

Coordinated Access and Assessment

Homeless individuals are not a homogenous population. Various interventions meet the needs of different groups. Identifying the needs of the target groups will determine which intervention is the most appropriate. This is done through the creation and implementation of a Coordinated Access and Assessment (CAA) program acting as the entry point into the System of Care.

CAA is a single place or process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing services. It is a system-wide program designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable first (triaging). It creates a more efficient homeless serving system by:

- helping people move through the system faster (by reducing the amount of time people spend moving from program to program before finding the right match);
- reducing new entries into homelessness (by consistently offering prevention and diversion resources upfront, reducing the number of people entering the system unnecessarily); and
- improving data collection and quality, and providing accurate information on what kind of assistance consumers need.

The CAA team provided standardized service delivery for homeless individuals or families seeking housing services. The CAA Team is operated by the [Distress Centre](#). The CAA is primarily delivered in the fixed location of [SORCe](#), with limited capacity for mobile outreach services.

Diverting people from the homeless-serving system is an important part of CAA. Intake Workers are trained to help clients develop prevention and diversion plans so as to reserve housing and case management spaces to those in greatest need (triaging).

If diversion is not possible, an intake worker will assess the client using the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool ([SPDAT](#)). The SPDAT determines the client's needs and can be applied in the System of Care in a standardized and methodical way. SPDATs are reviewed at weekly Placement Committee meetings. Membership is comprised of CHF-funded agencies. Clients are matched to programs based on available space, acuity, best fit and client choice.

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