

# CLIP

(CONSUMER LEADERSHIP  
INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM)

ENGAGING PEOPLE WITH  
LIVED EXPERIENCE

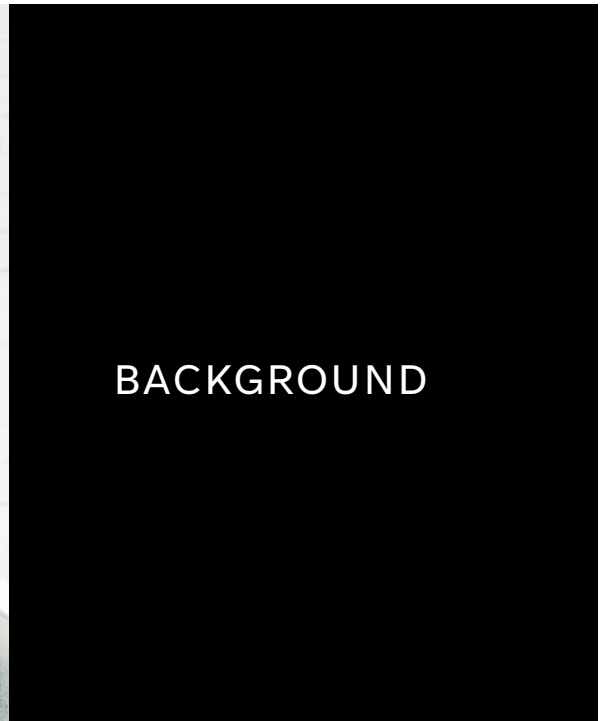
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## BACKGROUND

In 2020, the Connecticut Balance of State (CTBOS) funded a program in partnership with housing advocates and nonprofits to integrate people with lived experience (PWLE) into the statewide Continuum of Care (COC) steering committee process to improve services for people experiencing homelessness.

This program, the Consumer Leadership Involvement Program (CLIP), recognizes that solving the homelessness crisis requires innovative strategies. A holistic approach, including the meaningful engagement of persons with lived experience in decision-making opportunities, contributes to the goal of reducing homelessness in the State of Connecticut.

Over the past 3 years, 13 CLIP members have participated in the program since its inception, and several currently serve as voting members of the governing body, the CTBoS Steering Committee.

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## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

### Purpose

- To identify interventions and process improvements within the homeless system through active engagement and insight of People With Lived Experience (PWLE).
- Recognition that partnering with people who have experienced homelessness often leads to more inclusive programs and better outcomes for all clients; the integration of PWLE will transform homelessness in Connecticut.

### Objective

- To recruit, train, and integrate PWLE resources into the CoC policy-making process in an effort to improve homelessness services.
- To provide housing and homeless education, training, and technical assistance to the CTBoS CoC Steering Committee, state agencies, and other statewide homeless service providers.

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## PHASE 1: COHORT 1

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## OUR TECHNIQUE

### Phase 1: COHORT 1 - What We Did...

- ❑ Identified potential participants through a variety of sources:
  - Presentations to partner providers and visits to homeless shelters.
  - Emailed flyers distribution lists and posted them online.
  - Announcements during meetings and word of mouth.
- ❑ Interviewed and recruited our first cohort of 7 participants.
  - CLIP Cohort 1 representation included statewide geographical coverage across all regions.
  - Included 5 women and 2 men, all of whom were currently receiving homeless services and support.
- ❑ Invited CLIP members (and other consumers) to apply to be voting CTBoS Steering Committee members.
  - 3 CLIP members were selected for the 2-year term.
  - Participation in steering committee meetings included leadership roles and providing technical assistance support.

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## OUR TECHNIQUE

### Phase 1: COHORT 1 - How We Did It...

- ❑ Conducted weekly meetings with the cohort that included:
  - CoC knowledge training and access to information.
  - Instruction on participating in professional business meetings - Roberts Rules.
  - Training on the homeless system in Connecticut (CAN system).
  - Advocacy, policy review, and presentational skills training.
- ❑ Ensured that PWLE members were compensated for at least 6 hours monthly for participating in meetings and other tasks assigned to the cohort on behalf of the CTBoS.
  - Paid tasks included reviewing policy documents, participating in funding allocation processes, and other consultant homeless roles.
  - Compensation was prioritized for timeliness and accuracy to members because payment was key for this population.
- ❑ Created a culture of respect and compassion for PWLE

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## CHALLENGES

### Phase 1: COHORT 1 - What We Learned...

- ❑ The recruiting strategy for Cohort 1 during COVID-19 provided limited access to diverse participants. When chosen for the program, several Cohort 1 participants were unhoused or newly housed, requiring more case management than initially planned.
- ❑ Weekly payment options for non-employees was challenging for internal processes, so payments were switched to monthly installments.
- ❑ Identifying the expectations and opportunities changed throughout the year due to needs or interests expressed by providers, the CoC and the cohort. Many program plans were adjusted throughout the year to accommodate new requests and opportunities for the cohort members.
- ❑ Communications were impacted by the technology available to Cohort members (i.e., phone, wifi, and computer access needed to be provided to some).
- ❑ Attendance was an issue for some, and we lost several members over time due to the time commitment and continuing unstable housing situations.
- ❑ We needed to be intentional about creating a culture of respect and compassion for PWLE. Some expressed feeling tokenized at various points during the program. Implementing trauma-informed practices was key.

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## PHASE 2: COHORT 2

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## OUR TECHNIQUE

### Phase 2: COHORT 2 - What We Changed...

- ❑ Identified potential participants through a variety of sources:
  - Presentations to partner providers and visits to homeless shelters.
  - Emailed flyers distribution lists and posted them online.
  - Announcements during meetings and word of mouth.
- ❑ Interviewed and recruited our first cohort of 7 participants.
  - CLIP Cohort 1 representation included statewide geographical coverage across all regions.
  - Included 5 women and 2 men, all of whom were currently receiving homeless services and support.
- ❑ Invited CLIP members (and other consumers) to apply to be voting CTBoS Steering Committee members.
  - 3 CLIP members were selected for the 2-year term.
  - Participation in steering committee meetings included leadership roles and providing technical assistance support.

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## OUR TECHNIQUE

### Phase 1: COHORT 2 - Why We Changed It...

- ❑ Conducted weekly meetings with the cohort that included:
  - CoC knowledge training and access to information.
  - Instruction on participating in professional business meetings - Roberts Rules.
  - Training on the homeless system in Connecticut (CAN system).
  - Advocacy, policy review, and presentational skills training.
- ❑ Ensured that PWLE members were compensated for at least 6 hours monthly for participating in meetings and other tasks assigned to the cohort on behalf of the CTBoS.
  - Paid tasks included reviewing policy documents, participating in funding allocation processes, and other consultant homeless roles.
  - Compensation was prioritized for timeliness and accuracy to members because payment was key for this population.
- ❑ Created a culture of respect and compassion for PWLE

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## CHALLENGES

### Phase 1: What We Are Still Learning...

- ❑ The recruiting strategy for Cohort 1 during COVID provided limited access to diverse participants. When chosen for the program, several Cohort 1 participants were unhoused or newly housed, requiring more case management than initially planned.
- ❑ Weekly payment options for non-employees was challenging for internal processes, so payments were switched to monthly installments.
- ❑ Identifying the expectations and opportunities changed throughout the year due to needs or interests expressed by providers and the CoC and the cohort. Many program plans were adjusted throughout the year to accommodate new requests and opportunities for the cohort members.
- ❑ Communications were impacted by the technology available to Cohort members (i.e. phone, wifi and computer access needed to be provided to some)
- ❑ Attendance was an issue for some, and we lost several members over time due to the time commitment and continuing unstable housing situations.
- ❑ We needed to be intentional about creating a culture of respect and compassion for PWLE. Some expressed feeling tokenized at various points during the program. Implementing trauma-informed practices was key.

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# THE IMPACT

Cohort II  
Graduation  
and....  
Next Steps!



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# THANK YOU!!!

## QUESTIONS?

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