

Engaging Consumers of Homeless Services in Maryland: Recommendations to Increase Consumer Participation Across the State

By: Mauricio San Miguel-UMD, School of Public Policy

For: The Maryland Interagency Council on Homelessness

2018

Key terms

Consumers

Consumer
Advisory Board
(CAB)

Current policy

- The Maryland Senate Bill 796 (2014 General Assembly)
 - Tasks the ICH to:
 - “Solicit input from...consumers regarding policy and program development.”
 - Appoints to the ICH:
 - “One community representative who has personally experienced homelessness”
- Lack of consumer representation in the State
 - Consumer engagement in Maryland’s policy making process
 - Introduction of Consumer Advisory Boards

Research Questions

1. What practices to follow for the development of Consumer Advisory Boards aimed at increasing consumer engagement, collaboration and to incorporate experience and feedback into policy aimed at tackling homelessness?
2. Whether a Statewide Consumer Advisory Board be feasible and effectively increase consumer engagement in the policy making process in the state of Maryland, or should efforts be focused on guidance for the development of CABs at the local level, in Maryland's COCs?

Study Limitations

No Statewide
CAB on
homelessness

- Massachusetts Statewide CAB on HIV

Limited
empirical
evidence

- Health care CABs
- Research CABs

Interviews

MD COCs

- 3 Urban
- 2 Suburban
- 5 Rural
- No response: 6 COC

DMV CABs

- Baltimore County CAC
- Baltimore City CAW
- Fairfax County CAC

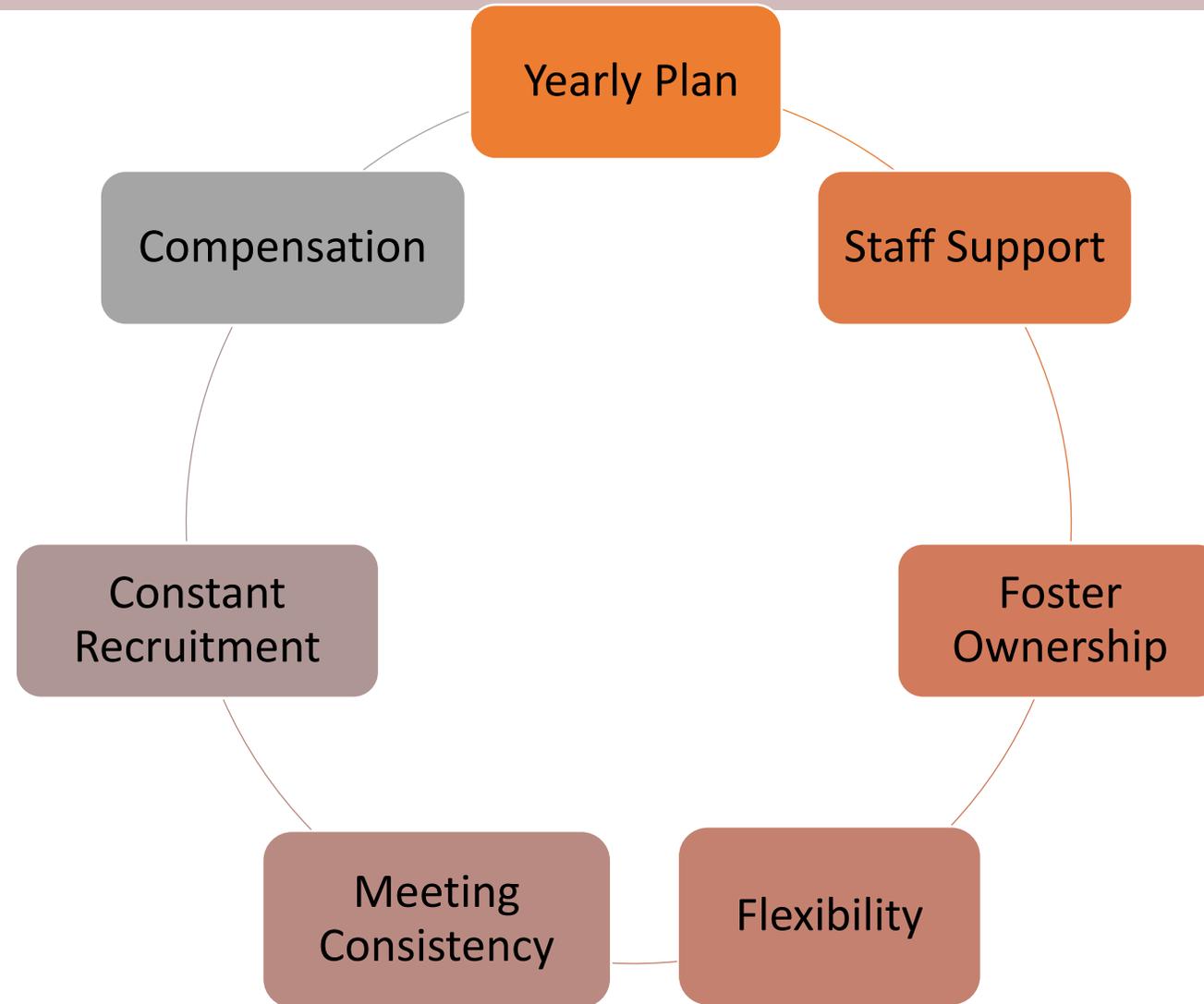
Consumers and advocates

- MD ICH consumer
- Baltimore City CAW consumer
- US ICH representative
- NHCHC representative

Findings: 1st Research Question

What practices to follow for the development of Consumer Advisory Boards aimed at increasing consumer engagement, collaboration and to incorporate experience and feedback into policy aimed at tackling homelessness?

Current Practices



Findings: 2nd Research Question

Whether a Statewide Consumer Advisory Board be feasible and effectively increase consumer engagement in the policy making process in the state of Maryland, or should efforts be focused on guidance for the development of CABs at the local level, in Maryland's COCs?

CAB Pros

Self-efficacy

Community Representation

Voice of a
Community

Consumer expertise

Effect on Policy

CAB Cons

- Delays in decision-making process
- Requires funding and resources from governing body
- Could enhance disillusion in the system

Recommendations

- Encourage development of COC CABs
- Propose process for a State Wide CAB
- Encourage collaboration among COCs on consumer participation
- Propose grants for COCs promoting consumer empowerment

Thank you for your time.