Shared Data Means Shared Power: Preventing Homelessness in San Diego

A Clarity Human Services
Partner Success Story



Executive Summary

Two leading organizations in San Diego's fight against homelessness, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) and 211 San Diego, teamed up to improve the sharing of client data between the organizations in San Diego's CoC. Leveraging <u>Clarity Human Services</u>' features as a user-friendly HMIS, RTFH and 211 San Diego enhanced coordination of care, empowered providers to offer holistic, trauma-informed care, and made it easier for clients to receive housing and other much-needed services.

Key Players



Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH)

RTFH acts as both the CoC Lead and the HMIS Lead for the city and county of San Diego, coordinating a vast range of efforts to prevent and alleviate homelessness in the area.





211 San Diego is a non-profit organization operating a 24/7 contact center and the CIE platform, giving folks a place to turn when they need housing or related services.

Community Information Exchange (CIE)



The CIE is a technology ecosystem that allows 135+ organizations to share information effectively and responsibly, supporting providers as they offer holistic, equitable care.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)



An HMIS is a secure system that helps CoCs provide better care for their homeless populations. San Diego uses Clarity Human Services to guide decision-making and manage client progress.

THE CHALLENGE

Siloed Client Information

San Diego's Continuum of Care (CoC) has a large, diverse, and evolving unhoused population.

Historically, data sharing between the HMIS and the CIE was limited and the systems weren't well-integrated. As a result, care coordination was less efficient, and it was challenging to support community members at risk of becoming homeless and provide trauma-informed care for unhoused people in San Diego.

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Cities the CoC covers with a total population of about 3.28 million

10,264

The 2023 Annual PIT (5,171 unsheltered and 5,093 sheltered)

46,000+

The 2023 Annual HMIS client count

904

HMIS participating agencies

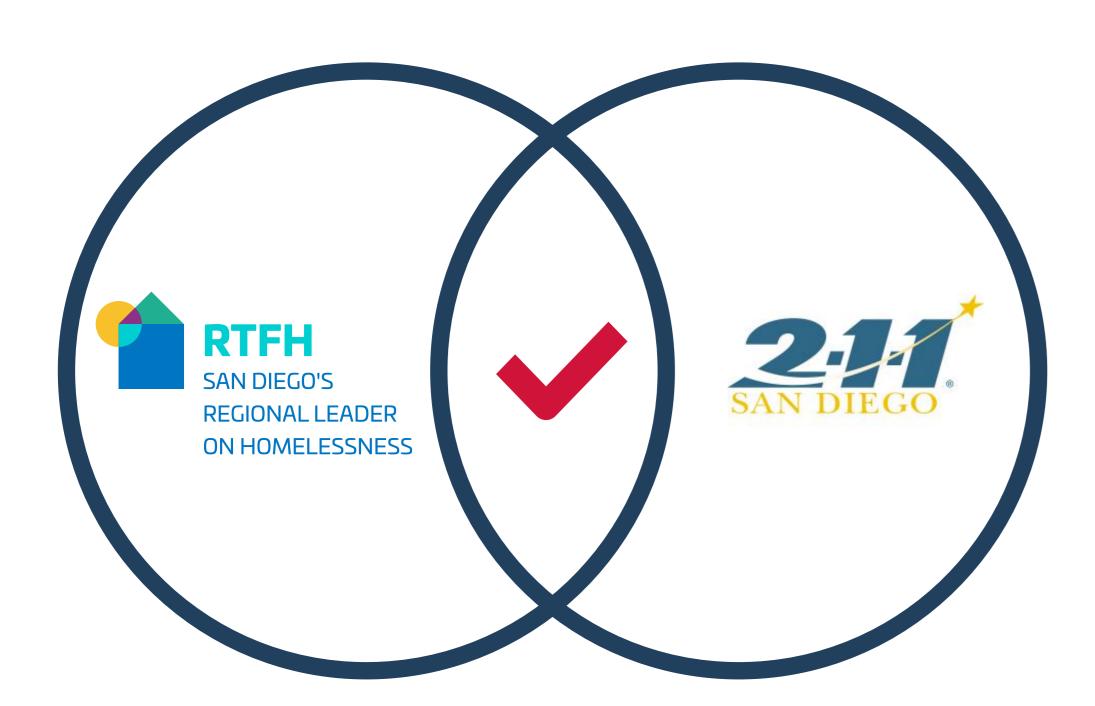
600+

HMIS programs

THE SOLUTION

Get Systems Talking

Anyone who's worked in a CoC knows that achieving interoperability between systems is far easier said than done. To tackle the issue, RTFH and 211 San Diego enacted two primary initiatives.



Bitfocus



Single Joint Consent

What if clients could opt into both the HMIS and the CIE in one fell swoop? In October 2019, the RTFH board voted to approve just that. Thanks to their strong historical relationship, RTFH and 211 San Diego were able to quickly design a shared consent for these two systems, which went into effect on April 1, 2020.

Now, providers have access to a wider range of relevant information, and clients have an easier time getting the care they need without repeating detailed (and potentially traumasurfacing) personal histories.

HMIS + CIE Integration

Of course, information is no good unless it's efficiently and securely shared between systems. Knowing this, the RTFH collaborated with CIE to ensure alignment between HMIS and CIE data elements. Better yet, the RTFH leveraged Clarity HMIS to create a custom, auto-generated report that refreshes with the latest data each day.

When changes are made in the HMIS (for example, in response to HUD Data Standards updates), the RTFH and CIE work carefully together to ensure there's no disruption to data sharing or their care for unhoused folks.

A Wealth of High-Impact Outcomes

It didn't take long for the benefits of the RTFH and 211 San Diego's collaboration to become evident.

THE TANGIBLES

Eligible clients who enrolled in the HEAP, an aid initiative that leveraged the CIE, were nearly 7 times less likely to experience homelessness compared to eligible clients who didn't enroll. Preventing homelessness costs
24% less than providing
services to clients experiencing
chronic homelessness.

Drawing from cross-sector data, the RTFH was able to create robust policy briefs and make stronger recommendations.

THE INTANGIBLES

San Diego CoC maintains a more comprehensive view of client needs and service utilization in the community.

Clients benefit because the new integration minimizes the triggering of traumatic memories and streamlines services.

Providers are empowered to draw from a broader pool of data to provide holistic, trauma-sensitive care.

The Word on the Street

According to local voices, the initiative enhanced coordination with...

"The prevention screening tool has been super easy to use for the pilot. Also, it's really nice to be able to use the CIE to see if the individual or family has called other prevention resources for help before coming to us. Allows us to do more digging with them."

-Yvonne Araujo, Alpha Project



...the housing / eviction prevention system.

"Oh, they went there a few months ago and now they're here with us. When they called 2-1-1 in the past, what were they asking for? Having this info helps me better understand their story and saves me time."

-Veronica Blea, Interfaith Community Services



...the healthcare system.



...the criminal justice system.

"The CIE was extremely helpful for us with locating patients for our Health Homes Program (Medi-Cal initiative that provides health, behavioral health, and other services such as housing navigation and housing tenancy supports to people with chronic conditions including homelessness). We were able to search for them and find out if and where they were connected, so then we could be proactive and reach out."

-AJ Galka-Gonyeau, Family Health Centers of San Diego

"Last week I received a CIE jail alert informing me that a client in our Whole Person Wellness program who was also staying at the shelter had been arrested over the weekend. As a result, we were able to notify the shelter staff and our Whole Person Wellness teams working with the client immediately, so her housing was not jeopardized while we watched for the disposition of her charges. She was released two days later, and both teams were able to resume work with her immediately."

-Glen Hilton, PATH San Diego

Clarity's Role in the Transformation

Our team at Bitfocus was thrilled to see Clarity play a role in San Diego's high-impact transformation, helping the RTFH to create custom, auto-generated reports and manage the coordinated entry process without friction.

Here's how Tamera Kohler described Bitfocus' role in a wonderful recent piece in the AWS Public Sector Blog.

"With Bitfocus, the technology is helping us share data and 2 Client Search > Paige John > 2 Profile collaborate across our community to meet our mission and the mandates that we have to protect client-level information; it's user-friendly for the 1,200 people who have to enter data, which has reduced support cases, decreasing Quality of DOB Full DOB Reported response times. As a result, we have reallocated resources to training and community engagement which has increased 1 - 5 of 7 HMIS participation in the community." Man (Boy, if child) 3 ~ Tamera Kohler, CEO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

Thank you to Tamera, her team, and all the awesome folks working to serve unhoused community members in San Diego!



If you'd like to learn how Clarity can help you care for your community, <u>explore</u>

<u>Clarity's features</u> or <u>get in touch with our team</u> at Bitfocus. We'd love to connect!