

PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT

Progressive engagement involves a person-centered approach to address homelessness by tailoring assistance to the unique needs of individuals encountered on the streets. Here's a breakdown of how progressive engagement is applied to street outreach:

- ▶ **1. INITIAL INTERACTION:**
Progressive engagement starts with the first interaction between outreach workers and individuals experiencing homelessness. This could occur on the streets, in public spaces, or at locations where individuals without stable housing are known to gather.
- ▶ **2. PROBLEM-SOLVING CONVERSATIONS:**
Outreach workers engage in problem-solving conversations to understand the immediate needs, challenges, and circumstances of the individuals they encounter. This might include discussing factors contributing to their homelessness, such as lack of shelter, mental health issues, substance abuse, or economic difficulties.
- ▶ **3. ASSESSMENT OF IMMEDIATE NEEDS:**
The focus is on addressing immediate needs for survival and stability, such as access to food, clothing, hygiene facilities, and emergency shelter. The goal is to establish trust and rapport while meeting basic needs.
- ▶ **4. IDENTIFICATION OF STRENGTHS AND BARRIERS:**
Outreach workers work to identify the strengths, supports, barriers, and obstacles faced by individuals. This includes understanding any existing social support networks, employable skills, or potential barriers to accessing available services.
- ▶ **5. CONNECTION TO RESOURCES:**
Based on the initial assessment, outreach workers connect individuals to available resources, services, and support systems. This could involve providing information about shelters, healthcare services, food assistance programs, mental health services, or substance abuse treatment options.
- ▶ **6. FOLLOW-UP AND ONGOING ENGAGEMENT:**
Progressive engagement extends beyond the initial encounter. Outreach workers maintain ongoing, close communication with individuals to track their progress, setbacks, and any changes in their circumstances. Regular check-ins help adjust support levels as needed and build a foundation for longer-term solutions.
- ▶ **7. COLLABORATION WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS:**
Outreach workers collaborate with various service providers to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach. This might involve connecting individuals to programs like Rapid Re-housing (RRH) or Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) based on their needs and eligibility.
- ▶ **8. ADAPTATION TO EVOLVING NEEDS:**
As individuals progress in their journey from street homelessness to stable housing, the level of support is adjusted based on evolving needs. The progressive engagement model ensures that lighter-touch supports are provided for those with lower needs, while those with higher needs receive more substantial assistance.
- ▶ **9. EMPOWERMENT AND INDIVIDUALIZED SOLUTIONS:**
Progressive engagement emphasizes empowering individuals to actively participate in decision-making regarding their journey out of homelessness. It recognizes the uniqueness of each person's situation and tailors interventions to suit their specific strengths, challenges, and aspirations.

By implementing progressive engagement in street outreach, service providers can establish a more personalized and effective approach to help individuals transition from homelessness to stable housing, taking into account the complexities of their individual circumstances.

