
Using Data to Improve Services for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

INFORMING STRATEGIC PLANNING AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



Objectives

1. Learn how to identify the data to collect to help your program or community to better understand and address youth homelessness
2. Understand how to better use the data collected as part of continuous quality improvement (CQI) process
3. Better understand what current data from Youth REACH MD shows about the service needs and barriers youth experiencing homelessness face to receiving support in Maryland
4. Practice using data to identify local service gaps and needs through exploration of Youth REACH MD data

What Data Does Your Program/Community Collect Currently?

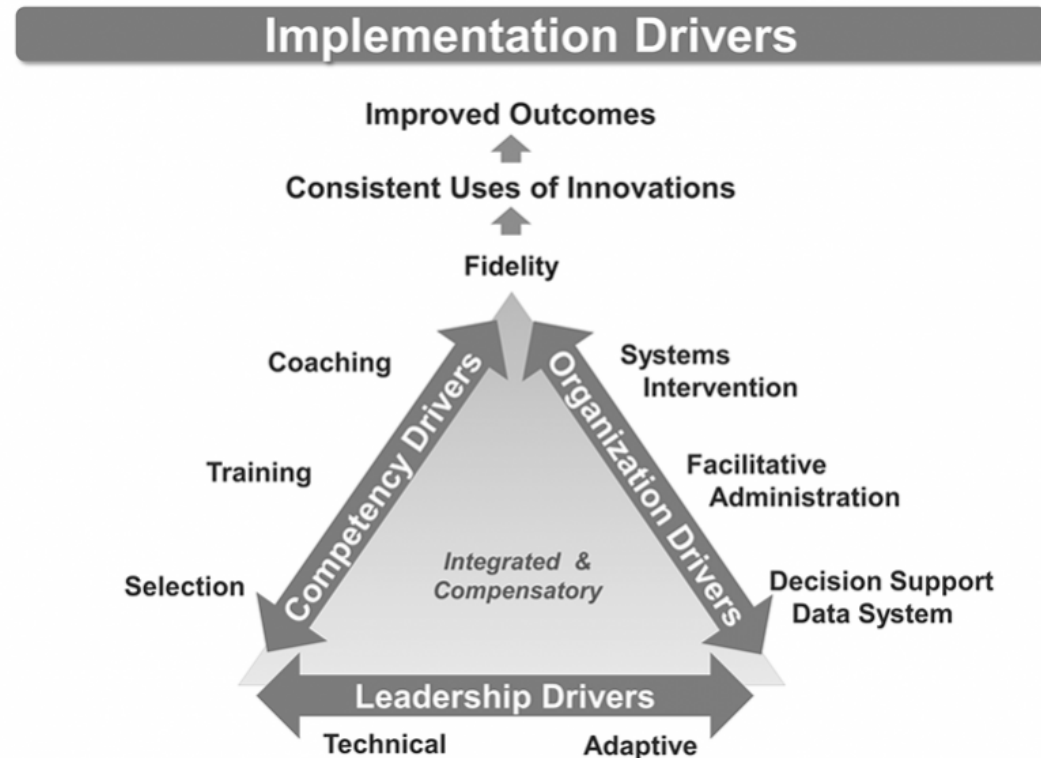
How Do You Use It?





Why Being Data-Driven Is Important

Implementation Drivers & Data



Types of Data Needed to Assess Implementation:

- Utilization Data
- Outcome Data
- Fidelity Data

USICH Criteria for Ending Youth Homelessness

- 1. The community identifies all unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.**
2. The community uses prevention and diversion strategies whenever possible, and otherwise provides immediate access to low-barrier crisis housing and services to any youth who needs and wants it.
3. The community uses coordinated entry processes to effectively link all youth experiencing homelessness to housing and services solutions that are tailored to their needs.
4. The community acts with urgency to swiftly assist youth to move to permanent or non-time-limited housing options with appropriate services and supports.
5. The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to continue to prevent and quickly end future experiences of homelessness among youth

Responding to Stakeholders

Practitioners and Administrators

NEED: real-time and/or routine data access to inform practice and program planning

FORMAT: Reports, dashboards

System Planners

NEED: routine reports and episodic decision-specific information

FORMAT: Reports, dashboards, presentations, policy briefs, journals

Funders

NEED: persuasive but data driven evidence of program need and routine reports on program impact

FORMAT: Reports, dashboards, presentations

General Public

NEED: persuasive but data driven evidence of program need and utility

FORMAT: Human interest stories, radio presentations, data visualizations, internet/social media posts



How to Get the Right Data

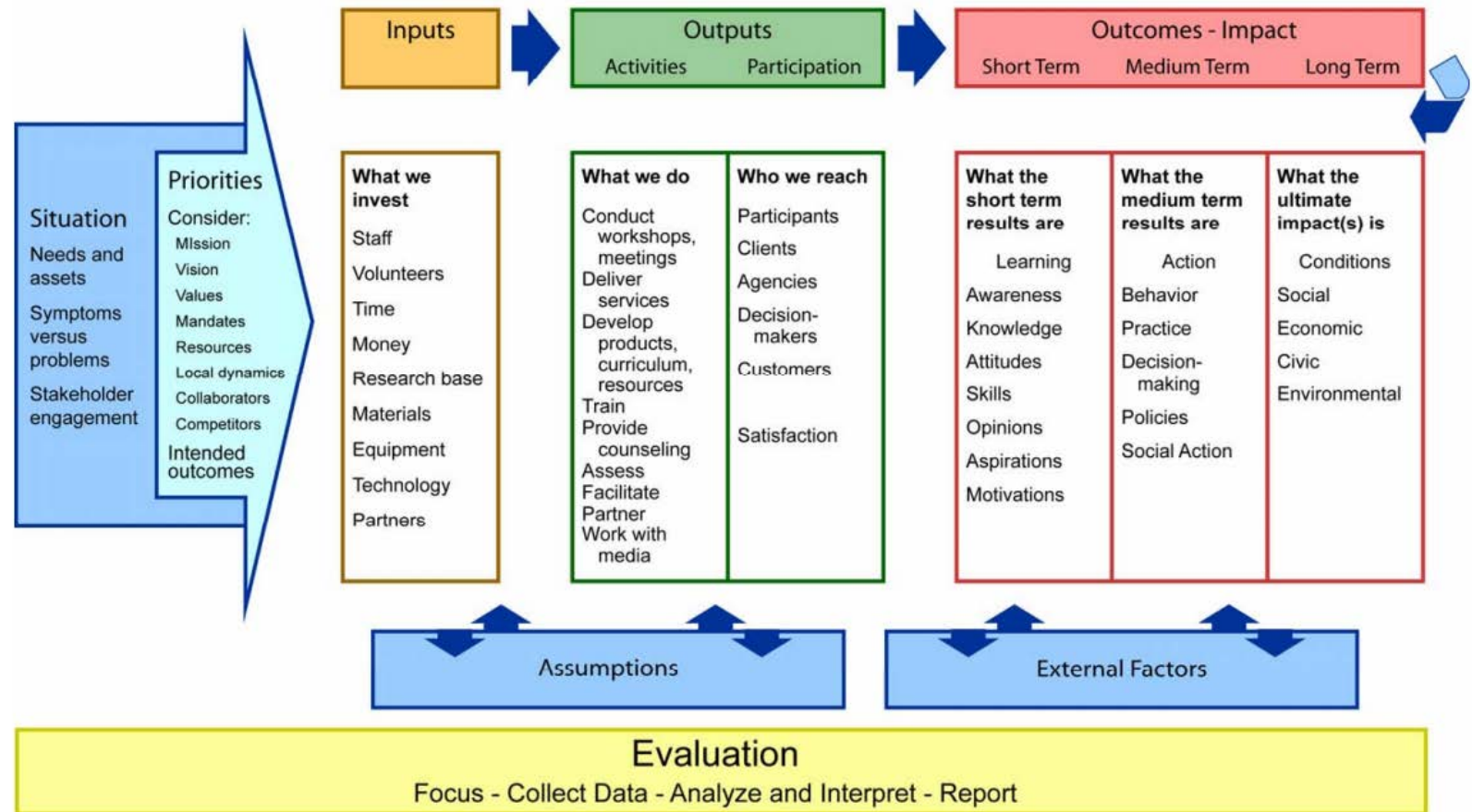
**In order to have actionable data you must
think carefully about:**

What you track

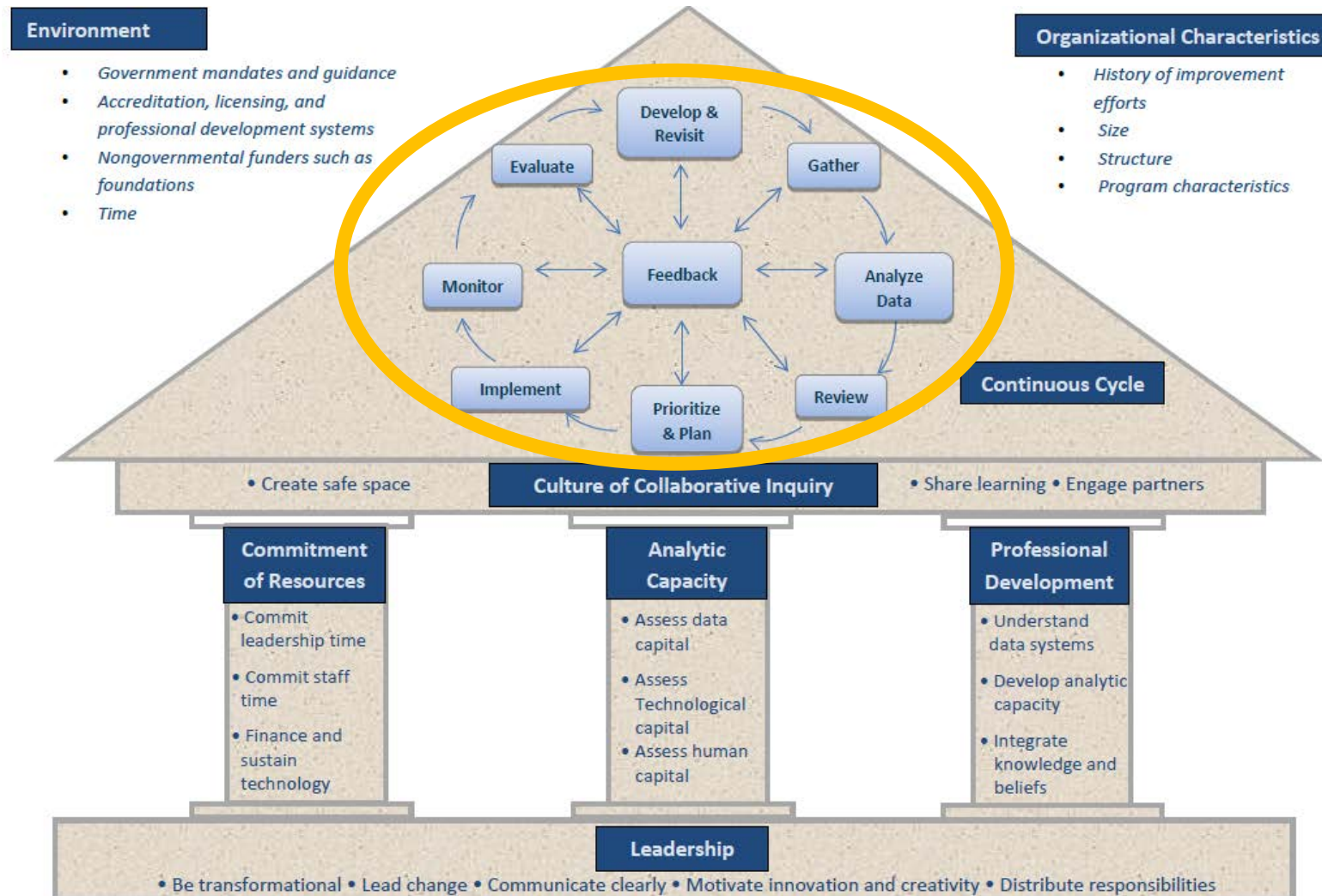
How you track it

Characteristics of Effective Data

- Accurate
- Timely
- Align with goals
- Tells a story



CQI Conceptual Framework



Necessary Data Elements for CQI

Must have...

- Demographics (age, gender, race)
- Utilization (referred, enrolled)
- Participation (attendance, disposition)

Should have...

- Fidelity (# of sessions on x topic or qualitative data)
- Satisfaction (quantitative and qualitative participant reports)
- Outcomes (changes in behavior, skills or knowledge)

What data do you have?

What data do you need and how might you get it?



Potential Stumbling Blocks and Tips

Not collecting all of the necessary data elements at each stage of the process to demonstrate progress

TIP: Map data to logic model inputs, outputs, outcomes

Not collecting the same data in the same way

TIP: Use a data dictionary that ensures common understanding of data elements (e.g., is enrollment at first contact or after intake is completed?)

Not having the resources to analyze, gather, and share data routinely

TIP: Build data collection into contracts and budgets, whenever possible





Using Your Data

Interpreting the Data

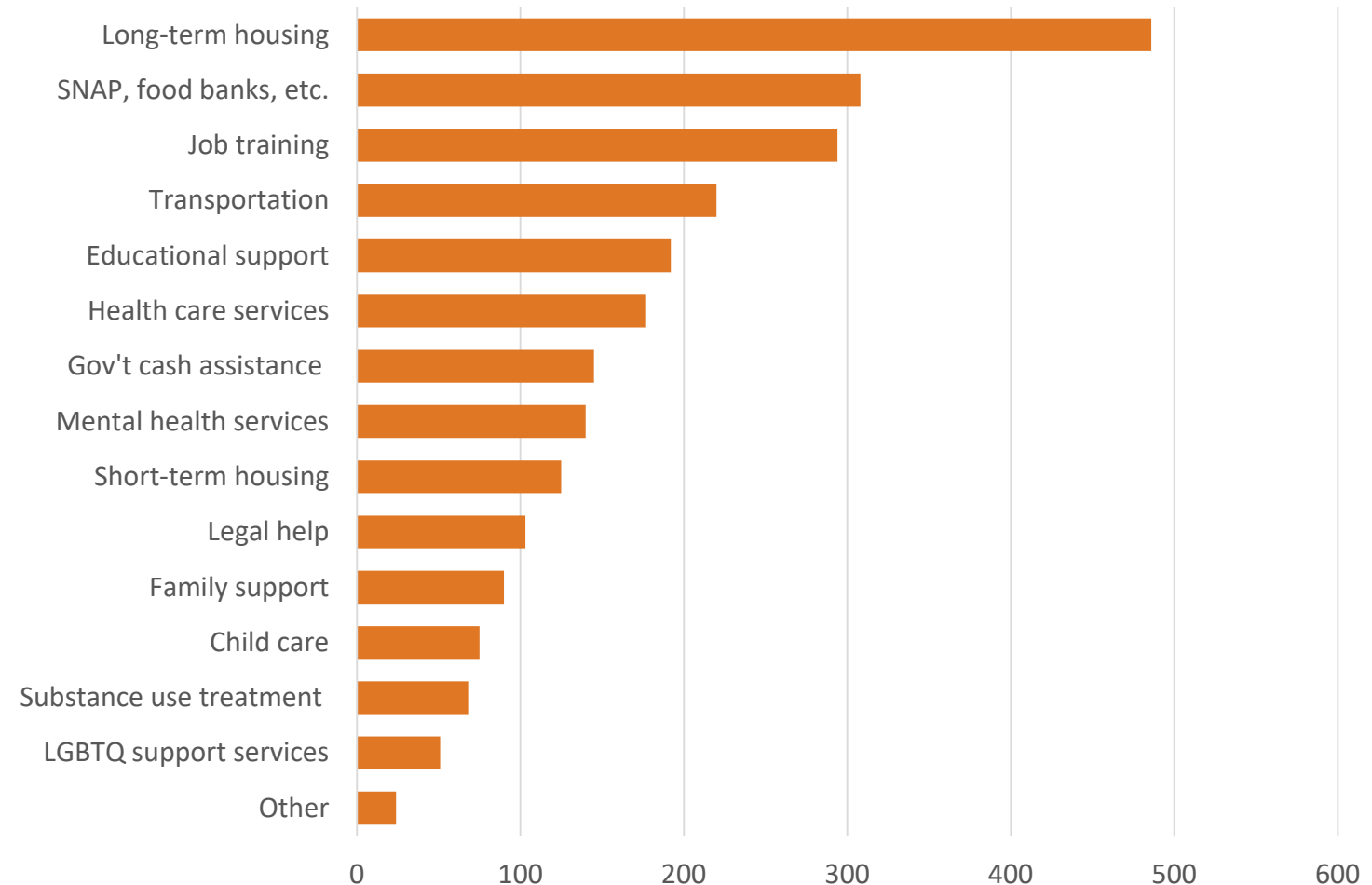
- Identify points of comparison
 - Census Data
 - Similar programs or communities
- Local knowledge is key
 - Use what you know about your community
 - Keep in mind the limitations of your experience
- Perspective is everything
 - Get as many different perspectives as you can
 - Make sure you have youth and other key stakeholder perspectives

Making Data Useful – Data Visualization

Youth REACH 2018 – Most Useful Services

	Frequency	Percent
Short-term housing	125	15%
Long-term housing	486	60%
Educational support	192	24%
Job training	294	36%
Health care services	177	22%
Family support	90	11%
Child care	75	9%
SNAP, food banks, or free meals	308	38%
Government cash assistance	145	18%
LGBTQ support services	51	6%
Mental health services	140	17%
Substance use treatment	68	8%
Transportation assistance	220	27%
Legal help	103	13%
Other	24	3%

Youth REACH 2018 – Most Useful Services





Examining Youth REACH Data

Youth REACH MD

Statewide Demographics

Maryland Census Data (ages 10-24)	
Black/African American	30%
White	42%
Hispanic	12%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%
Native American	0%
Multiracial	5%
Other	6%

	Frequency	Percent
Age Categories (n =816)		
17 and Under	113	14%
18 to 24 Years Old	703	86%
Race (n=801)		
Black/African American	425	53%
White	174	22%
Hispanic	79	10%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8	1%
Native American	8	1%
Multiracial	92	11%
Other	15	2%
Gender (n=801)		
Female	304	38%
Male	472	59%
Transgender (F to M)	4	0%
Transgender (M to F)	14	2%
Other	2	0%
Prefer Not to Answer	5	1%
Sexual Orientation (n=792)		
Straight	637	80%
Gay or Lesbian	64	8%
Bi(Pan)sexual	64	8%
Other	8	1%
Prefer Not to Answer	19	2%

Take a look at your local Youth REACH data demographics.

Where does the Youth REACH data match your experience and where does it not?

What might that tell you about the sample, the population, and/or your service array?



Youth REACH MD

Statewide Life Experiences

What are some common experiences of youth experiencing homelessness?

What does that tell us about ways we can be supporting youth?

	Frequency	Percent
Have Children (n = 790)	240	30%
Number of Children (n = 235)		
One	139	59%
2 - 3	86	37%
4 or more	10	4%
Currently Pregnant (n = 305)	26	9%
Live with Children (n = 238)	121	51%
Military Experience (n = 786)	8	1%
Foster Care Experience (n = 785)	157	20%
Age left foster care (n = 143)		
0-5	15	10%
6-10	27	19%
11-15	27	19%
16-18	47	33%
Over 18	27	19%
Lived in group home (n = 769)	189	25%
Ever stayed in juvenile detention (n = 788)	224	28%
Ever stayed in Jail (n = 785)	295	38%

Youth REACH MD Statewide Services Accessed and Requested

Supports Accessed

	Frequency	Percent
Food Stamps/SNAP	431	53%
Food banks or free meals	180	22%
Shelters	179	22%
Mental health services	177	22%
Job training	169	21%
Health care services	160	20%
Long-term housing	149	18%
I have not tried to get help	143	18%
Educational support	115	14%
Government cash assistance	107	13%
Short-term housing	104	13%
Transportation assistance	104	13%
Legal help	84	10%
Substance use treatment	62	8%
Child care	57	7%
Family support	53	6%
Drop-in or Teen Center	47	6%
LGBTQ support services	39	5%
Police officers	17	2%
Other	5	1%

Supports Requested

	Frequency	Percent
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Other	24	3%

What are some key differences in services youth accessed and what they would like to access?

What does this tell you about the service array?

Youth REACH MD

Statewide Barriers to Accessing Services

**What are the most common
barriers?**

**Why might those be the
most common?**

	Frequency	Percent
Transportation	313	38%
Waiting list	194	24%
Lack Documents	160	20%
Didn't know where to go	156	19%
I received all the help I needed	146	18%
Didn't qualify	127	16%
Didn't hear back	114	14%
Said they could not help	113	14%
Didn't follow through	106	13%
Wrong door	95	12%
Didn't feel comfortable	63	8%
Didn't like how I was treated	50	6%
Paperwork	44	5%
Other	43	5%
Language barrier	16	2%

Questions to Ask Yourself

- What data are we or someone else in our community already collecting?
 - HMIS
 - McKinney-Vento
 - Youth REACH MD
 - Others?
- How can we make that data work for us?
- What's missing? How do we collect it?
- Who is helping us interpret the data?

Questions?



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