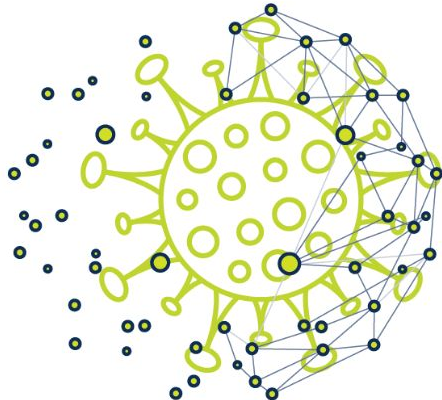


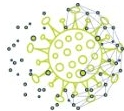
# Communication Crisis Responses: Can You Hear Us?

Garrick Rattler and Helen Meridy



## A Year of Crisis

Using Human Services Data  
to Recover from the Pandemic



# Agenda

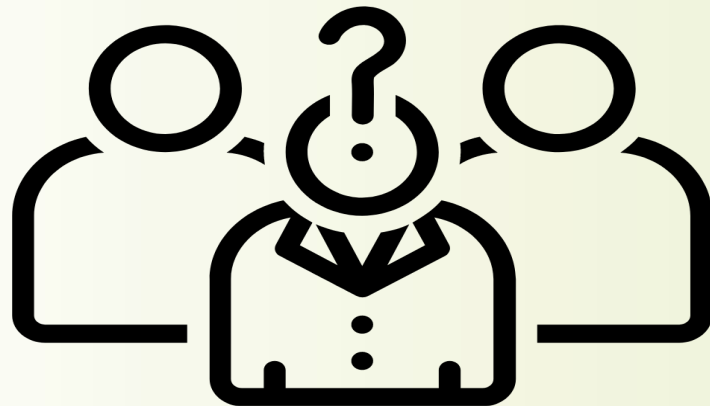
- Landscape of the Greater New Orleans Area
- New Orleans and Crisis
- Disaster Response
- Crisis Communication
- Equity Crisis
- People Centric Approach

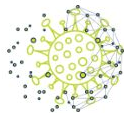




## WHO ARE WE

- VIA LINK
  - HMIS Lead
- Garrick Rattler (He/Him)
  - HMIS Data Support Specialist
- Helen Meridy (She/Her)
  - HMIS Coordinator

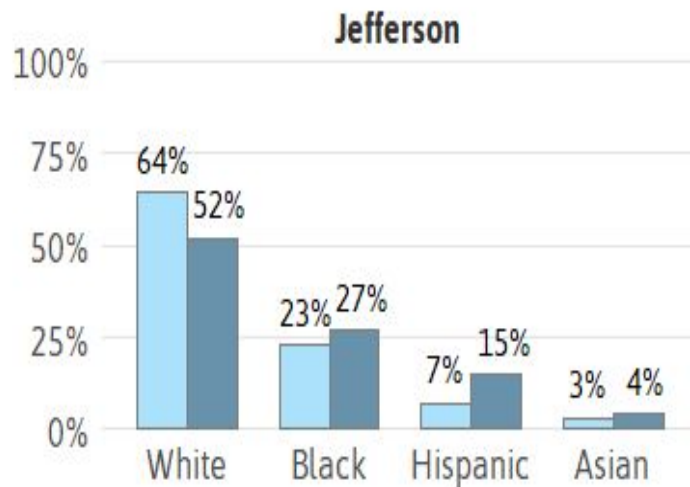
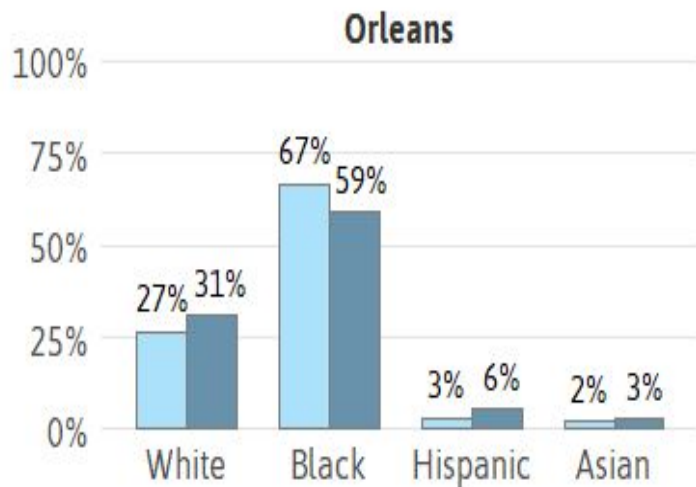




# New Orleans (Orleans and Jefferson Parish)

- **Population Estimate 2019**  
– 828,637

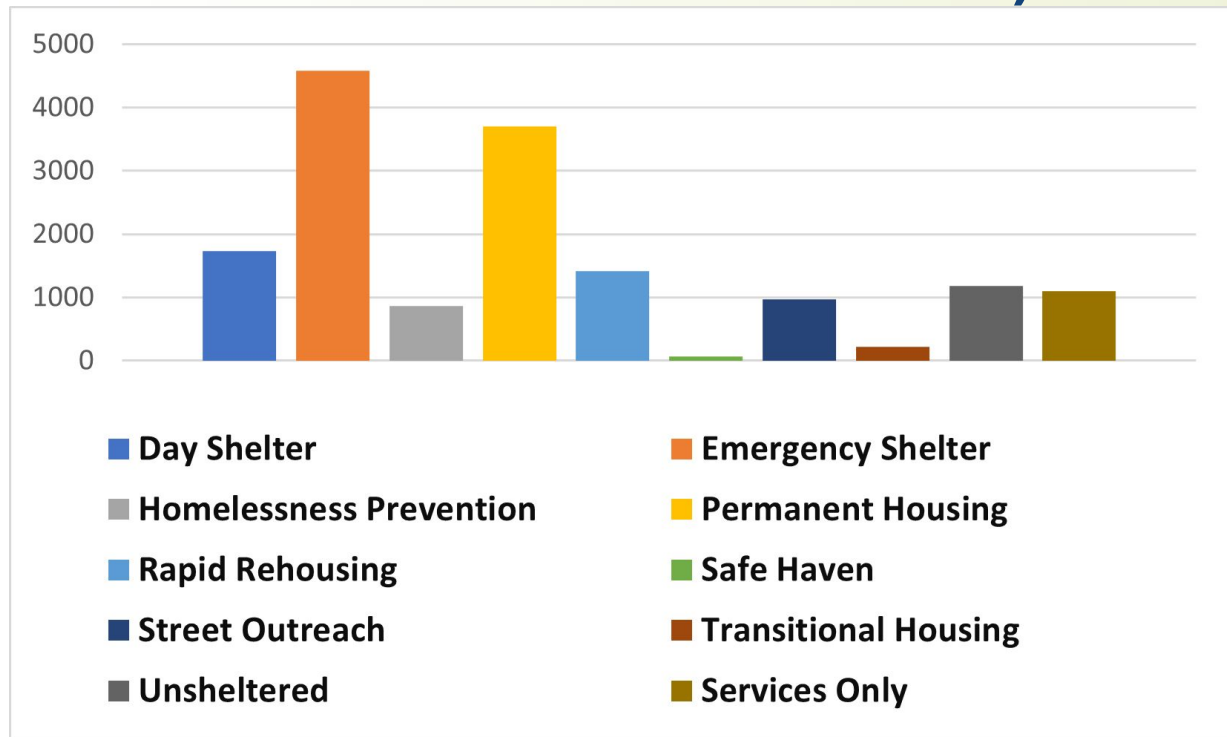
White, black, Hispanic, and Asian, Metro New Orleans parishes and U.S.

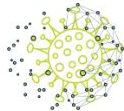




# New Orleans - (Orleans and Jefferson Parish)

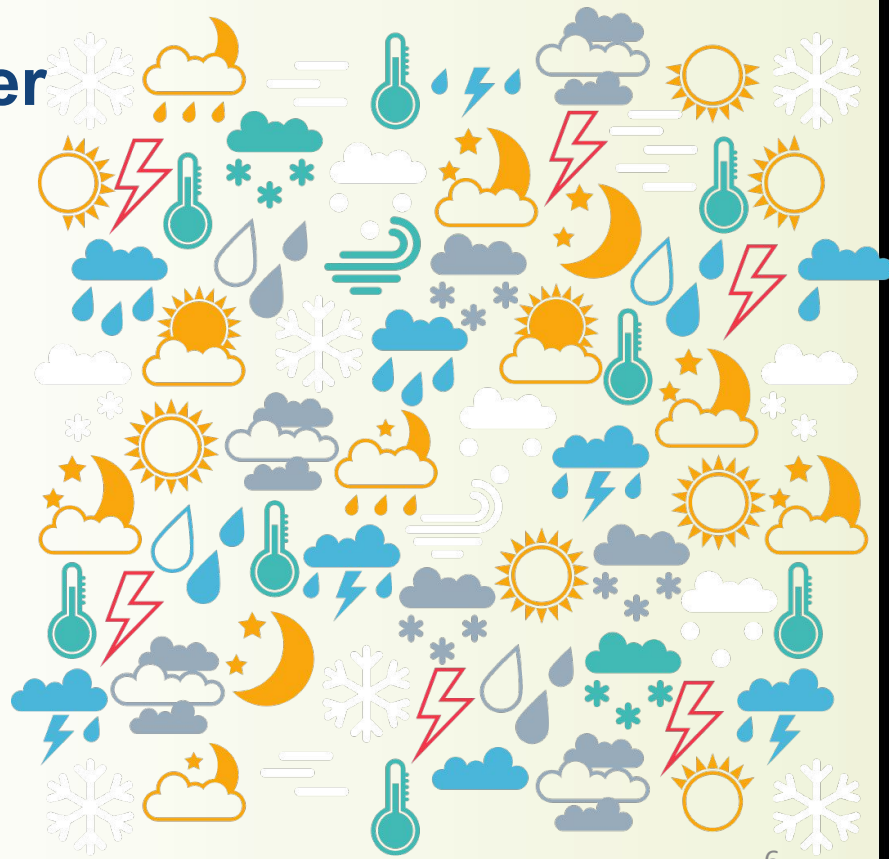
- **Homeless Population**
- **Programs & Agencies**
  - Over 75 Programs
  - Over 25 Agencies
- **HMIS Users**
  - 285 End Users

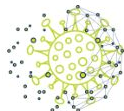




## New Orleans and Crisis: Weather

- Hurricanes & Flooding
  - 2020: a record 30 named storms and 5 of those made landfall in Louisiana
  - Countless Floods





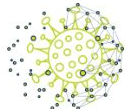
## New Orleans and Crisis: Poverty



**New Orleans 23.2%**



**USA 10.50%**



## New Orleans & Crisis COVID-19

**Total COVID Cases: 68,611 (8.27%)**

- Orleans Parish COVID Cases: 27, 398
- Jefferson Parish COVID Cases: 41, 398

**Total COVID Deaths: 1,594**

- Orleans Parish COVID Deaths: 714
- Jefferson Parish COVID Deaths: 814

### Orleans Parish:

- 73% of COVID deaths were African American (59% of Population)
- 25% of COVID deaths were White (31% of Population)

### Jefferson Parish:

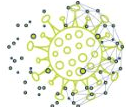
- 37% of COVID deaths were African American (27% of Population)
- 60% of COVID deaths were White (52% of Population)



# Disaster Response: Planning

- Planning is Key
  - Do you have a Disaster Plan?
    - What's in a Disaster Plan?
      - What constitutes as disaster?
      - Personnel procedure
- Project Management
  - How are you utilizing tools to help your team?

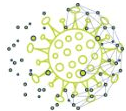




# Disaster Response: Communication

- Outreach: CoC & End Users
  - Virtual Engagement
    - Relationship Building
      - » One on One Outreach
      - » Program specific Outreach
      - » Virtual Training and Videos
  - Newsletters
    - » Monthly Reporting
    - » Tips
    - » CoC News





# Disaster Response: Data Adaptability

- New Situations = New Rules
- Who needs to be at the table?
  - How can we center the clients?
- What data is needed?
  - How can we make impact during this time?
- Make sure all stakeholders are involved in implementation and the Pivot

Example: CoC Covid Assessment Questions

- Covid Testing & Processing
- Covid Homelessness Responses
- Covid Vaccine

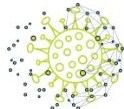




# Communication is **KEY** within Crisis

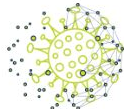
- Direct Contact with stakeholders
- Information Availability
  - Agencies that were Open vs Closed
  - Agencies that were awarded Cares Act funding and types, etc....
- Idea Brainstorming with COC/Agencies/End Users
  - Example: How to identify clients coming from Hotels that was referred to Cares ACT Rapid Rehousing? If not hotel, and client was housed do they qualify for CARES ACT Homeless Prevention?





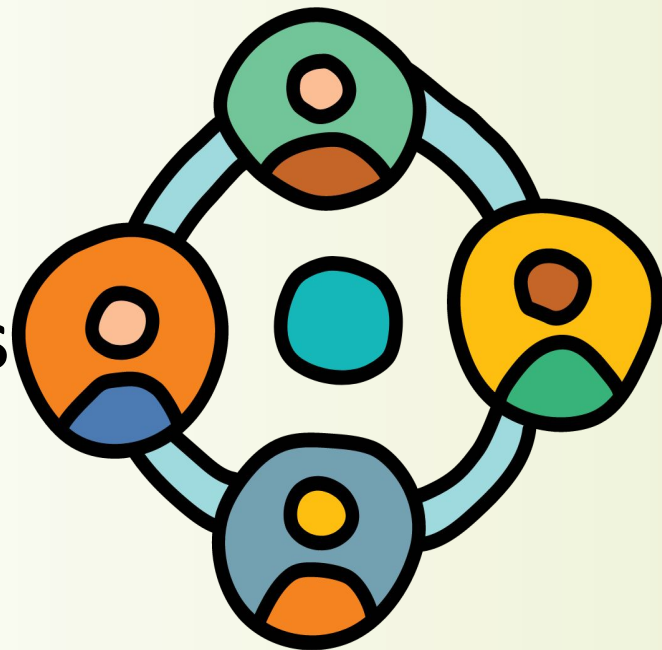
# Keys to Success: Effective Communication

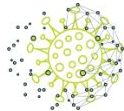
- Patience-this is new and unknown to everyone! **Patience is Virtue!!**
- Continuum Insight -What is your continuum's strengths and weaknesses? What can your continuum produce under pressure?
- Understanding the Users and Agencies
  - Tailor your data collection forms/training/connections to meet everyone's needs
  - Emails, Call Check -In, and Virtual Meets



## Importance of Communication for all levels: COC

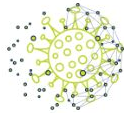
- Information and Clarification
- Stakeholder Data Input
- Disaster Rule:  
**Disaster = More Funding = More HMIS  
Participation → More Confusion**





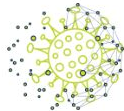
# Importance of Communication for all levels: Agency

- Agencies hold the requirements
- Agencies Enforce Workflow
- Agencies manage frontline workers



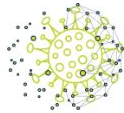
# Importance of Communication for all levels: End Users

- End users are vital to data collection process
- Making sure there's similarity in data collection workflow as much as possible
- Definitely gives one insight into what End Users are battling with on and off the clock



# The Equity Crisis

*“The COVID-19 pandemic has not only threatened the health and well-being of hundreds of millions of people around the globe but has also triggered a national recession in the United States and worsened the racial wealth gap” -Center for American Progress*



## Why is communication imperative in equity work?

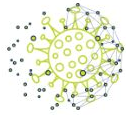
- Effective communication can supplement additional measures to maintain equity from the CoC to the end users.
  - Ensuring that there are fair and equitable resources available to all levels.
  - Discussions of incidents of unfair circumstances.
  - More accurate representation of populations in leadership roles
  - **ACTION**
- Equitable Communication Response Plans
  - Providing agencies and end users with resources that will strengthen their abilities to provide services for clients.
  - Ensuring that all agencies and end users have a firm understanding of the resources that are available to them.



# Equity Task Force

- 2018 Start Date
- 18 Members; CoC Agencies, Front Line Workers, Community Partners, HMIS
- Monthly Meetings: In-Person to Virtual Meetings; Email Communication
- Why The Group Works
  - Common Goals
  - Diversity
  - Open and Encouraged Discussion
  - Centering The Group in Decision Making





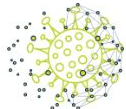
# Equity Task Force

- Where are we? Goals
  - Expand outreach efforts in geographic areas with higher concentrations of underrepresented groups into underserved communities
  - To develop educational material on creating greater racial and ethnic diversity for homelessness in the CoC.
  - To establish opportunities for regular communication and understanding of underserved populations in the Greater New Orleans area.
  - Implement professional development opportunities to identify and invest in emerging leaders of different races and ethnicities in the homelessness sector.
  - Examine emergency shelters and how race disparities play in access.



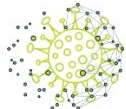
# Equity Task Force

- Where are we? Added Assessment Questions
  - Reason for homelessness
    - Later Added Covid Responses
  - Zip Code Of Last Permanent Address
  - In the last 90 days, were you released from a hospital, jail, or mental institution?
  - Have you ever been in foster care?
- What brought the committee to this?



# Equity Task Force

- A high percentage of Black Clients chose zip codes in Central City, Gertown, and Lower Garden District. While a high percentage of White clients chose zip codes in Gretna and Central City.
- **40%** of Black Clients chose financial situations as their reason for homelessness. 30% of White Clients also chose this option. Of all individuals answering the question, 36% choose this option.
- **10%** of Black Clients chose a Covid situation as their reason for homelessness. 5% of White Clients also chose this option. Of all the individuals answering this question, 8% chose a Covid Situation.
- **25%** of Black Clients chose Family Conflict as their reason for homelessness, while 15% White Clients and 27% American Indian Clients did the same.

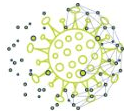


# PEOPLE CENTRIC

What does this all mean?

- Center People in all communication
  - Provide Resources
  - Provide Opportunities
  - Encourage Participation and Understanding
  - Provide Open Discussion Environment
  - Be Open To Quick Pivot Moments





**Thank You!**

**Questions????**

**Contact Us:**

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