



Housing and Services Resource Center

Cross-Sector Partnerships Roadmap – Part I

The Cross-Sector Partnerships Roadmap offers a high-level step-by-step guide to creating cross sector aging, disability, health and housing solutions for individuals and families due to complex needs that span across sectors. As the affordable housing crisis persists, more individuals and households with housing-related needs may be turning to additional systems including the aging and disability networks, primary care and behavioral health care, criminal legal systems, child welfare system, and income supports. To improve housing stability—and so each person and family can live successfully and sustainably in the community, our individual systems need to come together to provide a seamless and equitable set of support for those complex multi-sector needs.

To streamline access to services, better leverage resources, and ultimately make community living possible for more people, the Housing and Services Resource Center (HSRC) cultivates partnerships between every unique sector. This high-level roadmap can start partners on the road to more effective and efficient systems that drive gains in housing stability and health equity in our communities. The first step is for each potential partner to learn more about local organizations that serve the same people with different assistance. When partners understand the vital role that other organizations have in the community, they can identify where supportive services might intersect. This understanding sets the stage for engaging other organizational leaders who have a strong commitment to the values and to the change that is needed in communities to address challenges of access to quality services and housing.

This first installment of the roadmap focuses on the initial four aspects of cross-sector planning.

- 1) Understand the Need
- 2) Formalize the Team
- 3) Be Aware of Available Resources and Resources Needed for Success
- 4) Design the Intervention Model

Steps #1 and #2 commonly sit with systems or organizational leaders, while steps #3 and #4 are developed and carried out by departments' operational leadership. All the steps are needed to take a project or systems integration to fruition and scale, but the first four steps lay the foundation for all upcoming efforts. For an overview of the full Roadmap, see Figure 1.

Figure 1. Overview of Cross-Sector Partnerships Road Map



The First 4 Steps of the 8-Step Roadmap

Step 1—Understand the Need: Convene People with Lived Expertise (PLE), Analyze Data and Discover Your Partners

Addressing complex community needs drives most partnerships. System leaders need a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to understand the needs.

Convening PLE to hear their voices about need and how systems work on the ground should be part of this roadmap from start to finish. Communities in states such as Arizona are using [town halls](#) to hear from a broad array of community members and partners. PLE who can serve as part of the emerging cross-sector planning team can be recruited from these town halls.

Partners also need to share and analyze public health and population level multi-sector data to understand how to identify priority populations' characteristics and needs and develop common cross-sector definitions of populations, needs, and the evidenced-based practices to address those needs. A need may be identified in one sector that leads to a landscape assessment on who addresses that need in our communities:, for example, social-needs screening leads to more awareness in the health sector regarding housing instability. As other sector partners are identified, sectors will be matching data with cross-sector partners and align those quantitative findings to set priorities.

Finally each sector may need to learn more about local organizations that serve the same people but with different assistance. Partnerships in the earliest stages should create a local landscape assessment to learn who the right partners are to bring to the table and with resources that are needed by those you serve, but are not managed by the systems you operate. The HSRC website has a useful [set of directories](#) for finding local organizations in different sectors.

Step 2—Formalize the Cross-Sector Partnership Planning Team

Partners identify all funding and resources likely needed to address community needs as identified in step #1. Cross-sector analysis enables each sector to better understand the gaps of their partners. As gaps arise, work to quantify those gaps.

Each sector should contribute according to their core mission. That is, the housing sector contributes housing resources, while the aging and disability networks contribute independent living and other supportive services. As this analysis deepens, each sector

learns more about the challenges of the other sector and the policy changes and funding needed to fill gaps.

Joint priorities are developed from each sector's perspective. While the long-term goal is scale and systems integration, the short-term goal may be smaller scale pilots due to limited resources and the need to develop cross system models.

Step 3—Assemble Resources with Each Sector Contributing According to their Core Mission

Successful cross-sector partners planning teams require the right mix of leaders, policy makers, PLE, and operational staff. Partners identify key public, private and non-profit members, determine collaborative leadership, make decisions, refine goals, and develop project design and timeline.

The team should be unified around values (e.g., addressing equity in communities) and a shared high-level goal that meets key objectives across sectors. After those values and goals have been agreed upon, more concrete objectives should be developed. Often partnerships use a mix of metrics across sectors, such as decreased rates of homelessness and housing instability and gains in health and well-being.

The team should meet regularly and have an outside group of political leadership and community members to which the planning team reports on progress.

Step 4—Design the Intervention Model

Intervention models use evidence-based models, employ person-centered practices, are trauma-informed, and use a Housing First and Harm Reduction framework for healthy, and thriving individuals, households, and communities. The cross-sector planning team should offer and describe potential intervention models in their meetings to other partners that may not be as familiar with the models.

The intervention model ideally would have been researched and tested with similar populations but innovation and adapting to local context may also be valuable.

The intervention model should clearly lend itself to the outcomes and community impacts that have already been decided upon within the cross sector-planning team. The model should also be able to be constructed from already determined resources from step #3. When one or more of these factors is not the case, the cross-sector planning team works to address the gap together.

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