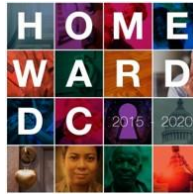




STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:
**RACIAL EQUITY &
INCLUSION REVIEW**

September 22, 2020

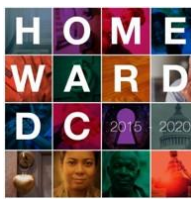




ABOUT TODAY'S DISCUSSION

- **ICH Full Council approved Homeward DC 2.0 plan in March 2020.**
 - Public release put on hold as District agencies turned their focus to COVID response.
- **When the ICH turned back to the plan this summer, they felt we would benefit from a re-read of the plan.**
 - Multiple shifting factors: COVID-related health issues, rising unemployment, potential eviction tsunami, impact of telecommuting on commercial buildings and housing market, etc.

ABOUT TODAY'S DISCUSSION



- Many of the issues driving changes to our landscape are intertwined with questions of racial equity.
- While the ICH did have a work group focused on racial equity to support development of Homeward DC 2.0, there weren't a lot of explicit strategies that came out of those discussions.
- Accordingly, we wanted to take more time for discussions with our partners.

AGENDA



- 1. Project Purpose & Context**
- 2. Process & Data Collection**
- 3. Discussion**
 - a) Hidden in the Numbers**
 - b) Forward Focus**
 - c) Better Together**
- 4. Questions?**
- 5. Next Steps**

KEY CONTEXT: SETTING THE STAGE

Amidst the chaos, 2020 presents an opportunity for us to address white superiority and racism that permeates throughout all aspects of our society.



Setting the Stage

- COVID-19
 - Nationwide, 199k+ people have died
 - Unemployment
 - Housing insecurity
- Protests and Civil Unrest
 - Murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks, and others
- Focus on addressing racial inequalities present in systems and institutions

“There is no better than adversity. Every defeat, every heartbreak, every loss, contains its own seed, its own lesson on how to improve your performance next time.” – Malcolm X

PROJECT PURPOSE: SETTING THE STAGE



Across the country, and in the District, there are vast racial disparities in who experiences homelessness and, in some instances, the outcomes within homeless systems. These inequalities will not go away on their own but require all of us to work together to develop and implement strategies that transform the system.

Racial Equity & Inclusion Review

- Gather qualitative data on racial equity in our system
- Review strategies in Homeward DC 2.0
- Identify opportunities for improvement
- Use information gathered to understand current-state of our system and inform decision-making moving forward

Presentation

- Conversations about racism are difficult, but necessary to create change
- Focus on sharing major themes and implications
- Recommendations will be developed together
- Thank you to everyone who participated!



“To bring about change, you must not be afraid to take the first step. We will fail when we fail to try.” -Rosa Parks



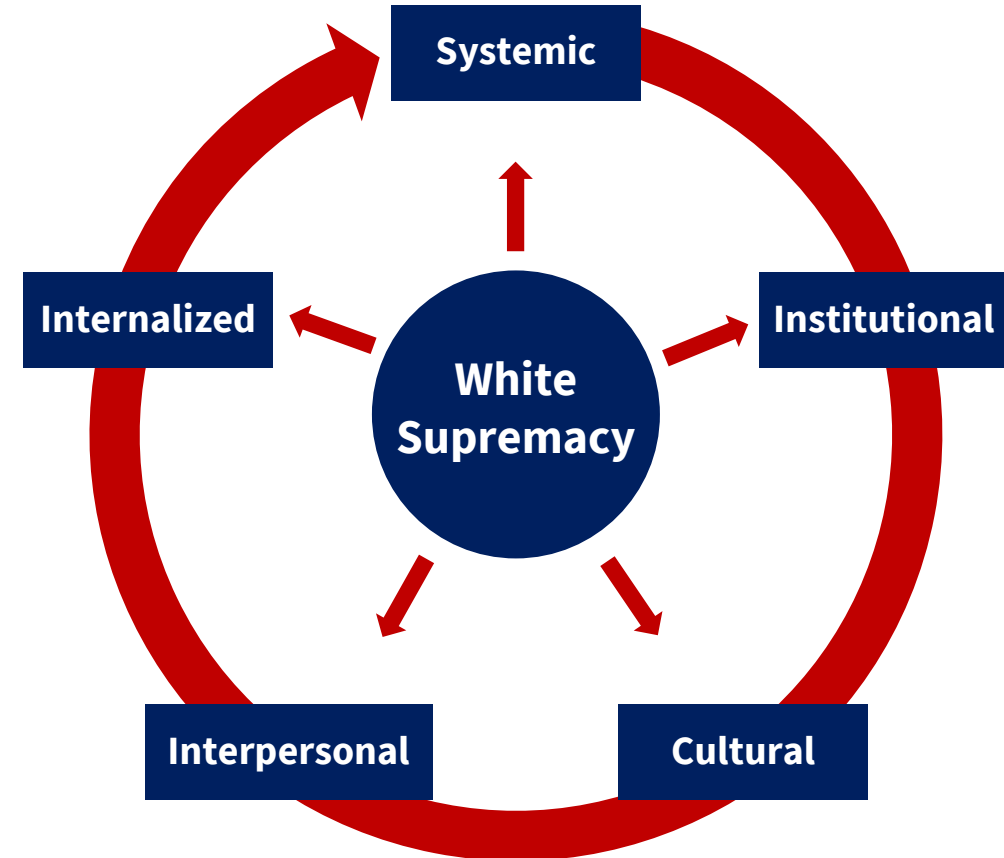


KEY CONTEXT: UNDERSTANDING RACISM

White supremacy is the glue that binds together white-controlled institutions into systems, which has been preserved through the implementation of racially biased legislation, policies, and practices.

Forms of Racism

- **Structural/Systemic Racism** is upheld through public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms which further perpetuate racial group inequity
- **Institutional Racism** refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor or put a racial group at a disadvantage
- **Interpersonal Racism** refers to one's beliefs, attitudes, and actions that support or perpetuate racism in conscious and unconscious ways
- **Internalized Racism** looks at how people develop ideas, beliefs, actions, and behaviors that support or collude with discrimination





What is Race Equity?

The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer determines how one is treated or fares in society. Racial equity includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

PROCESS OVERVIEW



Consumer Focus Groups



Stakeholder Interviews



Member Agency Survey

PROCESS OVERVIEW: CONSUMER FOCUS GROUPS



Conducted three focus groups with 30 consumers to gain their feedback and experiences in the District's homeless service system



Topics of discussion included:

- Experience in the District's homeless service system
- Who was at greatest risk of experiencing homelessness
- Perception of how homelessness differs across racial and ethnic groups
- Racism in the homeless service system, both institutional and interpersonal
- Whether consumers have a voice in shaping program and service delivery
- Areas of improvement in the District's homeless service system

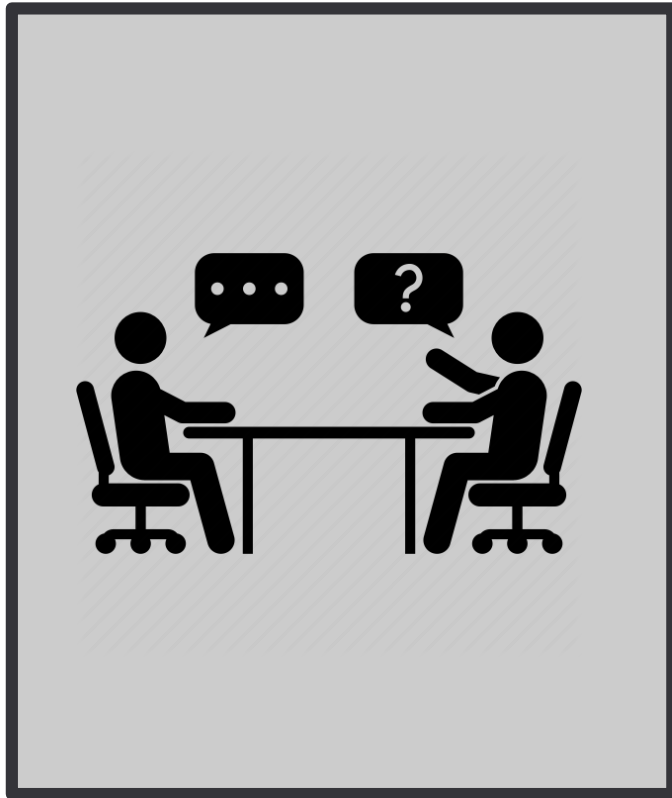
Locations:

- The Horizon (Short-Term Family Housing)
- The John and Jill Ker Conway Residence (PSH/Veterans)
- N Street Village (PSH/Single Adult Women)

PROCESS OVERVIEW: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



Conducted 30 interviews with stakeholders on racial equity and inclusion at the system and organizational level and its impact on service delivery to clients. Topics included:



General Questions

- Barriers disproportionately impacting people of color
- Experiencing or witnessing acts of racism, discrimination, or bias

Organizational Culture

- Commitment to racial equity and inclusion
- Racial equity and cultural competency training

Assessment Tools & Service Delivery

- Effectiveness of assessment tools and services
- Cultural competency of tools

Evaluation of ICH

- Rating of ICH's commitment to racial equity and areas for improvement
- Governance process and structure of work groups
- Homeward DC 2.0 addressing racial equity and inclusion

PROCESS OVERVIEW: MEMBER AGENCY SURVEY



Developed organizational self-assessment survey to all member agencies to develop a holistic snapshot of our member organizations' practices and policies regarding racial equity.



Purpose

- Gather baseline data and information in order to identify areas for organizational change and improvement
- Promote understanding and commitment to address issues of racial equity
- Facilitate the sharing of information, resources, tools, and support
- Build shared accountability across agencies
- There were no right or wrong answers

Five Areas of Focus

- Organizational Culture & Policies
- Racial Equity & Cultural Competency Training
- Workforce – Hiring, Promotions, Performance
- Service Delivery & Programming
- Community Outreach & Engagement

PROCESS OVERVIEW: MEMBER AGENCY SURVEY



15 of the 32 Member Agencies completed the survey, so the results are not conclusive but provide meaningful insights of where the system is currently.

Organizational Culture & Policies

- 73% have made a public commitment to racial equity
- 60% have an internal structure to address racial equity
- 53% have internal racial equity policies/plans (60% incorporated employees of color in the process)
- 60% have external racial equity policies/plans
- 53% assess and review materials for racial bias
- 80% support difficult conversations about race

Equity & Competency Training

- 80% provide training to their workforce (58% make it mandatory)
- 67% DO NOT track the participation

Workforce

- 53% have internal structure to promote workforce diversity
- 73% DO NOT have written procedures to increase recruitment, retention, and promotion of people of color
- 87% have formal and informal procedures to file race-related concerns
- 67% DO NOT incorporate race equity knowledge and skills in performance objectives and evaluations

Services & Programming

- 13% collect racial, ethnic and linguistic data of clients who are successful in their programs and services.
- 93% collect consumer satisfaction data (14% share it publicly and internally)
- 87% provide language interpreter/translator services to consumers

Community Outreach & Engagement

- 67% have strong process in place to identify, solicit feedback, and work in partnership on issues affecting communities of color
- 40% earmark resources for engagement in communities of color



PROCESS OVERVIEW: MEMBER AGENCY



15 of the 32 Member Agencies completed the Organizational Assessment Survey.

Advocate

- *DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence*
- DC Fiscal Policy Institute
- *Miriam's Kitchen*
- *Sasha Bruce Youthworks*

Continuum of Care

- *The Community Partnership*

Government

- *Child and Family Services Agency*
- DC Housing Authority
- DC Metropolitan Police
- *Department of Behavioral Health*
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Employment Services
- Department of General Services
- Department of Health
- *Department of Housing and Community Development*
- *Department of Human Services*
- Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency
- Office of LGBTQ Affairs
- Office of the City Administrator
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Private Sector

- *Jaydot LLC*
- *National Community Church*
- National Health Care for the Homeless
- The Community Foundation

Provider

- *Coalition for the Homeless*
- *Community Connections*
- *Community of Hope*
- District Alliance for Safe Housing
- *Friendship Place*
- *N Street Village*
- *Pathways to Housing*
- Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders



PROCESS OVERVIEW

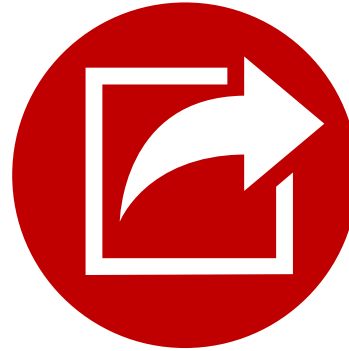


Hidden In the Numbers



Disparity In The District
Overrepresentation
Pathways & Barriers
Need For Intentionality

Forward Focus



Commitment to Equity
Deficit-Based Framing
Diversity & Inclusion
Training & Education

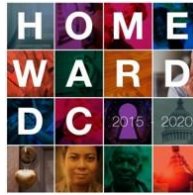
Better Together



Government Participation
Equity Among Providers
Empowering Consumer Voice

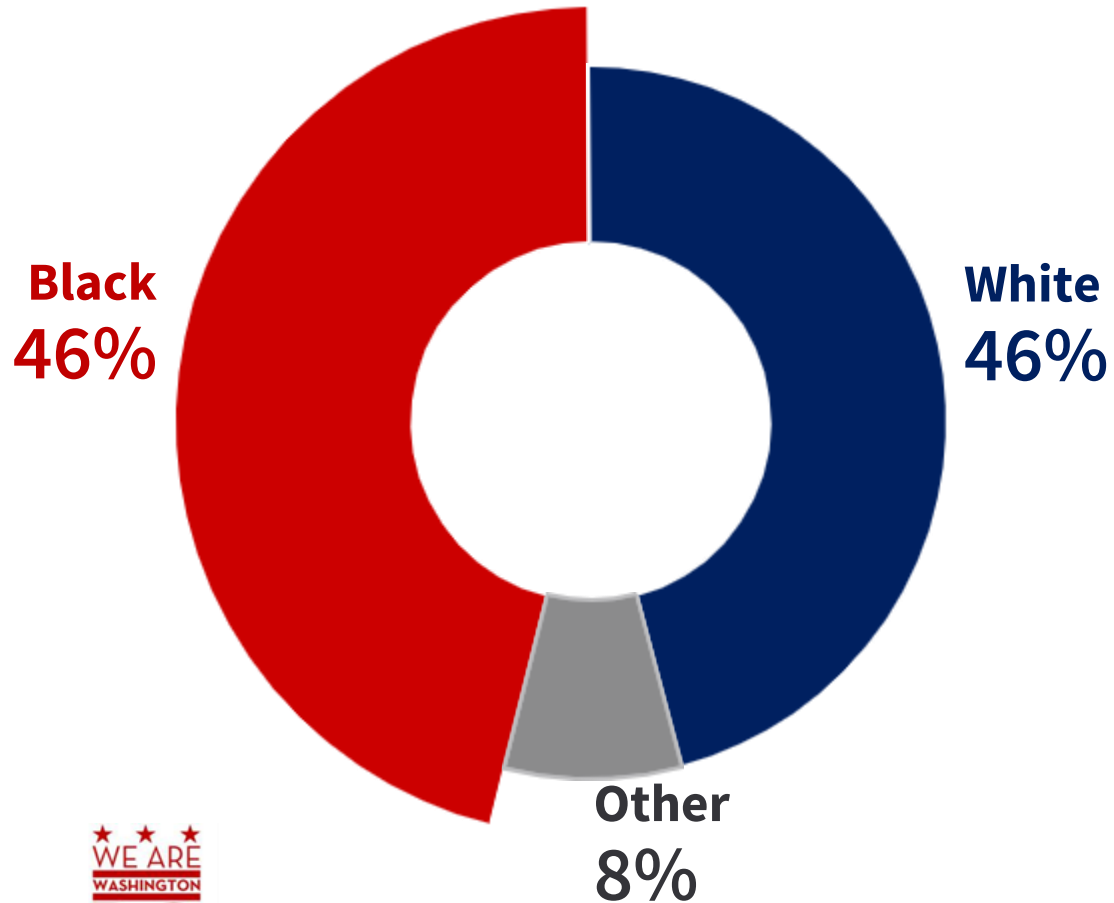
HIDDEN IN THE NUMBERS



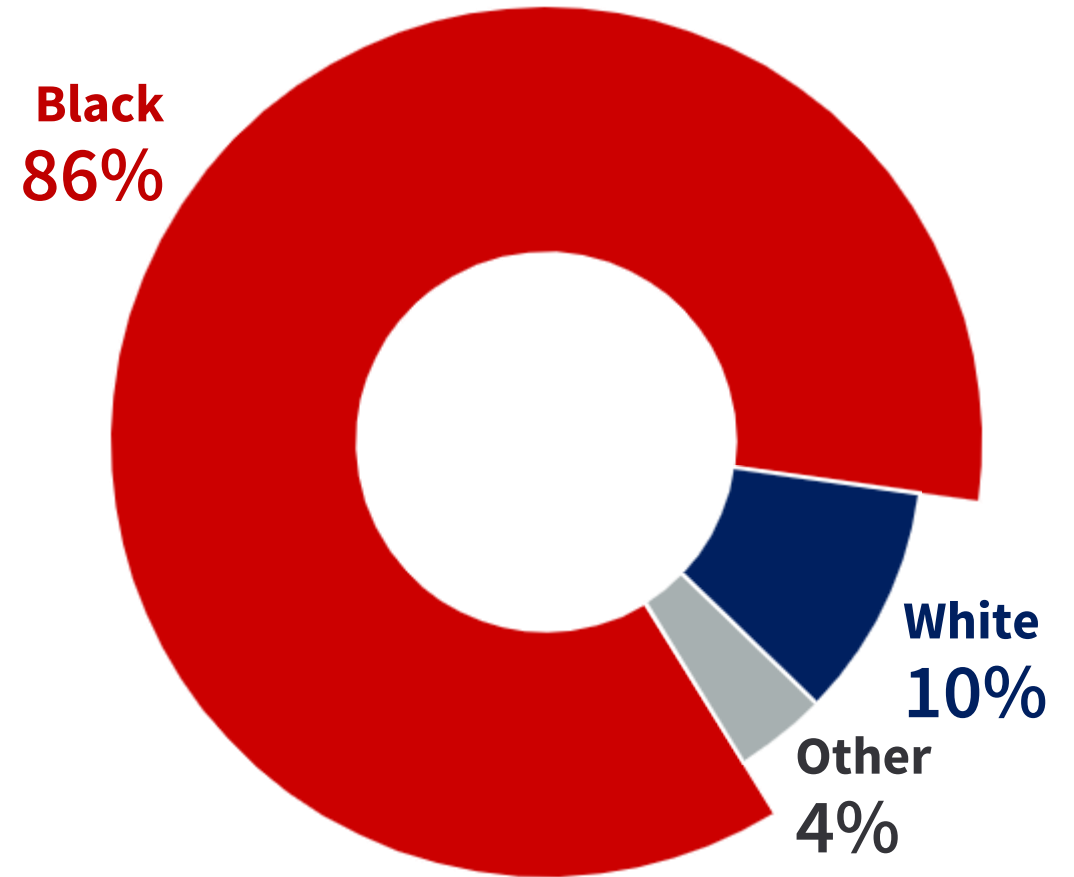


HIDDEN IN THE NUMBERS: DISPARITY IN THE DISTRICT

District of Columbia Population (2019)



Individuals in the Homeless Service System





HIDDEN IN THE NUMBER: OVERREPRESENTATION



The disproportionate number Black individuals and families experiencing homelessness clearly indicates that racial inequity is an issue in the District. However, the overrepresentation makes it challenging to assess areas in the system that need improvement.

Consumer Focus Groups

- Initially, instances of racism and discrimination because most of their peers and staff were also Black
- Felt that their White peers received preferential treatment

Stakeholder Interviews

- Identified racial inequalities in upstream systems, but not in the homeless serve system
- Need to examine the inequalities geared toward members of the Latinx community
- Majority had not witnessed or experienced racism or discrimination in the homeless service system
 - Instances that were identified focused on linguistics

Implications

- **Hinders the effective interpretation of quantitative data analysis using a race equity lens**
- **Without data, it is too difficult to ensure that the homeless system itself is not perpetuating inequity**
- **Rely on qualitative data identify where inequities exist**
- **Upstream inequities result in overrepresentation of Blacks in the homeless system**



HIDDEN IN THE NUMBER: PATHWAYS & BARRIERS



Factors that both cause homelessness and present barriers to exiting the system are similar but often fall outside the scope of the agencies providing direct services.



Implications

- The homeless services system is often a catchall for other systems that have fallen short, leaving it with the challenge of trying to solve multiple, large systemic problems at once
- Large system changes takes time and requires additional resources
- Creates feelings of hopelessness in both consumers and practitioners, which leads to burnout
- Strategies must include systems level changes focused on the preventing homelessness
- Further analysis of inflow and outflow for people of color through a race equity lens



HIDDEN IN THE NUMBERS: NEED FOR INTENTIONALITY



When racial impacts are not consciously considered when developing policy, creating programming, and delivering services, there is more likelihood that implicit bias will be present.

Stakeholder Interviews

- Most felt that their organizations were inherently doing the organizations and community-based organizations. work because they primarily served black clients
- Minimal outreach to staple entities in the black community such as faith-based

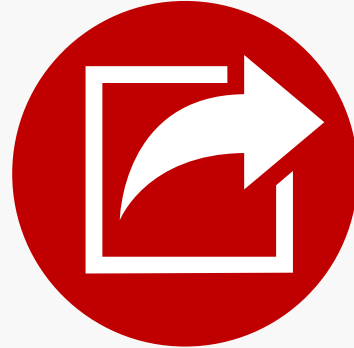
Member Agency Surveys

- 13% collect racial, ethnic and linguistic data of clients who are successful in their programs and services.
- 40% of organizations earmark resources for engagement and outreach in communities of color

Implications

- **Missed opportunities to advance racial equity in policy and program development, budgeting, planning and decision-making**
- **Consider the impacts of proposed decisions on different racial/ethnic groups, with added attention on stakeholders who are most disadvantaged or marginalized**
- **Identify clear goals and objectives, measurable outcomes, and tasks and timelines.**
- **Develop mechanisms for successful implementation, documentation and evaluation.**

FORWARD FOCUS





FORWARD FOCUS: COMMITMENT TO RACIAL EQUITY



Agencies are committed to racial equity and inclusion and are headed in the right direction.

Stakeholder Interviews

- Various definitions of race equity
- Almost all interview participants felt that their organizations were truly committed to racial equity and inclusion
- Everyone is beginning to have difficult conversations about racism and discrimination
- Agencies are at various stages in the process

Member Agency Surveys

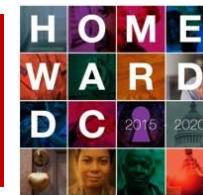
- 60% have internal structures whose goal is to address racial equity
- 53% have internal policies and 60% have external policies to addressing racial equity
- 80% encourage and support employees to have difficult conversations about race

Implications

- **A public commitment is only the beginning**
- **Need for a consistency for partners for what racial equity looks like in our system**
- **Establishment racial equity standards for all**
- **Review policies and practices through a racial equity lens**



FORWARD FOCUS: DEFECIT-BASED FRAMING



Biases practitioners have about their clients, both consciously and unconsciously, impacts policy development, program design, and service delivery.

Consumer Focus Groups

- Program rules were a significant concern for almost all focus group participants
- Instances where consumers felt they were mistreated because they did not "fit the description" (of being homeless)
- Consumer emphasized that experiencing homelessness does not mean there was an egregious failure on their part, but result of circumstance

Stakeholder Interviews

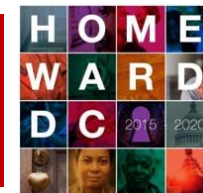
- Description of the Black community and consumers focused on deficits and not strengths
- Also felt program rules were punitive and did not provide clients with the dignity and respect they deserve
- Sentiments that some consumers are "gaming" the system
- Organizations have begun taking steps to address the biases in their programs' policies and practices

Implications

- **All consumers have strengths and focusing on them provides opportunities to provide services that appropriately address consumers' needs**
- **Interpersonal racism and bias are not exclusive to White practitioners**
- **Personal biases must be assessed and addressed**
- **Reframing the policies, programming, and service deliver using a strength-based approach**



FORWARD FOCUS: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



Racial demographics of the homeless services workforce do not reflect the diversity of people served, particularly at the senior management level.

Stakeholder Interviews

- Identified that senior-leadership in most organizations are primarily white
- Increases inequity within the ICH Full council and work groups
- Diversity within organizations is typically at the front-line staff

Member Agency Surveys

- 47% of agencies do not have an internal structure dedicated to promoting workforce diversity
- 73% DO NOT have written procedures to increase the recruitment, retention, and promotion of people of color

Implications

- **People of color are less likely to be involved in the development of policy and programming**
- **Feelings of resentment and internal conflict due to underrepresentation**
- **Establishing professional development opportunities to identify and invest in emerging leaders of color in the homelessness sector**
- **Greater racial and ethnic diversity on boards**



FORWARD FOCUS: TRAINING & EDUCATION



Member agencies are providing racial equity and cultural competency trainings to their staff, but are the trainings effective or accessible?

Stakeholder Interviews

- 45% were not aware of race equity trainings
- Of those who had attended trainings, many did not feel the trainings were effective
- Smaller organizations are unable to offer trainings due to limited resources

Member Agency Surveys

- 67% are not tracking the percentage of their workforce that participates in trainings each year
- Racial equity knowledge, skills, and practices are not incorporated into employee performance objectives and evaluations

Implications

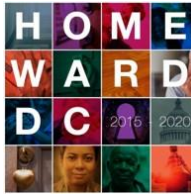
- **All staff working should receive ongoing training on understanding racism and the intersections of racism and homelessness**
- **Include concrete approaches to incorporating anti-racism into their work**
- **Progressive, building on previous concepts learned in past trainings**
- **Should be strengths-focused, empowerment-based, and trauma-informed**
- **Focus on interpersonal skills—both for working with clients and for working with our colleagues.**

BETTER TOGETHER





BETTER TOGETHER: GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION



Government agencies, who are pivotal role in addressing systemic issues consumers face, are slated to be at the table but participation is very uneven.

Consumer Focus Groups

- Difficulties when seeking services and assistance from some agencies
- Sentiments that agencies seemed uninterested in assisting them to find stability

Stakeholder Interviews

- All stakeholders interviewed identified at least one or more government agency whose lack of participation made serving their clients difficult
- *Concerns if agencies see our consumers as their own*

Member Agency Surveys

- 4 out of the 15 government agencies responded to organizational assessment survey.

Implications

- **Government agencies are mandated by law to be members of ICH Full Council, but there is a need for a stronger commitment and more consistent participation.**
- **Agency participation is needed to address upstream root causes impacting communities of color**
- **Creates undue burden on provider organizations to find solutions to address all consumer needs**



BETTER TOGETHER: EQUITY AMONG PROVIDERS



Major area of concern is equity in support resources for community-based organizations, specifically founded and ran by people of color.

Consumer Focus Groups

- Belief that White-led organizations have more power and are more capable to address their needs

Stakeholder Interviews

- Difficult to compete against larger organizations with more resources (funding, human capital, infrastructure, and relationships)
- Negative perceptions about quality of programming and service delivery without addressing why
- Lack of resources diminishes capacity to participate in ICH, where decisions are made and relationships are formed

Implications

- **Investment in capacity building for community-based organizations founded and ran by people of color**
- **Focus on ensuring that organizations in communities of color are adequately resourced**
- **Incorporate a race equity lens into its contracting process**
- **Provide capacity building opportunities to organizations who struggle to meet guidelines for funding opportunities**



BETTER TOGETHER: EMPOWERING CONSUMER VOICES



Consumers voice is necessary at all levels when developing policy, programs, and service delivery to enhance racial equity in our system

Consumer Focus Groups

- Did not feel their voices were heard in individual case management and development of programming
- Unaware of the ICH and the opportunities for them to be involved in the policy-making decisions
- Sentiments of tokenism when provided feedback because there was not follow-up on final decisions

Stakeholder Interviews

- Concerns raised about the diversity of voices in ICH Consumer Engagement Work Group
- Women and families are not represented
- Difficulty finding ways to engage consumers in meaningful ways – need for creative strategies
- Power dynamics in work groups do not favor the consumers
- Need for training and education to strengthen consumer voice in planning and decision-making processes

Implications

- **Empowerment includes providing consumers with the knowledge, skills, and training to make informed decisions**
- **Engagement strategies must avoid tokenism**
- **Leads to improved outcomes and increased satisfaction level that consumers have with services.**
- **Encouraging service delivery decisions that reflect the needs and wishes of consumers.**
- **Increased innovation and creativity in service planning**





QUESTIONS?



NEXT STEPS



- Strategic Planning Committee will reconvene on Tuesday, September 29th.
- Over the next week, please do a re-read on the plan and consider what changes – if any – you think are important to reflect in the plan.
 - Does anything need to be reframed?
 - Does the modeling need to be tweaked?
 - Should any strategies be added, deleted, streamlined?
 - Anything else?