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Candidate Outcome Indicators: Emergency Shelter Program

Implementing an outcome monitoring process enables organizations to track progress in achieving the program's mission. With this information, program managers can better develop budgets, allocate resources and improve their services. This document includes the following suggestions for starting or improving outcome measurement efforts:

1. **Outcome sequence chart** – *Identifies key outcomes presented in the sequence that are normally expected to occur.* The chart illustrates how one outcome leads to the next and identifies specific indicators that might be used to track each outcome. Intermediate outcomes tend to be on the left, and end (or final) outcomes are on the right. The program description at the top of the chart is meant to encompass a range of similar programs.
2. **Candidate outcome indicators** – *Lists outcomes and associated indicators as a starting point for deciding which outcomes to track.* They were chosen based on a review of the program area and consultation with program experts. Only outcome indicators are included (not physical outputs, such as number of classes held; not efficiency, such as cost per counseling session; and not organization issues, such as success in fundraising or staffing). The focus is on program beneficiaries (clients, customers, citizens, participants) and what has been accomplished for them. A data source or collection procedure is suggested for each indicator.

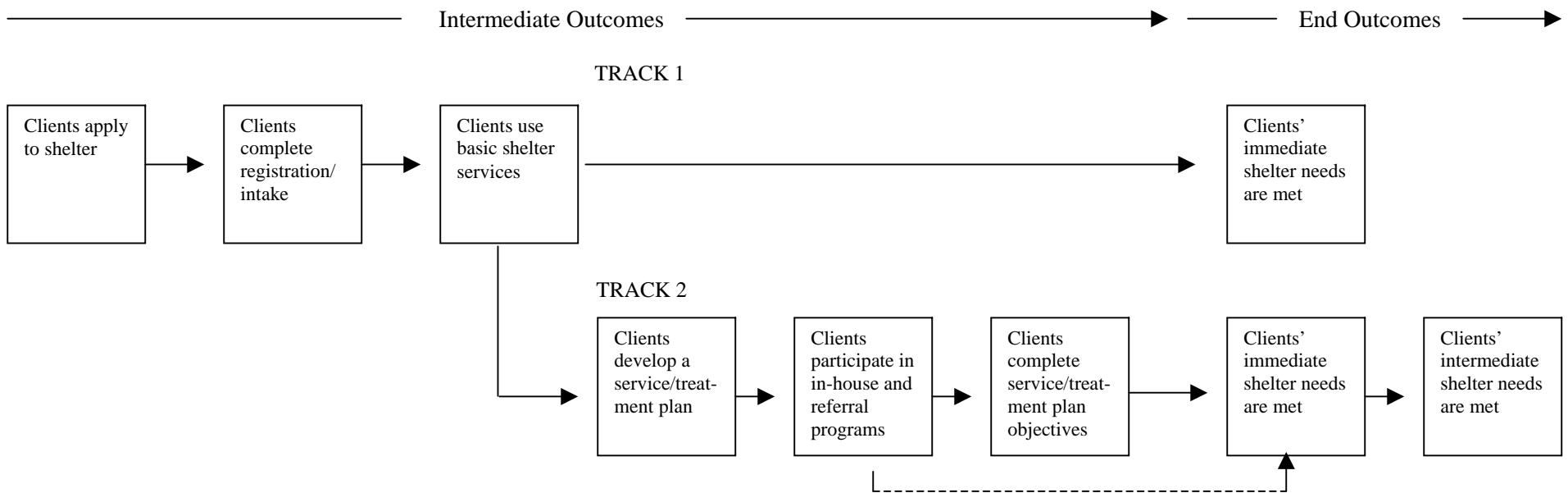
Suggestions and Limitations for the Use of the Materials

- Involve others in deciding which outcomes and indicators to track. Obtain input from staff, board members, and clients. As an early step, prepare your own version of an outcome sequence chart—one that you believe fits the needs of your program.
- Review the project report for additional ideas on relevant indicators and additional resources: *Building a Common Framework to Measure Nonprofit Performance*.
- Tabulate the outcome information by various categories of clients to see if outcomes are different for different clients (e.g., gender, age group, income level, handicap level, and race/ethnicity). Use that information to help better target your efforts.
- Start with a small number of the indicators, especially if you have had only very little experience with such data collection and have very limited resources. Add more outcomes and indicators to the performance measurement system later, as you find that information is likely to be useful.
- Outcome information seldom, if ever, tells *why* the outcomes have occurred. Many internal and external factors can contribute to any outcome. Instead, use the outcome data to identify *what* works well and what does not. Use the data to determine for which *categories of clients* your procedures and policies are working well and for which they are not working well. To the extent that the program is not working as well as expected, then attempt to find out the reasons. This investigation process leads to continuous learning and program improvement.

Emergency Shelter Program Description

To temporarily meet the housing and, in some cases, other needs of the homeless by providing short-term shelter and other services that may include showers, meals, laundry, transportation, child care, and counseling/case management for housing, employment, public benefits, and referral to outside services.

Outcome Sequence Chart



Indicators

1. Number of clients applying for services.	2. Number and percent of clients accepted for services.	3. Number of client bed nights.	4. Number and percent of clients who remain in the shelter three or more days and utilize services.	5. Number and percent of clients who develop service/treatment plan by the end of their Xth day in the shelter.	6. Number and percent of clients who, as a result of their service plan, make use of supportive services (in-house or by referral) within X days of shelter entry.	7. Number and percent of clients in need of mental health/addiction treatment who enter into such treatment within X days of shelter entry.	8. Number and percent of clients who complete service plan/shelter program.	9. Number and percent of clients who report their immediate shelter needs were met.	10. Number and percent of clients who move to long-term housing, transitional shelter, rehabilitative setting, or home of friend or family.	11. Number and percent of clients who maintained safe and stable housing for six months after leaving program.	
Participant satisfaction		Satisfaction with program services is an outcome that occurs within almost every program area, yet does not necessarily have a sequential placement may be: Number and percent of clients satisfied with emergency shelter programs and services.									

Sources Consulted: Developing Community-wide Outcome Indicators for Specific Services by Hatry and Lampkin (2003); Volunteers of America National Program Outcome Measures and Program Standards FY 2005 (Volunteers of America, 2004); Core Performance Indicators for Homeless-Serving Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by Trutko and Barnow (2003).

EMERGENCY SHELTER						
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	Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Notes	Outcome Stage
1	Increased Applications	Clients apply to shelter.	Number of clients applying for services during the reporting period.	Internal program records		Intermediate
2	Increased Enrollment	Clients complete registration/intake.	Number and percent of clients accepted for services during the reporting period.	Internal program records		Intermediate
3	Improved Participation/Use of Services	Clients use basic shelter services.	Number of client bed-nights during the reporting period.	Internal program records		Intermediate
4	Improved Participation/Use of Services	Clients use basic shelter services.	Number and percent of clients who remain in the shelter three or more days and utilize services.	Internal program records		Intermediate
5	Improved Participation	Clients develop a service/treatment plan.	Number and percent of clients who develop a recovery/treatment/service plan by the end of their Xth day of shelter at that site.	Internal program records		Intermediate
6	Improved Participation	Clients participate in in-house and referral programs.	Number and percent of clients who, as a result of their service plan, make use of services/programs (in-house or by referral) within X days of shelter entry.	Internal program records	Supportive services includes housing assistance, job assistance, behavioral health assistance (substance abuse/mental health treatment), primary health assistance/medical treatment etc.	Intermediate
7	Improved Participation	Clients participate in in-house and referral programs.	Number and percent of clients in need of mental health/addiction treatment who enter into such treatment within X days of shelter entry.	Internal program records		Intermediate
8	Improved Program Completion	Clients complete service/treatment plan objectives.	Number and percent of clients who complete service plan/shelter program.	Internal program records		Intermediate

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Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Notes	Outcome Stage	
9	Meet Immediate Shelter Needs	Clients' immediate shelter needs are met.	Number and percent of clients who report their immediate shelter needs are met.	Client survey	Programs following track 2 may want to break out clients who completed the program vs. clients who did not for indicators 9-11.	End
10	Attain Secure Housing	Clients' intermediate shelter needs are met.	Number and percent of clients who move to a transitional shelter, long-term housing, a rehabilitative setting (excluding prison), or the home of a friend or family member.	Internal program records	To measure short-term sustainability of housing arrangement, survey former clients 60 days after they leave the program.	End
11	Maintain Stable and Secure Housing	Clients' intermediate shelter needs are met.	Number of participants who have maintained safe and stable housing for six consecutive months (see notes) after leaving the program.	Survey of former clients	Safe and stable housing means a place of residence (either rented or owned) that is occupied for six months or more, which provides access to trash removal, cooking facilities, heat and running water, and in which the individual has not experienced (had a confirmed incidence of) abuse/neglect or experienced other serious safety or health risks.	End