

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 Clarity Human Services' 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

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.

**18**

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

**90+**

HMIS participating agencies

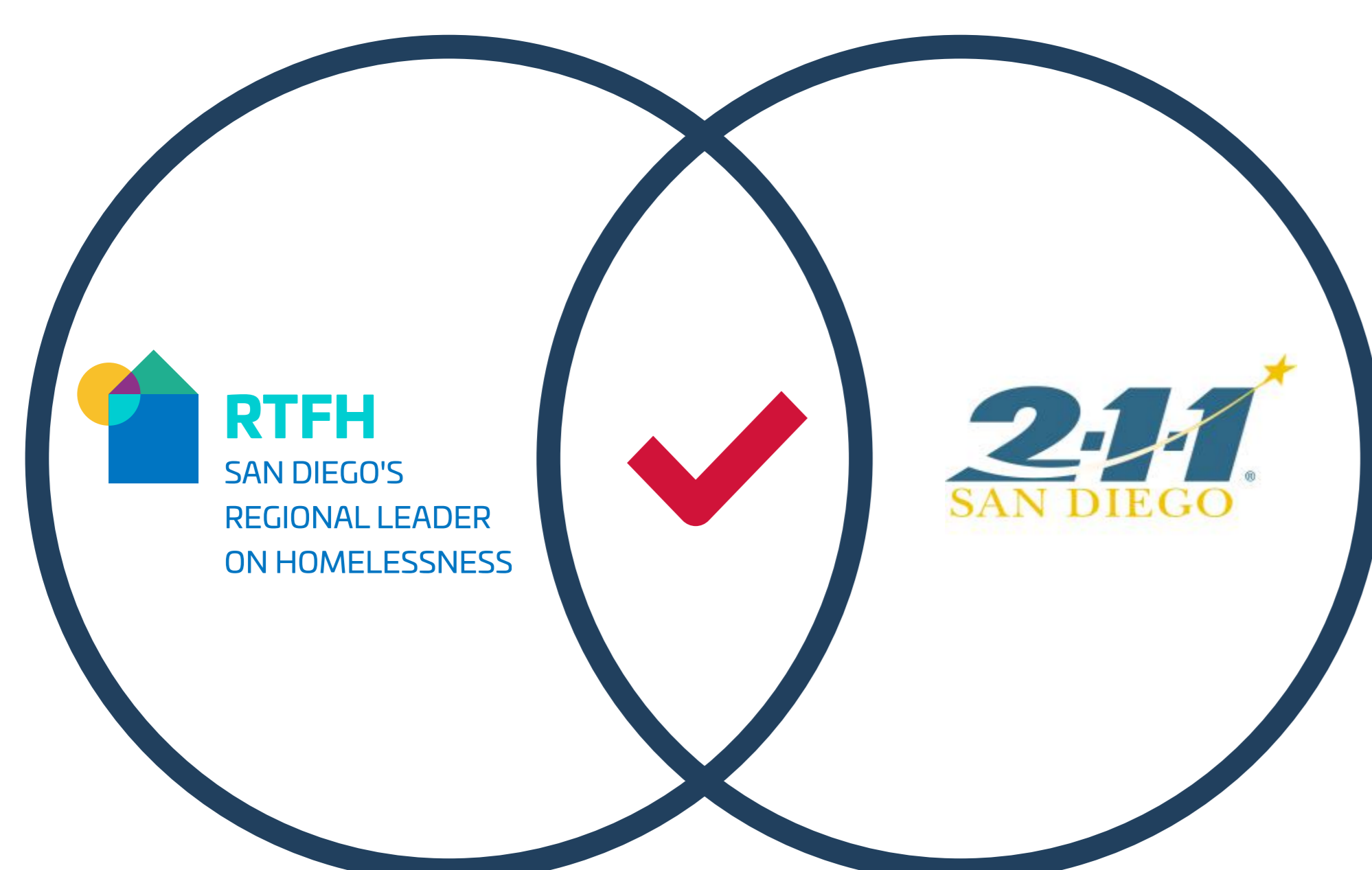
**600+**

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.



## 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 trauma-surfacing) 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

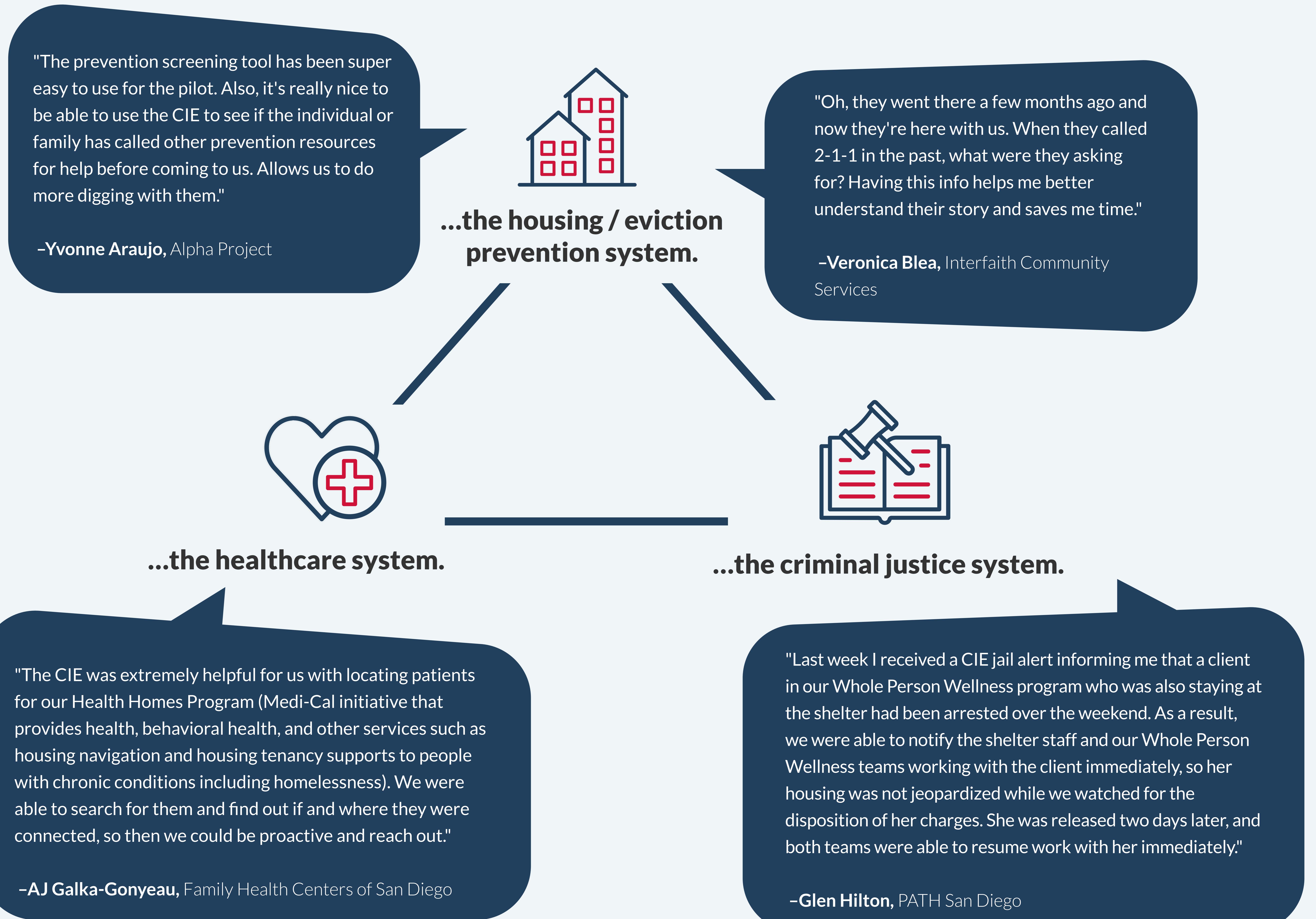
San Diego CoC maintains a more comprehensive view of client needs and service utilization in the community.

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...



# Clarity's Role in the Transformation

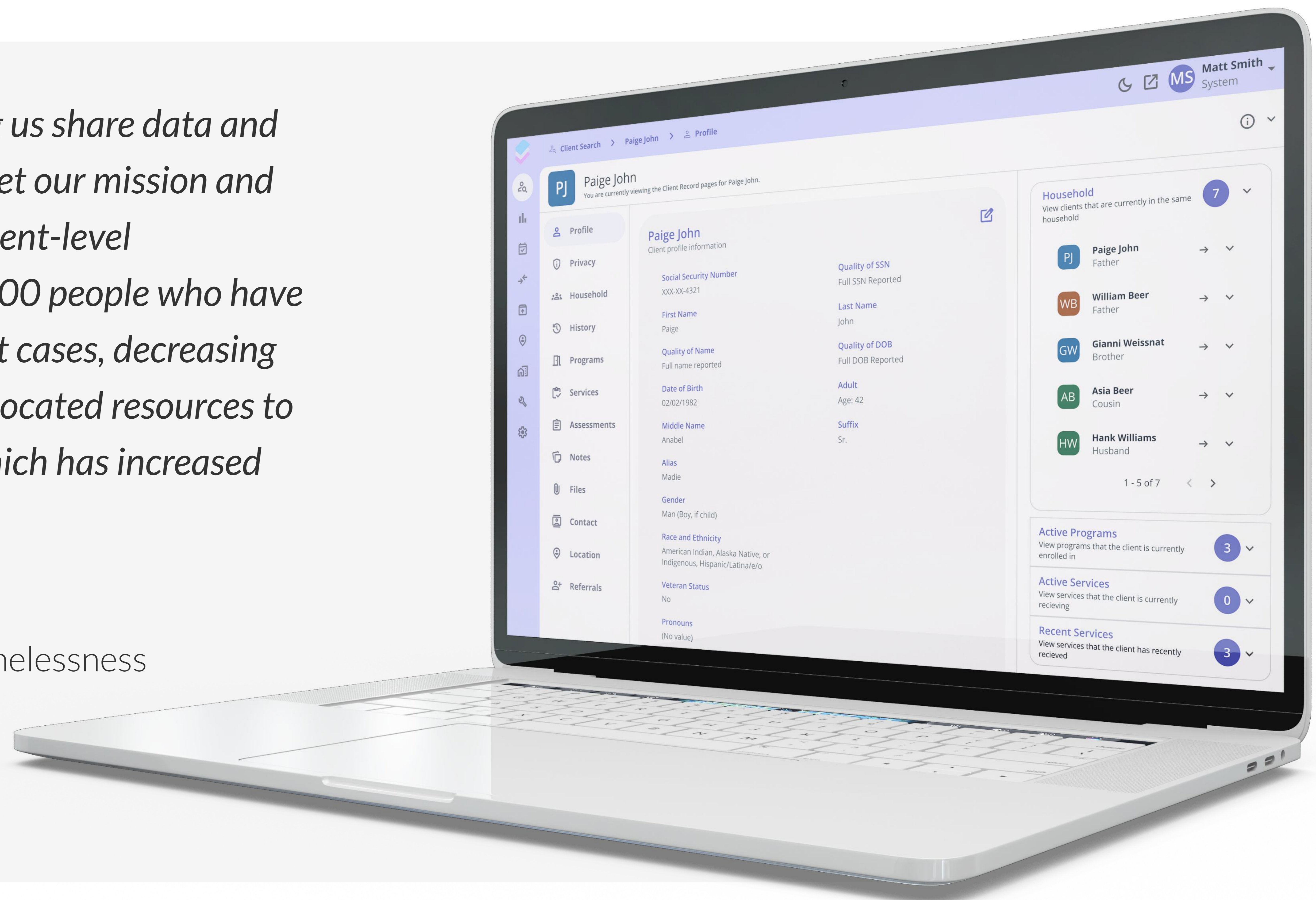
Our team at Bitfocus was thrilled to see Clarity play a role in San Diego's high-impact transformation, helping the RTFH to create custom, auto-generated reports and manage the coordinated entry process without friction.

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 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 response times. As a result, we have reallocated resources to training and community engagement which has increased HMIS participation in the community.”*



**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, [explore Clarity's features](#) or [get in touch with our team](#) at Bitfocus. We'd love to connect!