

## Housing is a Human Right Housing First Symposium



On September 27<sup>th</sup>, Connie Sanderson, Executive Director at the [Rochester/Monroe County Homeless Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#) and Ryan McIntosh, Homeless Services Manager, from CCSI's Rochester office along with Daniel Malone, Executive Director of Downtown Emergency Service Center in Seattle, WA, presented a workshop at the [Homeless Services Network](#) of Rochester's Housing is a Human Right, Housing First Symposium. This presentation addressed the topic of "Housing First & Coordinated Entry". CCSI is the Lead Agency for the Coordinated Entry System in Monroe County, working closely with the CoC and homeless services providers to fully implement this system.

A Coordinated Entry process is mandated by HUD for communities that receive homeless assistance funding from HUD. HUD's primary goals for Coordinated Entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present. Coordinated Entry helps communities prioritize homeless services assistance based on the vulnerability and severity of service needs of a person - it's not about screening people out of services but directing them to what can best meet their needs.

Housing First models are predicated on the simple premise that clinical and social stabilization occurs faster and are more enduring when the chaos of homelessness is eliminated from someone's life. A safe and healthy place to live should be the first treatment goal. There are no preconditions, such as participation in treatment or a defined period of abstinence to be placed into housing.

The Coordinated Entry and Housing First models are intertwined. Prioritization of persons with the highest needs in a community is an essential function of Coordinated Entry; persons with high service needs are prime candidates for Housing First programs. The workshop focused on how to achieve both goals, especially within an environment that has a limited inventory of permanent supportive housing units. Ultimately, how can a community most effectively use its resources through a Coordinated Entry system to ensure housing for those with the highest service needs using a housing first approach as well as options for those with less significant challenges.

As the Coordinated Entry system continues to evolve, CCSI will continue its work with the CoC and community providers to answer this and other questions related to how to eliminate homelessness in our community.