



BEST PRACTICES FOR IOWA'S HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM

Iowa Council on Homelessness

Standards for Quality Programs

Presentation to the

Peer-to-Peer Homelessness Symposium

June 5, 2014



WHAT IS THIS ABOUT AND WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Statewide System Development is
a priority of the
Iowa Council on Homelessness

First Things First...

- These standards were developed as recommendations to the Iowa Council on Homelessness at the request of the Council
- They have not yet been adopted or implemented
- There is more work needed to get to that stage
- There is nothing new required of you now

Opportunities Lie Ahead

- Assists local planning groups in meeting funding requirements for standards
- Offers peer-developed standards based on statewide input on best practices
- Clarifies elements of quality programs and organizations
- Professionalizes homelessness services and increases awareness of the value

Process and Timeline

- Introductory Webinar – November 2013
- Statewide Outreach – December 2013
- State Planning Advisory Committee – January – April 2014
- Deliverables – December 2013 – May 2014
 - Outreach Summary
 - Recommended Standards for Homelessness Programs
 - Operations, Services, Performance
 - Strategy for implementing tracking of performance standards

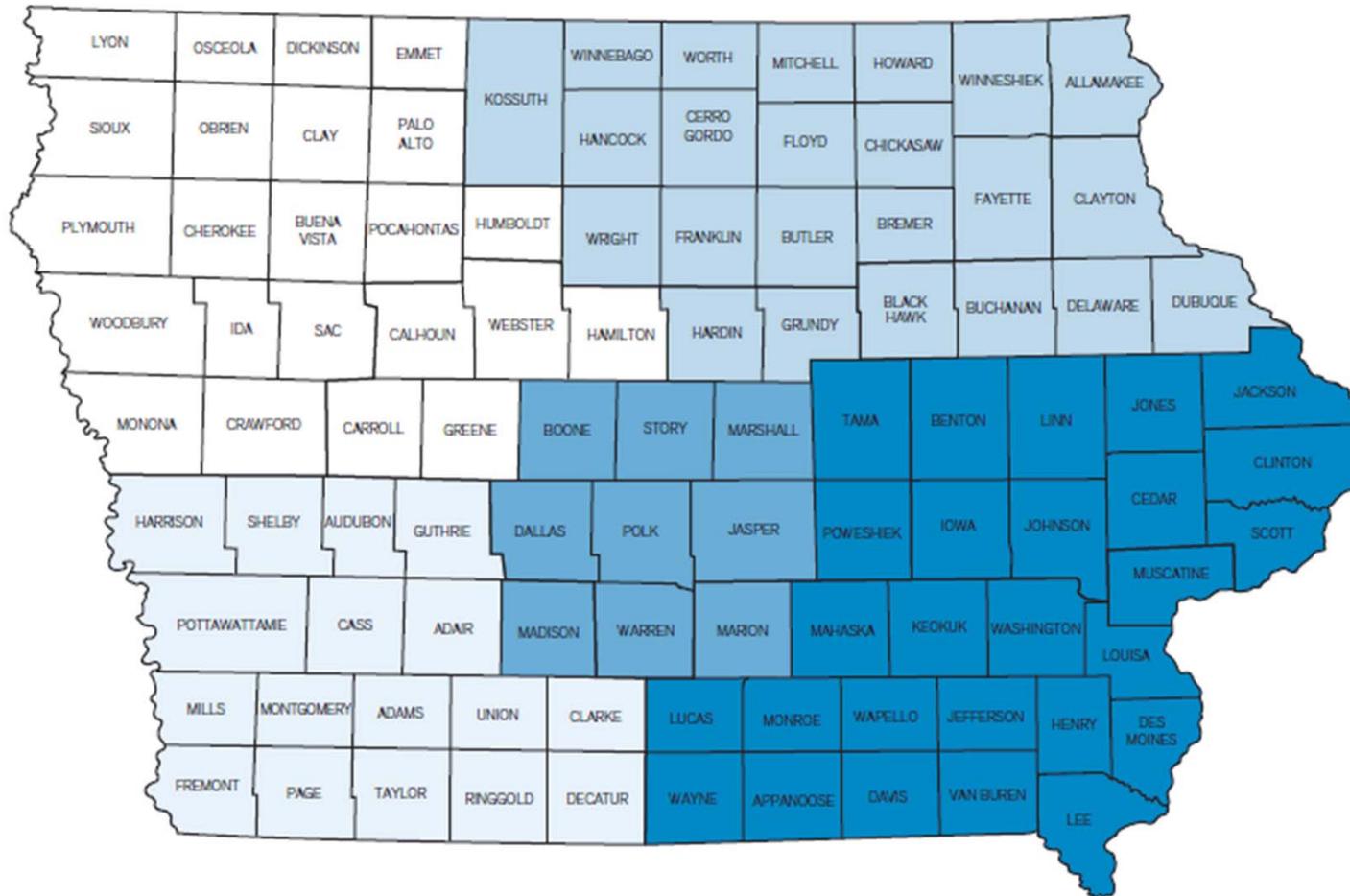
State Planning Advisory Committee Process and Deliberations

- Committee of hands-on stakeholders
- Diversity in program type and geography
- Four day-long in-person meetings
- Work between sessions
- Started with inputs from outreach meetings
- Engaged others statewide through a questionnaire “test” of representative standards”
- Consensus recommended standards
- All documents have been posted on the ICH website throughout the process to increase transparency

Charge to the Advisory Committee

- The State Planning Advisory Committee will recommend standards for outreach programs, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing (including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, homelessness prevention, and Housing First). Standards will cover:
 - Performance
 - Service
 - Operations

Regions of Natural Affinity



Best Practices for Iowa's Homelessness System

Definition of Standard

- “Standard” is an element of a homelessness program’s performance, service, or operations that is necessary for a quality program and meets, at minimum, funder requirements.

How Were Standards Identified?

- Findings of outreach meeting discussions and SWOT exercises
- Identified additional areas to be considered
- Re-framed, grouped, and listed topical range of standards, e.g. human resources, training, Board structure
- Turned the list into draft standards
- Reviewed and refined
- Consensus agreement on the set of standards

Standards for Quality Programs

- For the Organization/Agency
 - Think of the standards as a tool for internal quality assessment and improvement
 - Not for a planning group or a community
- Establishes minimum standards
 - Many will already meet the majority of the standards
 - Provides some guidance on where an organization might focus efforts

The Standards

- **Services Standards**
 - Demonstrate an organization's approach to, documentation of, and delivery of homelessness services
 - 11 services standards
- **Operations Standards**
 - Guide governance, infrastructure, personnel, and more
 - 32 operations standards
- **Performance Standards**
 - Define the outcomes organizations seek for clients
 - 9 performance standards

Questionnaire for Statewide Stakeholders

- To keep stakeholders informed of and involved in this initiative
- To assist the Advisory Committee understand the current status of programs in areas related to proposed standards
- To allow programs to “try on” the standards in their own programs and provide feedback

Homelessness Standards Program Questionnaire Responses

- Distributed to housing-focused organizations
- Includes representative examples from complete set of recommended standards
- Response N=151
- Responses gathered in April 2014
- NOTE: Some standards were revised after this questionnaire; a standard printed in the final report may be somewhat different.

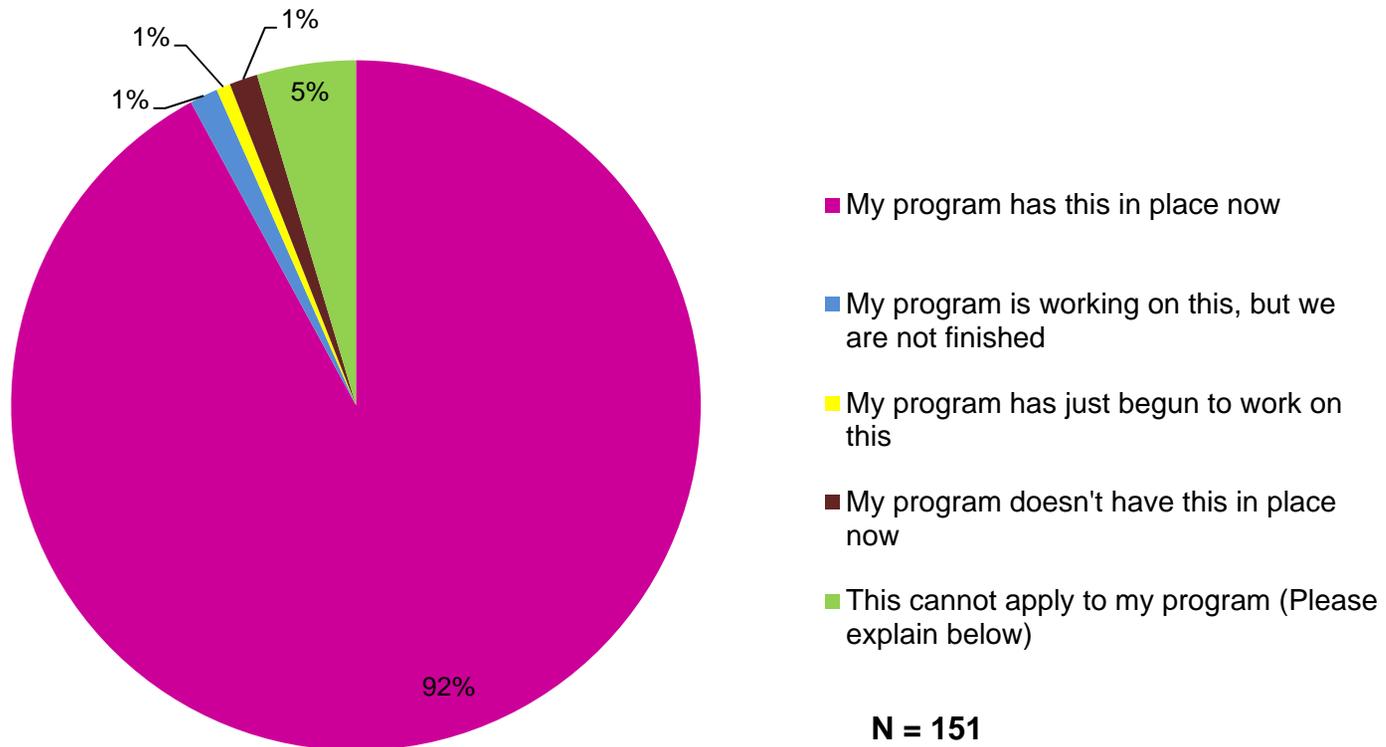
All standards complete this sentence:

- An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

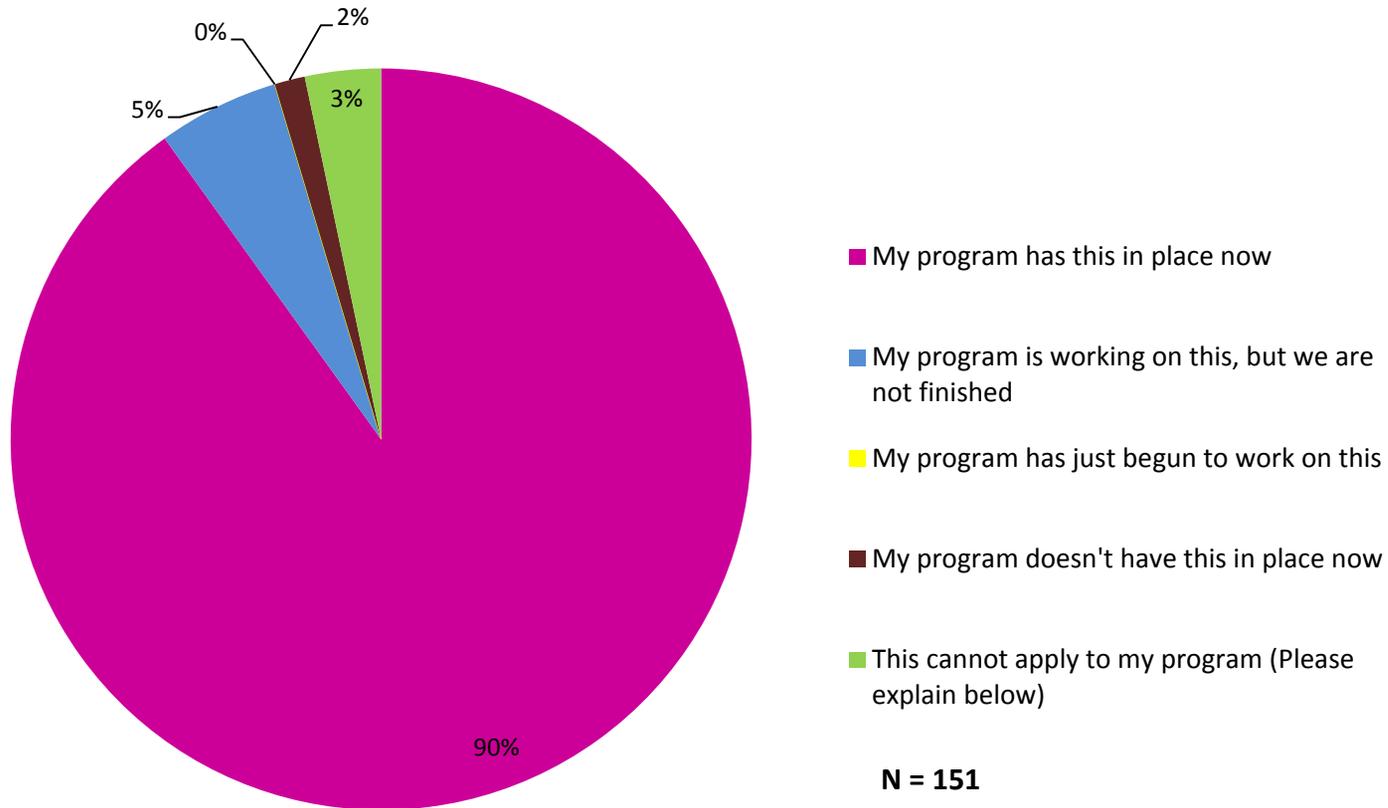
1. have regular, published and consistent hours of operation and/or a reliable point of contact.



Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

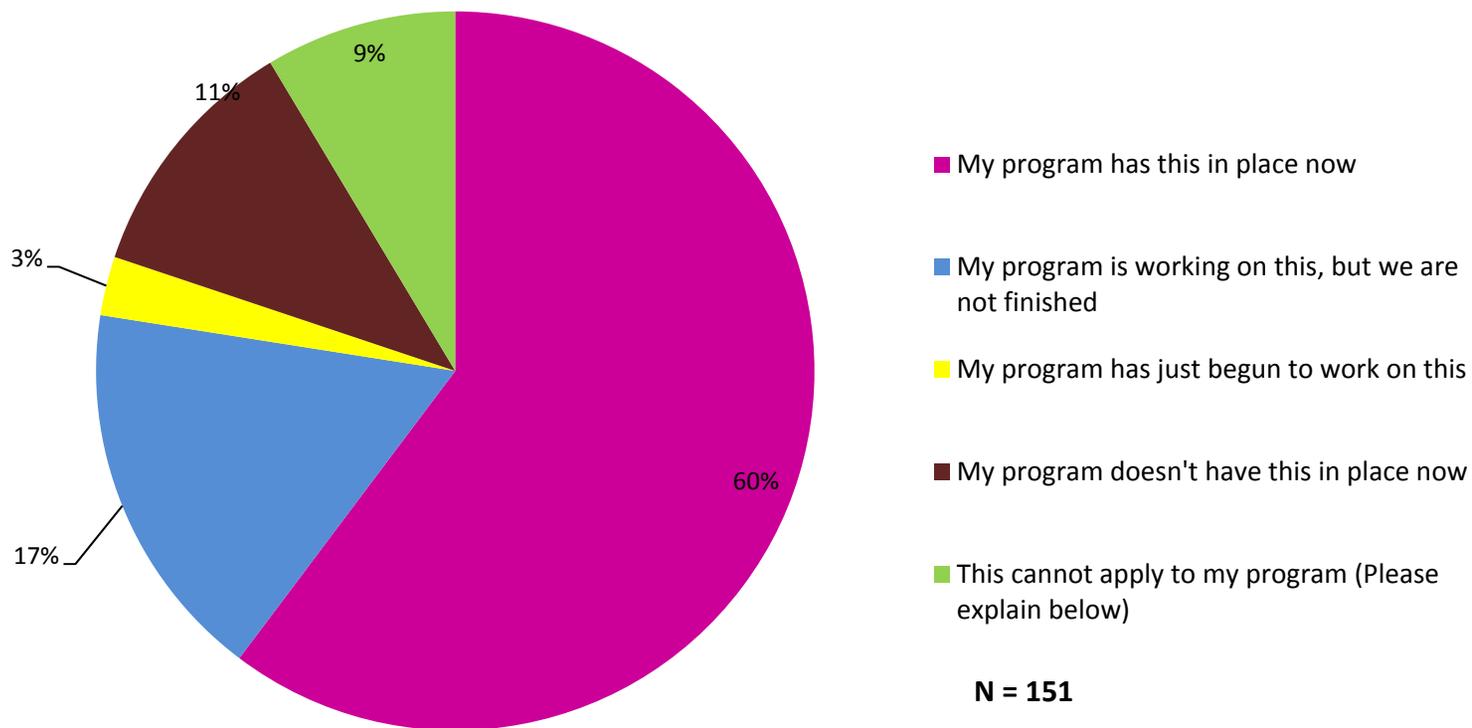
2. clearly identify the services provided and the populations served.



Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

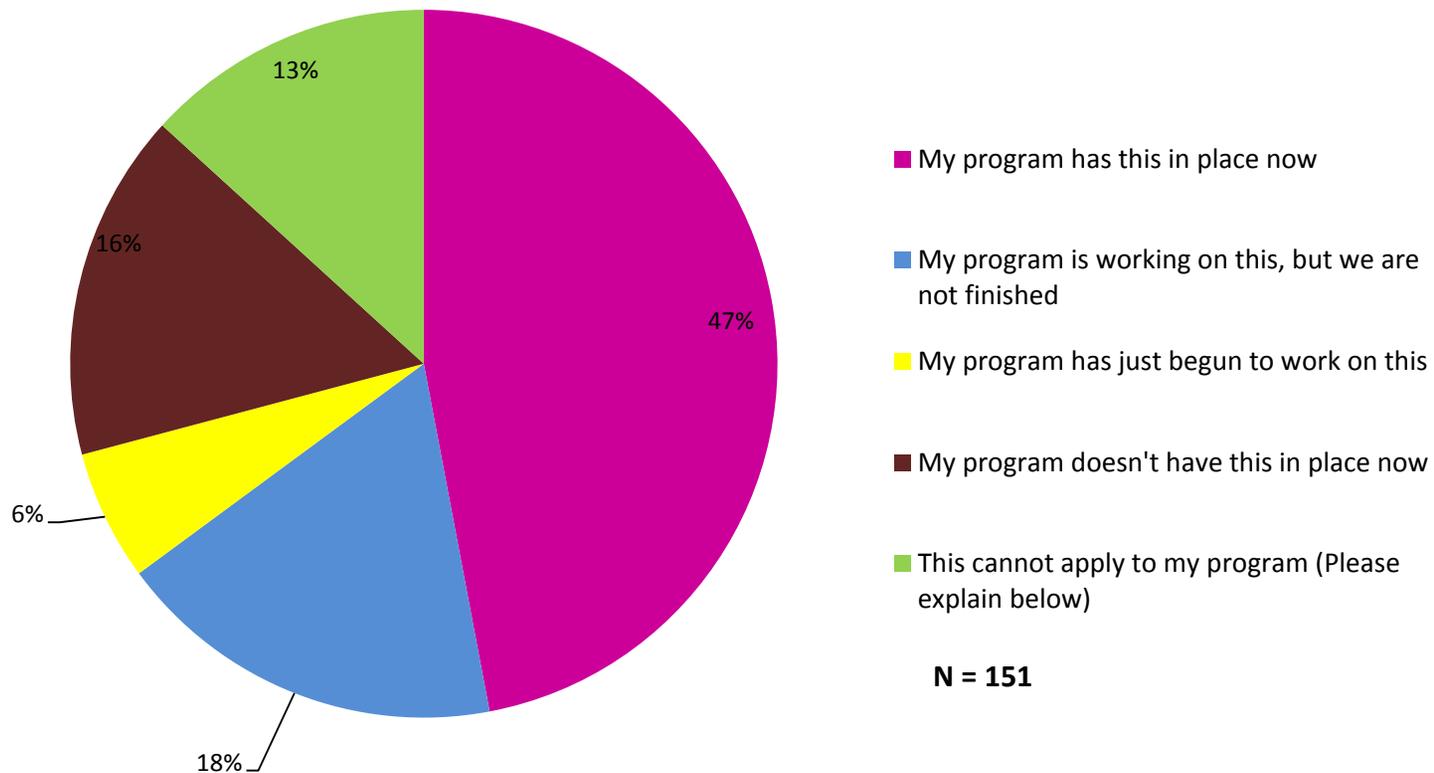
3. have written and publicly-available policy describing how assistance is prioritized within each program.



Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

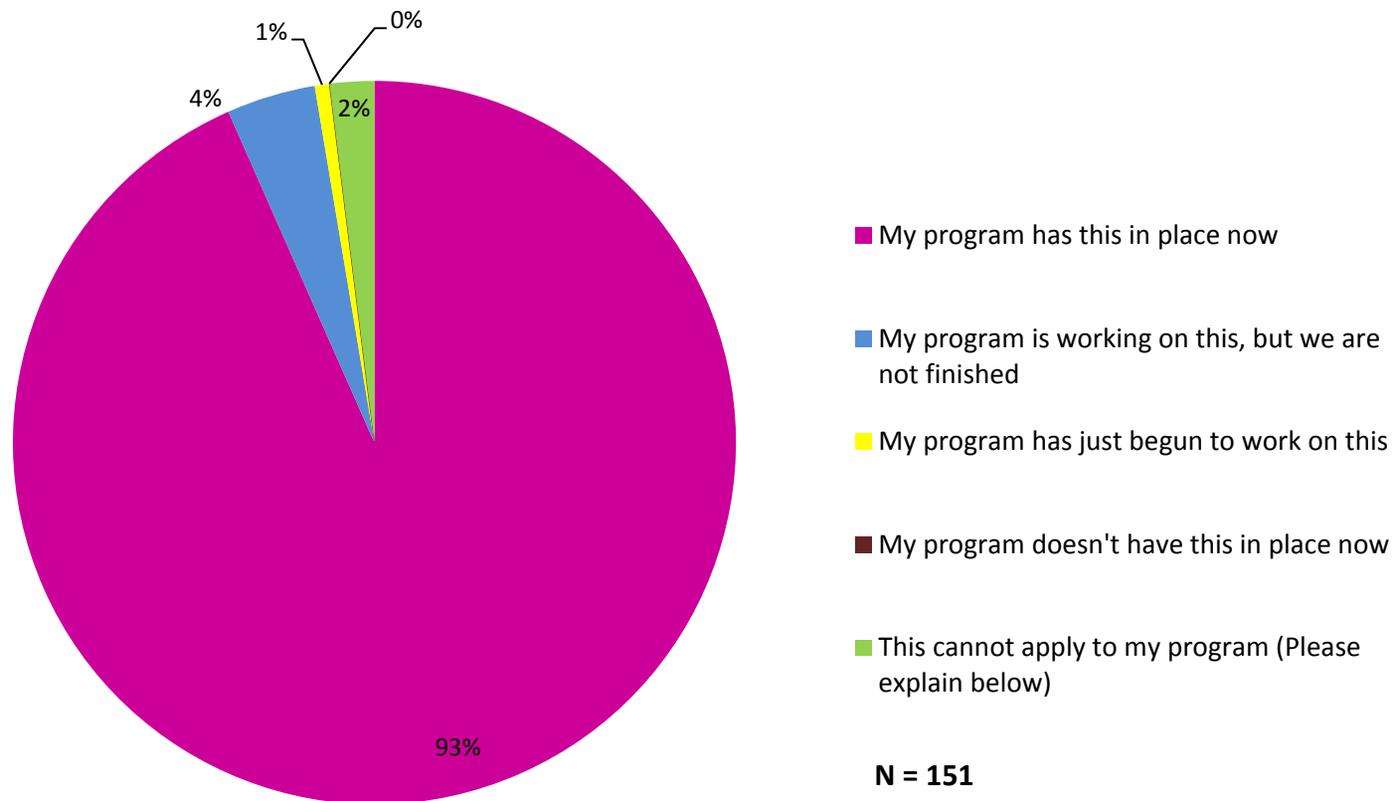
4. participate in the coordinated intake approved by the local Continuum of Care.



Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

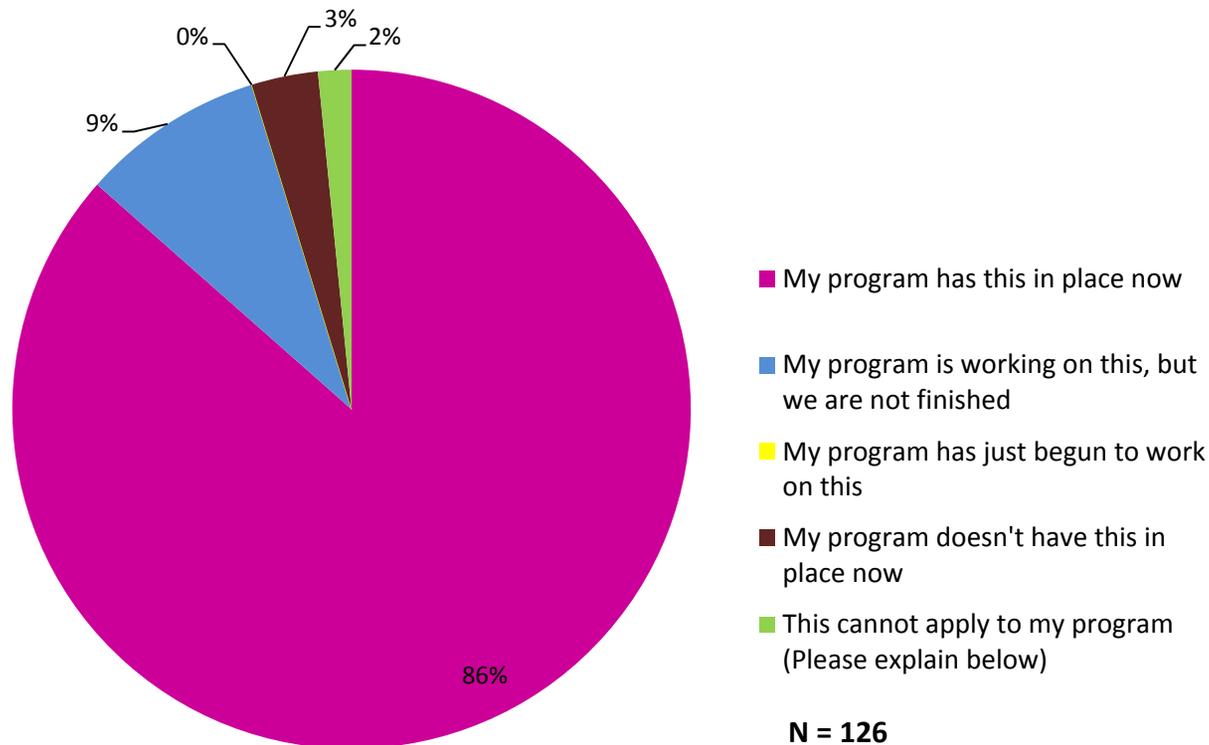
5. work formally and informally with other community resources, agencies, and networks to appropriately coordinate services and/or refer a client.



Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

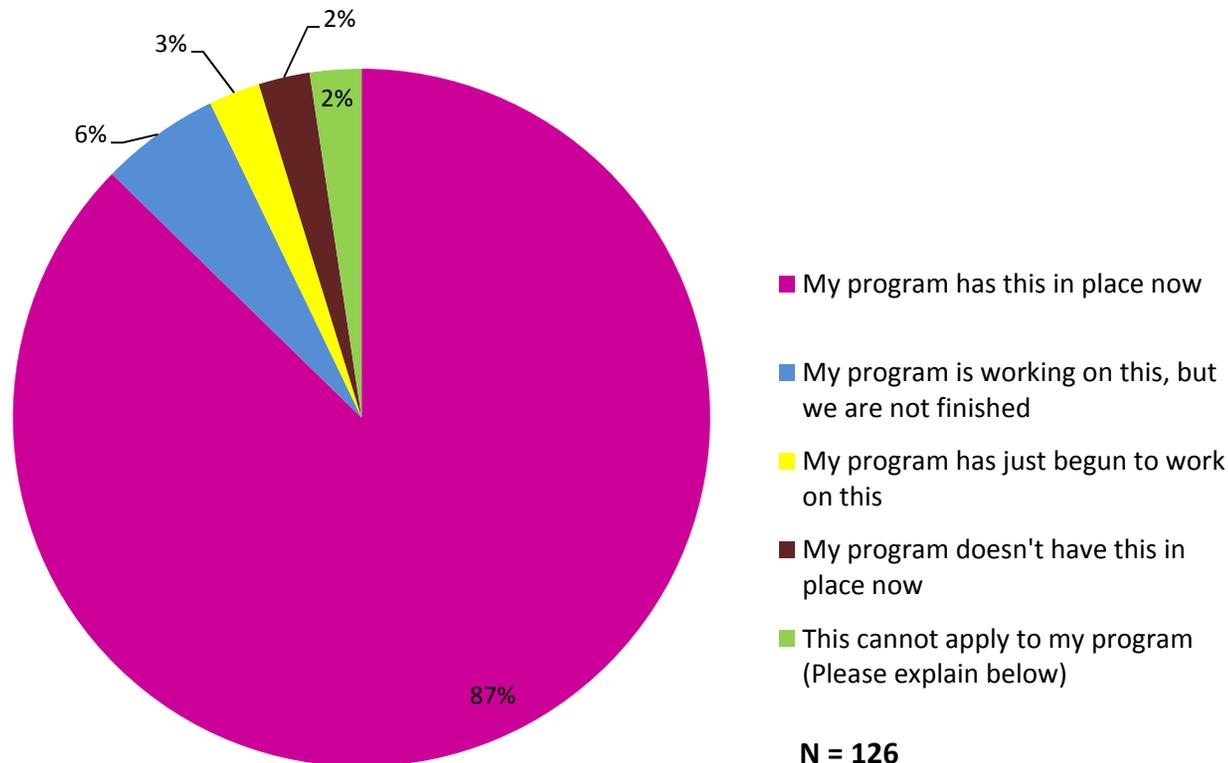
2. have written financial policies and procedures. This includes the following: demonstrate compliance with grant requirements, if applicable; track matched and leveraged funds, if applicable; have written procedures in place for document retention based on best practices for each specific type of document; and internal controls.



Operations Standards

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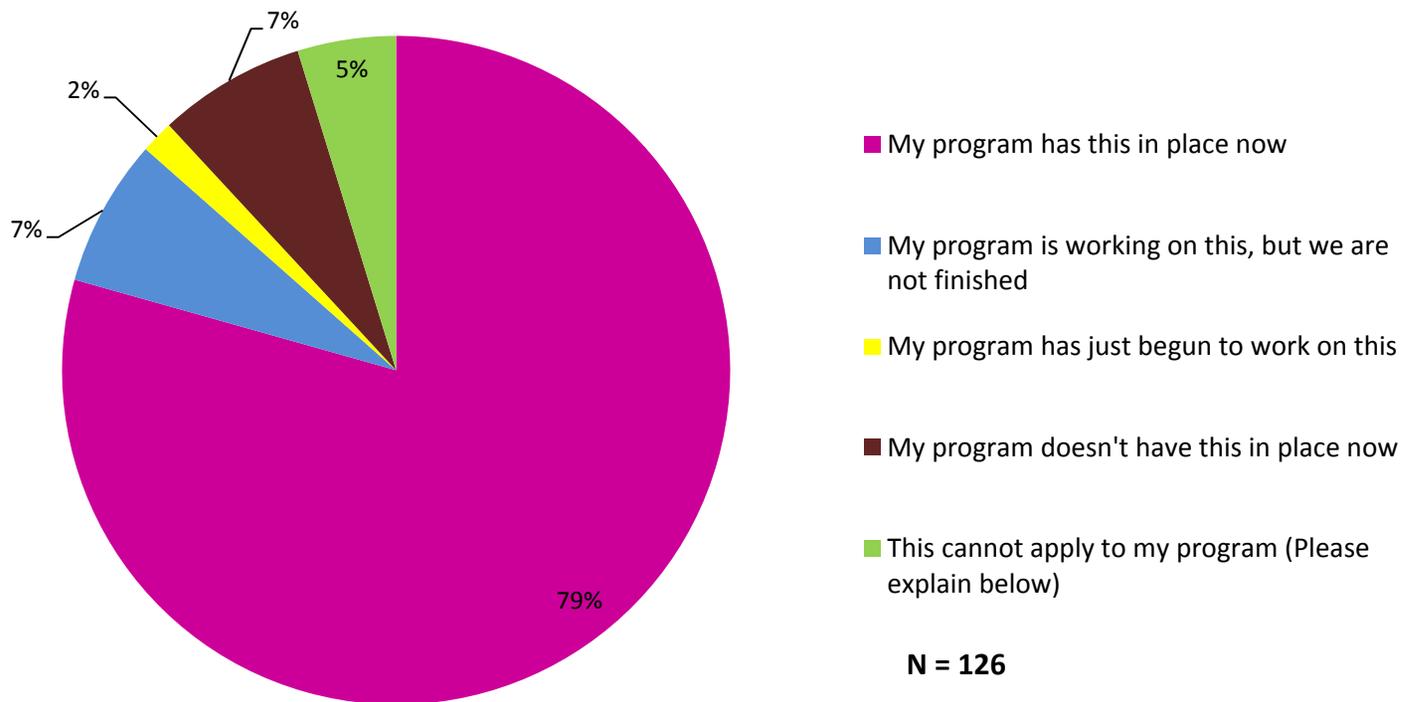
3. have a written employee manual or personnel policy and procedure manual. The manual should include, at minimum: a conflict of interest policy that applies to Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers; and a written policy for confidentiality and informed consent that is signed by each Board member, staff, volunteer, and client.



Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

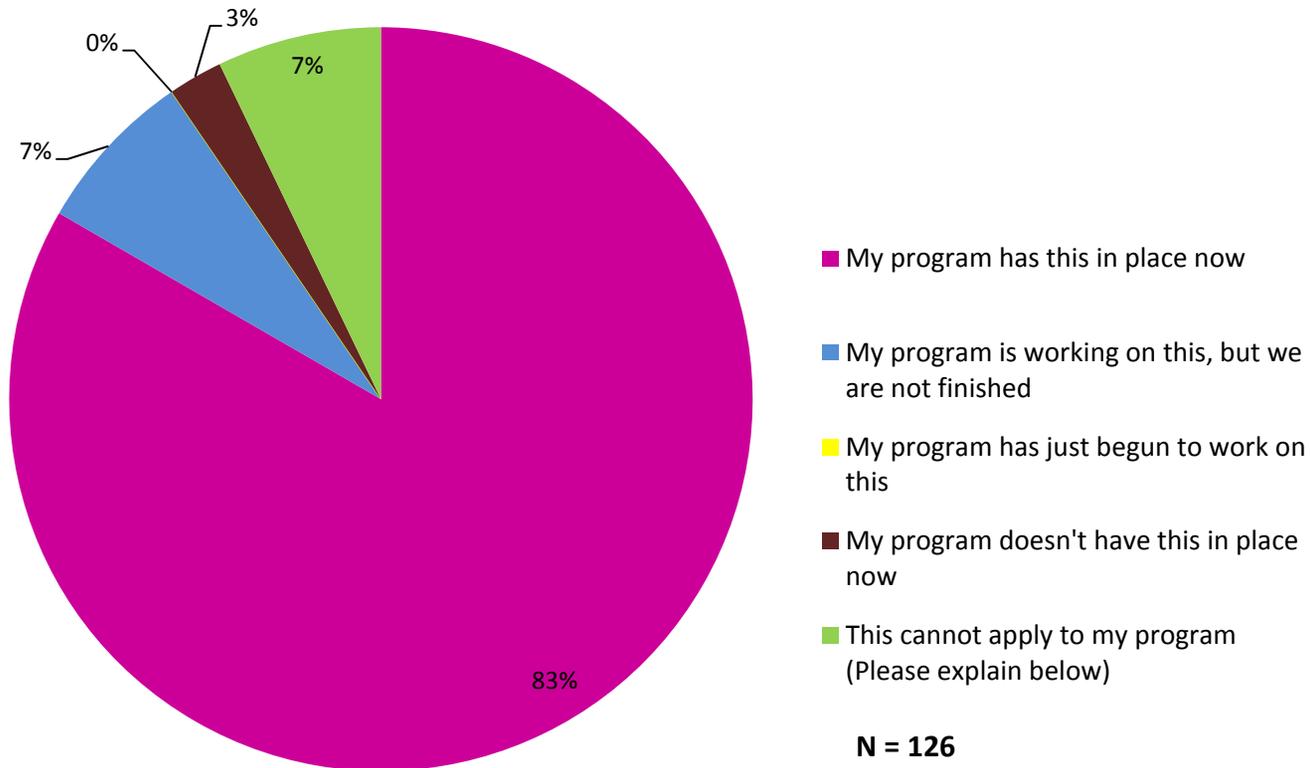
5. complete background checks including criminal history, child abuse, dependent-adult abuse, and sex offender registry for all employees and volunteers who provide direct services.



Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

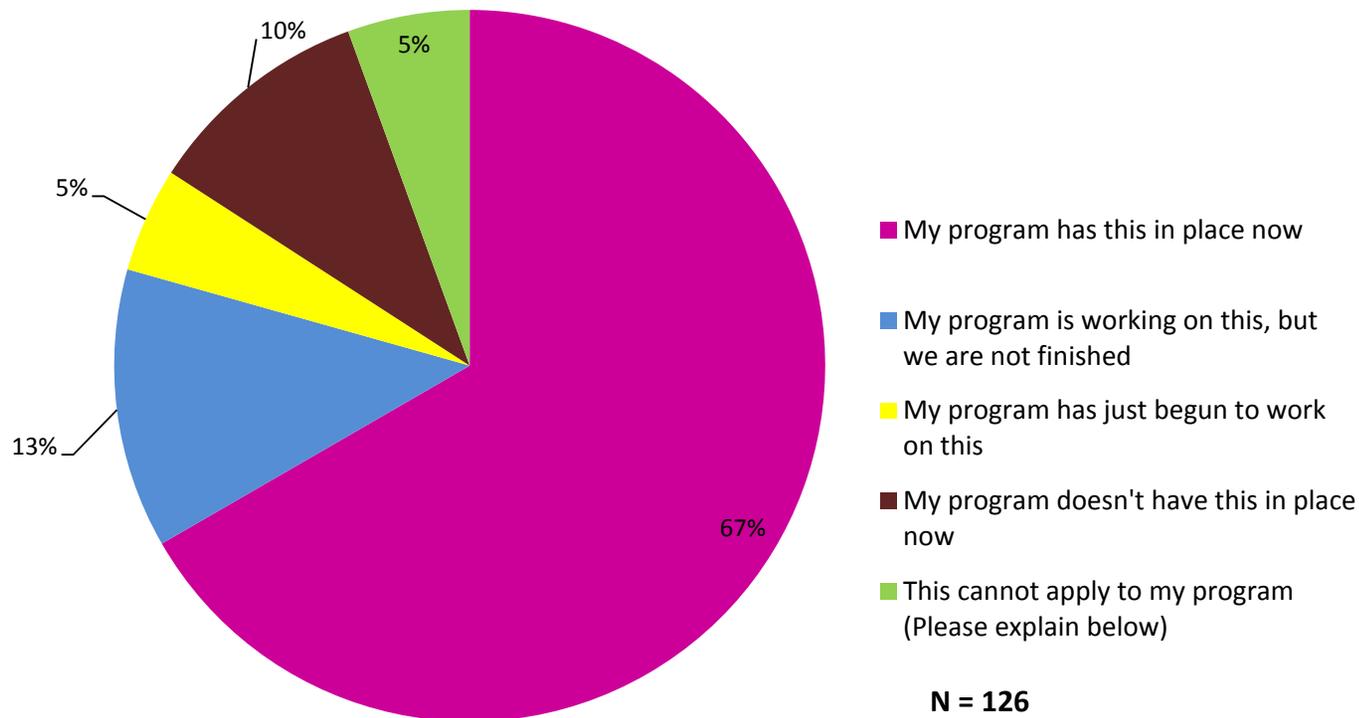
6. have written, determined minimum staffing requirements that are appropriate for the type of program and ensure a safe environment. In an emergency shelter, at minimum, one qualified staff person should be present during hours of operation. For other programs, at minimum, one staff should be available during the hours of operation.



Operations Standards

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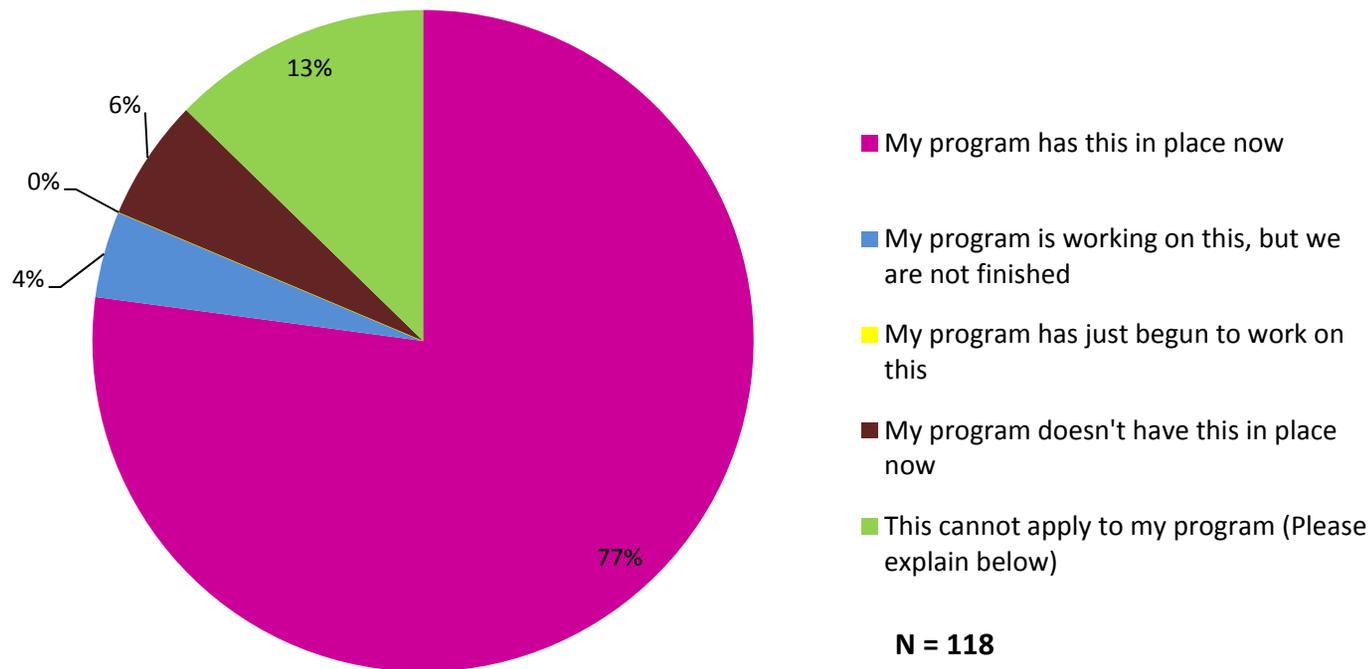
7. provide training, at minimum, for all staff and for volunteers who provide direct services, in the following topics: safety; ethics; confidentiality; First Aid (includes blood-borne pathogens), CPR, and AED training, if applicable; and required OSHA trainings.



Performance Standards

This standard applies to Outreach, Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

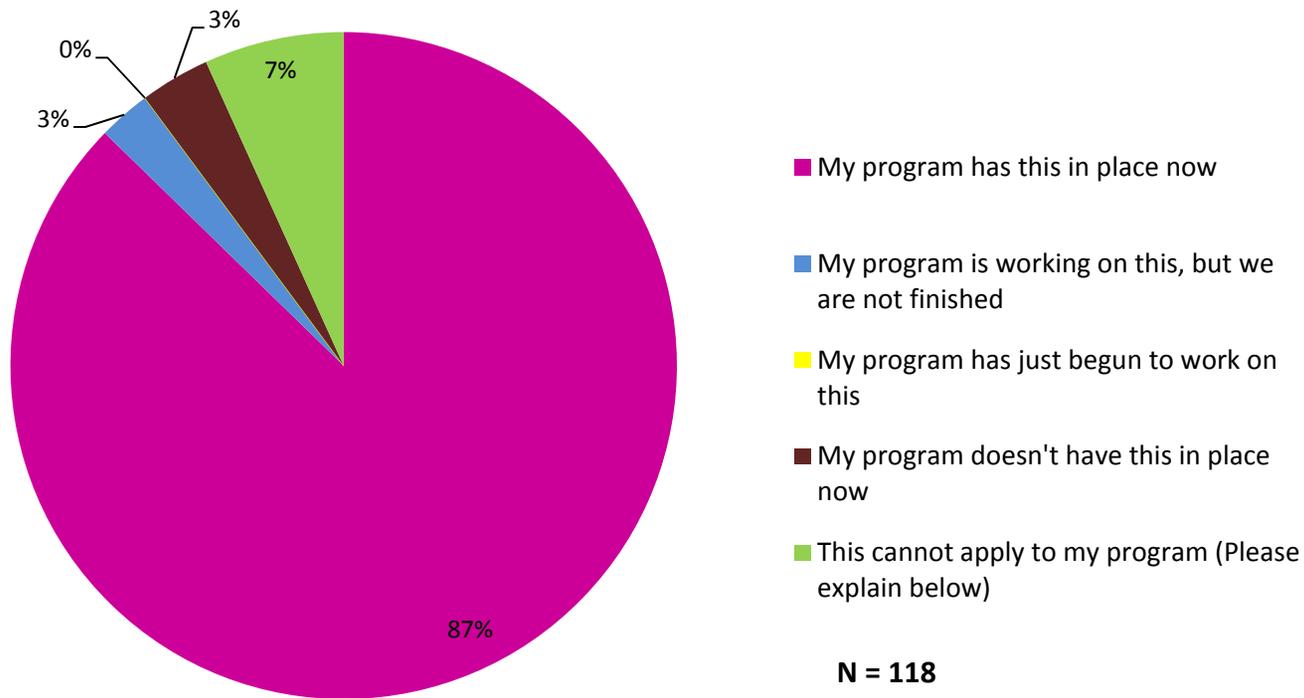
1. ensure that clients have the opportunity to choose to be off the street.



Performance Standards

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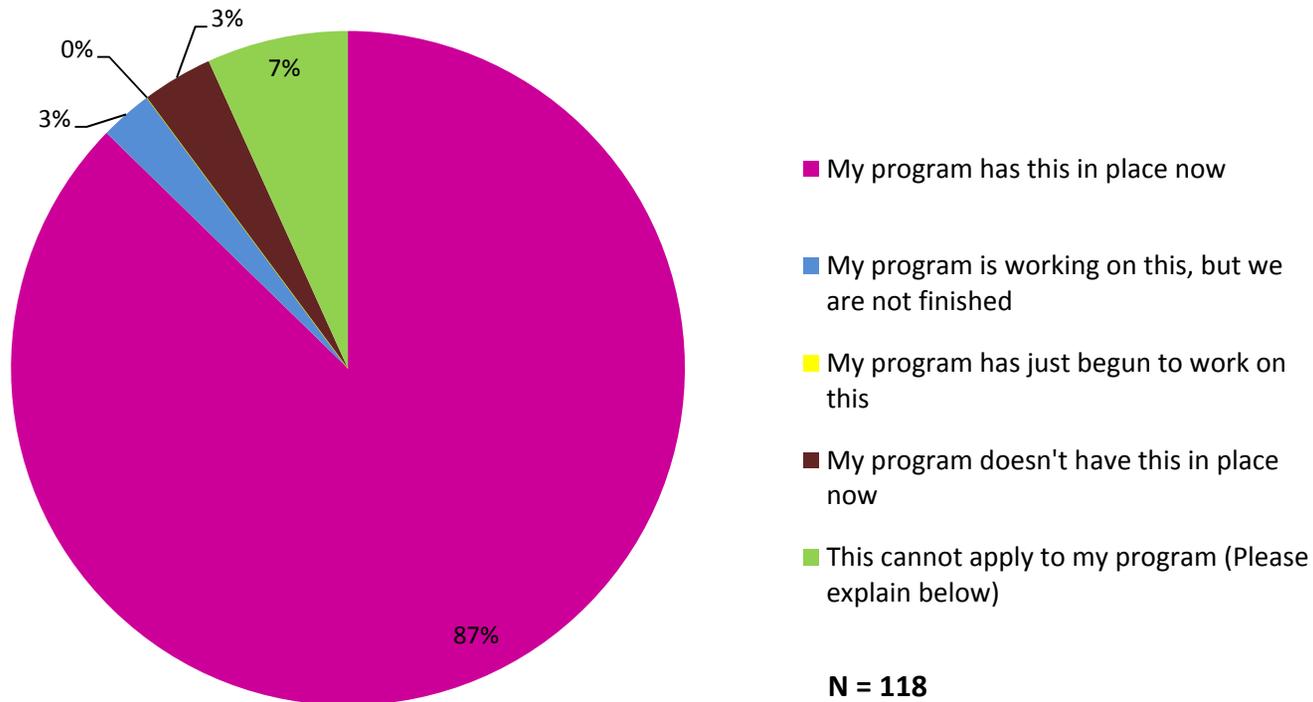
2. ensure that clients have basic needs met, e.g. food, shelter, clothing, safety.



Performance Standards

This standard applies to Outreach, Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

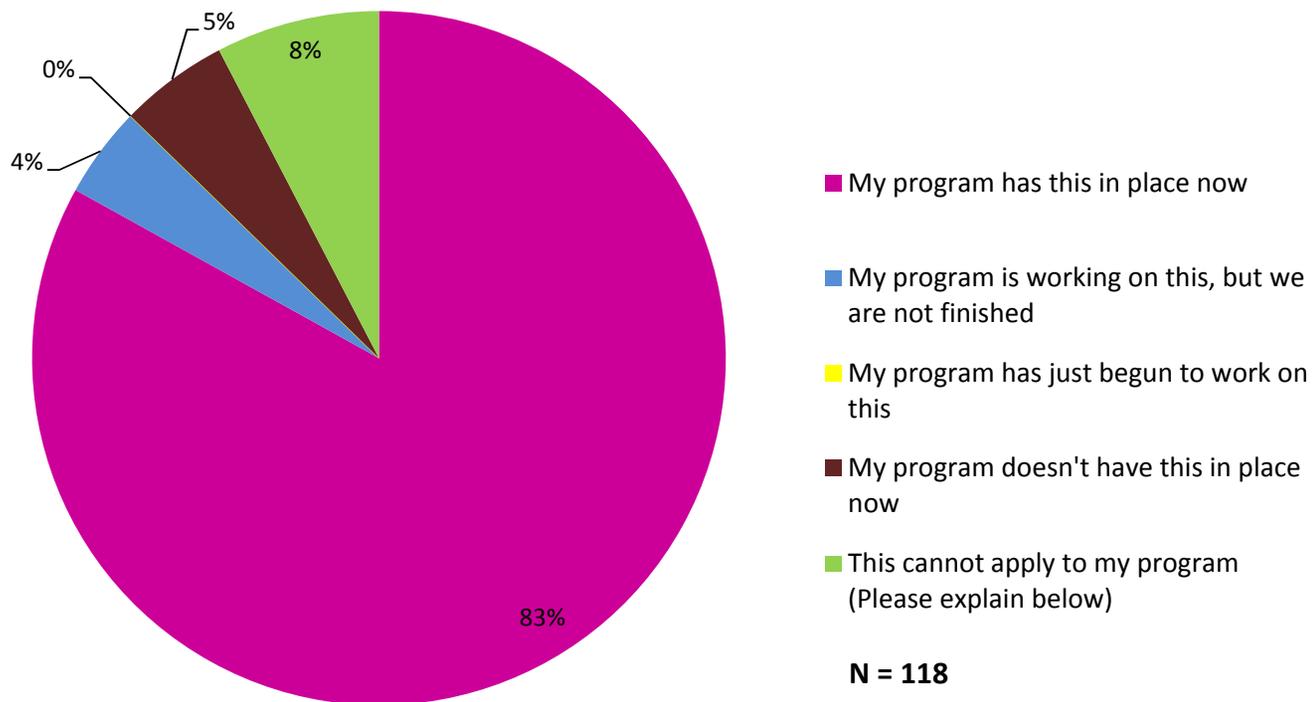
3. ensure that clients have the opportunity to connect with mainstream resources.



Performance Standards

This standard applies to Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. It does not apply to Outreach. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

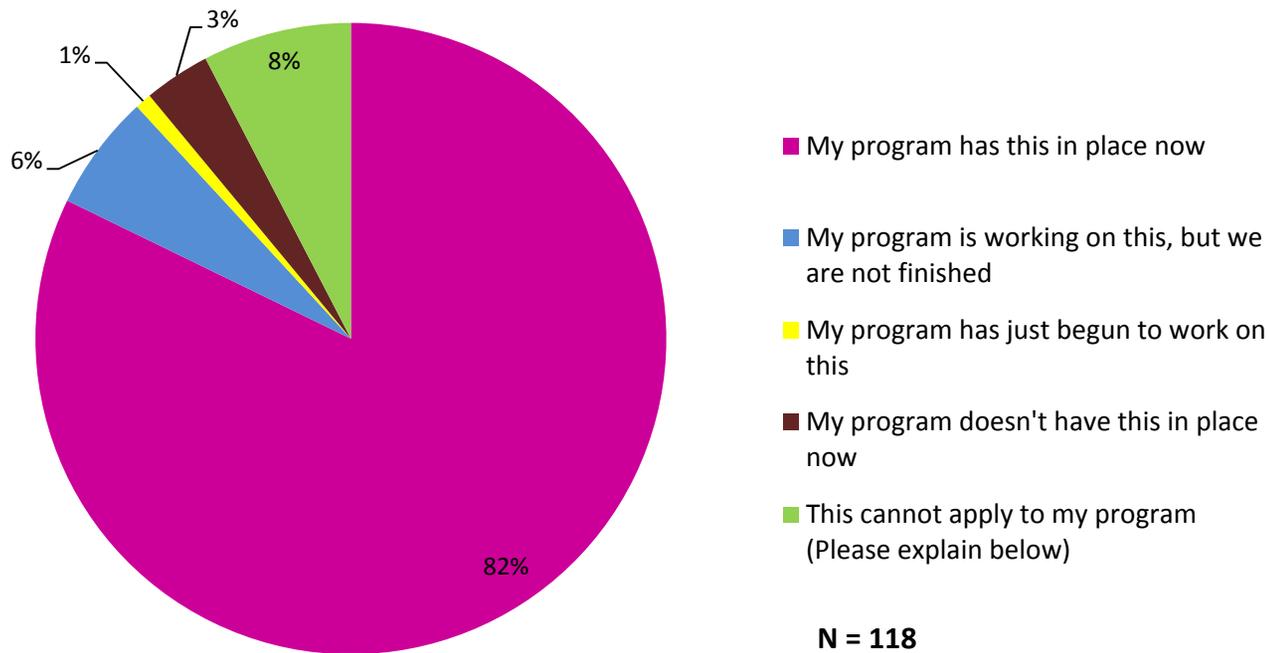
6. support clients in their progress toward identified goals.



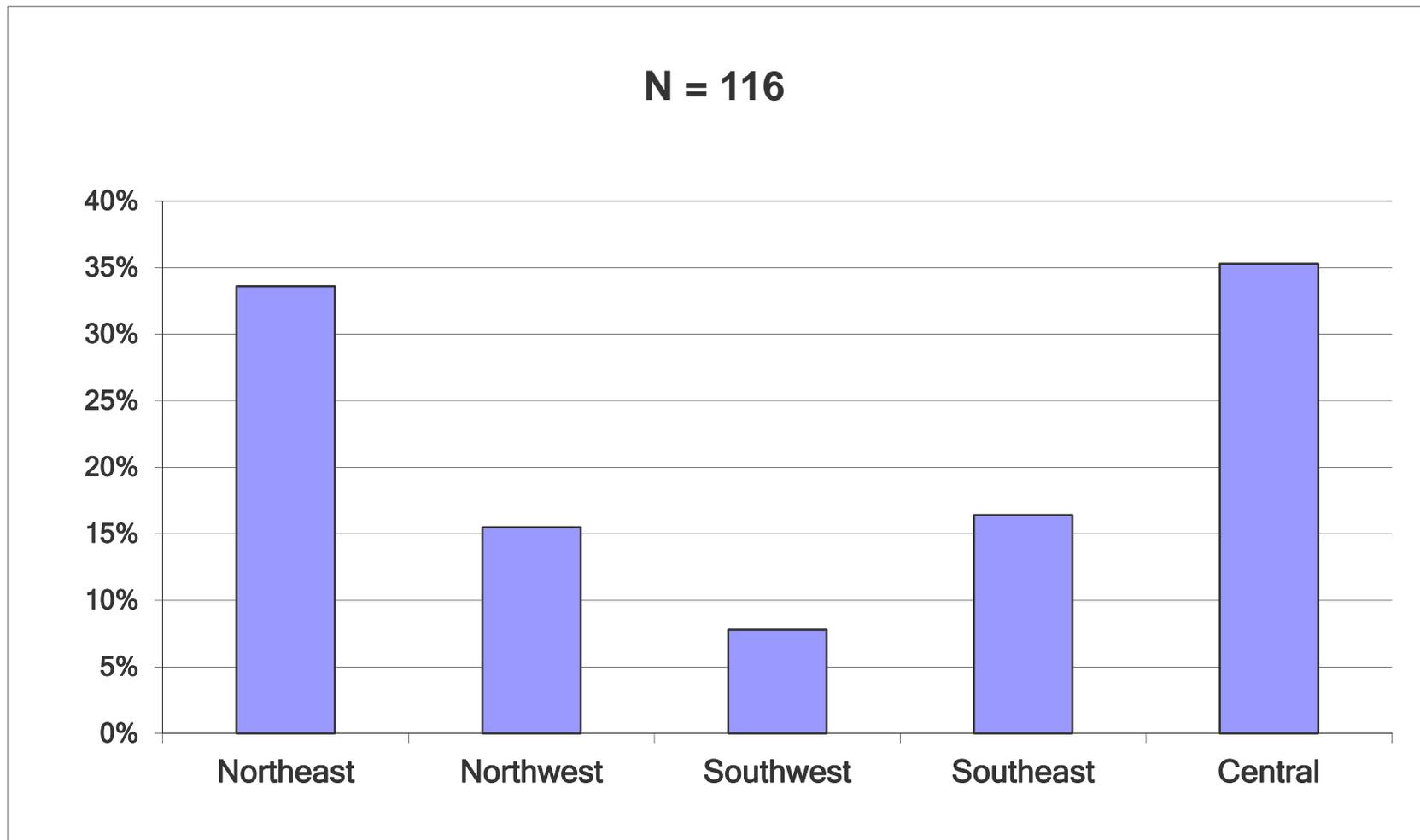
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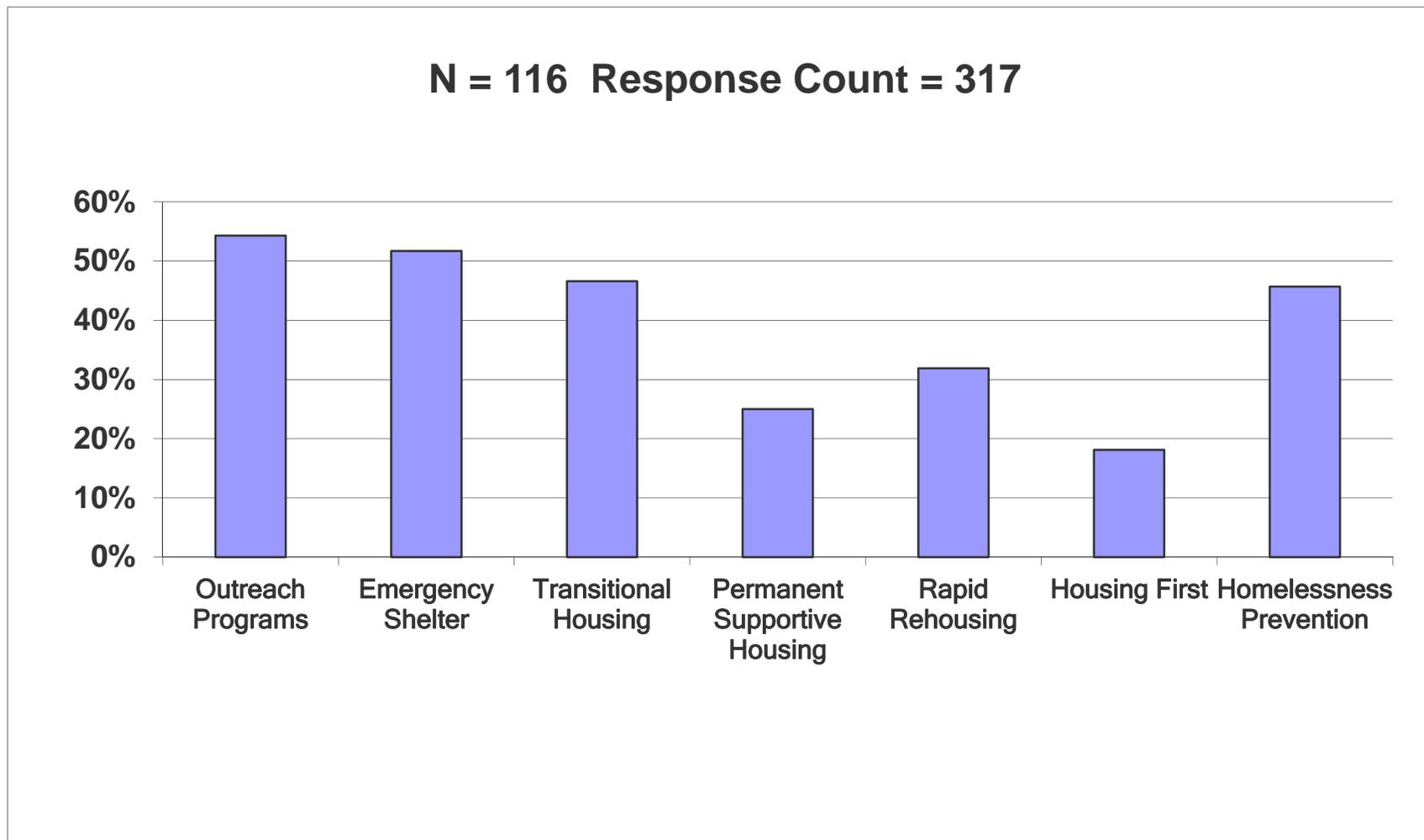
8. support clients in achieving financial stability and long-term, safe housing.



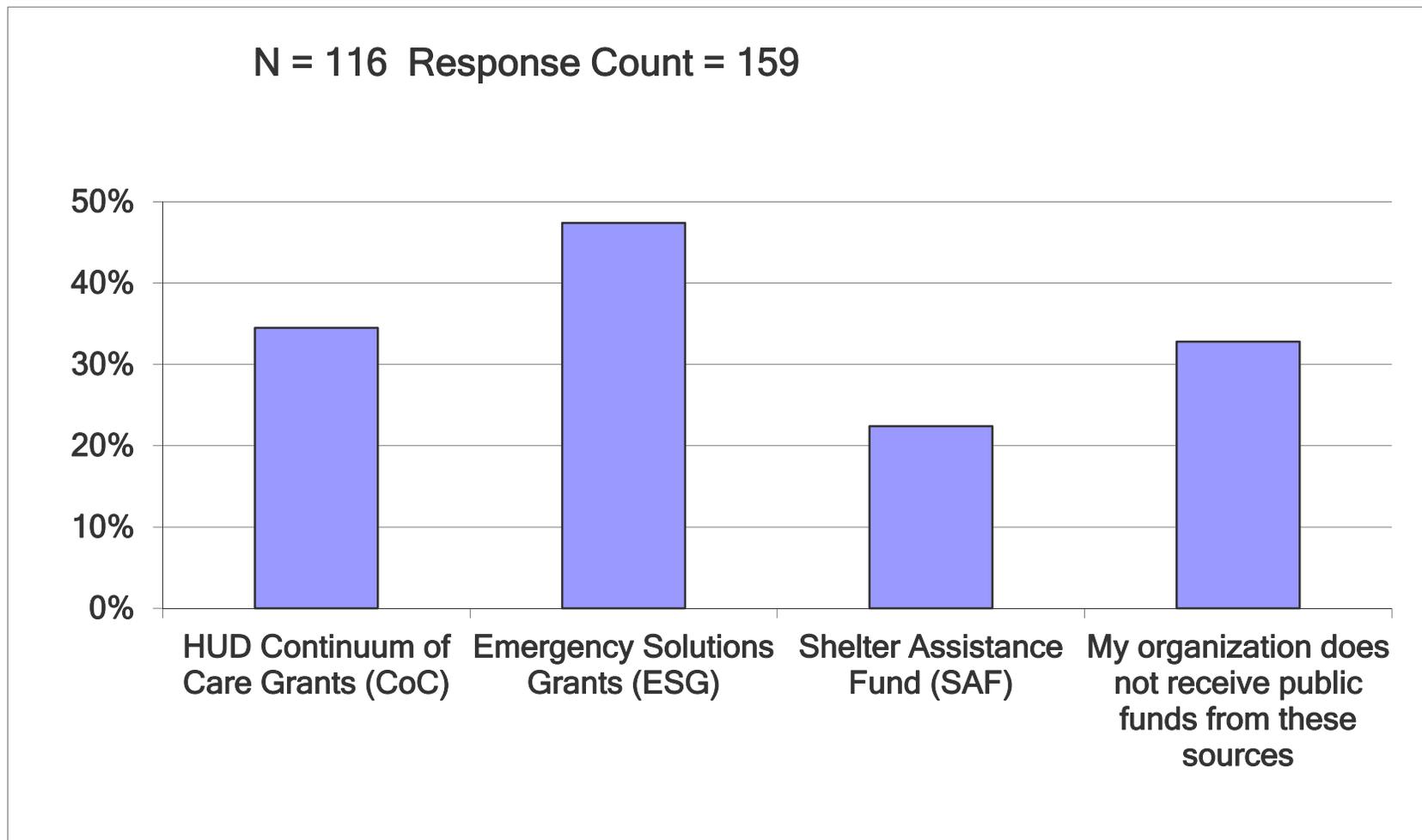
Services provided by this organization primarily serve which part(s) of the state?



What services are provided by this organization? (Check all that apply)



Which type of federal or state funding, if any, does your organization receive? (Check all that apply.)



Next Steps

- Iowa Council on Homelessness will determine the path forward
- If accepted, next steps include:
 - Develop concise supporting materials to aid programs in utilizing the standards
 - Conduct outreach to introduce and explain the standards
 - Provide training to interested organizations in approaching standards
 - Determine and establish tracking and indicators for each standard.
 - Periodically evaluate and adapt standards as indicated

Panelists

- **Crissy Canganelli**
 - Shelter House, Iowa City
- **Tony Timm**
 - Central Iowa Shelter & Services, Des Moines
- **Ronelle Clark**
 - YWCA Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Resource Center and Transitional Housing Program, Clinton
- **Arlinda McKeen**
 - Moderator & process facilitator for standards development
 - President, State Public Policy Group, Inc.



QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Download the Standards for Homelessness Programs document at <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Home/DocumentSubCategory/166>