VI-SPDAT Update
February 3, 2021

BACKGROUND

The Indianapolis Coordinated Entry System (CES) has been using the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) since CES launched in mid-2017. This tool assists with assessing household vulnerability and the prioritization of services and housing resources. The CES has and continues to use version 2 of the single adult, family, transition-aged youth (TAY) and justice discharge (JD) VI-SPDAT triage tools. In May 2020, OrgCode released version 3 of the tool which has not been implemented into the ClientTrack Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

In December 2020, President and CEO of OrgCode, and co-creator of the VI-SPDAT , Iain De Jong, wrote a blog post introducing the idea of ending the VI-SPDAT and working to create a tool or approach in its place greater framed through an equity lens. Staff at CHIP connected with OrgCode, expressing interest in being a part of whatever group or body formed to work through this.

In January 2021, OrgCode abruptly pulled all reference and materials surrounding the VI-SPDAT from their website. Iain De Jong wrote another blog post providing context around their decision to no longer support communities in using version 2 of the VI-SPDAT. The post makes reference to work already underway, by experts outside of OrgCode, to develop tools or approaches that consider gender and racial equity.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR INDIANAPOLIS?

The Indianapolis CES has recognized the need to revise the CES assessment long before the changes at OrgCode. In August 2019, a CES Refinement Workshop identified 17 refinement strategies to be prioritized within the project management structure over the upcoming years. These strategies include refining the CES assessment for streamlining and ease of administration, developing a process to manage under-reporting to improve accuracy of vulnerability measures, and revising prioritization to address nuances in vulnerability. CHIP remains committed to leading and project managing the refinement work surrounding CES assessment and prioritization.

WHEN WILL THE REFINEMENT WORK BEGIN?

Internal planning and prep has already begun. Over the upcoming months, we will continue to research best practices surrounding assessment and prioritization, engage in peer to peer learning with other CoCs, identify community stakeholders including those with lived expertise, and establish a workgroup that will dive into this important and vital work with an action oriented and problem solving mindset. Lisa Huffman, Project

Manager of CES Refinement and Crisis Response System, will be project managing the CES assessment tool refinement work. For additional information you may contact her by emailing lhuffman@chipindy.org

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE MEANTIME?
Indianapolis will continue to use version 2 of the single adult, family, transition-aged youth (TAY) and justice discharge (JD) VI-SPDAT triage tools. The use of discrepancy forms and case conferencing will continue to be vital for professional and clinical input of household vulnerability that is not accounted for through the VI-SPDAT.