

COVID-Alert Risk Evaluation (CARE) Project Overview April 19, 2020

Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and Inner City Health Associates (ICHA) are partnering on the Covid-19 Alert Risk Evaluation (CARE) project.

The goal of the project is to reduce risk of death and serious complications of COVID infection among people experiencing homelessness through identification of clients who are at higher risk of COVID-19 related harms and in need of greater protection.

Shelter staff and health care professionals will work together to identify mitigating strategies for those individuals to reduce their risk.

CARE assesses client risk of COVID-related hospitalization and ICU admission using ICHA health records, Shelter Management Information System (SMIS) data, and in-person assessments to identify each client’s risk of COVID-related harms.

These assessments inform how we can deliver safer spaces and health protections to the most vulnerable clients based on their risk and support needs. It can help ensure that health care providers can give all clients the care that they need and facilitate continuity of care as they move to different settings through the system.

Given the complexity of needs of the clients we serve, and the pressures our programs and staff are under, we may not have an immediate place to move people everybody. Understanding their risk will help us to better protect vulnerable individuals.

How It Works:

	Sites where ICHA Generally Operates	All other shelter and drop-ins
Step 1: Risk Stratification	ICHA conducts a risk assessment based on available health information, and connects with front-line program staff to review and validate this information and confirm clients' individual support needs.	<p>A member of the ICHA team is available to work with shelter supervisors to assess clients' risk and support needs over the phone, and in some cases in person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter staff will be able to conduct risk stratification using an online tool available from any computer or smartphone. • A member of ICHA’s team will work with shelter supervisors and staff to risk stratify clients.

<p>Step 2: Supporting sites with health protection measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each program supervisor will have access to the risk stratification information for the clients in their program to inform their choices around service approaches, client movement, and improved physical distancing measures. • Options to record and track clients' risk assessment level in SMIS are being explored. • ICHA and SSHA will support sites to identify options for clients, advise on physical distancing and cohorting measures, and movements to other facilities where available.
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Steps that the CARE Project Will Support

Strategies to consider for those identified as higher risk of COVID complications:

- cohorting in spaces that provide more opportunity for self-isolation
- prioritizing access to single rooms
- locating individuals away from common areas, stair wells and other high-traffic areas
- enhanced awareness and monitoring for symptoms
- ensuring ongoing access to existing health care services and support

Where referrals to alternate spaces, including hotels, are available, CARE can provide some guidance on allocating those spaces in a way that will serve clients and communities as best as possible. For example:

- People at higher risk but with lower support needs could be moved into available hotel spaces.
- Hotel spaces may not be a good fit for people at high risk and who have high needs. Other solutions may be required to ensure the safety of those individuals.
- Where clients with lower support needs are willing to transfer to new spaces, this may also create safer and more protective spaces for people at higher risk.