



Welcome to SWAP!

What is SWAP

System-wide Analytics and Projection (SWAP) is a suite of tools designed to help communities plan and prioritize changes to bring about the greatest possible reduction in homelessness.

Why We Developed SWAP

Focus Strategies developed SWAP in collaboration with the National Alliance to End Homelessness. We took on this project because many communities are working to “right size” or re-design their homeless systems in response to HUD policy priorities and local interest in more effectively addressing homelessness. Working with many communities, we have seen how system change efforts are often hampered by a lack of quantitative data to inform strategic planning. We designed SWAP so that communities can use local data to understand what their current system is accomplishing and model what happens when system and program changes are made. The SWAP tools can be used to inform system planning and system change efforts to reduce homelessness over a period of up to five years.

What SWAP Can Do for Your Community

SWAP can help communities be much more targeted and strategic with their right-sizing and system re-design efforts. The modeling component demonstrates the impact of a variety of system change efforts, including strategies to better match interventions to people who need them, investing in the most cost effective interventions, reducing lengths of stay, and increasing rates of exit to permanent housing. SWAP also helps communities improve their data quality and generally develop their analytical capacity.

One of the most powerful outputs of the SWAP is an estimate of how the size of community’s homeless population will change over a five-year period as a result of the programmatic and investment changes being modelled. Communities can use this tool to assess the impact of policy changes they may be considering or to project the results of changes already being implemented. If a community wishes to develop a plan for a system in which no one is ever homeless for longer than 30 days, the SWAP can help leaders, funders and policy makers assess the pros and cons of different approaches and choose a strategic direction that will allow the community to meet that goal.

How SWAP Works

SWAP uses concepts found in our 2012 tool, the Performance Improvement Calculator (PIC), but adds in a number of additional features to make it more powerful for specific system planning purposes. The SWAP analyzes system performance at a project-by-project level and allows communities to model the results of changes to individual projects or groups of projects. These can include such strategies as re-allocation of funding from transitional to rapid re-housing, serving more literally homeless people in existing programs, or increasing the rate of exit to permanent housing. The SWAP will also model the impact of creating new projects and programs through new investments. In short, SWAP shows the impact of the efforts that are being made to reduce homelessness while factoring in people newly becoming homeless over time. Communities will have specific and targeted strategies to maximize reductions in homelessness with the resources they have.