

MINNESOTA COORDINATED ENTRY ASSESSMENT TOOL SURVEY

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

June 2019

This summary was prepared by the Coordinated Entry Prioritization Assistance Tool (CEPAT) Work Group. More information about this group is provided at the end of this document. This summary includes background information, overview of the findings, and initial conclusions.

Background Information

Last year, in response to concerns about the VI-SPDAT, the Minnesota Coordinated Entry System (CES) Committee conducted a statewide survey. The survey sought feedback on the following areas:

1. Core Qualities of an Assessment Tool
2. Qualities of the VI-SPDAT that are helpful
3. Qualities of the VI-SPDAT that are problematic
4. Qualities/questions of an ideal Assessment Tool

Additionally, information on CoC affiliation, CES role, and interest in providing additional input was collected. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this process, whether through designing the survey, completing the survey, or organizing the responses afterward.

The committee received 286 responses to the survey. Members of the CEPAT Work Group and MESH staff reviewed each response and organized them into categories, creating hundreds of data elements. The full results of the survey can be viewed in the attached documents.

The results of this survey are now being utilized by Focus Strategies, a technical assistance provider who will provide a recommendation to Coordinated Entry Stakeholders on whether Minnesota should continue with the VI-SPDAT, choose a new tool, or pursue the development of its own tool. More information about Focus Strategies can be found in the June 2019 CEPAT Newsletter.

Overview of the Findings

The initial overview of the survey results demonstrated that there is a wide range of perspectives when it comes to how people think and feel about the VI-SPDAT as a prioritization assistance tool. In this way, we believe that the survey results affirmed the 2018 decision of the Coordinated Entry Stakeholders (10 Continuums of Care, MN Tribal Collaborative, and State funders) to evaluate the use of the VI-SPDAT in Minnesota and identify a path for moving forward.

The committee was able to sort responses into common themes, but was unable to identify a clear understanding of the positives and negatives of the tool due to a variety of factors including:

- Many responses related to the system or CoC policies versus the tool specifically. These responses were pulled out from the data included below but are included in the full survey response documents. The high volume of these responses highlighted the difficulty of assessing the tool in isolation without considering how it is used within a Coordinated Entry system.
- The VI-SPDAT with MN Script was being used in only a portion of the state and may have affected individual responses,
- Each CoC operates CES in a slightly different manner and therefore responses may have been regionally specific.
- The responses were such polar opposites, even on specific qualities of the tool. For example, 68 respondents in some way identified that they liked the ability to score and capture

vulnerabilities through the VI-SPDAT while 110 responded that they felt like the tool did not lead to accurate referrals.

Below is a summary of feedback received, organized into three groups:

- What respondents liked about the tool
- What respondents didn't like about the tool
- Characteristics of an ideal tool

What Respondents Liked	189
Ability to score/capture vulnerabilities	68
Works for clients	56
Accuracy of score/accurate referrals	34
Ease of use	25
Everything	4
The tool is validated	2

What Respondents Didn't Like	216
Inaccuracy of score/referrals	110
Wording of questions	68
Scoring function	19
Length of questions and tool	13
Opposed to concept of scoring	6

Characteristics of an Ideal Tool	245
More/new questions	159
Fewer questions	10
Wording of questions	27
Criteria/scoring	20
Current tool is ideal	12
Tweak vispdatt	10
No new tool, no tool at all	5
Go back to pre-CES assessments/process	2

Initial Conclusions and Next Steps

While it was helpful to further understand the things that people liked and didn't like about the VI-SPDAT, additional information is needed to fully understand if a change in a tool is needed, including how it fits into the entire system. This is the work that is being pursued by Focus Strategies and the CEPAT workgroup. CoC policies, people's level of training, and what version of the VI-SPDAT they were using (original or MN Script) impacted their responses. Since the VI-SPDAT is a prioritization assistance tool and only one aspect of the prioritization process, it is hard to get responses that are exclusively about the tool.

The Coordinated Entry Prioritization Assistance Tool Work Group will continue to support the work of Focus Strategies. Through the review of this data and initial conversations with Focus Strategies, the CEPAT Work Group is recommending that this work include, but is not limited to:

- Conducting small focus groups or surveys with targeted stakeholder groups;

- Analyzing how CoC policies, VI-SPDAT supplement and training affect both satisfaction and successful implementation;
- Analyzing if satisfaction improved with use of the MN scripting added to the published VI-SPATs;
- Looking at the proposed updates to the VI-SPDAT currently being tested to see if they address some of the concerns express; and
- Identifying training or education that could support improved assessment and prioritization prior to a recommendation from the committee on the best tool for MN.

Background Information on CEPAT

What Is The Coordinated Entry Prioritization Assistance Tool Work Group?

The MN Coordinated Entry Prioritization Assessment Tool Work Group members consist of people designated to represent:

- Continuums of Care - Carla Solemn, Laura DeRosier
- Coordinated Entry Priority List Managers – Katherine Cross, Sarah Hunt
- Minnesota Tribal Collaborative – Jordan May, Tammy Moreland
- State Homeless Programs – Ji-Young Choi, Tom Balsley
- HMIS System Administrator, ICA – Swathi Mummini

Why Does This Work Group Exist?

Minnesota Coordinated Entry stakeholders identified that it is essential that the Coordinated Entry assessment process:

- promotes accurate referrals,
- implements client-centric approaches, and
- is trauma-informed and culturally competent

What Are They Doing?

This group is focused on what a Coordinated Entry Prioritization Assistance Tool should look like for MN moving forward.

Beginning in April 2019, this group began working with Focus Strategies, a technical assistance provider under contract with Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. After a process of evaluation, Focus Strategies and MN Coordinated Entry Prioritization Assessment Tool Work Group will make a recommendation in the summer of 2019 that Minnesota either:

- Move forward with the existing assessment tool with some recommended improvements on implementation, or
- Replace this tool with either an existing assessment tool or the creation of a new assessment tool.