Coordinated Access: Where Would We Be Without It & the Need for Continuous Improvement

CAEH23

November 9, 2023

THE CANADIAN ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS

The CAEH leads a national movement of individuals, organizations and communities working together to end homelessness in Canada.

caeh.ca

Advocacy

The CAEH advocates for the federal and provincial policy changes needed to end homelessness.

Allied Networks

The CAEH supports several allied networks working toward our shared mission of ending homelessness.

Built for Zero Canada

Helping a core group of leading communities end chronic and veteran homelessness.

bfzcanada.ca

Data & Policy

Revolutionizing the way communities and governments use data to end homelessness.

National Conference on Ending Homelessness

Join us for the 2023 National Conference on Ending Homelessness, Nov 8-10 in Halifax.
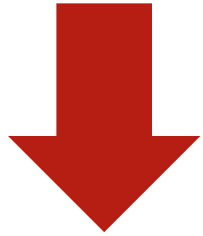
conference.caeh.ca

Training & Technical Assistance

Helping communities and organizations end homelessness with expert training and technical assistance.

training.caeh.ca

CAEH Theory of Change

All communities in Canada achieve and sustain an equitable and measurable end to all homelessness

Local systems are set up to drive and sustain reductions

Proven technical strategies implemented

Federal structural reform

Provincial systems support an end to homelessness

Key influencers expect + demand homelessness be ended

Truth + Reconciliation; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

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The Goal?

Solving Rather Than Managing Homelessness

The Fundamental Question

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Are all our programs + investments adding up to thing we really want: equitable reductions in homelessness over time?

"

"

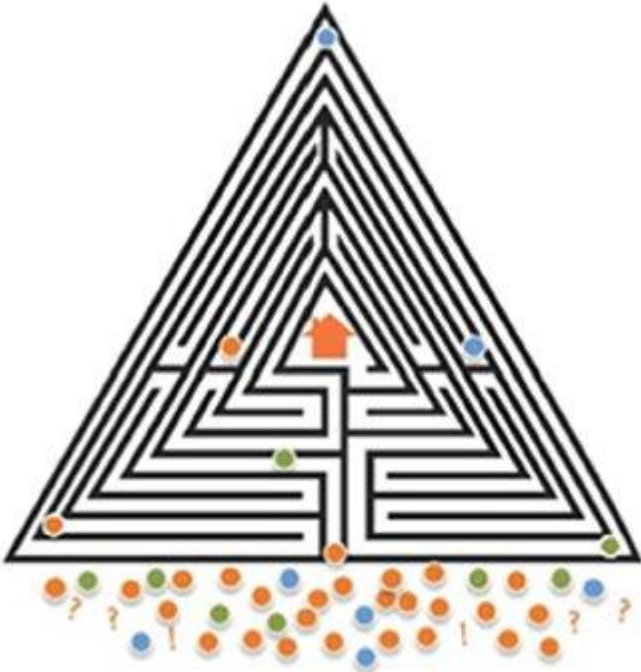**And if not, how quickly would we know, and how quickly could we pivot?**

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Before Coordinated Access

Standard System vs. Coordinated System
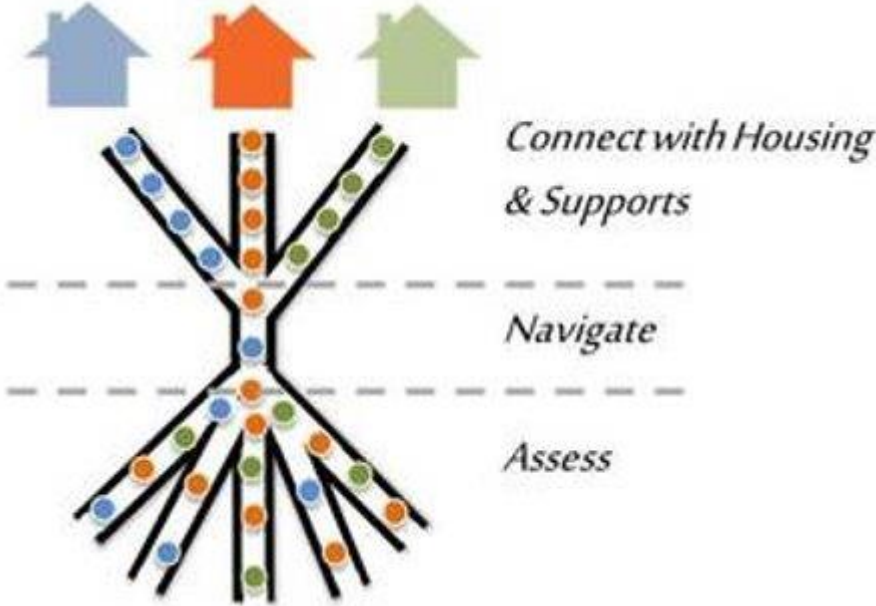
Standard System	Coordinated System
No coordinated community coverage	Fully coordinated outreach/access points
Each program has its own intake/assessment	One community-wide intake/assessment
Each agency keeps a list of clients	One community-wide By-Name List
My clients/my resources	Our clients/our resources
Agencies/programs prioritize clients independently or simply use a first-come, first-served approach to fill vacancies	Clear and rationalized community-wide prioritization protocol
Program-centric view which is only able to address homelessness	Opportunity for a system level, client centred view to end homelessness

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Person's Experience Before & After

Without Coordinated Access

With Coordinated Access

Connect with Housing & Supports

Navigate

Assess

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Programs - Connected vs. Coordinated

Where we were

Where we are

Where we're going

Putting people at the centre of your system

By-Name List
Real-time, comprehensive, community-wide person-level data (known and consenting)

Community Response
Organized around people's needs and assets
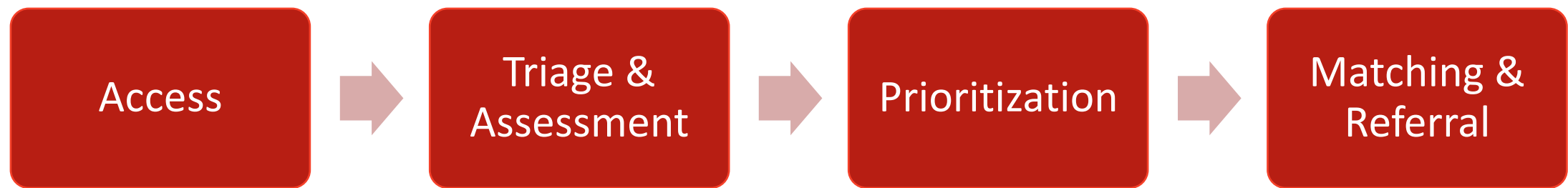
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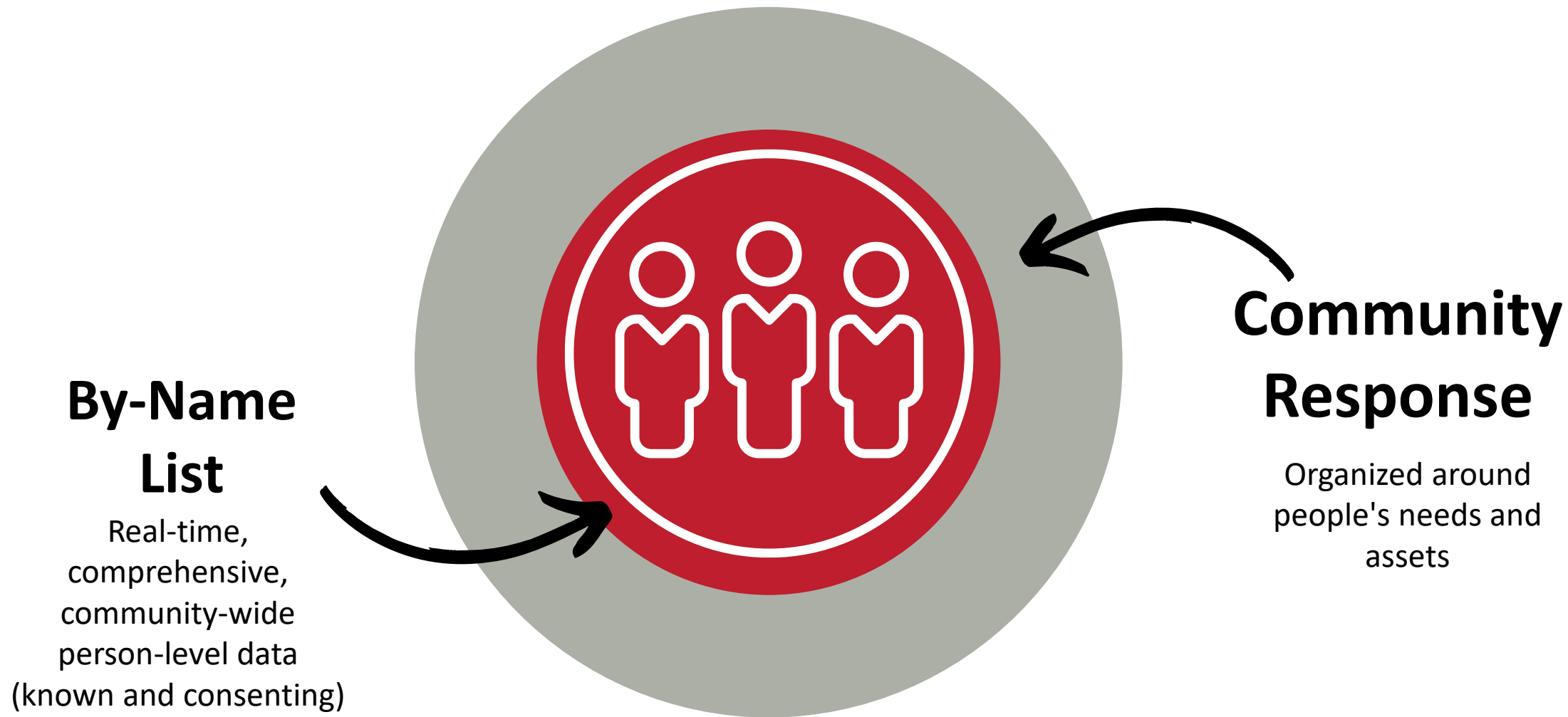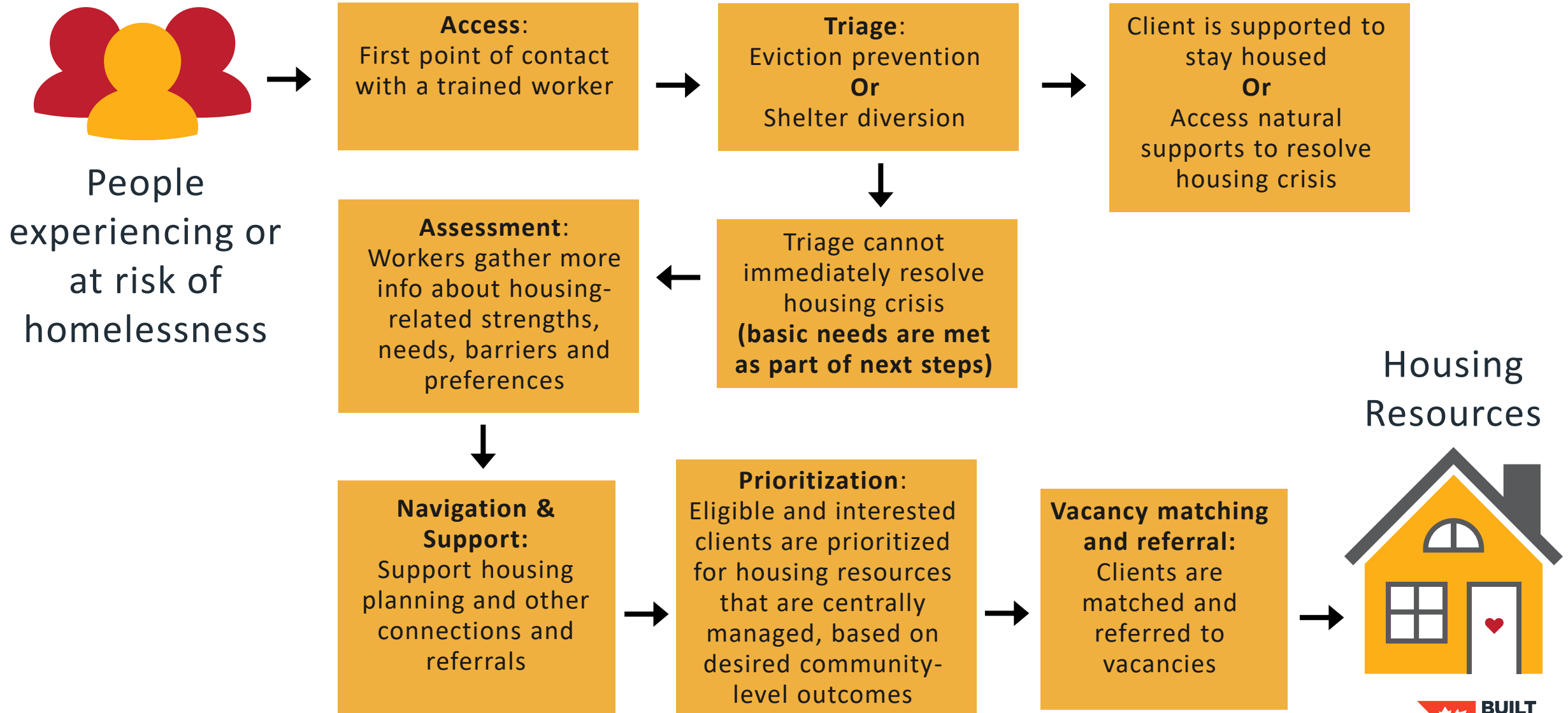
Understanding Coordinated Access

Coordinated Access is...

Coordinated Access is a way for communities to bring consistency to the process by which people experiencing or at risk of homelessness access housing and related services within a geographic area.

A strong CA system uses a Housing First Approach, real-time data through a By-Name List and Housing Resource Inventory, and a streamlined and standardized approach to service delivery through the following four key elements...

Access ➔ **Triage & Assessment** ➔ **Prioritization** ➔ **Matching & Referral**

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Coordinated Access Process Flow

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness

Access:
First point of contact with a trained worker

Triage:
Eviction prevention
Or
Shelter diversion

Client is supported to stay housed
Or
Access natural supports to resolve housing crisis

Triage cannot immediately resolve housing crisis
(basic needs are met as part of next steps)

Assessment:
Workers gather more info about housing-related strengths, needs, barriers and preferences

Navigation & Support:
Support housing planning and other connections and referrals

Prioritization:
Eligible and interested clients are prioritized for housing resources that are centrally managed, based on desired community-level outcomes

Vacancy matching and referral:
Clients are matched and referred to vacancies

Housing Resources

Adapted from Reaching Home CA Guide

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Connecting people to housing solutions

UNDERSTAND DEMAND & SYSTEM FLOW

LINKING SUPPLY & DEMAND

UNDERSTAND HOUSING RESOURCE SUPPLY

BY-NAME LIST

All known people experiencing homelessness (those unable to prevent or divert from homelessness) & System inflow & outflow data

COORDINATED ACCESS
Process to assess, prioritize & match as well as support navigation, problem-solving and improve flow

HOUSING RESOURCE INVENTORY

(housing resources e.g., Housing Help, Rapid-Rehousing, Housing First, Supportive Housing, Housing subsidies, etc. that are available and/or targeted to those on the BNL)

COORDINATED SYSTEM TO END HOMELESSNESS:

System Entry
(prevention/diversion/triage)

Navigation
(clarify needs, support housing plans, referrals)

Exit Homelessness
(housing, support)

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Benefits of a Coordinated System

System Benefits

Without it, you wouldn't know how the housing process is working or where to improve

Sharing of information between different agencies and program areas to maximize resources

Swifter and more coordinated assistance can help stabilize clients' conditions and limit need for high-cost crisis interventions (e.g., accessing the ER if that level of care is not needed)

Client Benefits

Simplified, consistent access to supports and services

Access to all housing resources (rather than just the door they walked into)

Reduces the need to repeat personal information to obtain support

Misunderstanding, Evolution & Continuous Improvement

Myths & Facts

Myth: Coordinated Access will end homelessness

Fact: While important, as it can improve coordination and user experience, help to better utilize existing resources, pinpoint where further resources are needed, and be a platform from which to problem-solve barriers - it's NOT A MAGIC BULLET for ending homelessness - there are many factors at play.

Myth: A By-Name List and Coordinated Access are two totally separate things

Fact: A By-Name list with real-time, comprehensive person-level and aggregate level data is a key component of Coordinated Access. While there are unique technical elements to each, a By-Name List approach is the same thing as Coordinated Access. The By-Name List is not just data or a waitlist, it is meant to be used to house people in a coordinated way.

Myth: Prioritization is new - and unfair

Fact: People have always been prioritized, just not in a transparent, community-wide, agreed-upon way. Must be done consistently, equitably, and with as much real-time information as possible. Having a process to allocate limited resources is fair - the fact that there is not enough appropriate, affordable housing and supports available is not fair.

Myths & Facts

Myth: We don't receive Reaching Home funding so we can't or don't need to implement Coordinated Access

Fact: If you are interested in ending homelessness in your community, a By-Name List and Coordinated Access are key approaches. Communities have implemented a By-Name List and Coordinated Access without federal funding. Regardless of Federal requirements, there may be requirements at a Provincial level to implement BNL/CA. If interested in being part of the Built for Zero Chronic and/or Veteran Cohorts, a confirmed Basic Quality By-Name List and the Reaching Home Level of Coordinated Access are required at minimum.

Myth: Coordinated Access once implemented is complete

Fact: The nature of homelessness and systems is that they are constantly changing. CA requires continual evolution and improvement. What your local CA system looked like when it started, is not what it will and needs to look like in the future.
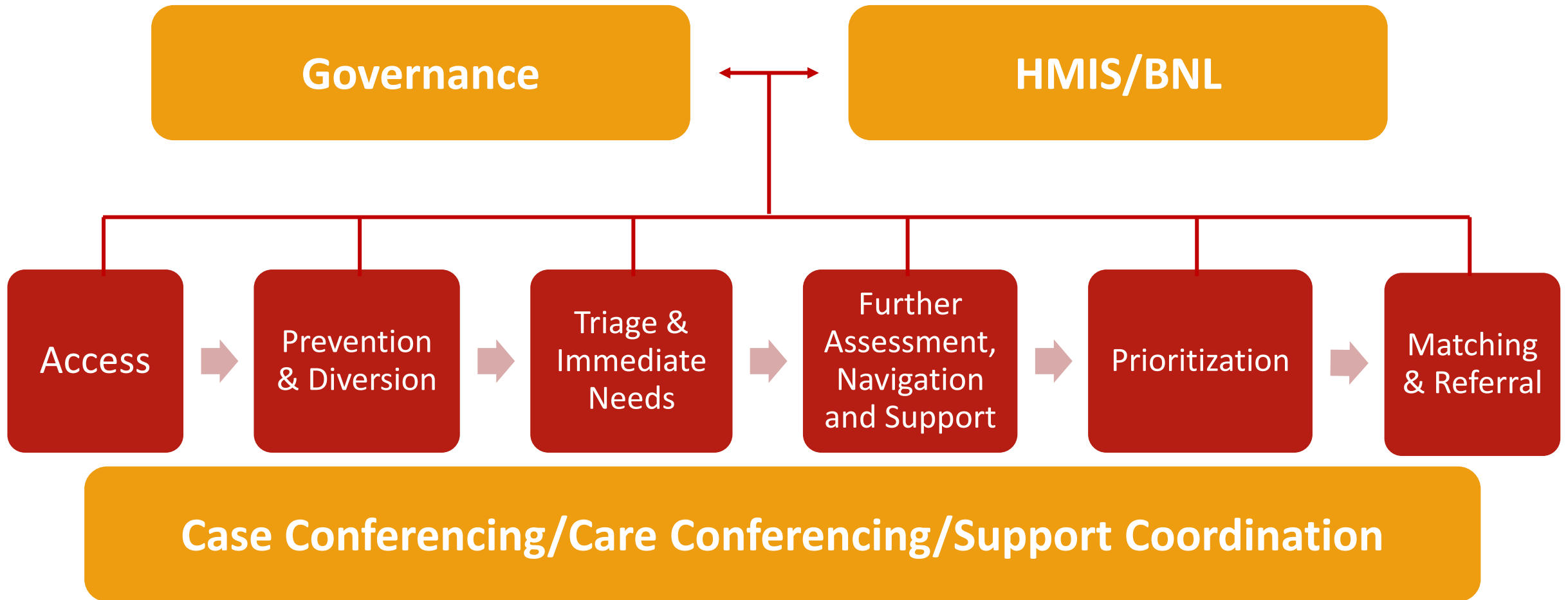
Common Mistakes/Early Implementation Issues

- Not enough focus on effective governance and communication

- Forgetting about/under emphasising prevention and diversion

- Only engaging shelters - lack of other access points and coordinated outreach

- Only having one organization involved (e.g., CE or System Manager who does it all) - needs to involve multiple partners

- Not engaging with Indigenous partners - not understanding how to build this relationship and co-design and adapt

- Only engaging system staff at the leadership level - not directly reaching out/having a plan to involve direct support staff

- Not resourcing effectively - people trying to implement off side of desk

- Challenges in explaining consent and not understanding progressive engagement and assertive outreach

Common Mistakes/Early Implementation Issues

- Thinking implementation is simply adding technical components rather than a massive system transformation and change management process

- Lack of continuous training

- Lack of housing planning and navigation support for those on the By-Name List

- Over-reliance on a tool for decision-making

- Not applying housing first principles and keeping housing focussed

- Lack of effective action-oriented case conferencing across the continuum

- Rigidity/lack of dynamism and continuous improvement

- Blaming the idea of Coordinated Access rather than the local implementation of it
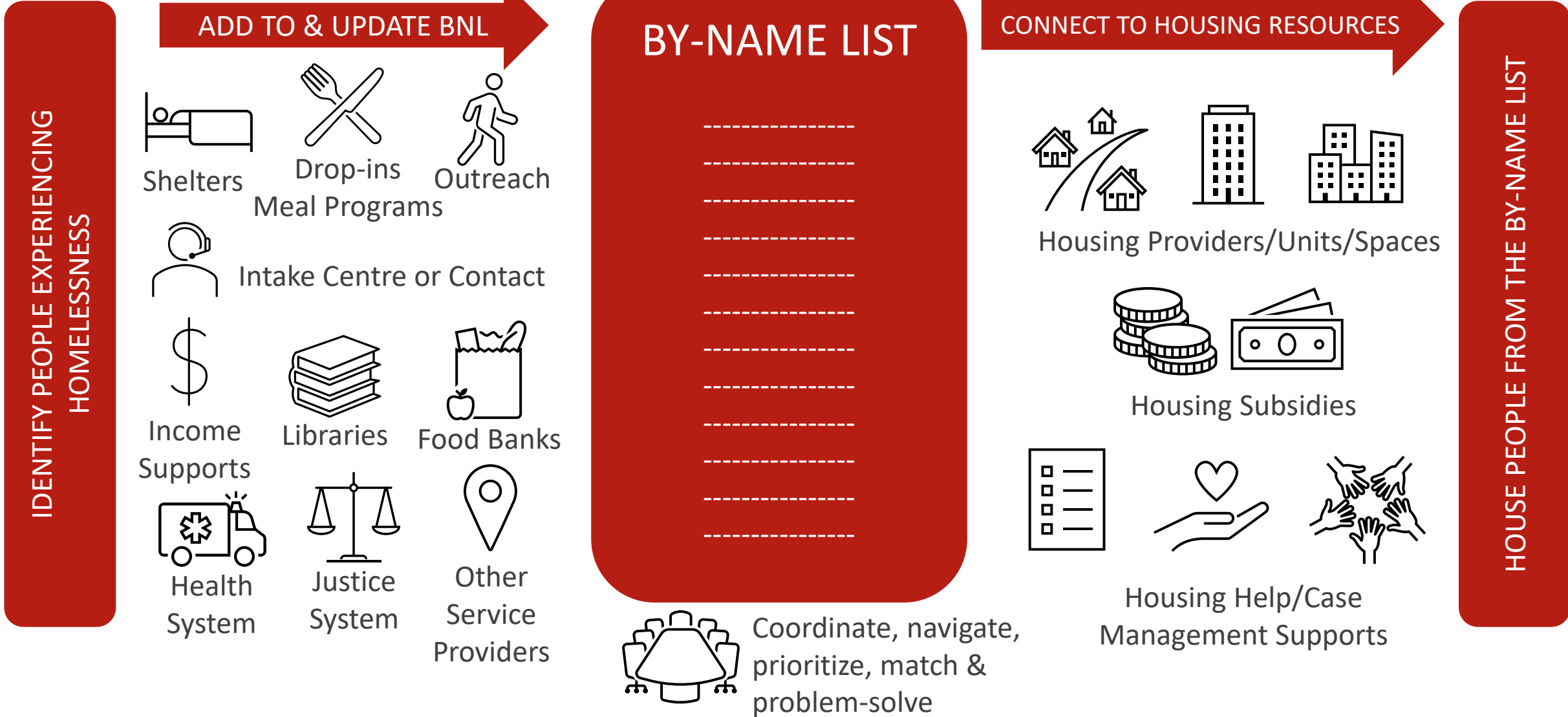
Elements of Coordinated Access - Updated

Governance ←→ **HMIS/BNL**

| Access | → | Prevention & Diversion | → | Triage & Immediate Needs | → | Further Assessment, Navigation and Support | → | Prioritization | → | Matching & Referral |

Case Conferencing/Care Conferencing/Support Coordination

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What a governance structure does

- Provide standards for how decisions will get made

- Create shared alignment around long-term aims and the milestones necessary for reaching those goals

- Establish a measurement framework and consistency in data collection

- Provide a shared organizing framework with room for localized implementation and adaptation at the community, population or program levels

- Be formalized enough to maintain consistency in approach but nimble enough to change course when necessary

- Serve as a feedback loop between leadership and system or front-line work (often at various levels)

- Facilitate the alignment of resources and changes to the system

- Include the voices of those impacted by homelessness, including those who are most marginalized

- Build trust with the broader community

- Enable results with integrity that are transparent, accessible and supported by key interest holders

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Connecting people to housing solutions through Coordinated Access

IDENTIFY PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

ADD TO & UPDATE BNL

- Shelters
- Drop-ins / Meal Programs
- Outreach
- Intake Centre or Contact
- Income Supports
- Libraries
- Food Banks
- Health System
- Justice System
- Other Service Providers

BY-NAME LIST

Coordinate, navigate, prioritize, match & problem-solve

CONNECT TO HOUSING RESOURCES

- Housing Providers/Units/Spaces
- Housing Subsidies
- Housing Help/Case Management Supports

HOUSE PEOPLE FROM THE BY-NAME LIST

Degrees of Prioritization Dynamism

Super Static

- E.g., Community/Social/ Affordable Housing waiting lists
- Little understanding of true need
- Limited assessment of needs, strengths, vulnerabilities, etc.
- Information is updated infrequently
- First come, first served
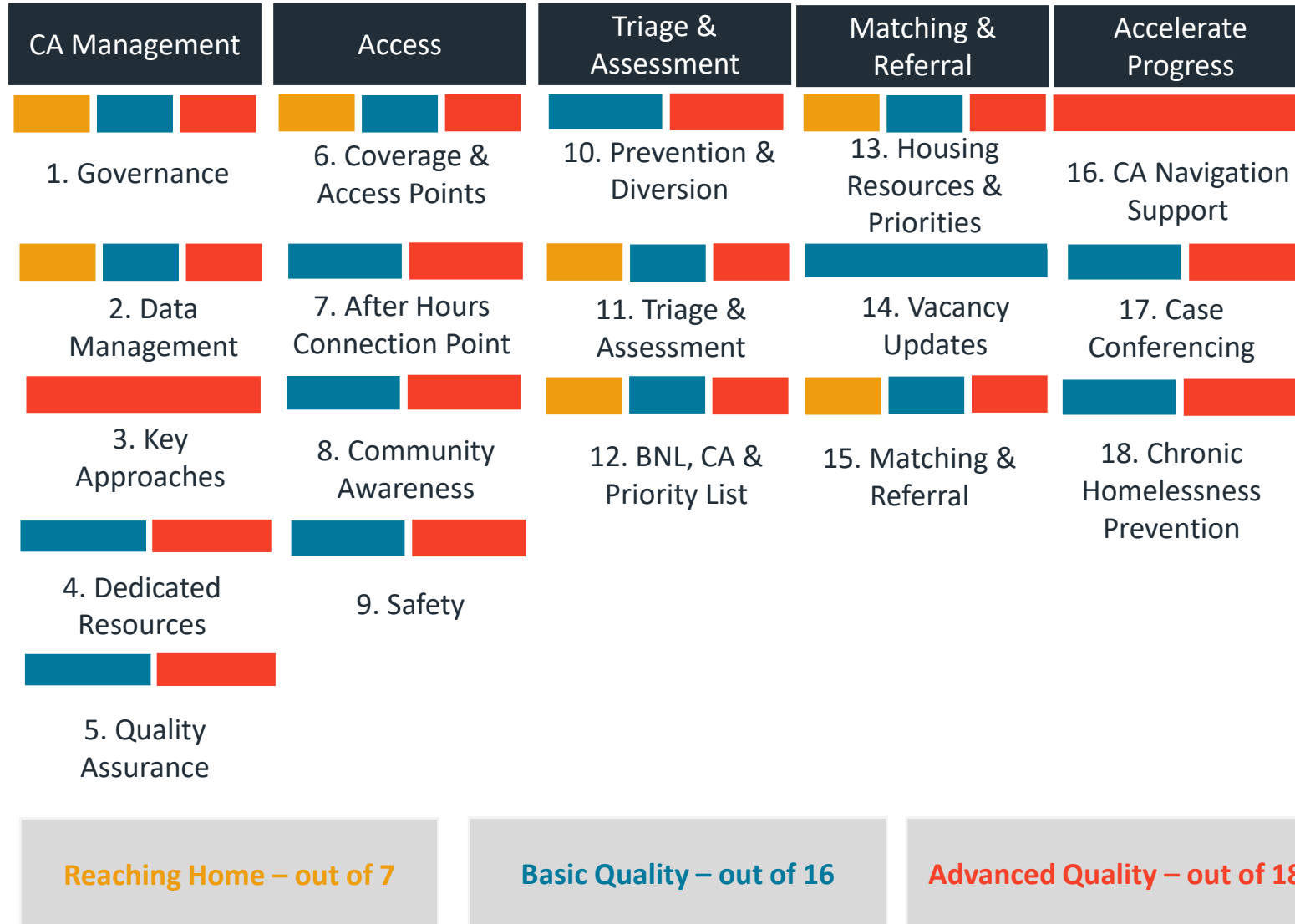- Does not serve people experiencing homelessness well

Static

- May be more where communities at early CA implementation are at - get stuck
- Limited assessment of housing needs
- Prioritization criteria overly reliant on an assessment score
- Little support while waiting for a vacancy and process
- Rigid and somewhat arbitrary lines that determines how matches are made

Dynamic

- Desired approach
- Accounts for changing needs of people and shifting availability of resources
- Includes consideration for housing needs and preferences
- Allows for flexible housing matching decisions
- Addresses process bottlenecks
- Utilizes case conferencing to problem-solve, consider other options, and support housing matching

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CA Scorecard - It's about continuous improvement

Scorecard
&
BNL
Scorecard
Guide
&
CA Scorecard
Guide

CA Management	Access	Triage & Assessment	Matching & Referral	Accelerate Progress
1. Governance	6. Coverage & Access Points	10. Prevention & Diversion	13. Housing Resources & Priorities	16. CA Navigation Support
2. Data Management	7. After Hours Connection Point	11. Triage & Assessment	14. Vacancy Updates	17. Case Conferencing
3. Key Approaches	8. Community Awareness	12. BNL, CA & Priority List	15. Matching & Referral	18. Chronic Homelessness Prevention
4. Dedicated Resources	9. Safety			
5. Quality Assurance				

Reaching Home – out of 7   **Basic Quality – out of 16**   **Advanced Quality – out of 18**

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Coordinated Access Toolkit

https://bfzcanada.ca/coordinated-access/

Communities are seeing progress

Thank You

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