



# Improving CE Access

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LOCAL PLANNING BODY TOOL

**MICHIGAN**  
BALANCE OF STATE  
CONTINUUM OF CARE



Determine the appropriate starting point for your Local Planning Body and begin to improve access to your system.

LEVEL 1:

SLIDE 3

LEVEL 2:

SLIDE 7

LEVEL 3:

SLIDE 10

ACTIVITIES:

SLIDE 11

# Level 1: Set Up for Success

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Before having this conversation, you should have your engaged LPB members, particularly those from the Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (HARA), shelters, and any groups that are a likely “first call” for the general public to access assistance.

- Likely “first call” places will take some brainstorming– these aren’t the places you, as a professional working in the field, might identify. Try to think like a person that knows nothing about resources designed to end homelessness– who might they turn to? A teacher? A librarian? A police officer? A DHHS worker? A religious leader?

***Pro Tip:*** Don’t guess when you can ask. Do you have anyone that has used your system to access resources as a partner in your LPB? If not, start recruiting! Also, more than one voice is always better, consider a limited time survey of people accessing services. Keep it short (1-2 questions), anonymous, and ensure all partners are collecting the responses in the same way.

# Level 1: Review of Current System

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Identify and take stock of what you currently have in place for the follow areas:

**Location:** Where can a person access the homeless crisis response system (HCRS) in your LPB? List out the locations.

**Methods:** In what ways can a person access the HCRS in your LPB? In person? By phone? List these.

**Time:** When can a person access the HCRS in your LPB? Identify if different times have access to different features.

**Marketing:** How is the information to reach the access point shared? How would the general public know about it?

**Safety:** How are victims and survivors of domestic violence or runaway and homeless youth served in the LPB?

**Training:** How are people at the access points trained on the necessary tools and approaches? Is this sufficient?

# Level 1: Review of Current System

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Identify the opportunities for growth for each of these areas. What are action steps your LPB can take to make improvements in each of the areas you just reviewed?

- Location
- Methods
- Time
- Marketing
- Safety
- Training

# Level 1: Planning Next Steps

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Discuss the areas in which you feel the LPB is in greatest need of improvement.

Some methods to help facilitate this are a Chicken or Egg Diagramming or an Ease of Impact Chart (see slides 11 & 12)

Discussions should keep central the quality of the service response to the person/family experiencing homelessness.

***Pro Tip:** A helpful re-frame can be to think of your programs as if they were a business. How would you treat customers to ensure they had a good experience and rate you well on Yelp? Would your business be so complicated to get in the door that they would just turn to Amazon instead?*

# Level 2: Set Up for Success

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This is intended for the LPBs that read the Level 1 suggestions and felt they have covered Access discussions thoroughly already and are in greater need of a different approach. Before you begin, check in with stakeholders and determine if this is where you should focus.

This advanced level will focus on consumer service and input.

# Level 2: Review Current System

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Discuss what you already have in place to gather feedback on the system from people who have used or are using coordinated entry services. At the system or agency levels this might include:

- Paper surveys
- Focus Groups
- Committee/Board members with lived experience

You may consider which of this feedback might be useful to share at the system-level to inform conversations about improving coordinated entry access. Adding specific questions or other minimal changes could increase the uses of information already in your system.

# Level 2: Planning Next Steps

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Your community can complete the Access Point Assessment activity (slide 13) to identify gaps in your current system access. If you have consumer feedback on system access that you identified in the review step, use this to inform your process.

Once you have identified gaps, you can brainstorm ways to fill these gaps. Using the Ease of Impact Chart activity (slide 11) can help determine the best approach.

# Level 3: Planning Next Steps

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If your community has advanced beyond the Level 1 and 2 assessments and activities; you can still improve your system access—with consumer input! To do this, your community might wish to conduct a Listening Session.

Communities that wish to host a Listening Session with support from the Balance of State (e.g. payment to consumers for their time), should use their meeting time to create a plan that will also serve as a proposal to the BoS Executive Committee.

For specifications on what to include in your planning, see the Listening Session activity, slide 14.

# Activity: Ease of Impact Chart

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- Draw a chart on a large poster-paper or white board an X and Y axis (only positive;0-10)
- List each action step/option on its own Post-It or smaller piece of paper
- Discuss where each item belongs on the chart: How difficult is it to do? How much impact will it have? (0 should be no difficulty and no impact)
- Once you have agreement (limit this activity to 15 minutes or so) on the placement of options on the chart, you can build your action plan, starting with options that give the most impact for the least difficulty
  - The grey text in each quadrant can help give you an idea of where to start for each part.



# Activity: Chicken or Egg

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- Draw a chart on a large poster-paper or white board sections of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> positions
- List each option on its own Post-It or smaller piece of paper
- Discuss where each item belongs on the chart: Does it come first, second, or third in planning?
  - To identify first items, ask if this one drives or leads the others
  - Second and third aren't unimportant, they just aren't the steps to be taken first
  - Time limits help, keep this step under 20 minutes
  - Once you have agreement on the placement of options on the chart, you can build your action plan, starting at the beginning and working forward

# Activity: Access Point Assessment

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- On large poster-paper or a white board, write out all areas of system access consumers typically take to access services (outreach, calling a number, walking into a specific location, etc). Allow room in each of these areas for additional notes
- Using two colors of sticky notes, use color A for **types of barriers** and color B for **groups of people** and have participants write make sticky notes for each of these things for each access point (eg, if an access point is a physical location, a note on color A might say “**far away from other resources**” while color B might say “**people without cars**”
- Do this for each access point separately, keep it to 10 minutes for each access point
- In each area, cluster sticky notes that are similar
- Discuss the areas where barriers are similar across multiple access points or where the same groups of people have difficulty accessing multiple access points

# Activity: Listening Session Planning

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Plans should include at minimum:

- planning group or individual,
- timeline,
- projected costs,
- marketing and engagement,
- target group,
- transportation,
- objectives/goals/focus areas,
- facilitation plan,
- how information will be documented, analyzed, and synthesized.

Submit plans to the [coordinator@miboscoc.com](mailto:coordinator@miboscoc.com) account for consideration by the Executive Committee.