

Making Coordinated Entry Work ~~for You~~ to End Homelessness

National Conference on Ending Family and
Youth Homelessness

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About Focus Strategies

- Sacramento-based consulting firm
- Founded to help communities improve use of data to reduce and end homelessness
- Working on CES development /refinement in eight communities
- Presenting today: Katharine Gale, Principal Associate

What should CES accomplish?

- Simplify access for clients
- Ensure fairness and consistency
- Prioritize assistance
- Match households to *most appropriate available intervention(s)*
- Target limited resources more efficiently
- Speed movement from homelessness to housing

But it doesn't do everything...

- Should get people to programs faster ... but, programs still have to house them quickly
- Frees up some staff capacity (reduce front end work) but doesn't create new housing
- Gives information about bottlenecks and gaps, but alone can't fix them
- May change demand – consider how impacts client and program behaviors

Where to start...

Your System Goal(s)

What are you trying to achieve??

- End unsheltered homelessness?
- End chronic homelessness?
- Target limited resources to those who have highest rehousing barriers?

Be clear about your goals – that should drive your process and prioritization

Your Prioritization Should Reflect Your Goals

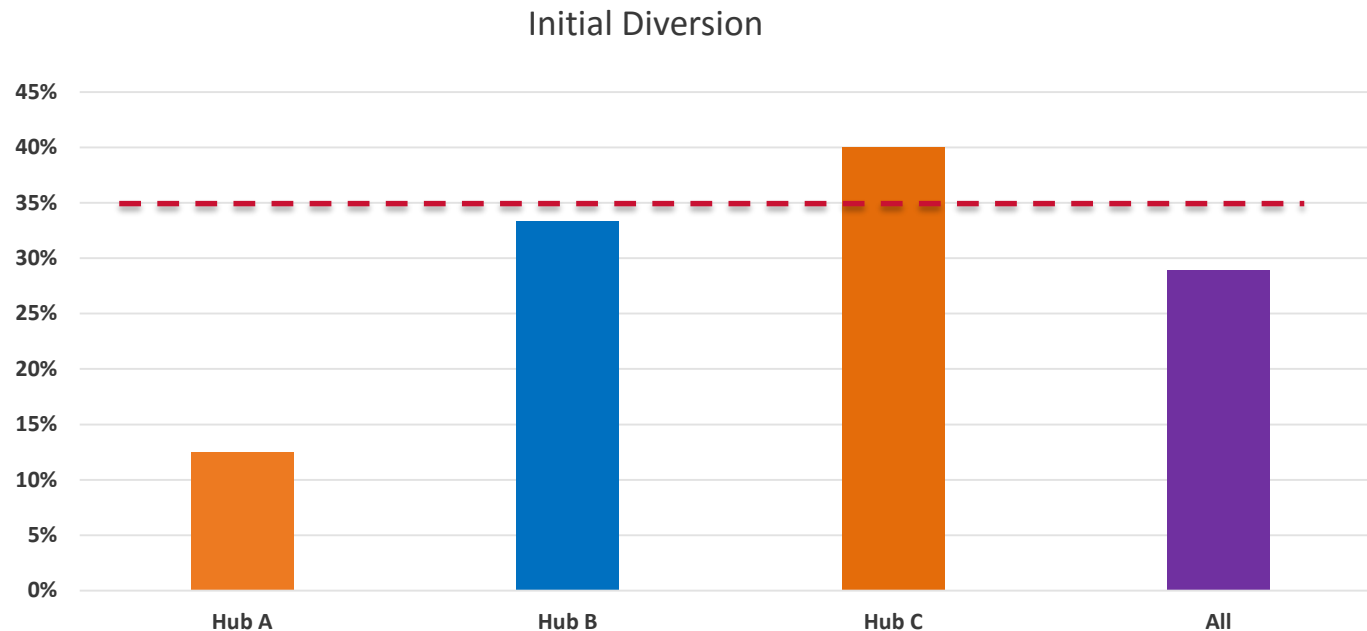
- If ending unsheltered homelessness is your goal, weight that most
- If reducing total time homeless is your goal, chronicity is not just a yes/no question
- If you want limited resources to go to those who most likely can't do it on their own, focus on housing barriers
- Too many priorities = no priority

Using Data To Evaluate Your CES: What are you looking at?

- Outcomes (destinations, including for diversion)
- Incoming situation (where stayed before?)
- Time frames (contact to assessment, assessment to resource, resource to housing)
- Flow (how many in, how many out, how many **stuck**)
- Returns

What are you looking at?

All your metrics should have performance benchmarks, and each program or agency should see how they contribute:



What CES data will tell you...

Housing People vs. Filling Slots



Too many matching /screening criteria!



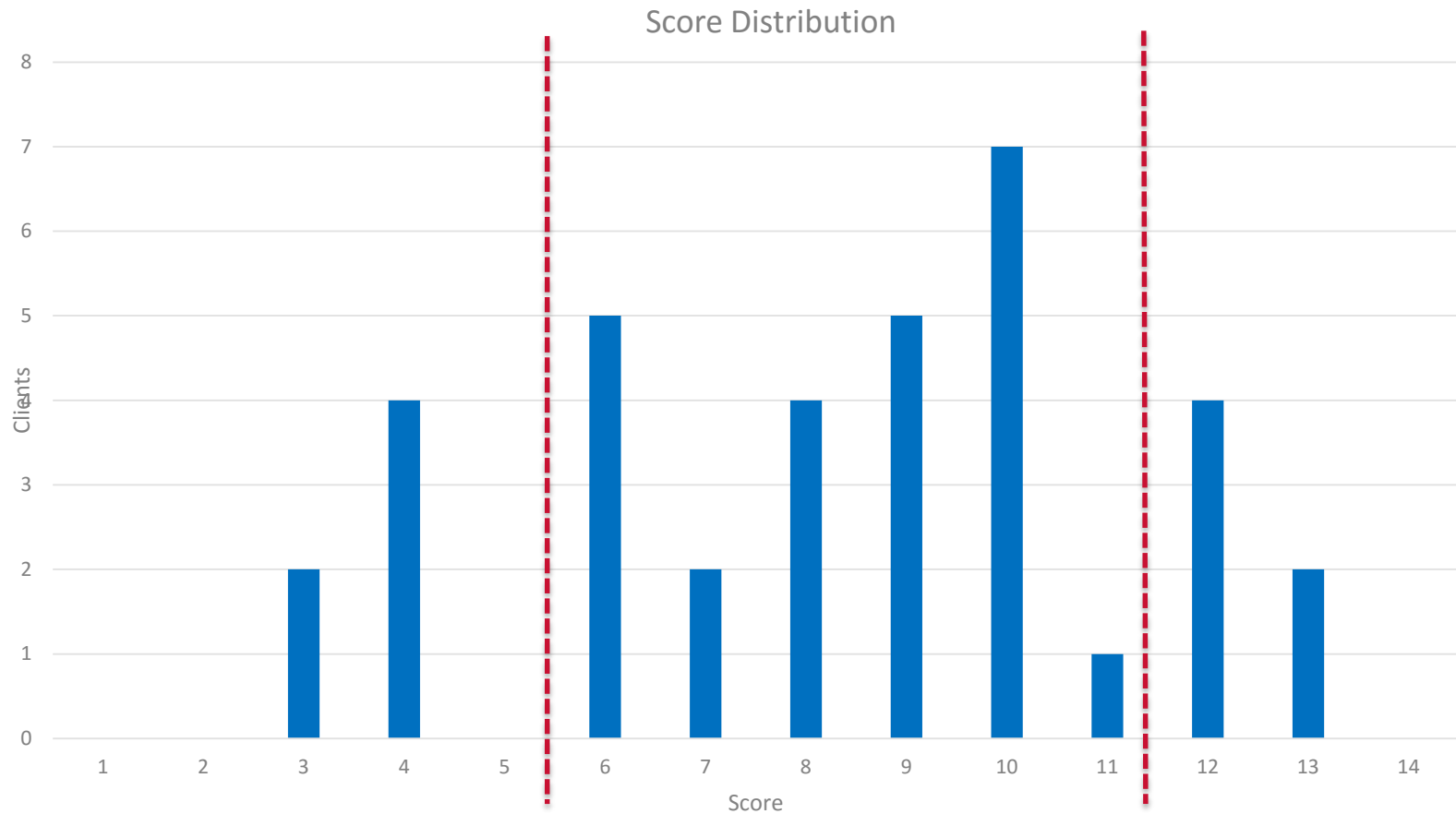
- Matching system can't be automated
- Many rejections for programs
- People/households who don't get served

Identifying Tool Challenges

Data can help you see if:

- Scores reflect staff desire to get people in
- Patterns change as clients learn what to say
- People at certain score points are stuck

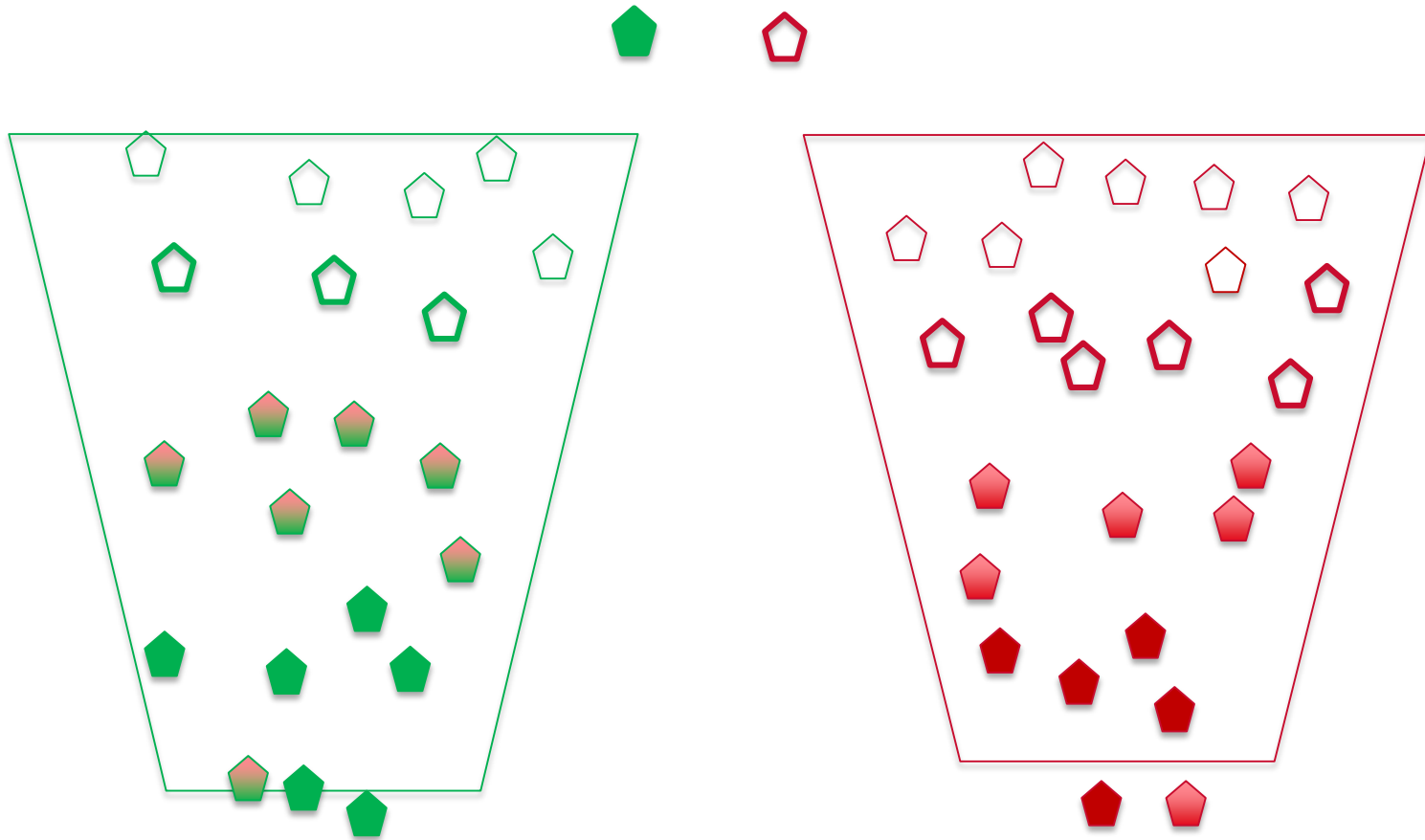
What does this tell you?



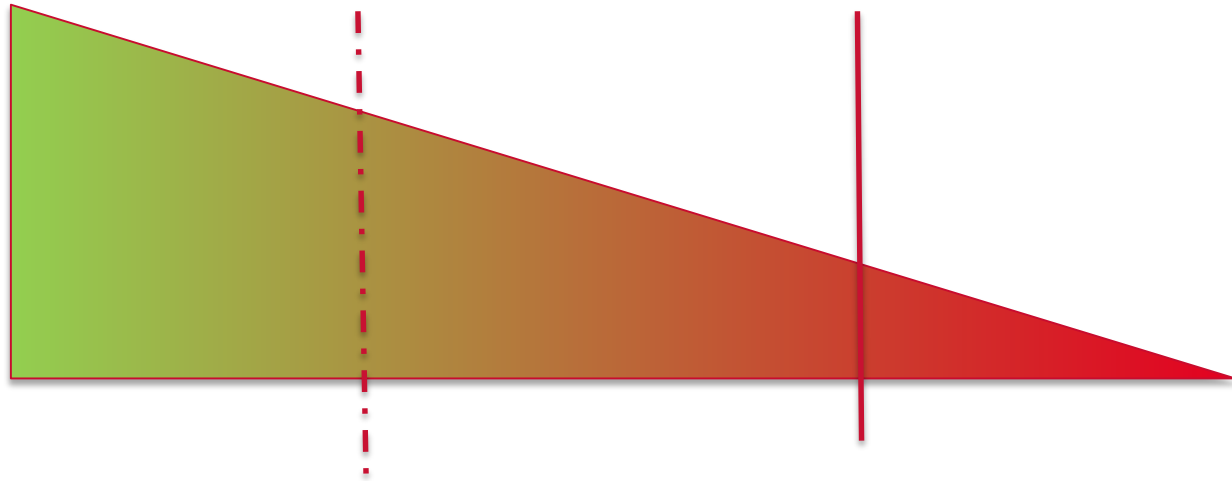
Beware of People Stuck in Buckets!



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Blending the Buckets



Scores are scores, People are people

- Tools help make resource decisions but they are not infallible; people defy expectations
- No one is their score.

“She’s a 13, she **needs...**” vs.

“She scored 13, indicating she could benefit from X... Do we have X?”

Other factors impacting CES flow

- High no-show rates at set appointments
- High rates of refusals/denials
- Lengthy assessments that include unnecessary information – **TMI!!**
- Working from an out of date list (long wait lists end up full of ghosts)

Data-DRIVEN means

- Look at data every time you meet
 - Every time means **every** time
- Look at data between when you meet and if something's up, call a meeting!
- All system change decisions are data informed
- Data can be questioned but never ignored

What to invest in if system's really stuck ...

- 100 units of PSH, equals ~15 openings a year
- 100 slots of RRH, equals ~ 240 openings in a year (at average 5 months)

Shelter doesn't house people, but it does shelter them.

What's your priority??

For more information
Katharine@Focusstrategies.net

www.focusstrategies.net

