CT Outreach (OR) Training
Best Practices in Outreach to Homeless People
Session #1: Values, Goals and Engagement

DECEMBER 2, 2024

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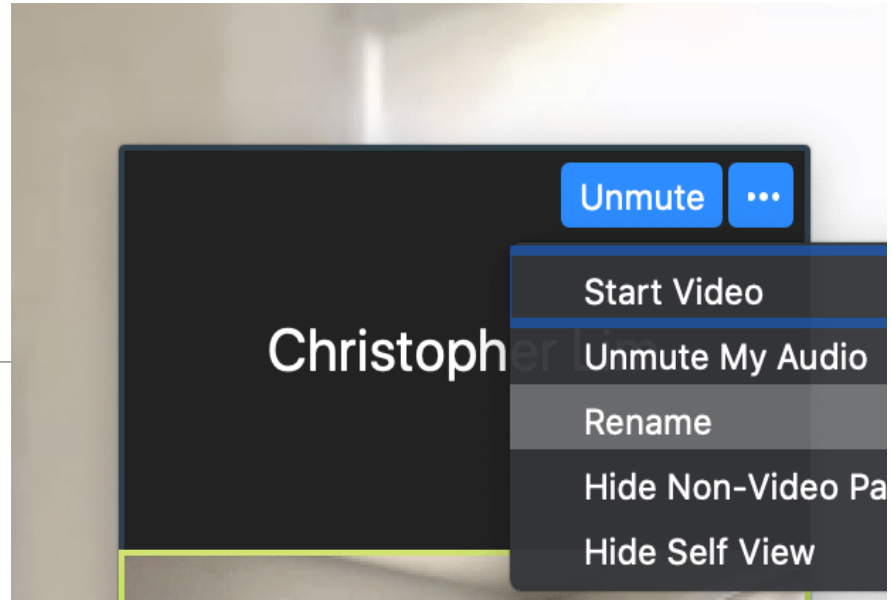
Housing Innovations

Welcome



- Introduce Facilitators
- Goals for the Session
- Housekeeping
  - PLEASE TURN YOUR CAMERAS ON AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.
  - Please put your name as you would like to be addressed as your screen name.
  - We will upload the slides to the chat box momentarily.
  - We love interaction – please raise hand, use emojis, type comments in the chat box or just unmute and talk!
  - The session is being recorded and will be posted to the web.
  - Today's session is 2 hours- some slides are for reference.

Who is with us today?

Please put in the chat box:

- Your agency and role/title
- Your location (city, town or CAN)
- Something that makes you smile

- Welcome & Introductions
- Outreach Guidelines Overview: Values, Vision and Goals
- Engaging People experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
  - *Identifying People*
  - *Engagement and Building Relationships*
  - *Maintaining a Client Centered Approach*
- Closing Comments
- Additional Resources

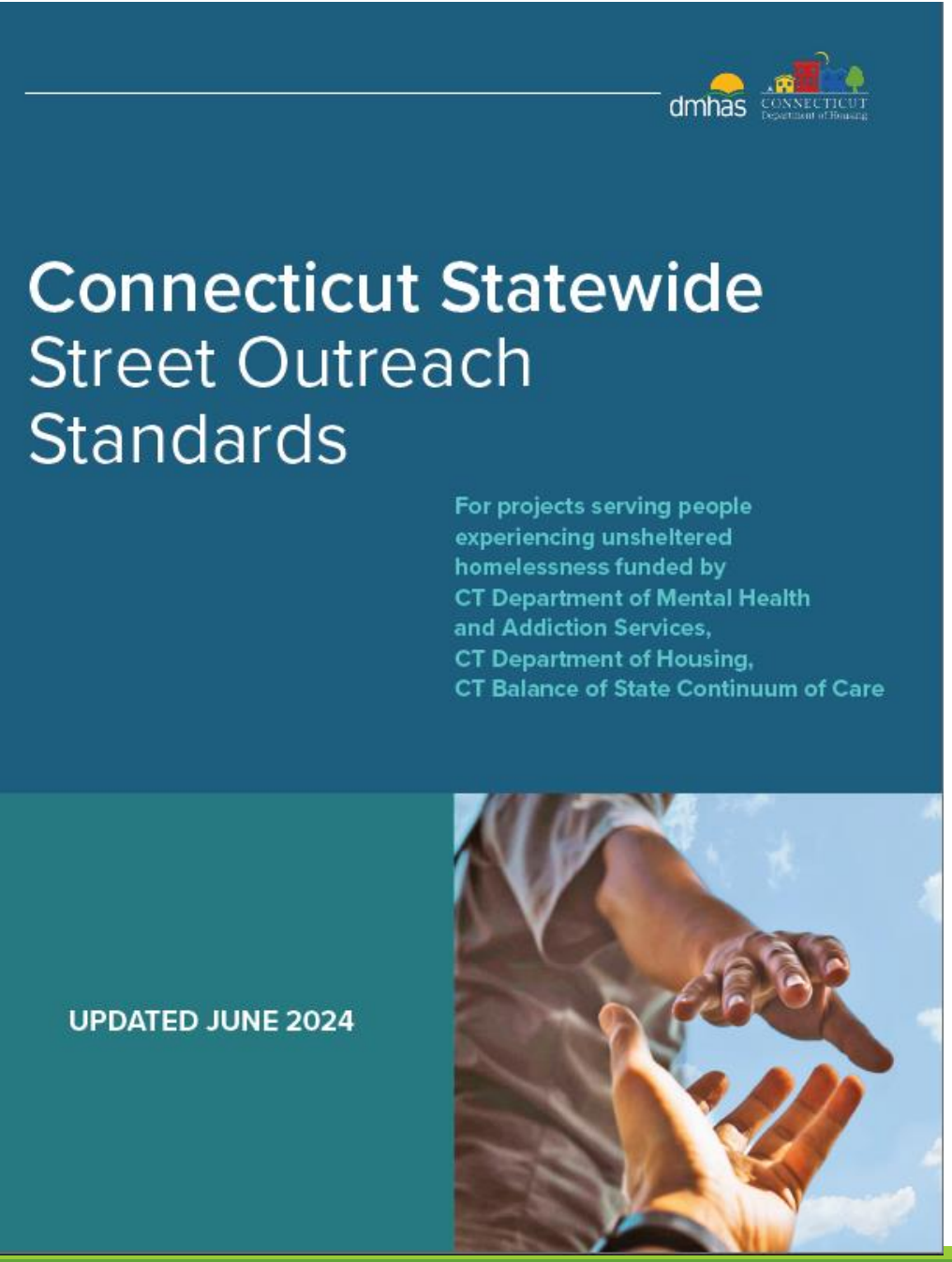
Zoom Polls

How long have you been in your current position?

How much experience do you have in street outreach work?

Outreach Guidelines Overview

VALUES, VISION, & GOALS



- **Spring 2022:** Outreach Guidelines adopted
- **July 1, 2024:** CT Statewide Street Outreach Standards adopted

Key Changes:

- Requirement to use the standards for all DMHAS, DOH and CT BOS funded Street Outreach
- Assessment and Service Plan required for all outreach projects
- Summary of Changes

Content: Vision, Values, Outcomes; Practice Standards for Outreach Workers; Supervisory Standards; Project Standards for Program Managers; Standards for Agencies; Outreach Plan Template; Assessment and Service Plan Template

CT Street Outreach Values

- Housing First
- Urgency – end homelessness as quickly as possible
- Respect perspectives, motivations, choices & property
- Build trusted relationships and create transparency with clients & partners
- Become allies in clients' journeys and meet them where they are
- Minimize risk & reduce harm
- Create equal access and be consistent

Outreach Values (2)

- Engage as an interdependent provider in a network of committed service providers
- Practice and support culture of self-care
- Be flexible and creative problem-solvers
- Commit to data and documentation – use in collaboration and service improvement
- Rigorously plan outreach

Vision and Goals

Vision: to support people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in achieving some form of permanent, sustainable housing

Goals*:

1. Quickly connect to safe housing, income and other supports
2. Identify people living in unsheltered locations
3. Minimize service gaps or duplication
4. Use resources strategically to end homelessness
5. Support people to meet tenancy obligations
6. Provide warm handoff and aftercare

*Specific program outcomes related to these goals will be discussed in relevant sections of this series. A full list of the outcomes is in the additional resources section of these slides.

Small Group Discussions

Introduce yourselves to each other

Discussion Prompts:

- How and when did you come to work in Street Outreach (OR)?
- What do you think about the values, vision and goals in the OR guidelines?
- Are there things that seem harder?
- Things that seem easier?
- Are there questions about what any of the values, vision or goals mean?

Key Roles of Outreach Workers – Focus of Session #1

- Identify who is living unsheltered in your geographic area
  - Includes: canvassing, maintaining partnerships, responding to referrals, may include in-reach
- Make contact and establish credibility and relationships with people living unsheltered
  - Includes: earning trust, being consistent and reliable, demonstrating kindness and helpfulness

Key Roles of Outreach Workers – Focus of Sessions #2

- Provide housing-focused case management
  - Assessing needs and developing housing/service plans
- Coordinate with partners to move people to housing
  - Participating in the CAN,
  - helping people understand housing options and access other essential services,
  - providing after-care, and
  - warm-handoffs
- Maximizing safety & harm reduction
- Collect and enter data
  - entering prompt, accurate data into HMIS/DDAP & PIT count participation

Zoom Poll

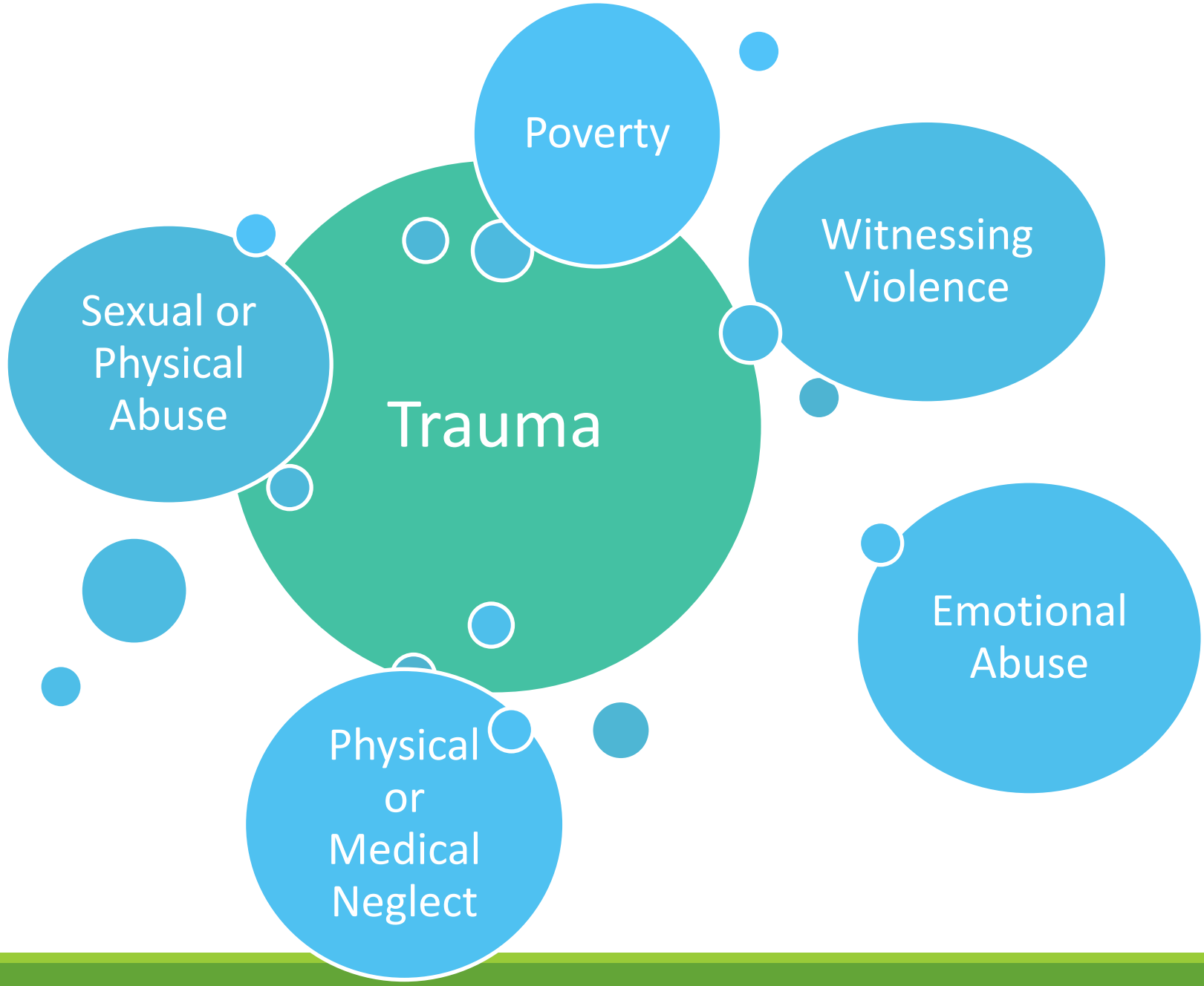
Which statement about the CT Street Outreach Standards is most true for you.

1. Today is the first I am hearing about the Standards.
2. I knew something about the Standards before today, but not yet using them in my day-to-day work.
3. I am very familiar with the Standards and using them regularly/with some frequency.
4. I would like to learn more about the Standards.
5. Other: *Please type in the chat*

Engagement

Day One: Develop a relationship with the person.

Primary Goal: Create a “why” for them to engage with you.


Poverty
Witnessing Violence
Sexual or Physical Abuse
Trauma
Emotional Abuse
Physical or Medical Neglect

Trauma & Homelessness

People experiencing homelessness are likely to have experienced & continue to experience some form of trauma, which can interfere with:

- Sense of safety
- Perception of control and self-efficacy
- Interpersonal relationships & ability to self-regulate

Trauma-Informed Care Principles:

- Emphasize safety and be predictable
- Emphasize client choice and rebuild control
- Be aware of triggers and avoid re-traumatization
- Assist to identify strengths and build skills

Building the Relationship

- Be yourself. People know if you are being authentic.
- Keep showing up and always follow through promptly.
- Listen to identify what the person wants and cares about.
- Be patient and don’t push any agenda.
  - Be trauma-informed in all interactions.
- Find something to work on together.
  - Start with small goals and keep it simple.
- Provide concrete assistance: food, clothing, gear, hygiene & disease prevention supplies, documents.
- Present housing as a way to get wants, needs and goals met

Building the Relationship – 2

- Pay attention to race, gender and ethnicity and how they may impact the engagement.
- Offer as many choices as possible and talk about opportunities.
- Build confidence and trust as you accomplish things together.
- Provide relief/comfort
- Ask for help: Clinical consultation can help determine what is underlying what you are seeing and plan the best approach.
  - *If you don't have a clinician in your agency, Mobile Crisis Teams can provide case consultation – reach out to Mollie for help connecting*
- Seek information: client, CAN, HMIS, EMS, police, mainstream and homeless service providers
- Keep your promises

Break Out Discussions

Discuss a person you had difficulty engaging and ultimately connected with?

- What were the engagement barriers?
- How did you overcome those barriers?

How do I know if I was successful at Day One engagement?

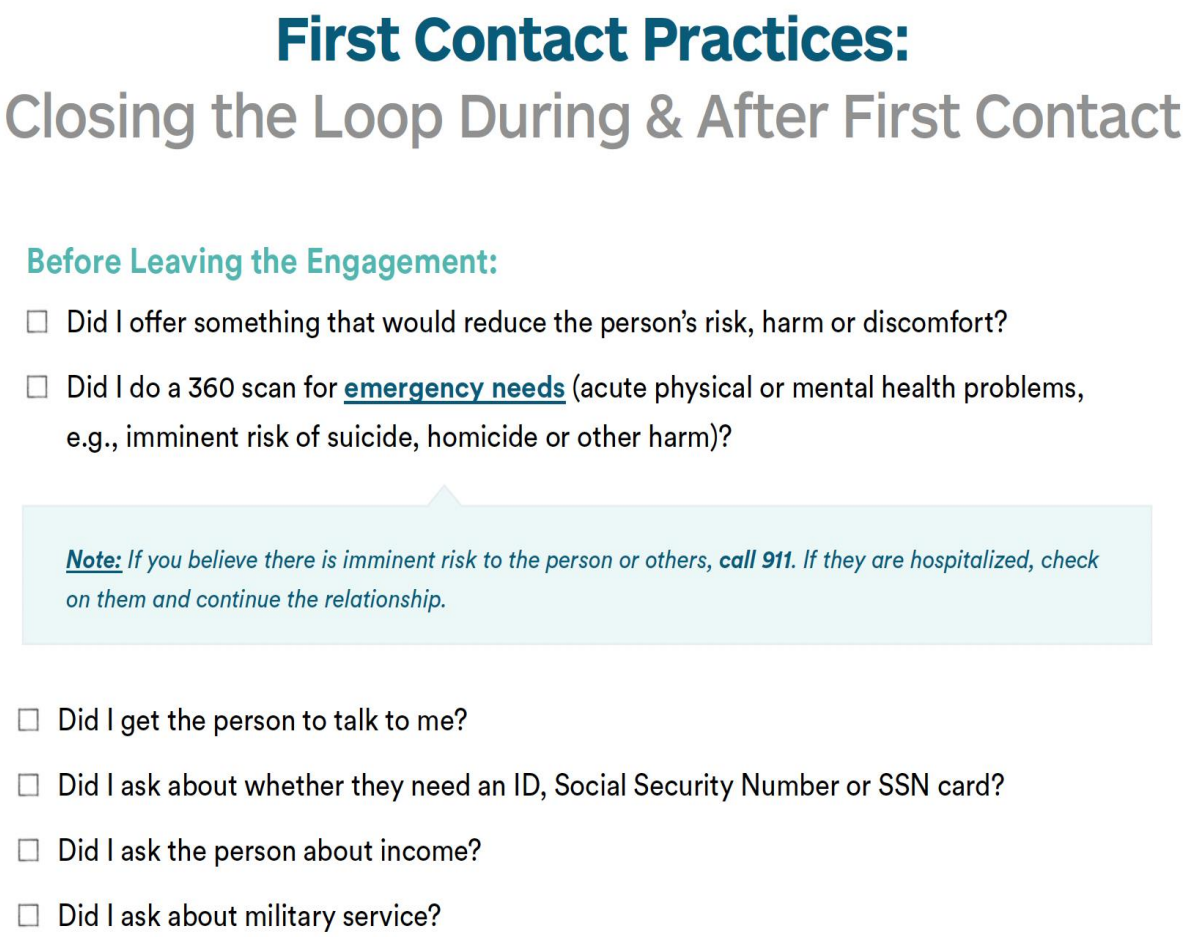
The person wants to speak with me again!!

Tips to keep Momentum:

- Make every effort to engage new clients within 24 hours of referral
- Engage again within 48 hours
- Follow through on commitments
- Use warm hand-offs

Tool Review: First Contact Practices

For a full version of the tool
See: CT Street Outreach Standards



First Contact Practices:

Closing the Loop During & After First Contact

Before Leaving the Engagement:

- ☐ Did I offer something that would reduce the person's risk, harm or discomfort?
- ☐ Did I do a 360 scan for **emergency needs** (acute physical or mental health problems, e.g., imminent risk of suicide, homicide or other harm)?

Note: *If you believe there is imminent risk to the person or others,* ***call 911****. If they are hospitalized, check on them and continue the relationship.*

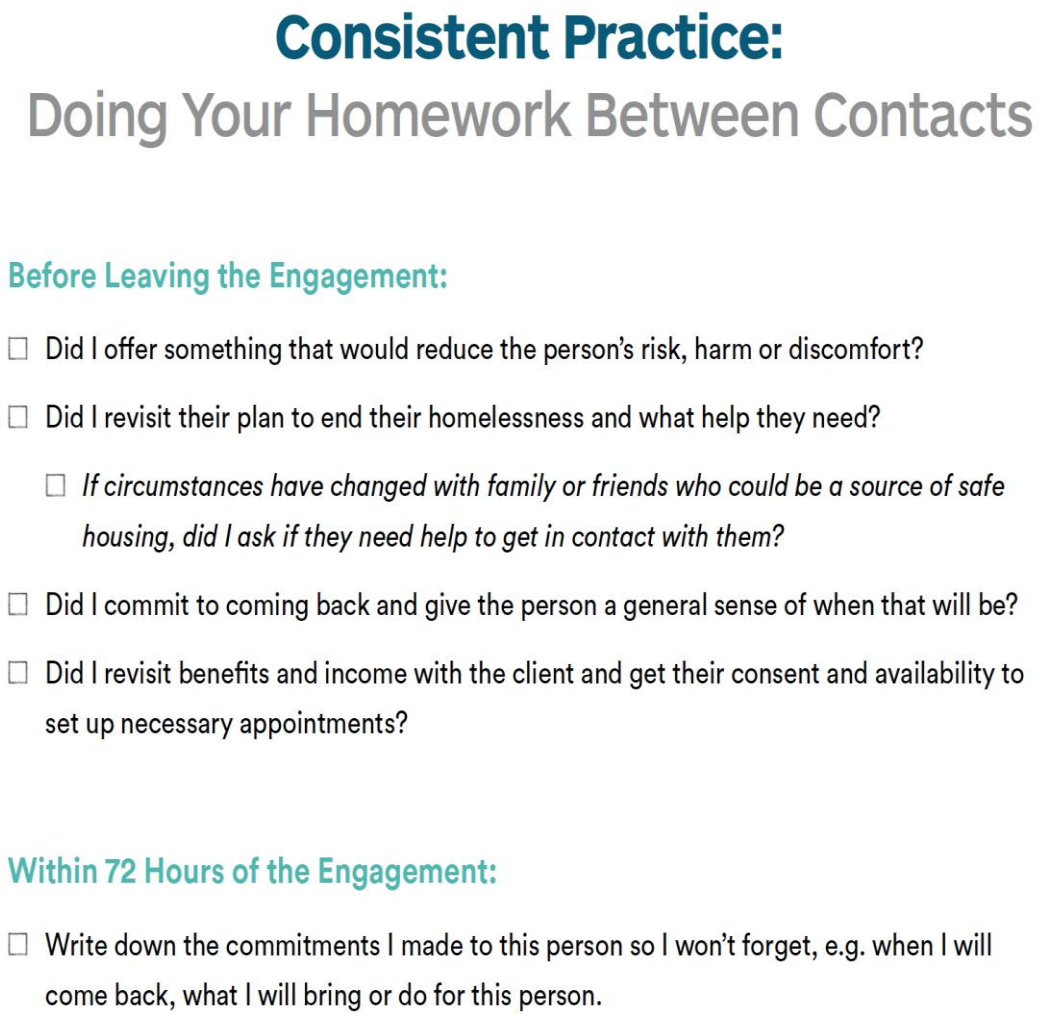
- ☐ Did I get the person to talk to me?
- ☐ Did I ask about whether they need an ID, Social Security Number or SSN card?
- ☐ Did I ask the person about income?
- ☐ Did I ask about military service?

Engagement Techniques: Maintaining a Client-Centered Approach

- Offer services multiple times and in different ways.
- Understand client perspectives, including any reasons they are not using shelter/services.
- Help people solve the problems that are most important to them.
- Advocate with community partners to make sure people get the services they need and that services are working for them.
- Assist in accessing temporary accommodations and permanent housing that can accommodate the entire family, including pets.

Tool Review: Things to Do Between Contacts

For a full version of the tool
See: CT Street Outreach Standards



Consistent Practice:

Doing Your Homework Between Contacts

Before Leaving the Engagement:

- ☐ Did I offer something that would reduce the person's risk, harm or discomfort?
- ☐ Did I revisit their plan to end their homelessness and what help they need?
  - ☐ *If circumstances have changed with family or friends who could be a source of safe housing, did I ask if they need help to get in contact with them?*
- ☐ Did I commit to coming back and give the person a general sense of when that will be?
- ☐ Did I revisit benefits and income with the client and get their consent and availability to set up necessary appointments?

Within 72 Hours of the Engagement:

- ☐ Write down the commitments I made to this person so I won't forget, e.g. when I will come back, what I will bring or do for this person.

Closing Comments

Closing

- Building trusted relationships with clients is the foundation of outreach work.
- Permanent housing is the primary goal of outreach.
- Impacts of trauma and other life experiences can interfere with relationships.
- Be consistent, reliable, kind and helpful.
- Focus first on what's most important to the client.
- Implementation of Outreach Standards is required for all CoC and DMHAS funded outreach projects - effective 7/1/24.
- Good luck with this very important work!

Additional Resources

Upcoming Outreach Webinars:

- Best Practices in Street Outreach – Part 2 – December 9, 2024 from 1- 3pm
- Best Practices in Street Outreach – Part 3 – January 2025
- Working with People & their Pets – January 2025
- Supervisors Sessions: Supervising Street Outreach Staff & Programs –2 sessions January/February 2025
- Requirements for Agencies Receiving Outreach Funding – February 2025

Communities of Practice: Schedule

All meetings will be from 10-11 AM

- 12/12/24
- 2/13/25
- 4/10/25
- 6/12/25

Zoom:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89707921341?pwd=E0HGHKt1R5SaZ5RTjiYajup7kklykT.1

Meeting ID: 897 0792 1341; Passcode: 216034;
Phone: 646-876-9923

Naloxone Training & Resource Fair

12/17/24 10:30am – 12:30pm

Lee Auditorium at Merritt Hall

CT Valley Hospital

1000 Silver St, Middletown, CT

Quarterly Outreach Meetings

Next Meeting: 3/19 at 1pm

Join on your computer or mobile app

Click here to join the meeting

Passcode: YRSRpB

Or call in (audio only)

+1 860-840-2075

Phone Conference ID: 636 766997#

Street Outreach Training Inventory

Web-based training available on topics including:

- Best Practices and Engagement Strategies
- Homeless Response System Overview
- Housing Options
- Housing Assessment & Planning
- Mental Health
- Crisis Intervention & De-escalation
- Harm Reduction
- Encampments
- Trauma-Informed Outreach
- Self-Care, Vicarious Trauma & Staff Resiliency
- Working with Special Populations (Youth, Older Adults, LGBTQIA, DV)
- Racial Trauma & Equity
- Disaster Response Planning

Other Resources

- CT Homelessness Response System Acronyms
- Core Elements of Effective Street Outreach to People Experiencing Homelessness (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness)
- 19 Strategies for Communities to Address Encampments Humanely and Effectively (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness)
- National Outreach Guidelines for Underserved Populations (Health Outreach Partners)
- Within Reach: Perspectives of Hard-to-Reach Consumers Experiencing Homelessness (National Health Care for the Homeless Council)

Street Outreach Outcome Measures DMHAS Contracts

- At least 85% of consumers will remain in the program or discharge to Permanent Housing (PH) during the annual reporting period.
- At least 30% of consumers will increase income of any kind (earned and unearned) during the annual reporting period.
- At least 90% of consumers have had at least one service during the last 6 months of the annual reporting period.
- At least 85% of newly housed consumers get or are referred to supportive services to sustain their permanent housing.
- At least 85% of consumers contacted while unsheltered will be enrolled in the Unsheltered Street Outreach program and accept services.

SNOFO Street Outreach Renewal Evaluation Measures

Performance Benchmarks TBD:

- X% of participants exit street outreach to a PH destination
- X% of participants exit street outreach to shelter or other positive destination*
- X% of adult participants increase cash income from any source from project entry to exit/assessment
- Rate of Return (RoR) to Homelessness among BIPOC is less than or equal to White RoR
- Spending: Based on budget size 85% projects under $250K or 90% & <$50K unspent for others**
- 90% Utilization – based on quarterly household PIT count
- 35% Participant Survey Response Rate

*Countable Positive Exit: Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility, Foster Care home/group home, Psych hospital/facility, substance use treatment/detox, long-term care/nursing home, TH for PEH, residential project/halfway house with not homeless criteria, hotel motel paid without shelter voucher, Staying/living with friends/family (temporary tenure), HOPWA TH, Host Home (non-crisis)

** Evaluated at end of 3-year grant term

Questions?

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