

2. How can mainstream programs target the needs of people who are homeless?

Conditions of homelessness, such as transience, instability, and lack of basic resources often make it difficult for homeless individuals and families to apply for, retain, and use mainstream services. There are strategies that can be used to improve access and use of mainstream programs for homeless individuals and families. These strategies include but are not limited to:

- Improving integration and coordination of programs, where multiple needs can be addressed at the same time
- Making the process of applying easier or simultaneous for programs
- Improving outreach efforts about program benefits and eligibility requirements to the homeless and holding mainstream programs accountable for serving homeless people
- Training program personnel about the many issues unique to the homeless, such as lack of stable housing, transportation, and access to a permanent mailing address and phone

3. What are some examples of specific activities or coordination of mainstream programs?

Following are several examples some applicants in the FY 2002 competition provided to demonstrate how they were improving integration and coordination of mainstream programs. These are not all-inclusive, but represent a range of actions CoC's might consider.

- Provide case managers to accompany homeless persons to mainstream program offices and help in the eligibility process
- Develop a formal service agreement between homeless service providers and local mainstream program offices
- Create a single intake form to determine eligibility for all mainstream services
- Train mainstream program staff to conduct extensive outreach at area shelters
- Use a mobile support team for outreach and to bring clients in for mainstream services and case management and identify key contact persons to resolve barriers to services
- Distribute information and conduct presentations about mainstream programs at shelters, transitional housing, and places where homeless people congregate
- Place mental health, substance abuse, public housing and public assistance staff on-site at training or employment centers

Q. Strategies for Discharge Planning Policy**1. What are some examples of specific discharge planning policies that communities can implement?**

Following are several examples some applicants in the FY 2002 competition provided:

- Begin the process of discharge planning when a client enters the institution, not when he/she is ready to be released.
- Require all publicly funded institutions to secure all available entitlements for residents prior to discharge.
- Include all stakeholders in the planning of the policy, including professional representatives from varied disciplines (Justice Services, County Counselors Office, County Police Dept., Dept. of Human Services), municipalities, social service agencies, community organizations, and advocates. Also, these policies must be developed with input from clients. A team approach is the key to planning and implementing a successful discharge policy.