San Diego Rapid Response Network Migrant Shelter Services | Data Collection

The following is an excerpt from Jewish Family Service of San Diego's upcoming white paper on San Diego Rapid Response Network Migrant Shelter Services. The full white paper will be linked here when available, as well as published on www.rapidresponsesd.org and www.jfssd.org.

When San Diego Rapid Response Network (SDRRN) Migrant Shelter Services was first formed, the data collection system had to launch simultaneously. While Jewish Family Service of San Diego's (JFSSD) general data collection and analysis system was robust and effective, collecting shelter data was a completely new undertaking, and there was no ramp up time due to the immediate need for services.

Initially, the shelter's data collection was built on Google Sheets out of necessity and tracked the basic information required to assist people seeking asylum during their respite stays at the shelter and subsequent travel to their final destinations. This initial system was different than the overall system for JFSSD. Data tracking included:

- Number of people expected to arrive at the shelter each day
- Number in household (number of adults and children)
- Country of origin
- Language spoken
- Number of meals and snack bags
- Departure dates/times
- Number and average of people per day and beds filled per night
- Special medical need or disability

As guests continued to arrive and the shelter operation grew – with no end in sight one year in – the JFSSD data team understood that a more stable and secure collection system was required.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, new arrivals temporarily halted, and the JFSSD data team had the pause they needed to envision and build a more robust system using JFSSD's client management software. JFSSD created new processes specific to shelter operations within its existing Efforts to Outcomes and Impact (ETOI; by Bonterra) client management software, which is used across the agency. The buildout was complex, which made it challenging to respond to immediate changes in reporting needs, but was much more efficient and secure than the previous spreadsheet system.

Additional tracking measures included:

- Number of pregnant individuals, Migrant Protection Protocol enrollees and Title 42 exemptions

- Number of "diversions," or people transported from the Port to other locations for respite care when SDRRN Migrant Shelter Services is at capacity

The system was also created with a variety of COVID-19 related data points, including:

- COVID-19 Testing data for each individual
- COVID-19 and vaccination rates
- Required quarantine length and rates
- Hotel locations (as the shelter moved from a congregate site to individual hotel rooms – see Shelter Operations) and occupancy rates, e.g. protocols for if one person in a family unit tested negative for COVID-19 while the rest tested positive for different hotel location accommodations.

The system also required close coordination with UC San Diego Health. With increased government funding sources, SDRRN Migrant Shelter Services was also required to provide additional data reporting, including regular reports to government stakeholders.

Data Team

The SDRRN Migrant Shelter Services data team is supervised by the shelter operation's assistant director, as well as a data manager. There are three data specialists who run reports, with profiles and inputs completed as part of case managers' intake process. This team is supported by JFSSD's central data team of four full-time staff, who meet weekly with the shelter data manager to help build out new systems, modify reports and provide training and support. The data team is constantly reviewing and determining which factors should continue to be tracked and what is unnecessary.

The strength, nimbleness and resilience of the team is extremely important, for as with any technology, sometimes the system goes down. When this has happened, the operations and data teams have modified their process to keep shelter operations working to serve shelter guests with housing, food and transportation. The shelter team is empowered to make decisions to ensure seamless operations.

Data Usage

In addition to determining daily and future operations, and for fund reporting, data is used in a variety of ways. The shelter data manager is tasked with looking at the numbers from a proactive, strategic, and holistic perspective to determine current and future needs, funding, support, and metric tracking. The data also provides critical points and reasoning for new grant funding, including funding pools available to groups of shelters.

Data plays an important role in telling the narrative and impact of the SDRRN Migrant Shelter Services' to the border region and as a component to the greater immigration system.