is stationed at the public housing unit Royal View Manor. I am very accessible. My office is actually across from the main elevators on the first floor. And people where English isn't their first language may not feel as comfortable to seek me out because of that limited English proficiency. So that can be a barrier in understanding, what can we do differently? I think lack of modeling -- what has that person's life experiences been? Who have they been surrounded by?

And I think a concrete example is if someone's experienced generational poverty and their parents or maybe their grandparents, they've never seen them work or develop habits or be engaged voluntarily or just working, that need to be accountable or to engage and follow through is harder.

And I think priorities -- we all have basic needs -- I mean, that's a given -- but priorities and perceived priorities -- our priorities from individual to individual are all different. So an example of that is I have a gentleman who states he's not working now. He needs to work. I got him involved in a job readiness program. He had the opportunity from someone on his employment

team to talk about a job opportunity. It looked like it was very promising. And he didn't have a phone at that time, so he would communicate with me. And I would communicate what the staff member from Iowa Workforce Development was communicating.

And his priority even though he said was working, it took him several days to get into contact, even though he had access to a phone. So priorities and understanding those, it can be a barrier to engagement. Habits of that individual that you're serving, just building those good habits about consistency or not ever having those, not having to be accountable or show. And I think culturally, too, depending on what refugees you're working with, some refugees if they have -- I'm going to use the example of Sudan -- if they came from an agricultural environment, the concept of time is something that they have not been around -- the need to show up on time. It's just different cultural habits as well.

And then another barrier to engagement is just low resiliency, I think a tolerance threshold. A good example is I have a client that I work with who he's in HiSET now. And he goes to classes regularly. And he's the gentleman that went to a job readiness training. And it was more of a classroom setting. He did great. He attended the trainings.

But over time as I've been working with him, I've kind of observed when there's a bump in the road -- which happens very often in life -- his resiliency is limited. Say, he has to go to a new place and even though I think he's pretty versed at the bus system, he gets frustrated easily. Or trying to -- which is frustrating for most -- trying to get a governmental phone sometimes can be a challenge.

So that low resiliency -- and that may be just because of a lack of support or past history, just a variety of factors. When I talk about engagement, when I was asked to talk about best practices, I really had to think about what words come to my mind when I think about engagement. And we know that engagement is the state of being engaged. Either you're emotionally engaged or you're committed.

And I think it's important for us to understand what comes to mind and what are some techniques we can use to maybe increase engagement with the residents we serve through our ROSS programs. One is motivation. And I think that's very important to understand what motivates an individual to move forward and increasing their economic independence.

And I think that motivating behavior or motivation is really so individualized. And sometimes what we would perceive -- oh, that wouldn't be a motivating factor -- is something for that individual. So it's really important, I think, to find out what motivates that individual. A couple examples are I have a female I'm working with and her child is not with her; her child is with the biological father in another state. So she knows to get her child back, she has to improve her financial stability. She wants to get her HiSET. She wants to get employment that's a livable wage. And her motivating factor is to have her child back living with her.

I have another client who is a refugee, or was a refugee. And when he came to the United States, he and his wife -- and my sense is it's economic reasons -- he was married. Actually, his wife went to Canada with her family. And he shared a picture, showed me a picture of him and his wife on their wedding day. And his goal, which education is very important to him and he thinks

is the key for financial independence, a livable, sustainable wage. And his motivating factor is to improve his situation so he can reunite with his wife and provide for his wife.

I have another client who has been working four years. She is a housekeeper and works in a hotel. As I'm sure you're familiar, the hours can vary. You know, she's got good work experience, not the best employment benefits. And I've been working with her to look at finding new employment-- even though her goal is still to remain in housekeeping, she is limited. Her English skills are good, the reading and writing, because she is a refugee. And she's trying to improve her skills by taking ESL classes. But her goal is to find a job that has better benefits. And her long-term goal is to have home ownership and even have her adult children live with her and for them to own a home.

So the motivating factors are different, but I think it's important to try to explore or probe what those are to keep bringing that or focusing on that for engagement. Participation incentives -- at City of Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency, I would say one of our incentives -- because it is a voluntary program -- is we do have family service program funds we can use if the criteria is met. So that can be an incentive for participation and engagement with the ROSS program. Oftentimes, since I've been in this position, the majority of times people are looking for a bus pass, for searching for employment, or employment. We have assisted with textbooks for English as second language classes as well as postsecondary textbooks.

Relationships -- that's a word that comes to my mind with engagement. Oftentimes, I think we can have formal and informal development of a relationship. And I'll use my office as an example. Since I'm on the main floor and pretty accessible, oftentimes I'll go out and the tenants know me. And it may be just talking about the weather or checking in. Or they'll pop their head in and say, hey, what's going on here? But it doesn't have to be a formal meeting to discuss school, but just that informal connection which can lead to a relationship. And I think a part of engagement is support.

A lot of times -- and I would say an observation that I've made serving this population is they really have a lack of support overall. Not every individual, but I see that is a commonality. That may be because of their choice, meaning it may be circumstances. It may be their choice. Or it may be they have burned every bridge. I mean, oftentimes, when you have people with alcohol usage -- I have a gentleman I'm working with that has a supportive brother, but his brother has finally said, I can't do this anymore. So for a variety of reasons, support can be limited. And I think it's important when working with them to see it through your actions.

Oftentimes, when I meet with people and review goals or check in with them, I'll let them know, what can I do to support you in your journey? So I'll even verbalize that. And I tend to do that intermittently because I want them to know that. Connections for engagement -- I think that's an important piece. And I think service coordinators can do that through a variety of methods -- through newsletters, through the communication patterns, also leveraging resources in the community, through your partnerships, through your committees, bringing those identified needs, when possible, on site or through a variety of mechanisms. Keeping those connections fluid, and I'm going to say ongoing is important.

Purpose -- what is their purpose? What do they want? What is their outcome? And also that's important to focus on what do they want to achieve in that outcome, as well as action. One example is I have a client who has multiple medical problems, and she has anxiety too. And she says, I just get overwhelmed. And so I will always try to encourage them to take action instead of sitting idle. I told her one day, I'm sure it is overwhelming. What are two things you want to focus on this week, and encouraging her to take action on just two things and coming back and touching base with me.

Initial engagement -- for best strategies, I think the welcome visit -- which I'm sure most of you do -- I think it's a good way to do that initial engagement. And I think the sooner the better. I always make sure I talk about the ROSS program, talk about the incentives, if you have any, you want to touch on that. I really outline my role -- what do I do here, various assignments. And then one thing I've learned over time is because a lot of them are homeless or doubled up, I really have that conversation, what immediate needs do you have? Do you have furniture? Do you have a bed? And over time, I've kind of learned that.

I have a wonderful partnership with a faith-based organization that tries to give donated furniture to people who were homeless once. So they will provide a couch and even a table. They're so wonderful to work with. But oftentimes, that welcome visit by incorporating what immediate needs you have establishes that connection or that engagement. And they see a result as a result of that, so they'll come back again. And oftentimes, if they have a lot of immediate needs, to stabilize, then we'll coordinate a follow-up meeting right away. Strategies for continued engagement -- I think everybody's going to be different based on their infrastructure.

I think my benefit is I'm accessible. Another thing we've done is we have a phone that is in my office that clients or residents can come down and use. It's local calls only. But a lot of times our clients are on governmental phones or they're in transition and don't have a phone. And even to schedule a medical appointment, as you know, can take 20 minutes, so just having that as an option for accessibility. And I think a key thing is being genuine. Honestly, I think people know when you're the real deal, and what you say, you mean. I think that's very important when serving the residents we do.

When someone joins ROSS and we're talking about goals, I really lay out expectations. What is my role? And what are the expectations to be joining this program? And I try to encourage accountability and identify action steps and time frame. When I'm working with someone on, say, career interest -- developing or creating a plan for a job would be a good example -- I will schedule a time with them. So for career assessment, it's usually a three-step process. So to develop those, I guess, behaviors, I will schedule meetings at the same time and day for maybe a four-week period, depending on what we're working on.

And I talked about motivational interviewing, just the need to know what really motivates someone and the ability to have crucial conversations with the population we're serving, I think, is important. And lastly, it has to leverage funding, but I think it's really using what incentives you have and the partnerships you have to try to develop a very good system for your participants to be successful. So that is really some of the strategies I use. My presentation is more on a micro level working directly. As I stated before, I leverage a lot of relationships and

partnerships to bring resources on site, as well as to get people where they need to be, to meet their immediate needs.

Colleen Moore: Great. Thanks, Melissa.

Melissa Nordel-Earp: You're welcome.

Colleen Moore: We're going to move on now to Vivian.

Vivian Diaz: Yes.

Colleen Moore: Okay. You're up.

Vivian Diaz: I'm ready. I hope everyone's doing well. I think all of the presenters are so happy to be with you. I'm looking at the attendance. It's unbelievable. It's 286. I can't believe it. It's wonderful. I'm very glad to be sharing this information with you today. I do want to tell you briefly who I am and how long I've worked here at the Housing Authority of Maricopa County, because I think it frames why I do what I do and how I do it under the ROSS Service Coordinator Program. I've worked for the housing authority now for 14 years. Of those 14 years, I've had the honor of having three ROSS three-year grants.

So I've been able to truly build from cycle to cycle in the grants quite a lot of innovation and quite a lot of different partners, even change policies in different directions, because I've had the luxury of the support of the grants over time. But I do want to tell you a little bit first about the Housing Authority of Maricopa County. Housing Authority of Maricopa County owns and manages over 600 units in 15 communities throughout Maricopa County. And we're speaking here about things that would be under public housing. We obviously run a Section 8 housing choice voucher program as well.

These properties are located generally in smaller cities and unincorporated areas of the county. Most of the larger cities in the metropolitan Phoenix areas, if you know the area a little bit, they have their own housing agencies that serve populations within each city. Because of the size of the Phoenix metropolitan area, though, HAMC divided its operations into four separate geographic areas, each with its own wait list and area office. Why I'm giving you that framework is so that you see the environment in which the ROSS Service Coordinator Grant thrives.

I want to give you a little more insight about the geographic distances and how sometimes this in itself will challenge all of us as ROSS service coordinators to get the work done. It's just a reality, especially in rural areas or even in urban areas where we have a spread out response to housing needs. So as an example, El Mirage and Surprise have four multi-family apartment communities, with one property that is serving senior households. Avondale is comprised of two properties, with one housing unit or community that serves senior households as well. Peoria has three apartment complexes with one property. And this property serves special needs and seniors in particular.

Guadalupe is an extremely unique location within our jurisdiction of service. It's actually located within a tribal government jurisdiction. So it makes for some very interesting collaborations and partnerships as we work there under the ROSS umbrella. And then Mesa, Arizona, has two

multi-family apartment communities. And obviously, the challenge of serving 12 individual locations, which is what the ROSS program has done, could only be addressed by developing very focused and to some degree some fairly creative partnership relationships with still in mind, how do you provide that individual family response to their particular needs? Not an easy task.

We all know this, those of us that have worked in this business for a while, and those that are just starting. Engaging and defining the role of both the housing property managers and local partners became one of my first goals. ROSS grant goals and information to each property manager was my initial step. And I've done that every time we've had a grant cycle. And I've done it within the first quarter of the grant implementation phase. This communication also helped in determining how much of a role in the service coordination effort property managers actually wanted to play.

When you're running such a large operation, sometimes you may want that support of a property manager in your ROSS efforts, but in fact, they're busy handling property management needs. So we struggle with that. Finding that balance was critical to having some success appearing in that property for those residents. Initially, this also set the stage for talking to the property manager about resident leaders, natural leaders, or people that would be interested in volunteering or had particular interests. Property managers are a dynamite way of connecting with residents in communities that you may not have already established relationships with.

They can lead you to potential support from volunteers, potential leaders, and to people to serve. So once you have that initial discussion with your property manager, what I then would do is create a survey. And this is the part that I think becomes the communication and the ongoing check-in for how successful you're being and how well you're evolving over time. There are many types of surveys. Some of them, obviously, are very scientific. Some of them are very qualitative in nature. If some of you understand what I mean by that, they're very simple. They ask very simple questions.

The survey instruments that I decided to create were in support of the goal of meeting the goals within the logic model. I framed the questions. And I framed the need for responses to reinforce the goals and to also help me identify and support what would be the service components that would be coming to these communities. So it's a very simple instrument that asks the name and the address and phone number and email. And here's the key to this idea of you spoke to the property manager and they may have referred you to possible leaders or support people in the community.

I meet with those potential folks in the community that were referred or that I know, and they become part of the process of identifying needs and bringing services and implementing the surveys in their communities. So it's an actual resident that helps. And it's an actual partner that may join them in going door to door and gathering information from people and introducing ourselves. It's very personal. It's very time consuming. But it is one of the best tools I have ever used to keep your hand on the pulse of what's going on in your communities and with your partners. So I highly recommend that you devote that time. I'm going to speak a little bit more about the survey instrument that was interesting going through it a little bit.

And I'm going to give you some examples. As I said, surveys are developed with ROSS goals in mind. So questions on the survey target various potential needs and link these directly to the

service partner deliverables. An example of this -- and I'm happy to share all of these instruments -- all of the surveys, all questionnaires. I'm happy to send them to anyone that requests them. So please note that. One of the questions might be, would you like to advance your computer skills? That's a pretty open question, right? That one directly would connect to our workforce development computer workshops and our partners that are providing that type of service.

What it does, it actually enables the partner to create a program that's very targeted and very specific to not only individual needs, but later on I speak about common needs in the community, which we have defined as service anchors. And what happens in most communities -- we know this -- the folks that we serve, the communities that we serve, have much in common with each other. They might have a desire to approach a response a different way depending on whether there's a disability or whether they have a language issue. Or maybe they're a recent immigrant, as the other presenter had been speaking about. So there's a lot of things that go on in that person in the "how," the best way to get that service to the individual.

So a lot of what I spend time in is not what the service is, because I already have partners that know what they're doing in those areas. I spend time convincing and repackaging and encouraging our partners to deliver these services in a different way, because that seems to be where we have failed, in many respects, the community. It isn't that they won't go to a GED class, it's that they would prefer to go to a GED class on Saturday morning.

It isn't that they won't talk about bullying or mental health issues and their children on the property, it's that they would like to have those presentations done at home or in smaller family home-based groupings at a neighbor's house as part of a social event or a social ongoing strategy for connecting families to one another in the property. Once those surveys are completed, what happens is you assess. You meet with your partners. And you begin that idea of, what are the things in common in this community? What can we bring as a packaged service component to start engaging folks in getting their needs met?

One last comment on surveys -- surveys are conducted at least quarterly in each of the geographic areas. So that's a lot of work. And I realize that. But it's very valuable. It connects you. It personalizes you. And it brings in that partner immediately to the home base of that client. They're conducted door to door. They're also conducted as part of information and social events. I do not host any event without a survey instrument being there. And we're not talking an evaluation. We are talking about assessing need constantly and throughout the program approach, and also then by partners that provide specifically sponsors are those anchor services.

It generally takes about four hours to conduct from response to assessment, any one of these surveys if you're doing the door-to-door. Anchor services, again, are defined by what those responses are and by the feedback that we've assessed. We found that participation level when providing these in this manner is much higher than simply bringing an individual, multiple service, calendar type of community response in the properties. Families and seniors more readily participate over time when there is an absolute direct link to what they have said they want. It's an interesting approach, but it's worked.

Linking resident leaderships to this is also an obvious piece. It's not the traditional leadership through leadership councils or that more of the governmental or organizational level. It is

actually looking at residents once you identify those anchors and you bring them in and you help them, whether it's individually by then saying, hey, I've got a service here. Let's do an individual training and service plan, or by joining groups or workshops that you're offering. What happens is you start identifying people's assets. We hear this a lot in our work, looking at residents as assets rather than just consumers of these different service programs.

So by identifying them as assets and identifying their interests, let's say, in a career field, and tying that partner's service deliverable to the possibility that this resident can work with that partner to bring these programs to their community and even learn a skill. We call these, "earn and learn opportunities." And our housing authority actually sets funds aside as stipends to help residents gain more direct work experience, but also to tie them in the networking effort to that service partner. It's been a thing of beauty to watch happen. And I can tell you we generally have 40 resident liaisons working at any given time over the course of the year with different partner service deliverables.

And they coordinate and facilitate. And they go to public meetings. And they help with surveys. And they follow up with residents to make sure that they're showing up to service deliverables or service programs being provided. So all of these things become this wheel that usually starts rolling and taking effect within the eighth month of your first year of operation. So for me, that pretty much gives you a picture of it. And I'm going to tell you about what type of anchors. Here are the anchor service programs that we find are most common across all of our properties: childcare, senior health, food and nutrition, and access to employment information.

Those were the solid program elements and program needs that everyone at any level -- whether there was a 16-year-old or whether it was a 40-year-old or a 60-year-old -- these were benefit service areas that everyone requested or needed. So we created our partnerships to deliver these in each of our properties. One thing I can tell you is that scheduled meetings and ongoing meetings and surveying the coordinator role, serving as a convener, bringing like partners together as example. You're bringing in a workforce development program, and you're training folks in jobs that might be available in manufacturing. But you don't have transportation.

So you get together with residents that, in fact, might have vehicles. Or you get together with the county transportation department and offer some creative way of getting residents to these workshops. So you bring like partners. And these partners support each other on the ancillary support needs to be effective in doing these different program responses. So that's my job. I actually meet quite a bit with partners. I rely quite heavily on the residents that are leaders. And I supervise and train and help facilitate their skill building as they're helping these different service partnerships in their community.

So to let you know again, the feedback and the survey part is essential. We do an annual one as well, and it's a little bit more specific to current service needs and wants, goals. And I also take a little bit of time to ask them about what their experiences have been over the year. And so you know, although I do have ITSP residents, and I serve residents very directly, every household is part of a ROSS service program unless they tell me they don't want to participate. So throughout the entire program of the grant, the residents are being engaged on a regular basis in their communities with either partnerships, surveys, events, you name it.

One last thing so you know, those 40 resident liaisons that I mentioned, they have job descriptions. They have work assignment detail reports that they do and that they submit every month. And the stipends -- in a shocking way, I'm going to let you know what these stipends are -- the stipends run anywhere from \$90 to \$120 a month. So they're not huge. They really are joining the workforce development partner, signing up with them, and wanting to learn a skill by still providing a service in their community.

The average number of hours a resident liaison devotes to their project is about 10 hours, max, a week. So they're not stopping their life and doing this liaison work, or I'm not providing them with just one vehicle to become self-sufficient. I'm providing them an opportunity to build some skillsets to move on and possibly move on more comfortably. So that's my presentation. I hope you took away some things from that. And thank you again.

Colleen Moore: That's great. Thank you so much, Vivian. Okay. We're going to move on to the folks in Denver. There's three of them, so I'm hoping that they'll have enough time. And we can run over a little bit. I know some of you may have questions. We've had a couple submitted so far. But let's move quickly to our presenters from Denver.

Annie Hancock: Good afternoon, everyone. And thank you for joining us. My name is Annie Hancock. I am the health and aging program administrator here at Denver Housing Authority. And I'm a service coordinator of Senior High-Rise. I am here with Angela Komar, who is a self-sufficiency program administrator and service coordinator at a family row type development, and Tsehai Teklehaimanot, who is our RCB, our resident counsel board, and local resident council program administrator. And we are here to talk about how we really put residents at the center of our engagement process.

So just a little background -- Denver Housing Authority's HUD ROSS service coordinators provide resources and referrals to residents at 20 DHA sites, including senior, disabled, and family row type, surveying over 4,500 residents. The service coordinators collaborate with resident associations, DHA housing management, and community partners to bring on-site programming to residents, including education and employment services, money management, resources and referrals, health and wellness programs, transportation assistance, food and nutrition, community gardens, and so much more.

The service coordination at DHA focuses on two main program areas -- the aging in place, and the senior and disabled housing, and the economic self-sufficiency and family row type housing. Our three keys to successful engagement, which Angela and Tsehai will elaborate on, really put residents at the center of the engagement process. First and foremost, our service coordinators partner with the residents. We work with resident leaders and local resident councils to sustain and build our partnerships. One of the most important partnerships is at our local resident councils are the applicants and the recipients of the HUD ROSS Service Coordinator Grant.

Second, is our partnership with our community agencies. By connecting with the small local organizations, such as churches, libraries, rec centers, and neighborhood associations, we are able to provide successful and appropriate programming on site for our residents. And finally, our partnership with housing management -- we partner with our property managers to engagement strategies using programs such as welcome neighbor, resident orientations, and

referral processes so we can connect with our residents upon move-in. So I'm going to turn it over to Tsehai to talk about the resident associations and local resident councils.

Tsehai Teklehaimanot: Okay. So I'm going to talk about our local resident council boards, which we refer to as LRCs. Local resident councils are the foundation for community building at DHA. And just to give you some background, we do have LRCs at each of our sites. DHA's LRCs are HUD grant recipients who work with the service coordinators to meet the needs of the community and the grant goals. LRC meetings are run by elected residents with the assistance of the service coordinator. And they convene monthly.

In these meetings, service coordinators present updates on grant goals, as well as upcoming programming. And since our LRCs are the HUD ROSS recipients for these grants, it's very important for us to make sure at these LRC meetings that we are reviewing the grants and the grant goals -- what we've met, what we need to meet, and what we look forward to meeting in the future. I do want to point out that these are official organized meetings that we host, so they do have an agenda. They do have a format that they follow. And they are very organized in the way that we go about them.

So housing management also provides updates at our meetings on upcoming inspections, building projects, policy changes, security, and other site and agency information. Local organizations are also invited to present information and resources at these meetings. This helps establish partnerships in which organizations can come back and provide on-site programming. In addition, we also have translation services that are available at these LRC meetings. And what we do is if we have a community site that we have a demographic that speaks a certain language, if we have a large participation at our LRC meetings from that demographic, we will pull in a translator to translate during those meetings.

And we are able to do this through our partnership with management, who can pick up some of the budget issues when it comes to actually bringing in translation services. So that shows how important a partnership with management is as well. Residents are your best community advocates in building and sustaining partnerships. And when we identify resident leaders, one of the ways we do that is through our LRCs. When we have our LRCs meetings, when we host events, that's when we really see the residents that are involved in bringing in programming, ideas, what they want to see as far as resources and referrals at our sites. So that's how we identify our community leaders.

And that not only helps us with our LRCs, it also helps us with establishing ambassador programs. And we do have several different ambassador programs at DHA. We have our walking ambassadors, our technology ambassadors, as well as our Welcome Neighbor Program, which Angela will speak more to in a minute.

So to gain resident advocates is really the most important thing here. And it really serves us when we establish these local resident councils. And through that, this encourages residents, management, and coordinators to partner to meet the needs of the community. Another way that we work with our residents and get information through them is also through surveys. We do have a health and aging survey. We have an economic and education survey. And those are surveys that the service coordinator team puts out. And then we also partner with management to

do a resident satisfaction survey. So I will now turn it over to Angela, who will talk more about our local partners.

Angela Komar: Hello, everyone. So just like some of the other agencies that spoke earlier, we have lots of local service partners. And the way we develop our relationships with our local agencies is really by using our residents. We meet with the residents. We survey the residents. We ask for their suggestions and input prior to bringing a service on board. That way we have resident buy-in from the get-go. We also utilize residents in their relationships within the community to create partnerships. So our resident leaders will tell their service coordinator about a great agency or service that's available. And then the service coordinator will reach out.

And we invite those agencies to come to the LRC meetings and present about their program. When they do that, they start to build a relationship with the residents themselves. And that usually helps facilitate them bringing the programming out. So we are able to do a lot of our programming at the sites themselves to avoid transportation issues and obstacles. For example, we've got health clinics at eight of our sites that come monthly. We have mobile food banks that go straight to our sites. And these are just a couple examples of the many types of relationships that we utilize that really comes from the residents.

So here are some more partnerships that we have. And we also have after-school and early-learning programs on site as well. And again, a lot of these partnerships continue to thrive because of the relationship between the partner agency and the residents. So briefly, I'll touch on our initial engagement strategies with residents. We have a partnership with housing management that allows us to provide resident services orientations prior to resident move-in. So when a resident is notified that an apartment will soon be made available, they are instructed to come to one of our opportunity centers located at a housing development.

And then they meet the service coordinator, learn about the programming that's available. And that really begins that relationship. Then, once they move in, we partner again with housing management, and we have a Welcome Neighbor Program. What's really great about the Welcome Neighbor Program is we involve the residents in it. So as Tsehai mentioned, a Welcome Neighbor ambassador is appointed at each development. And they go through a training. And then they participate in the Welcome Neighbor onboarding of new neighbors, which means they go out with the property manager and the service coordinator door-to-door and welcome new move-ins and provide them with a small gift and a binder full of resources.

We also have the resident achievement program. Again, this is another major partnership with our housing management department. The resident achievement program is put in place to provide incentives for residents to meet the grant goals associated with the ROSS Service Coordinator Grant.

So when residents are meeting those goals or participating in activities to help them meet those goals -- such as joining an employment program, getting a job, maintaining a job, attending a health clinic -- they receive points. And the service coordinators tracks those points. And residents can then redeem or cash in those points for upgrades to their units. They can buy supplies to help clean their units -- everything from basic cleaning supplies to new carpeting or painting a room in their unit. Again, this is funded through our housing management department

through that relationship we have with them. And it is a great way to start building a rapport and relationships with our residents to help bring them into the programming that we do.

I'm not going to go through all of these different ways we provide ongoing engagement because a lot of these have been talked about already. But I just want to reiterate the importance of constant outreach -- flyers, bulletin boards, emails, anything that you can do to really remind the residents that we're around and then use the residents to also promote the programs. So the resident council board meetings, the local resident council meetings, we always are including information about programming and upcoming events and workshops and classes in the community. And often, residents are bringing their own information about local resources to those meetings to share with other residents.

We also provide annual events that help those communities, such as our holiday programming, which helps us engage residents that we might not see in our other programs. And that might be the first doorway into becoming involved with their service coordinator. And the importance of listening to the resident and learning from them, what's important for their community and really basing the programming that we bring in on the resident needs, because that helps with their buy-in and their engagement. And we just wanted to show off a couple pictures. On the left you'll see residents at a leadership conference. The resident council board provides meetings.

And they provide conferences which are open to all the residents at all of our developments. And we help provide transportation so that residents can participate. And every July we do our leadership conference, so that's what you're seeing in that picture on the left. And on the right, are our five resident council board members. They are each at a different site. And they come together to provide these really large meetings and conferences. So we're very proud of the work that they do advocating for their community. And we're really lucky to have them as such strong partners. So thank you for allowing us to be here with you today and to present. And I'll turn it over.

Colleen Moore: Thank you so much, Angela. We actually are just about right on time. And I believe that Trey has actually been able to answer just about all the questions that were submitted through the Q&A box. Are there others?

Anna Mahathey: I think there were some that were sent privately.

Colleen Moore: Okay. Well, Trey how do you want to handle any remaining questions?

Tremayne Youmans: Yeah. So if you guys have questions, I know we're a little bit over, but we can take 5-10 minutes to answer some more questions. I know, Vivian, people are interested in your survey, so one, getting your survey out to participants if you're willing to share that, which I believe you are.

Vivian Diaz: I am. Very much so. I was hoping that maybe my email would be provided. And I could actually package some of these different little instruments that I have, because there's different types. So I'm very happy to provide that.

Tremayne Youmans: Sure. So we can also send out -- it may be helpful -- I think we were going to do this -- the contact information for those that presented today so you guys can also further ask any questions.

Colleen Moore: Trey? Excuse me. Before we close out, there are actually another couple of questions that only appeared in some Q&A boxes. I think Anna has a couple. And maybe we can just take a couple minutes and see if our presenters can respond to a couple of these. Is that okay?

Tremayne Youmans: Yes.

Anna Mahathey: So one of the first questions was submitted during Melissa's presentation asking, "What has worked to engage people with disabilities?"

Melissa Nordel-Earp: Well, I think it's just first, when I'm working with people with disabilities and I have a good idea of what their needs are, it's maximizing if there are any supportive services that they may be eligible for to enhance their support systems, then I will try to link them to those. If their disabilities are based on mental health, I always make sure they're linked in. We have an integrated health program if they meet the criteria which provides direct service workers in regards to that feature. So it really depends on what the individual's needs are.

In the state of Iowa, we have managed care organizations that are affiliated with Medicaid. So sometimes they're offering a lot of additional benefits, like wellness programs and/or Silver Sneakers is another one if they're on Medicare, looking at avenues to help them stabilize, or what options do we have to improve or maintain their health and wellbeing? So I try to link those into those, if that answers the question.

Colleen Moore: Great. Thanks. Any more?

Anna Mahathey: The next question, this is for Vivian. And it asks, "Where do you get the funding for resident liaison stipends?"

Vivian Diaz: That is a great question. And it's a question that I get asked often. Our housing authority has set aside under resident participation funds a little bit of outside funding, and makes it available to do incentives. Housing management really provides the funds for this. I have also been exploring lately, because this year is not a ROSS Service Coordinator Grant year for us as a community. We've gone through a large rental assistance demonstration project. So the conversion of our public housing is almost complete across our jurisdiction.

So what I've been doing a lot lately is actually working with those solid partners, those relationships that I've built over the last nine years, to explore grants and to create new venues for funding, specifically to keep this earn-and-learn project going, which seems to be really effective. So back to those stipends, it's important. So for an example, we served over 6,000 meals between after-school and summer-meal programs. And so our food bank is quite a good solid partner for us. So I'm exploring grants that we can write together and integrate the resident liaison or the resident stipend into those grant requests.

We also have a kids club. And I'm looking at some childcare providers that seem to be amenable to look for new funding pools. So that's how we have our money for stipends and for the liaisons.

Colleen Moore: Great. Thank you. One more?

Anna Mahathey: Yeah. Okay. So this is a question for all of the presenters. "What can you tell us about the size of the resident populations that you all have been discussing today?"

Vivian Diaz: Yeah. This is Vivian. The seven geographic areas that I had mentioned in those communities, you're looking at apartment complexes of 25-125 units. So given that I had said that I pretty much serve everyone, unless they don't or opt to not participate, I'm looking at about 285 households on a regular basis, with the typical household of three to four people in each household. So that's the ROSS direct service client population, I would say.

Annie Hancock: Here in Denver, we have 20 properties ranging from, 12 of those are senior and disabled, and those sizes range from around 75 units to 254; and at our row type family developments, between 131 and 380 units. So a service coordinator may be split between multiple sites so they could be serving upwards of 388-400 households per service coordinator.

Melissa Nordel-Earp: And this is Melissa. Mine is the smallest out of all three of the presenters. So I touched on Royal View Manor, which is the adult public housing unit that I serve under ROSS specifically. There are 200 units. And then I have 43 scattered site homes. And the household composition may vary. Let's just say, an average of three to four household members. So those are the individuals that I serve based on seeking services from me.

Colleen Moore: Okay. Thanks. Go ahead. Another one?

Anna Mahathey: "What role does social media play with outreach and engagement? And what have you found most effective?"

Colleen Moore: I think that's for anyone.

Angela Komar: This is Angela, Denver. We have explored this option to try to use social media to engage residents. And currently, we have not ventured into that territory as the housing authority. However, our local resident councils are very interested in creating a Facebook account and using that to engage other residents. And we're still in communication as to how that would look as far as what technical support the service coordinator would provide. So unfortunately, we don't have any real information to share about how successful it is, but it has been something that we've considered.

Anna Mahathey: Great. The next question is for Vivian. "How long is the survey? And how long do you recommend it to be?"

Vivian Diaz: The initial survey, it's actually a single page. It has about 10 questions on it. And I would not recommend getting too deeply into, "What would you like to do and how would you like to do it?" type of questions. Primarily, what I'm looking for in the survey is contact availability. That is a real key essential role of the survey, knowing exactly when a resident is

most available for service deliverables, so we can shape the time of day and the schedule for our partners to be more successful in bringing those programs.

I also look at experience in work, since we do want to focus on employment and education as a priority under ROSS. I do look and ask a couple of questions about background and work experience. And then I ask some very generic questions, or more what I call generic questions based back on to that logic model and the priorities. So I'm asking things that relate back to some overarching goals, like, are you finding that you're needing some more nutrition services during the summer, or during the fall, or not at all?

And the reason I phrase it like that is because that is obviously a personal question. And they may not know me or may have a relationship with me or one of my workers. And again, I say workers and I mean residents, the resident liaisons. So I want to leave that open as much as possible for them to do that. But it's single page. It can be conducted in Spanish and English. I haven't tried it in other languages, but we do have it available in both Spanish and English.

Anna Mahathey: Great. The next question, I believe this is a question that Denver can answer. "Has it helped anyone to work in partnership with elected officials as an additional form of engagement?"

Angela Komar: So at our resident council board meetings -- and those are the large meetings -- and we do host one of those large meetings once every other month, so we have six in a year -- and we do invite residents from all 20 of our sites -- at those meetings, we will occasionally have elected officials come out sometimes and speak to the community, especially if there are people who were a part of that community or grew up in it or they're in that district for that council. However, we have recently started working with the City of the Denver to put on what are called, "board and leadership workshops" so that we can educate our residents on how they can apply, interview, and actually sit on city council boards around the city.

It's really important for us to make sure that our residents have a voice on the agency level. But just with all the changes that are happening, we also want to make sure they have that voice on the city level. So that's kind of the connection that we have there. So we do have boards and commissions around the city that have appointees that are appointed by the mayor.

And we specifically work with and give our residents the skills to be able to apply, interview, and actually sit on those boards. And a lot of those skills already come from them being able to successfully execute their actual own LRC meeting. So we've tried to make that transition. So that's kind of a way that we work with some of our elected officials or the city.

Anna Mahathey: Great. Thank you. We have two more. Do we have time?

Colleen Moore: Okay. Yeah. Let's see if we can squeeze in the last two. I apologize and thank all of you to be able to hold on with us for an extra 14 or 15 minutes.

Anna Mahathey: This question asks, "Do you also see a need to provide a service at its minimum state where there's no service available for families, for example, self-esteem empowerment services for residents?" And that's a question open to all the panelists.

Vivian Diaz: I believe I can take that on a little bit. The idea of the 40-resident liaisons for me is in support of providing that type of opportunity or service. Self-esteem empowerment, resident leadership, anything that brings the skillset and the position of that resident to more of their personal exploration of them being an asset, of them being able to address self-sufficiency in their own way by linking with others. Yes. I would agree that that kind of opportunity if it's available through a partner, and I would recommend very strongly that you identify partners for that. And by the way, mental health partners sometimes have that opportunity available.

Melissa Nordel-Earp: And I would agree with what she said and just echoing, I think the self-esteem, the confidence -- you know, as you build someone's confidence if there's confidence issue or achieving things, even small steps can build self-esteem. I had a woman who started taking community-based ESL, and her self-esteem -- my observation -- it was just tremendous the difference as her English language skills improved by attending a community-based ESL.

That's just one example. But I think by all the actions that you do and the linkages and checking back in with someone alone besides maybe a specific workshop -- which you could put on, whatever the case -- I think that builds that self-esteem and that confidence to move forward in their journey.

Anna Mahathey: The last question is directed to you, Vivian, asking how you get surveys submitted back to you. "Most residents don't complete them for us or leave most of the questions blank. Do you give an incentive to turn in completed surveys?"

Vivian Diaz: Interesting. I don't give incentives for completing surveys. And I think the good fortune that I've had is we really do train and we spend a lot of time training our resident support team, our liaison team and our partners to work together to conduct surveys in the community.

And remember what I had said earlier, these are not scientific surveys. These are not programmable surveys that you just then do a data entry sheet on this. You tabulate these items by hand once you receive the data. These are coded. So what happens is people get to go back and forth. We go back three times. If we do not get a response, we do a mailing as part of that.

So we do the door-to-door, we do a mailing, and then we go back physically again. By the third time, we normally have some contact. And we do get some response. I've been pretty successful. I get about a 45-55 percent response on my surveys, which is huge, I think.

Colleen Moore: Yeah. It is. Okay. Trey, do you have anything else?

Tremayne Youmans: I want to thank everyone for coming. I also want to say in the chat box, I put how everyone can sign up for the ROSS mailing list. The link is there below. On that link, you'll actually see a few mailing lists that you can sign up for. If you scroll towards the bottom, you'll see the ROSS mailing list serv. And there you can get a lot of information not only regarding ROSS, but also PIH programs as well. So it's a very helpful link in communicating not only getting information and resources out to all of you all.

Colleen Moore: And, Trey, can we use that? When the recording is made available, the recording of the today's webinar, can we use that as a way to provide the link to folks?

Tremayne Youmans: Sure. So once the recording is available, all those that are signed up for the listserv, we can email that listserv this webinar. So we want to encourage everyone that's participating on this to, if you have not already, sign up for the listserv.

Colleen Moore: Great. And thank you to all of our presenters and everyone who participated, especially all of you who stayed on for an extra 20 minutes today. We really appreciate it.

Vivian Diaz: Thank you.

Angela Komar: Thank you.

Tsehai Teklehaimanot: Thank you.

Colleen Moore: Okay.