



ANCHORAGE COALITION TO
END HOMELESSNESS

HOUSING REFERRAL SESSION 1

Access and prioritization: **How to get clients in the housing queue**

Presented by Mac Lyons, Coordinated Entry Director



Against the wind

“The willow submits to the wind and prospers until one day it is many willows — a wall against the wind.”

— *Frank Herbert, "Dune"*

Goals of Coordinated Entry (CE)



Prioritize most vulnerable for limited resources.



Streamline the Homeless Response System.



Move communities to data-informed decisions.





How does Coordinated Entry achieve this?

- With the help of a coalition of service providers.
- People-focused intervention that plays off client strengths and weaknesses to find a **more perfect** housing solution.
- By constantly evolving to help lead individuals and families to the best options.

Coordinated Entry: meeting individualized needs

Coordinated Entry helps connect clients to the appropriate housing interventions.

- For some this will be light touches.
- Others need rapid rehousing or other housing funds.
- Some will require more intensive interventions such as permanent supportive housing or help finding assisted living.



Access: where it begins

“Access refers to how people experiencing a housing crisis learn that coordinated entry exists and access crisis response services.” – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Access Points:

- Play a *critical* role for our neighbors experiencing homelessness.
- Often the first contact with the homelessness response system.
- Front line for Coordinated Entry.
- First step for housing referral.

Without Access Points our clients will be lost in the system with no chance of getting housing referrals through CE.



Access Points

The word from HUD



Ensure all people have equal access to the crisis response system.



Accessible and well-advertised.



Streamlined.



Cover the Continuum of Care's entire geographic area.



Multiple Access Points needed to cover a large geographic area like the Municipality of Anchorage.

Current Access Points



ACEH Main Office
4700 E Tudor Road, Suite A



ACEH Street Outreach Pop-ups
Tuesdays at Cuddy Park, Thursdays at Davis Park 1 p.m.



Covenant House Alaska (TAY Clients Only)
755 A Street



3rd Avenue Resource & Navigation Center
1101 E 3rd Avenue



RurAL CAP: Safe Harbor
207 Muldoon Road



Emergency Cold Weather Shelters*
Alex Hotel, Aviator Hotel and 1111 E 56th Avenue

*Completes/updates assessments for residents only.





Anchorage needs more Access Points!!!

More Access Points means more coverage.

The more coverage the less likely clients will fall through the cracks!

Getting more people into Coordinated Entry helps people navigate the housing system faster!

Why do a Coordinated Entry Assessment?

An open assessment places the client on the prioritization list based on vulnerability.

Each question in the assessment has a purpose to help find a **more perfect** housing referral for the client.

A CE Assessment is the **only way** to have your client get on the prioritization list.

If your client is not on the prioritization list, your client **will not** receive a housing referral.



Coordinated Entry lives and
breathes by having an
accurate prioritization list!

THE MORE ACCURATE THE PRIORITIZATION LIST, THE FASTER
AND MORE SUCCESSFUL HOUSING REFERRALS WILL BE.

It's best we got, yet ...

Due to the sheer volume of clients on the prioritization list, not everyone will receive a housing referral.

Clients low in the prioritization list need to be referred to other resources around town that can potentially help.



If your client is not on the prioritization list, your client ***will not*** receive a housing referral through CE.

YOUR CLIENT NEEDS AN OPEN CE ASSESSMENT TO BE ON THE PRIORITIZATION LIST.

What happens after the CE Assessment?

- Once the assessment is completed the client is put onto the prioritization list the following morning.
- AKHMIS automatically calculates where the client will be placed on the prioritization list.
- Clients wait a varied amount of time depending where they land on the prioritization list.
- *EX: Client A and B receive a CE Assessment at the same time.*
 - *Due to prioritization, client B appears high on the list than Client A.*
 - *Client B receives a referral within a month.*
 - *Client A, due to being lower in the prioritization list, receives a referral six months later.*



What is prioritization?

- Coordinated Entry-specific process by which all persons in need of assistance who use Coordinated Entry are ranked in order of priority.
- HUD requires that priority be given to those who are most vulnerable.
- Prioritization is based on a specific and definable set of criteria that are documented, made publicly available and applied consistently throughout the CoC for all populations.



Anchorage's Current Prioritization

Anchorage is one of a kind!

Clients are prioritized based on their HUD disability conditions as reported in the CE Assessment.

- Each disability gets a +1 point added to their prioritization
 - Alcohol Use Disorder, Drug Use Disorder, and Both Drug and Alcohol Disorder are considered 1 point no matter what the combination of the answers are
 - It doesn't matter if the client has all three selected. They will still only get 1 point total for all three being selected.



Tie Breakers

The most a client can currently score is 6 points.

The tie breaker factors are:

1. Client's age; oldest to youngest

2. Length of time homeless as determined by first touch in AKHMIS

Medical Elevation

Clients with high needs who did not rank highly in prioritization can be elevated during case conferencing.

Not an automatic change in priority:

- Medical documentation and/or client notes inform decisions.
- Done at discretion of transition coordinators and CE manager.



Housing Provider Responsibilities

- Attend appropriate Case Conferencing meetings (will discuss tomorrow).
- Request referrals (supervisors or above only).
- Inform ACEH when a client is no longer experiencing homelessness (housed, incarcerated, deceased etc.).
- Inform ACEH of any supervisor or above changes in personnel to help keep workflow smooth between ACEH and partners.



Policy: Inactive Clients are Closed

- Clients that have no activity in AKHMIS in the last three months will be closed.
- Being closed means the client will no longer appear on the prioritization list.
- **If the client is not on the prioritization list the client *will not be eligible for housing referrals through CE.***
- Please make sure all your clients have a ***current open CE Assessment.***



Only active clients can get housed.

- Make sure your client has an open enrollment in Coordinated Entry.
 - ✓ Project Start Date.
 - ✓ No Exit Date.
- If they do not have an open assessment, please do one with them!
- Update open assessments with Interim Updates when:
 - There hasn't been an updated CE Assessment in over 90 days.
 - There is a change in their Current Living Situation.
- If they have no major changes in their life or contact info simply do a “Current Living Situation” found on the “Summary” tab in AKHMIS.











It's easy as 1-2-3!

Q CURRENT LIVING SITUATION (Head of Household and Adults only)

Start Date *	Current Living Situation *	Worker who made contact with the client	Client location details	Contact Notes
Add				



CURRENT LIVING SITUATION (Head of Household and Adults only)

Start Date *	08 / 15 / 2023    G
Information Date (same as Start Date) *	___ / ___ / ___    G
Current Living Situation *	-Select-  G
<i>If "Other", Specify</i>	<input type="text"/> G
Organization or project that verified current living situation	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Lookup"/> <input type="button" value="Clear"/> G
Worker who made contact with the client	<input type="text"/> G
Zip Code of client's current living situation	<input type="text"/> G
Client location details	<input type="text"/> G
Contact Notes	<input type="text"/> G
<i>For [SO] projects funded by Anchorage Alcohol Tax only, what was the duration of the client contact?</i>	-Select-  G

Ideal Scenario for Housing Referral

- Client contacts an Access Point and completes a CE Assessment.
- Client is told to update their contact information as often as possible.
- Client is told to answer all phone calls because it could be a housing partner reaching out about housing opportunities.
- Client is pointed to other resources around Anchorage.
- The following morning the client is placed on the prioritization list according to their vulnerability level.
- Client is placed high on the prioritization list.



A More Common Scenario

- Client is told to find an access point to complete a CE Assessment.
- Client calls and is told that they are unable to do a CE Assessment because the housing provider is not an Access Point.
- Client then walks into a Housing Provider and is told the Access Point at the time is not in office.
- Client gives another Access Point a call and finally gets in contact with an Access Point.
- Client completes assessment.
- Client leaves thinking the assessment is guarantee to a referral into housing



Clare's story

- Woman in her early 30s woman (single adult)
- Recently experiencing homelessness for the first time.
- Able to make it to an Access Point relatively quickly.
- Clare completes a Coordinated Entry Assessment.
- Due to having zero disabilities Clare is placed at the bottom of the prioritization list.





ACTIVITY TIME!

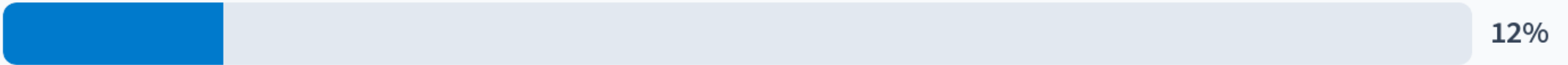
Q. How can you best help Clare?

Scan the QR Code to answer!

Need assistance? Ask one of the ACEH team!

How can you best help Clare?

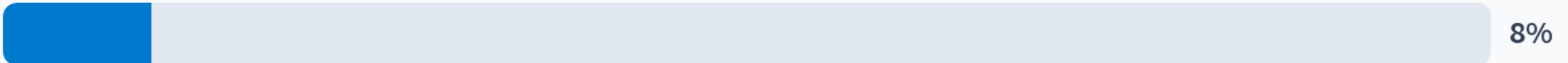
Have her wait for a referral



Connect her to other resources to help with her situation



Tell her you will house her once a referral in your program is available



Conference Activity: Right answer

Clare can best be helped by
connecting her to other resources.

Sully's story

- Middle-aged man (single adult).
- Recently experiencing homelessness for the first time.
- Able to make it to an Access Point.
- Sully completes a Coordinated Entry.
Assessment the same day as Clare completes hers.
- Sully has multiple disabilities.
- Sully is prioritized high on the prioritization list.





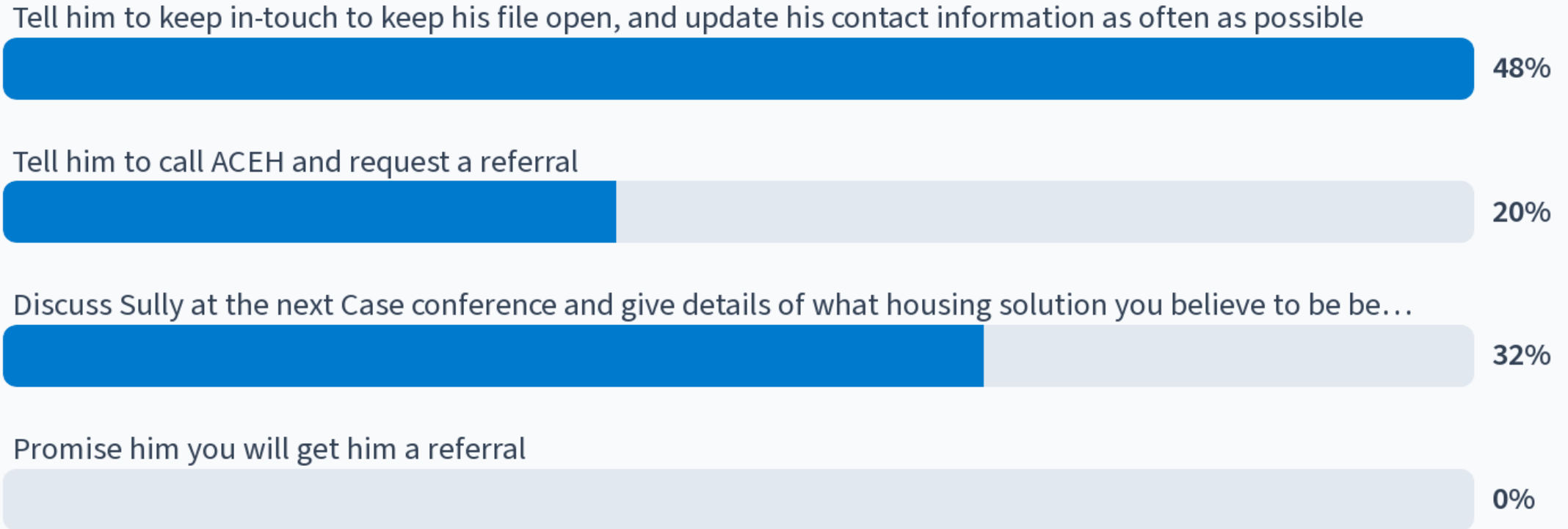
ACTIVITY TIME!

Q. What are the best ways to help Sully receive a housing referral?

Scan the QR Code to answer!

Need assistance? Ask one of the ACEH team!

What are the best ways to help Sully receive a housing referral? (mark all that apply)



Conference Activity: Right answer

Sully can best be helped by staying connected/keeping his information current and advocating for him at case conferencing.

Jason's story

- Elder (single adult).
- Has been experiencing homelessness for many years.
- Jason is in and out of homeless services.
- Jason is *never asked to complete an Assessment*.
- Jason has many disabilities and severe medical issues.





ACTIVITY TIME!

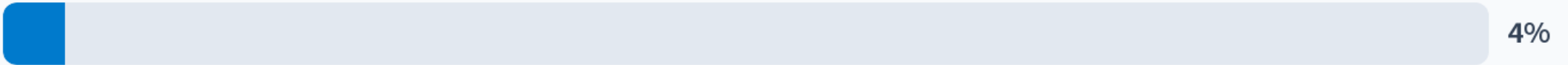
Q. When will Jason receive a housing referral?

Scan the QR Code to answer!

Need assistance? Ask one of the ACEH team!

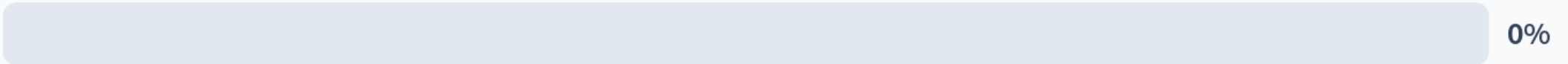
When will Jason receive a housing referral?

Very soon!



4%

In a few months



0%

Without an open CE assessment, Jason will never receive a housing referral through CE.



96%

Conference Activity: Right answer

Sadly, Jason will never be helped through the Coordinated Entry system if he has never received a CE Assessment.

Do you have ideas about CE and prioritization?

WE WANT YOU!

Please join us at the Coordinated Entry Committee which occurs the first Friday of every month!

If you are interested, please reach out to ACEH!



Takeaways

1. Access Points are essential to getting clients in the door into Coordinated Entry.
- 2. Anchorage needs more Access Points.**
3. If clients do not have open CE Assessments, they ***will not be eligible*** for housing referrals through CE.
4. Prioritization of housing referrals is given to our most vulnerable.
5. Housing referrals live and breathe through an accurate prioritization list!



Next time at the CE Conference

Proper ways to request referrals.

Prioritization and how it effects the clients we pull for referrals.

Once a client is referred what next?

Proper closure policies.

Retaining clients into housing.



THANK YOU!

Questions & ideas?

Slides and additional resources are available at aceh.org/conference

Contact Mac at mlyons@aceh.org