

Barriers to Emergency Shelter Services in Maryland Continuums of Care: A Needs Assessment

Presented by Anne Wagner

Prepared for the Maryland Interagency Council on
Homelessness

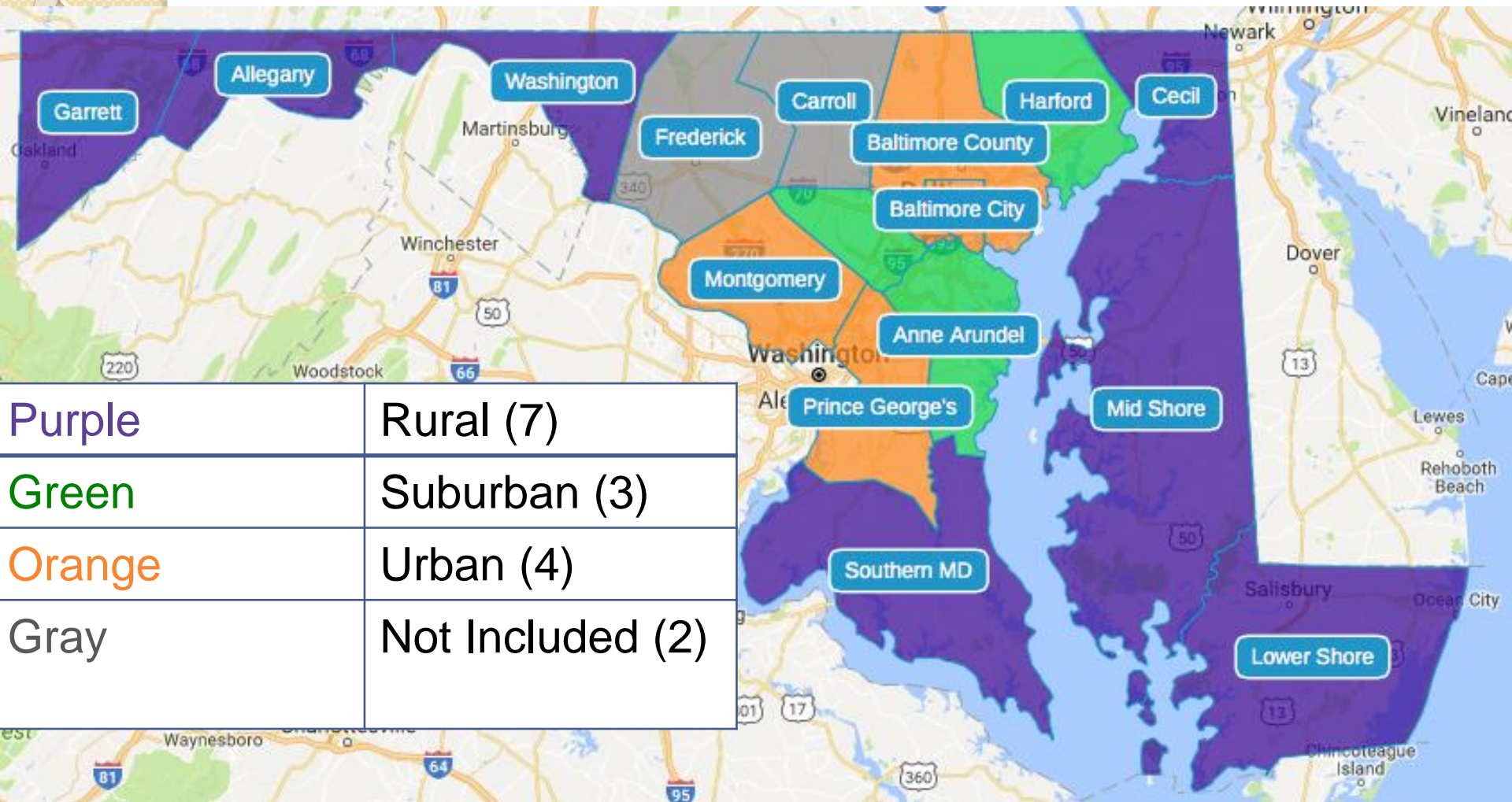
Purpose of the Study

- To contribute to the tenth goal of the ICH
- To understand how this impacts safety of clients and staff
- To identify resource gaps that may create barriers for shelter

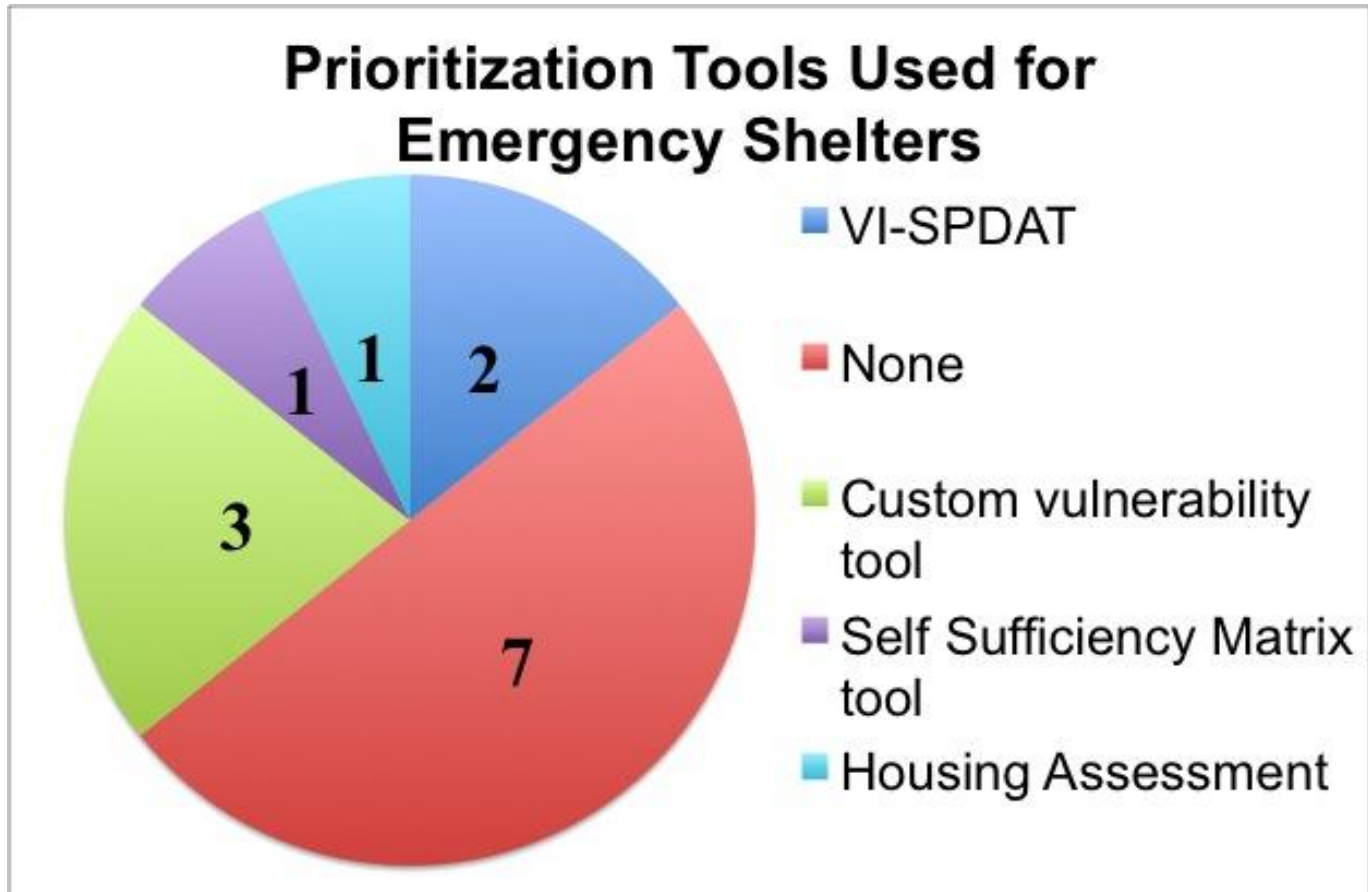
Coordinated Entry Requirement

- HUD requirement for “Coordinated Entry Process” by January 23, 2018
- Low Barrier Checklist by the 100,000 Homes Campaign
- Goal Six of Maryland Homeless Services Framework Goals

Interviewed CoCs



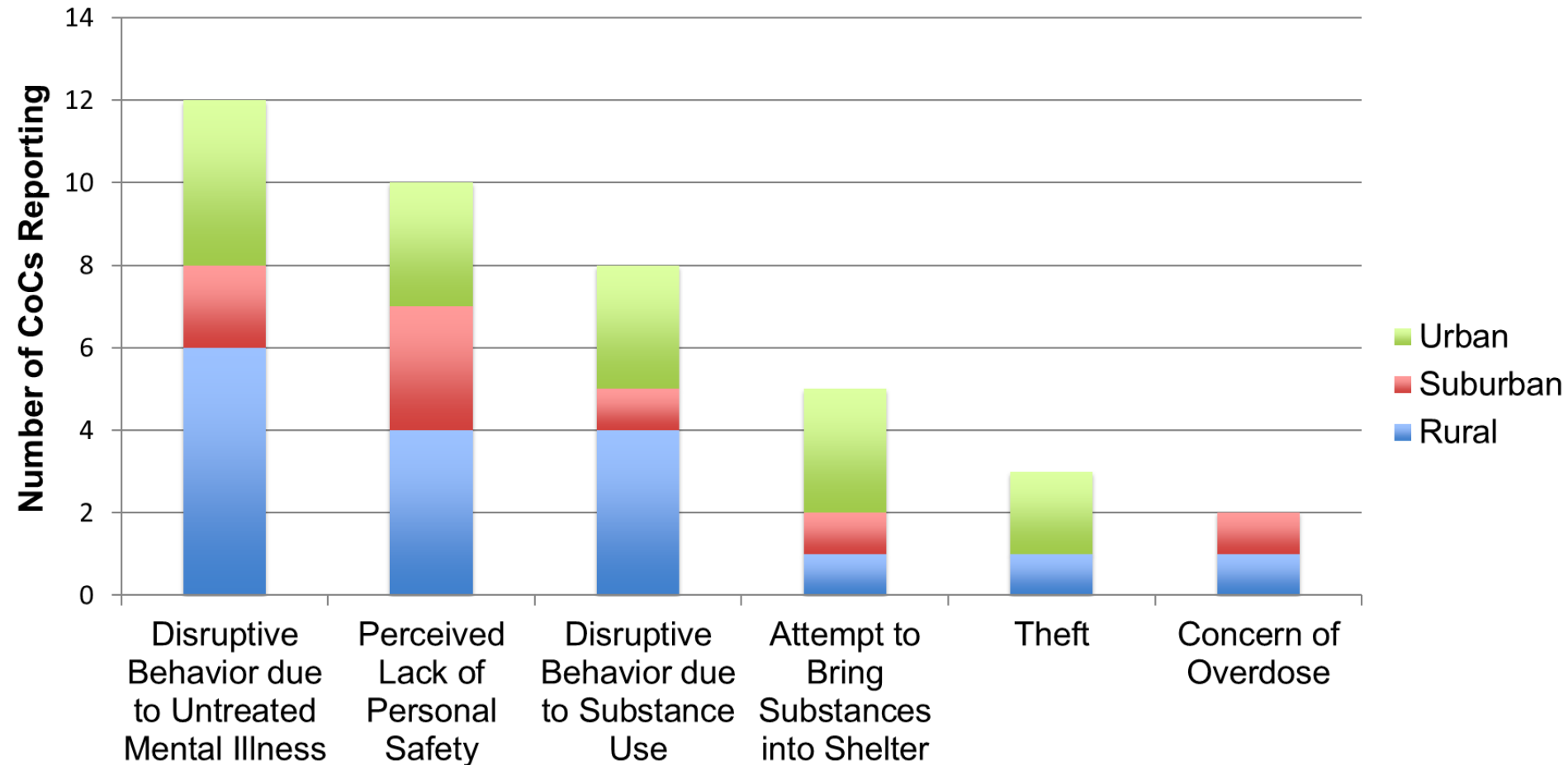
Prioritization Tools



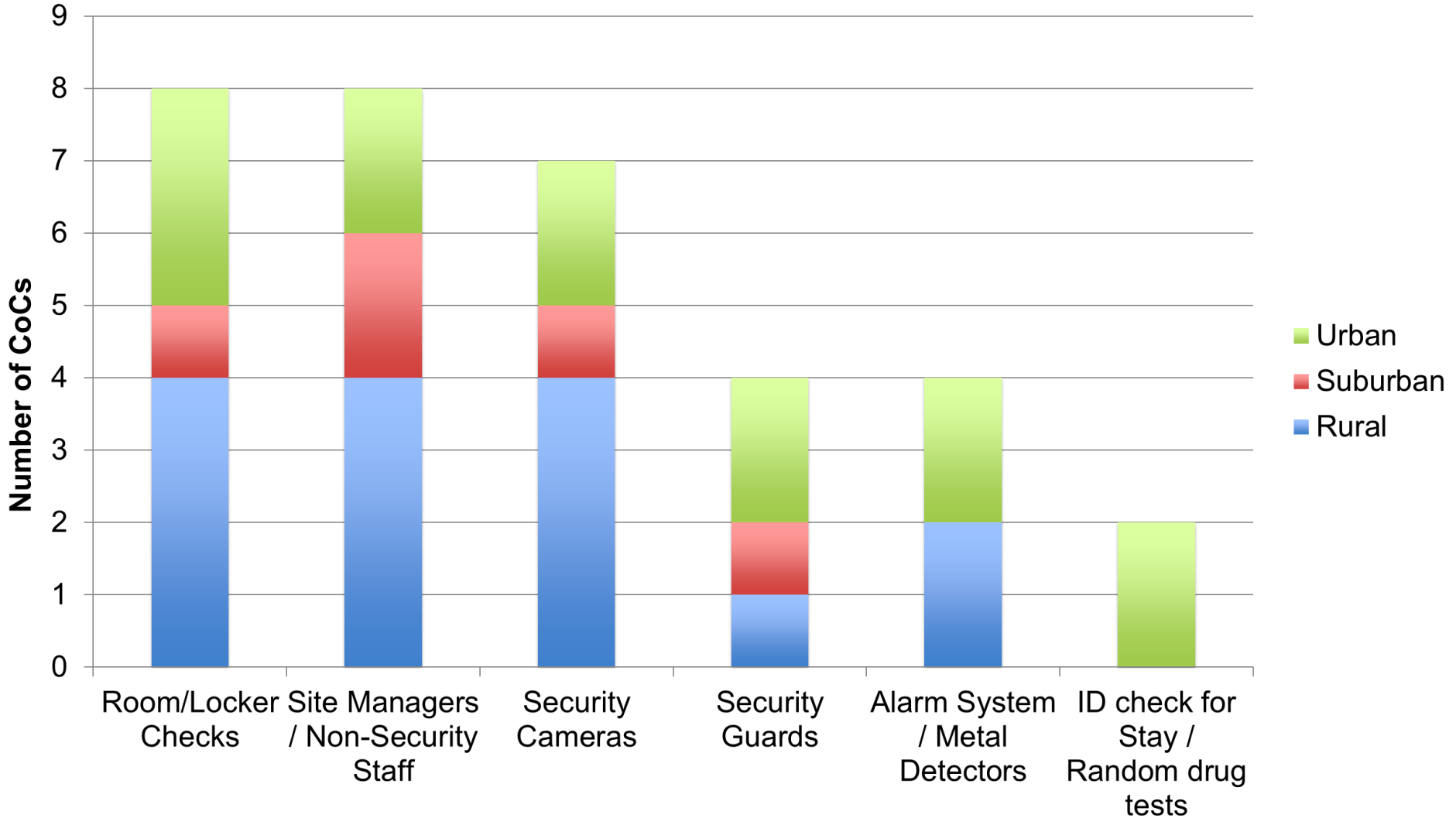
Client Advocate Interview – Perceived Safety Concerns

- Theft of Personal Property
 - Medicine
 - Identification
 - Money
- Mistreatment from other clients/staff

Concerns that Threaten Safe Environments in Emergency Shelters



Security Precautions Reported by CoCs



Client Advocate Interview – Admission to Shelter

- Older children, especially males, in families
- Physical disability
- Open Arrest Warrants
- Bed availability due to client's gender identity

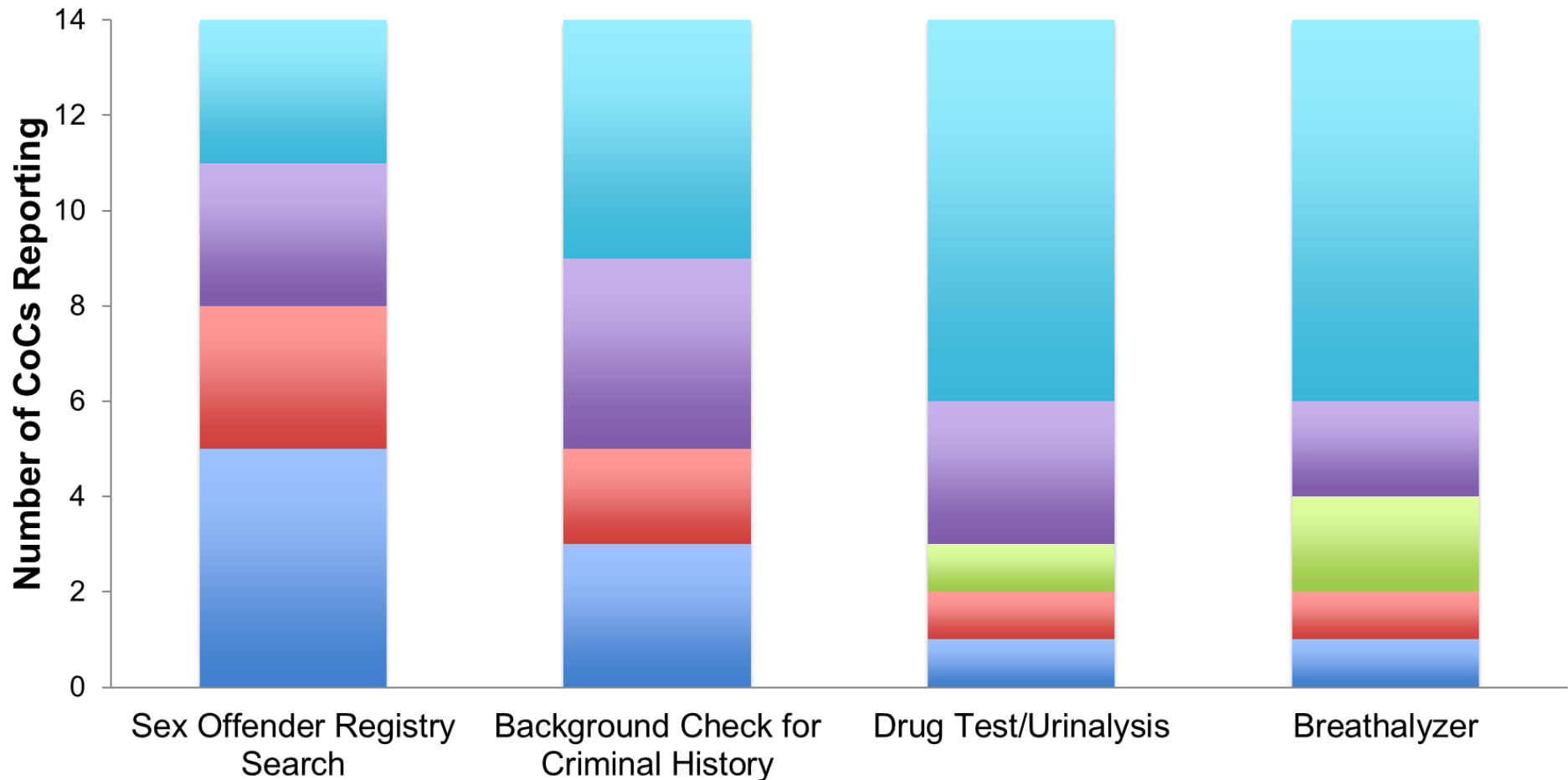
Barriers - Space

- 10 CoC leads reported **capacity issue** when open beds do not meet family/individual characteristics
- 7 CoC leads reported **congregate living spaces**, limiting private areas and spaces to accommodate behavioral needs
- 4 CoCs have shelters with **limited ADA accessible units**

Barriers – At Intake

Entry Requirements that Create Barriers

■ Rural ■ Suburban ■ Urban ■ Used but Not a Barrier to Entry ■ Not Reported



Barriers – Rural CoCs

- **Transportation**

- 6 Rural CoCs report limited public transportation as a barrier to services

- **Programmatic Requirements that do not keep low barrier status**

- 6 Rural CoCs report shelters having sobriety, church attendance, and similar requirements

Data Needed for Further Assessment

- Collect turn away data
- Survey CoCs on low barrier checklist
- Assess privately-run shelters for prioritization tools, safety concerns, and barriers
- Survey people experiencing homelessness who do not access shelters

Recommendations

- Expand cold weather entry policies
- Improve staff training
- Add professional and clinical staff members
- Encourage more interagency partnerships and on site services
- Increase funding for ACT teams
- Conduct a cost projection



Questions?

**For more information please
contact me at
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Thank you