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THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



FLEXIBLE RESOURCES, DATA-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS:  
USING HMIS AND HEARTH TO END HOMELESSNESS

# Performance Measurement of Homeless Systems

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## Learning Objectives

- Participants will review and understand...
  - Performance measures identified in HEARTH, including the performance criteria for “high performing communities”
  - Which programs impact each measure and how to use the HMIS data to calculate performance
  - Approaches to using performance data for system management and performance improvement





## Why Measure Performance Across the CoC?

- Ensure common understanding of system intent and goals, along with the programs that make up the CoC
- Understand how individual programs (via 'outputs') result in positive change for persons served ('outcomes')
- Understand how individual programs impact overall CoC performance
- Understand how well CoC prevents & ends homelessness
- Identify areas for improvement





## Shifting Federal Performance Emphasis

- McKinney-Vento *before HEARTH Act*
  - CoC: performance measurement focused on aggregated HUD-funded project outcomes
    - Permanent housing at exit (TH projects)
    - Housing tenure (PSH projects)
    - Employment at exit (All)
  - ESG: performance measurement focused on sub-recipient outputs (CAPER)





## Shifting Federal Performance Emphasis

- Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)
  - Performance measurement focused on grantee outputs/outcomes
    - Number of persons/households served
    - Permanent housing at exit
    - Change in income entry to exit
- McKinney-Vento *as amended by HEARTH Act*
  - CoC: performance measurement will focus on CoC performance as a system
  - ESG: performance will impact CoC performance



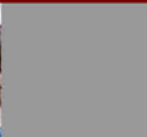


## *Audience Quiz 1:*

1: What is one of the key performance indicators specified in the HEARTH Act?

Response options:

- Reduction in unsheltered population
- Length of time individuals and families remain homeless
- Increased self-sufficiency of persons who are homeless
- Increased number of persons who can recite Justin Bieber song lyrics





## HEARTH Act: CoC Performance *Indicators* “Selection Criteria”

- Length of time homeless
- Recidivism (subsequent return to homelessness)
- Access/coverage (thoroughness in reaching persons who are homeless)
- Overall reduction in number of persons who experience homelessness
- Job and income growth for persons who are homeless
- Reduction in first time homeless
- Other accomplishments related to reducing homelessness





## HEARTH Act: CoC Performance *Indicators* “Selection Criteria”

- If serving families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes:
  - Preventing homelessness among families with children and youth who are at highest risk of becoming homeless, or
  - Achieving independent living in permanent housing among such families with children and youth, especially those who have a history of doubled-up and other temporary housing situations or are living in a temporary housing situation due to lack of available and appropriate emergency shelter

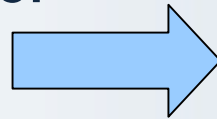






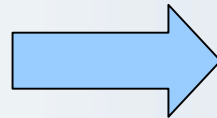
## HEARTH Act: Performance *Targets* for “High Performing” CoCs

Mean length of episodes of  
homelessness...



< 20 days  
OR  
 $\geq 10\%$  less than prior year for persons  
in similar circumstances

Recidivism...



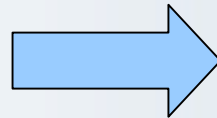
< 5% within the next 2 years  
OR  
Decrease of  $\geq 20\%$  over prior year for  
persons in similar circumstances  
within next 2 years





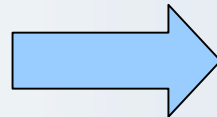
## HEARTH Act: Performance *Targets* for “High Performing” CoCs

**Service system  
participation...**



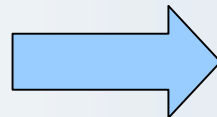
**Actively encourage homeless  
individuals and families to participate  
in homeless assistance services  
available in geographic area**

**Data system  
participation...**



**Include each homeless individual or  
family who sought homeless  
assistance services in the local HMIS**

**Effectiveness of  
previous activities in...**



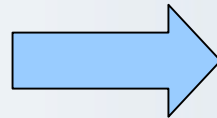
**Reducing the number of individuals  
and families who became homeless**





# HEARTH Act: Performance *Targets* for “High Performing” CoCs

Effectiveness in...



Preventing homelessness among families with children and youth who are at highest risk of becoming homeless

OR

Achieving independent living in permanent housing among families with children and youth who are at highest risk of becoming homeless, especially those who have a history of doubled-up and other temporary housing situations or are living in a temporary housing situation due to lack of available and appropriate emergency shelter





## What is Performance Measurement?

Performance measurement is a ***process*** that ***systematically evaluates*** whether your ***efforts*** are making an ***impact*** on the clients you are serving or the problem you are targeting.





## Performance Measurement Terms

- **Performance Indicators:**
  - Output: what a program or system does or produces (e.g. number served, cost/household, length of stay, etc.)
  - Outcomes: what is gained or changed as a result of output related to client knowledge, skills, behaviors or conditions (e.g. housing destination, recidivism, income changes, etc.)
- **Performance Target:** percentage or numeric goal set for an indicator





## Performance Measurement Terms

- **Difference between system and program performance targets**
  - Program goals: may vary depending on target population, program purpose, services, etc.; use for measuring program performance individually, compare to similar programs
  - System goals: reflect aggregate performance; measure of system impact; use for measuring system achievement of CoC goals, compare to other communities





## Establishing a CoC Performance Measurement Structure

1. Identify & Develop Performance Indicators
2. Set Performance Targets
3. Measure Performance
4. Report Progress
5. Identify and Make Improvements





***Identify Performance Indicators***

***Set Performance Targets***

***Make Improvements***

***Measure Performance***

***Report Progress***







# 1. Identify & Define Performance Indicators

- Key Considerations:
  - What impact is the CoC trying to make?
    - Primary: prevent and end homelessness
    - Secondary: increase well-being, stability...during and after
  - What indicators best reflect and convey CoC impact and achievement of the CoC's strategic plan?
  - What indicators are used by CoC funders (public/private)?
    - Are such indicators already defined and operationalized?
  - What is beyond system/program control?
  - What programs affect an indicator and can therefore also be measured on the indicator?
  - Are the right programs collecting the right data?
  - Is data quality sufficient?





## CoC Impact: Key Considerations

- **Prevention/Diversion** – Are fewer people experiencing homelessness for the first-time? Are only persons who have no safe, appropriate housing option being admitted to shelter?
- **Incidence of homelessness** – Are overall rates of homelessness declining? Is street homelessness declining? Is chronic homelessness declining?
- **Length of stay in system, across all homeless programs** - Do people stay homeless for shorter periods of time?





## CoC Impact: Key Considerations

- **Successful resolution of housing/homeless crisis**
  - Do people resolve their housing/homeless crisis successfully by maintaining/obtaining permanent housing? Are people successfully connected to community-based supports?
- **Repeat incidents of homelessness (recidivism)** – Are repeat occurrences of homelessness avoided or declining?





## CoC GOALS

*PREVENT*

**HOMELESSNESS**

*END*

*REDUCE*





## Identifying Key CoC Indicators: HEARTH

- Remember, HEARTH identifies the following indicators to be used by HUD:
  - Length of time homeless
  - Recidivism (subsequent return to homelessness)
  - Access/coverage (thoroughness in reaching persons who are homeless)
  - Overall reduction in number of persons who experience homelessness
  - Job and income growth for persons who are homeless
  - Reduction in first time homeless
  - Other accomplishments related to reducing homelessness
  - Prevention/independent living for families with children and youth defined as homeless under other federal programs





## Developing a Performance Indicator: Key Elements

For each indicator (output or outcome), identify the following:

**Purpose:** identifies the reason for the indicator

**Programs:** identifies the programs and/or system for which an indicator applies

**Definition:** defines the indicator

**Program Goal-Setting Methodology:** basis for setting goals around the indicator

**Reporting Methodology:** provides detailed description of how indicator is calculated





## Example Performance Indicator: Length of Time Homeless

**Purpose:** A reasonably short length of time homeless indicates system and program success in rapidly re-housing persons who are homeless. It can also indicate efficiency related to turnover of beds which is essential to meet system demand for emergency shelter.

**Programs:** Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, and Transitional Housing Programs

**Definition:** The average cumulative number of days households receive outreach services, emergency shelter and transitional housing as measured by their sum total days of program participation. For each program enrollment, this is measured from their first program entry to exit or last day of report period.





## Example Performance Indicator: Length of Time Homeless

**Program Goal-setting methodology:** Meet or below CoC target. An average length of time homeless that is less than the CoC target is considered positive.

**Reporting methodology:**  $\text{Sum (Per enrollment: household exit date or report end date - Entry date) / the number of total distinct households served within the report period.}$







## Which Programs are Accountable? Who to Count?

- For HEARTH indicators, HUD will define each and determine a common reporting methodology.
- Be clear if applicable at program or person-level





## Example of Performance Indicators by Program Type

	Prevention	Outreach	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Re-Housing	Permanent Supportive Housing
Number Served	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Successful Housing Outcomes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Average Length of Stay			✓	✓	✓	✓
Recidivism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Successful Income Outcomes			✓		✓	
Direct Client Assistance Utilization		✓		✓	✓	
Occupancy			✓			✓





# Measurement Methodology Considerations

Specify all parts of query/calculation:

- Programs
  - Across a program type (e.g., all outreach, all PSH programs)
  - All programs
  - Programs that serve a specific subpopulation
- Clients (de-duplicated across programs)
  - All 'exiters'
  - All participants
  - All currently enrolled
  - Those who stayed > 6 months
- Data Elements
  - Same HMIS elements as program measures
  - Need rules to reconcile data across programs if client was enrolled in more than one program
- Timeframe
  - Define date range
  - Specify date field (entry date, exit date, placement date, assessment date, etc.)





## Using HMIS Data for Measurement

**Indicators can be calculated consistently for all clients if, and only if:**

- Staff are collecting the required information at entry, exit and any applicable interim data collection points for each client.
- Staff are recording this information into the HMIS in a timely fashion (e.g., 4<sup>th</sup> business day of every month for prior month).
- The target population is clearly defined.
- Programs clearly define what constitutes a “program enrollment”, there are clear policies/procedures, and staff consistently apply.
- The program goals are clearly defined for the target population.





## Using HMIS Data for Measurement

***Collecting and entering data in accord with HUD's HMIS Data Standards (updated March 2010) and having quality data are pre-requisites for performance measurement***





## 2. Set Performance Targets

- Key Considerations:
  - How is the CoC currently performing? Individual programs?
  - How are other communities performing on the same or similar indicators?
  - What is reasonable and achievable...but requires effort to achieve?
  - What are longer term goals and how can interim performance targets be used to help move the CoC toward goal achievement?
  - What targets have funders (public/private) set for the CoC?  
Programs within the CoC?
  - For individual programs, how will the target population served and the services provided to the target population affect performance?  
How will the local economy and housing market affect performance?
  - Should performance targets be adjusted for certain programs based on target population, services provided and/or other factors?





## Approach to Setting Targets

- **Adopt longer-term system goals and interim targets**
  - Examine past program and system performance data
  - Account for state and federal goals (e.g., HPRP, HEARTH)
  - Account for local goals related to achievement of long-term impact
- **Establish program performance expectations**
  - Negotiate with agencies
  - Incorporate into CoC/funding agreements
  - Identify quarterly, semi-annual, annual goals
  - Account for degree to which a program type impacts overall performance
  - Determine response to low performance up front





## Example CoC 3 Year Goals

- Decrease PIT count by 30% overall (once consistent methodology used)
- Increase emergency shelter diversions to 20%
- Reduce length of time homeless to 30 days
- Increase income of assisted households by 25%
- Increase permanent housing exits to 70%
- Reduce recidivism to 5%
- *Set different goals for different 'sub-parts' of the system (e.g., homelessness prevention, homeless outreach, men's emergency shelter, etc.) and/or programs that serve certain types of clients (e.g., different goals for severely disabled persons)*







## Example of Setting a Performance Target: Length of Time Homeless

- System Goal: reduce average length of time homeless to 30 days by end of 2013
- Current CoC performance: 45 day average
- CoC Performance Targets:
  - 2011: 40 days
  - 2012: 35 days
  - 2013: 30 days
- Programs that impact this goal: Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing
  - Not all program types impact goal equally





## Example of Setting a Performance Target: Length of Time Homeless

- CoC Performance Targets by Program Type (average length of program stay/participation)

	Street Outreach	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Current Performance	51 days	33 days	115 days
2011 Target	48 days	30 days	105 days
2012 Target	44 days	28 days	100 days
2013 Target	38 days	25 days	95 days





## 3. Measure Performance

- Key Considerations:
  - Is HMIS system ready?
    - Sufficient coverage, data quality for period examined?
  - Have reporting methodologies been tested?
    - Are results valid, reliable?
  - How often will performance be measured? How often do funders require performance to be measured?





## Example of Measuring Performance: Length of Time Homeless

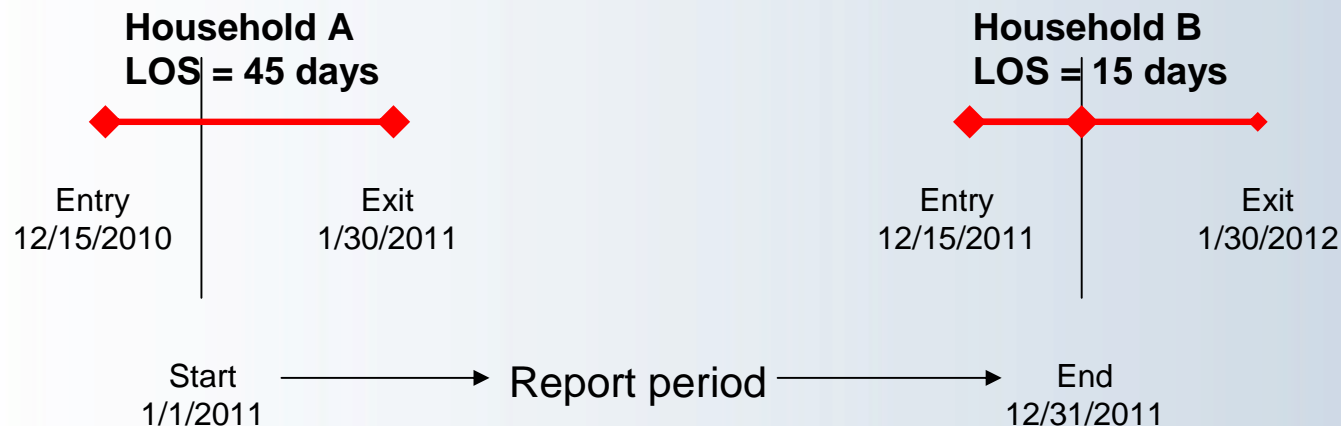
- Key HMIS Data Elements to Measure Length of Time Homeless
  - Program Descriptor Data Elements:
    - Program Type (outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing)
  - Universal Data Elements:
    - Name, SSN, DoB (depending on de-duplication approach)
    - Program Entry Date
    - Program Exit Date
    - Personal Identification Number
    - Household Identification Number





## Example of Measuring Performance: Length of Time Homeless

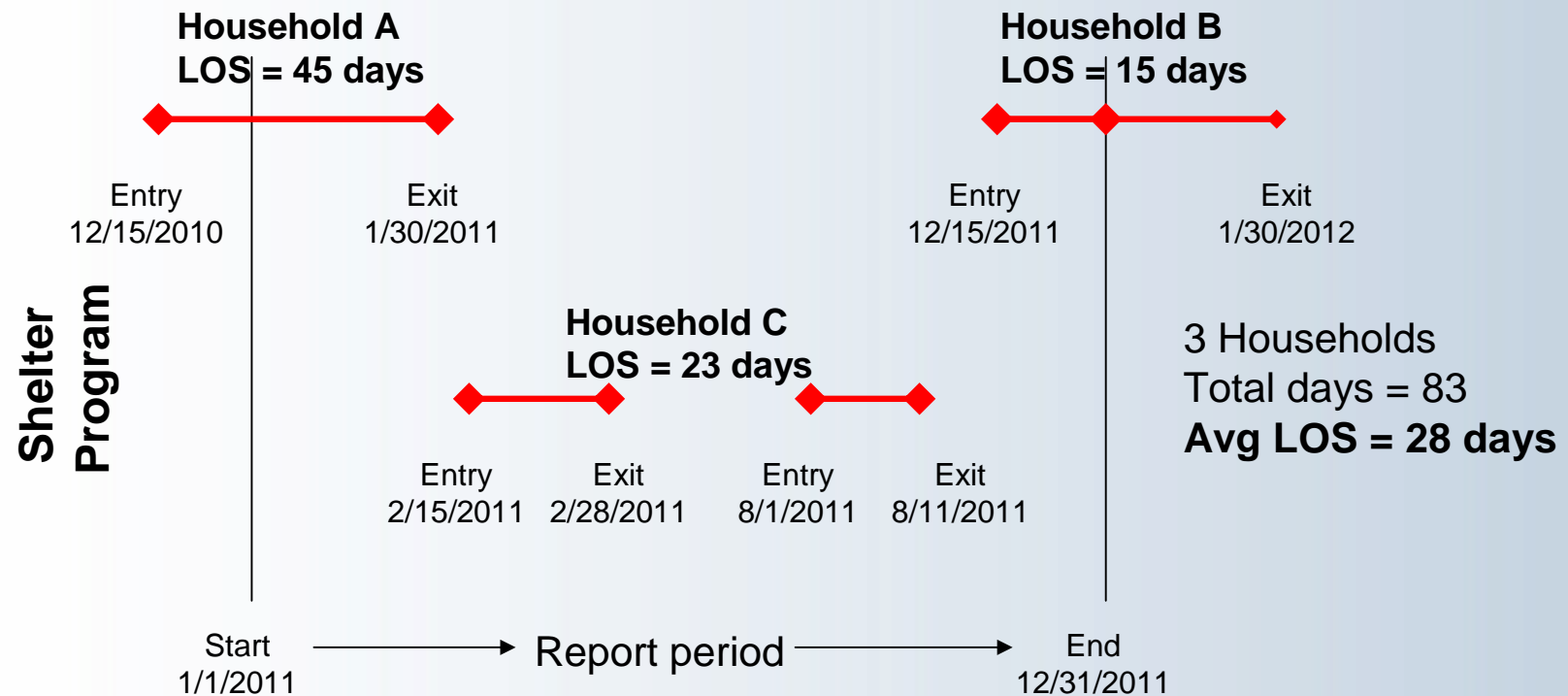
- Build query based on indicator reporting methodology
  - Sum (Per enrollment: household exit date or report end date – Entry date) / the number of total distinct households served within the report period.
- Household shelter stay examples:





# Example of Measuring Performance: Length of Time Homeless

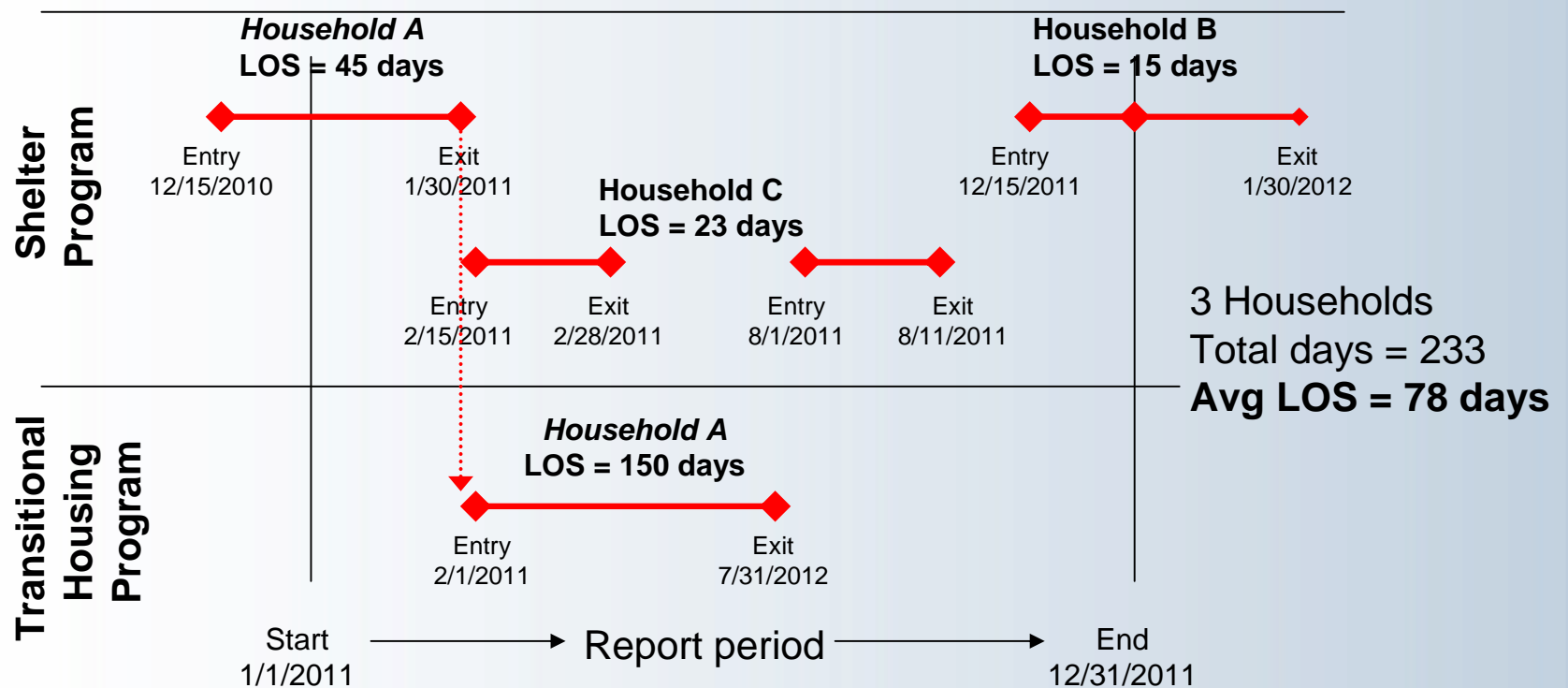
- Program performance example:





# Example of Measuring Performance: Length of Time Homeless

- System performance example:





## Caveats of System Performance Measurement & Analysis

- May require a lag in time even beyond the client's completion of program involvement
  - *Measuring recidivism requires a certain period of time (e.g. 3, 6 or 12 months) after program exit in which return to the system might occur*
- If the HMIS only includes data from a subset of programs, the system analysis will provide an incomplete picture
  - *Perceived decline in recidivism may only reflect absence from participating providers as opposed to not being homeless anymore*







## 4. Report Progress

- Key Considerations:
  - How will CoC performance be reported?
    - CoC “Dashboard”
  - Who will receive CoC performance reports?
    - Providers
    - CoC governing group
    - Local governments
    - Other public/private funders
    - Other CoC/community stakeholders
  - How often will performance be reported?
    - Quarterly, semi-annually, annually?
  - Will positive and/or negative achievement be highlighted?





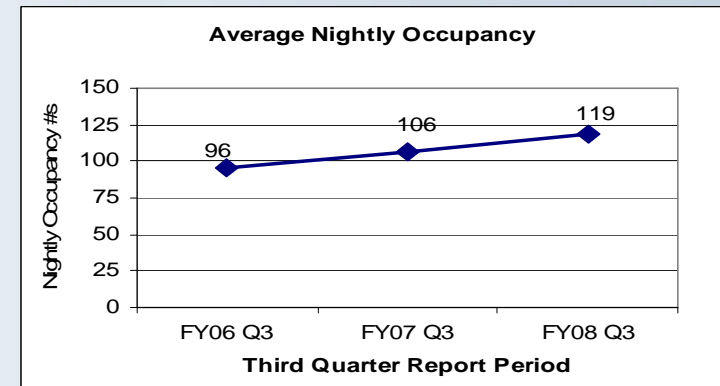
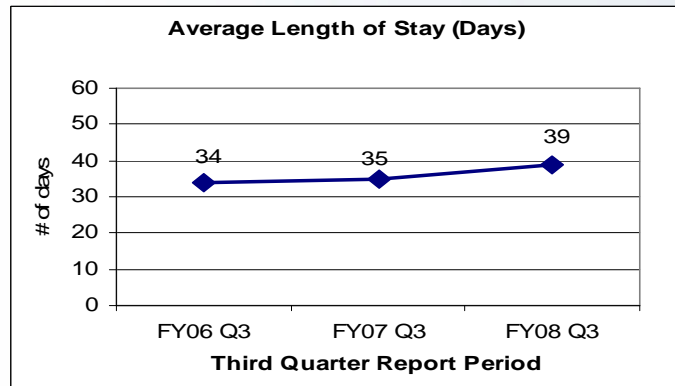
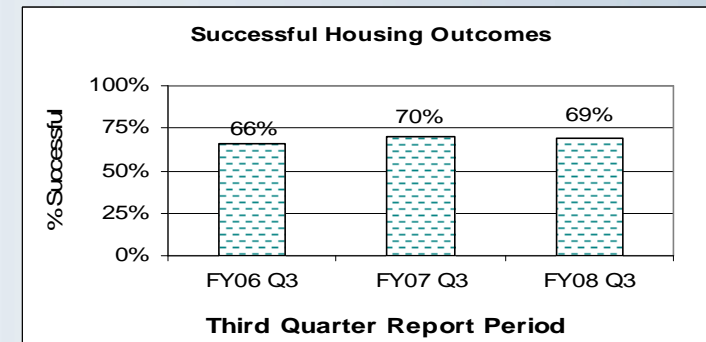
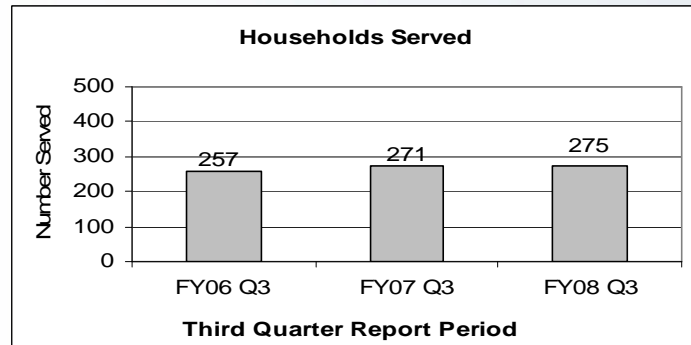
# Example of Performance Reporting: Columbus, Ohio

- **Annual Evaluation**
  - System & program measures compared to period goal
  - Used to help determination annual funding
  - Data mostly derived from HMIS
  - Programs scored as:
    - *High*: no less than one not achieved
    - *Medium*: half or more achieved
    - *Low*: less than half achieved
- **Quarterly System & Program Indicator Reports**
  - System & program performance measures compared to period goal
  - Used to identify system(s) and program(s) “of concern”, need for intervention
- **Annual Community Report on Homelessness**
  - Annual and trend data
  - Point-in-time count data
- **Reports issued to CSB Board of Trustees, CoC Steering Committee, funders, [www.csb.org](http://www.csb.org)**





# Example of Performance Reporting: Columbus, Ohio – Family Shelter System





## 5. Make Improvements

- Key Considerations:
  - How can performance reports be used to in a performance improvement framework?
    - Continuous quality and performance improvement
    - “What gets measured, gets done”
  - Performance data should inform...
    - Annual HUD CoC project selection process
    - Local public/private funding decisions
    - Identification of system needs/gaps
    - Public policy development
    - CoC goal adjustment





## *Audience Quiz 2:*

2: What is one of the key steps to establishing a CoC performance measurement structure?

Response options:

1. Ensure every program that provides any type of help for homeless persons is entering data in HMIS
2. Set-up a an independent client database for each CoC program
3. Define performance indicators
4. Test on a loved one and see if they still love you





## Additional Resources:

*What Gets Measured, Gets Done: A Toolkit on  
Performance Measurement for Ending Homelessness*

<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/2039>

HUD Homeless Resource Exchange

[www.HUDHRE.info](http://www.HUDHRE.info)

Community Shelter Board

[www.csb.org](http://www.csb.org)

