



CE Prioritization Tool for San Francisco Homeless Adults
Analysis of Test Data
November 16, 2017

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1. Background

Focus Strategies is providing technical assistance to the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) to design and test a prioritization tool to be used in the implementation of Coordinated Entry for chronically homeless adults. The tool when finalized will be programmed into the ONE System, the community's new HMIS implementation. A draft set of prioritization tool criteria, questions and weighting have been developed by Focus Strategies with input from HSH staff. To ensure that the tool functions as intended, Focus Strategies has analyzed a set of test data gathered from San Francisco homeless adults in October 2017. This report presents the results of that analysis and recommendations for adjustments to the tool.

2. Data Collection Methodology

The test data was collected by interviewing adults living in shelter or on the streets in San Francisco. The interviews were conducted by outreach staff identified by HSH using a paper questionnaire created by Focus Strategies. The questionnaire included all the weighted factors needed to generate a prioritization score, plus some additional questions needed to complete our analysis, including demographic questions.

Interviewers were instructed to read all questions as phrased and to make a note of any questions that appeared to be confusing or any other feedback relating to question wording. A copy of the survey tool is attached as Appendix A.

Focus Strategies and HSH entered data for a total of 258 surveys. Survey collection was designed to sample the homeless population in similar proportion to San Francisco's most recent Point-In-Time (PIT) Count.

3. Results

a. Demographic Characteristics of Surveyed Adults

The table on the next page summarizes the demographic characteristics of the adults surveyed. Respondents were allowed to select more than one race, current gender identity, and sexual orientation. This section and the following table depict responses categorized for analysis, and a full list of the responses provided is available in Appendix B.

Most adults described their race as either Black (38%) or White (30%) with many also self-reporting being Multiple Races and "Other." Less than twenty percent of adults were Hispanic and the majority (64%) currently identify as male.¹ Most respondents were heterosexual (78%), though a significant minority (19%) reported a different sexual orientation. Ages ranged from 18 to 88, with an average of 47. Most adults surveyed met the criteria for chronic homelessness (63%).

¹ A slightly larger percentage of respondents (67%) were assigned male at birth, consistent with the small number of male to female transgender adults surveyed.

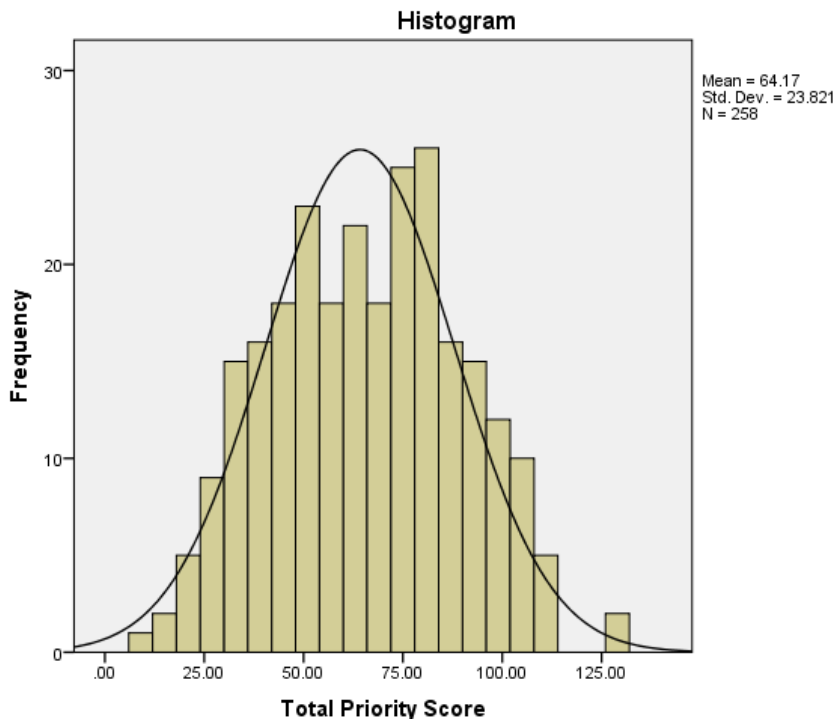
Characteristic	Response Options	N (Total=258)	%
Race	White	78	30.2
	Black	97	37.6
	Asian	2	0.8
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	1.2
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	12	4.7
	Other	28	10.9
	More Than One Race	27	10.5
	Missing	11	4.3
Ethnicity	Hispanic	43	16.7
	Non-Hispanic	196	76.0
	Missing	19	7.4
Current Gender Identity	Male	164	63.6
	Female	73	28.3
	Other ²	17	6.6
	Missing	4	1.6
Gender Assigned at Birth	Male	174	67.4
	Female	78	30.2
	Missing	6	2.3
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	200	77.5
	Other ³	49	19.0
	Missing	9	3.5
Age	Less than 26	20	7.8
	26 – 39	46	17.8
	40 – 49	67	26.0
	50 – 59	74	28.7
	60 – 65	29	11.2
	66 and over	15	5.8
	Missing	7	2.7
Chronically Homeless	Chronic	163	63.2
	Not Chronic	95	36.8

² All respondents who selected a response other than male or female were collapsed as ‘other’ for analysis purposes. See Appendix B for the full range of responses.

³ All respondents who selected a response other than heterosexual were collapsed as other for analysis purposes. See Appendix B for the full range of responses.

b. Score Distribution

After the Priority Tool Total Score is calculated, the total score can range from a low of 0 to a high of 144. A high score on the tool is indicative of a high number of barriers to housing and higher vulnerability. Low scores on the tool primarily indicate a lower vulnerability and barriers. In the current sample, the total score ranged from 9 to 126, indicating that no adults scored in the highest end of the possible range. The basic statistics associated with the Total Priority Score indicate that the distribution of scores includes more individuals in the upper range than would be expected in a normal distribution. The mode (72) is higher than the mean (64.2) and median (64.5), indicating that distribution is somewhat negatively skewed. In this particular sample, that is likely due to the oversampling of chronically homeless adults, who are expected to receive higher scores than non-chronically homeless individuals. Distribution of scores amongst the chronically homeless population will be discussed in Section E. The graph below illustrates the distribution of the full set of scores.

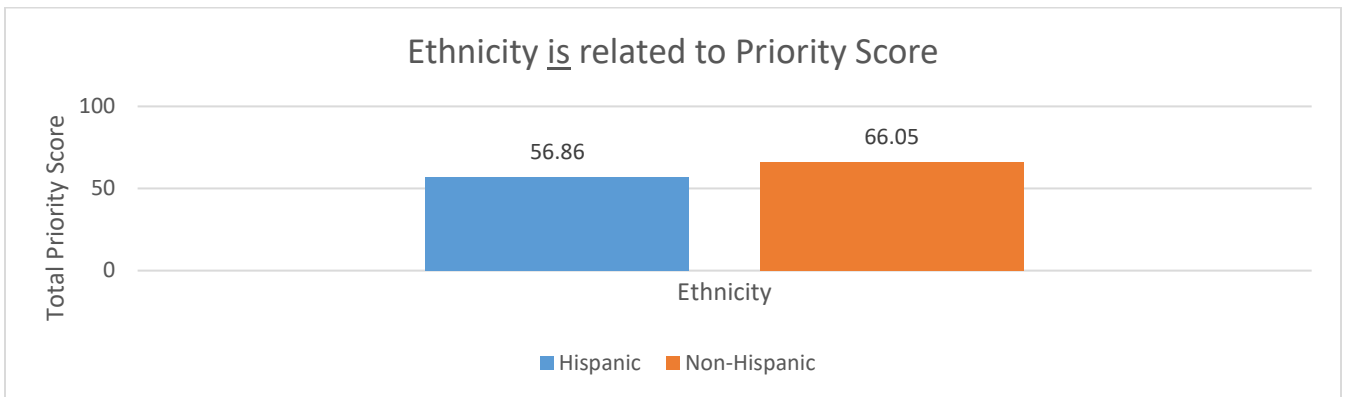
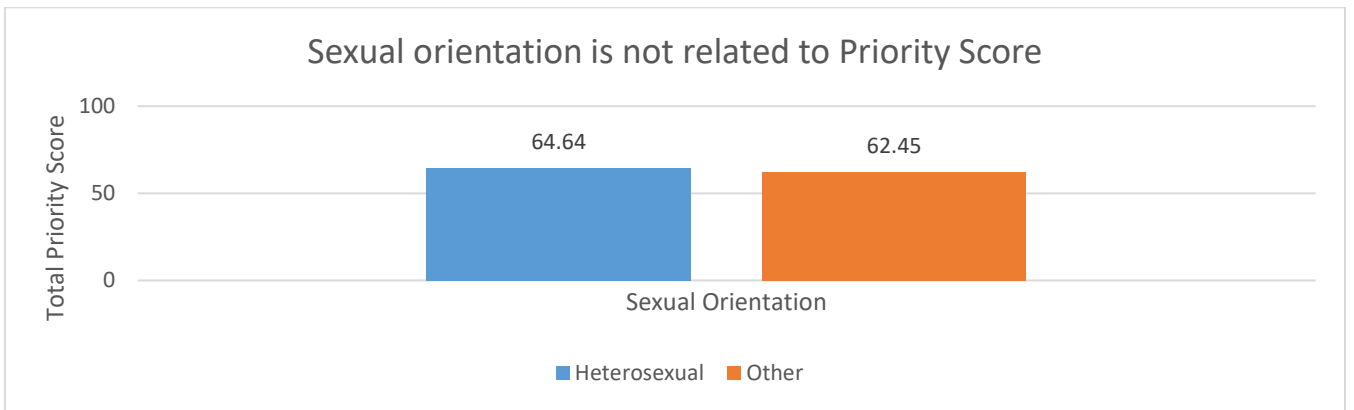
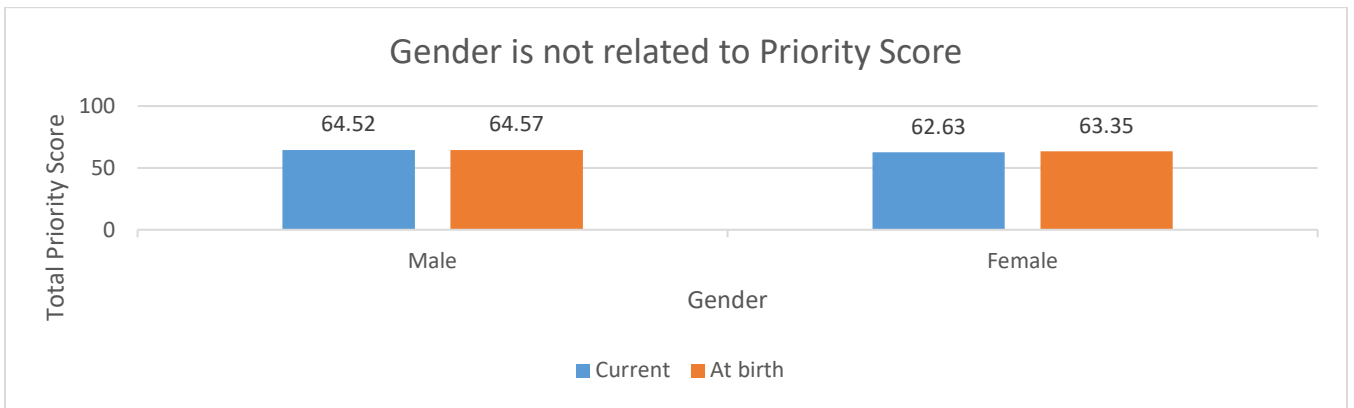
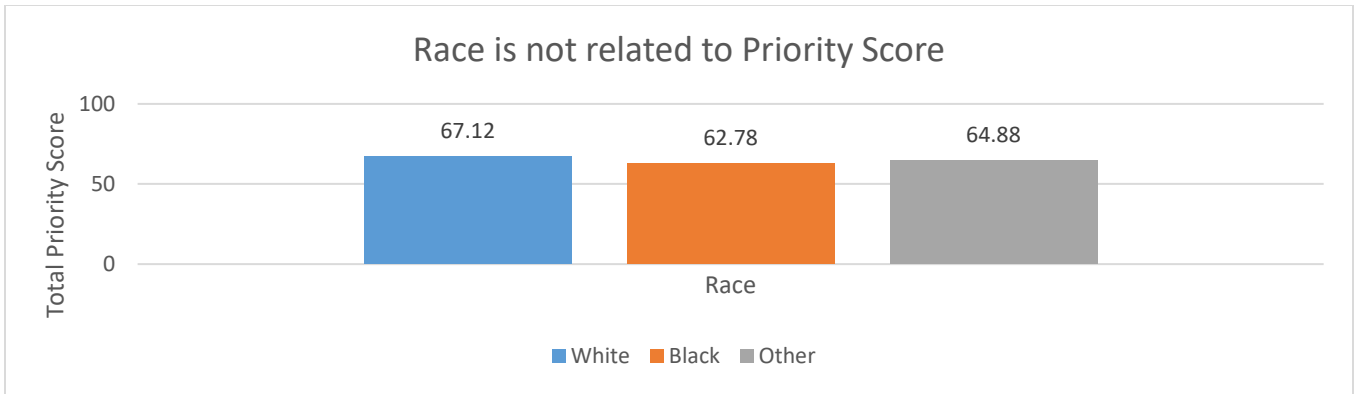


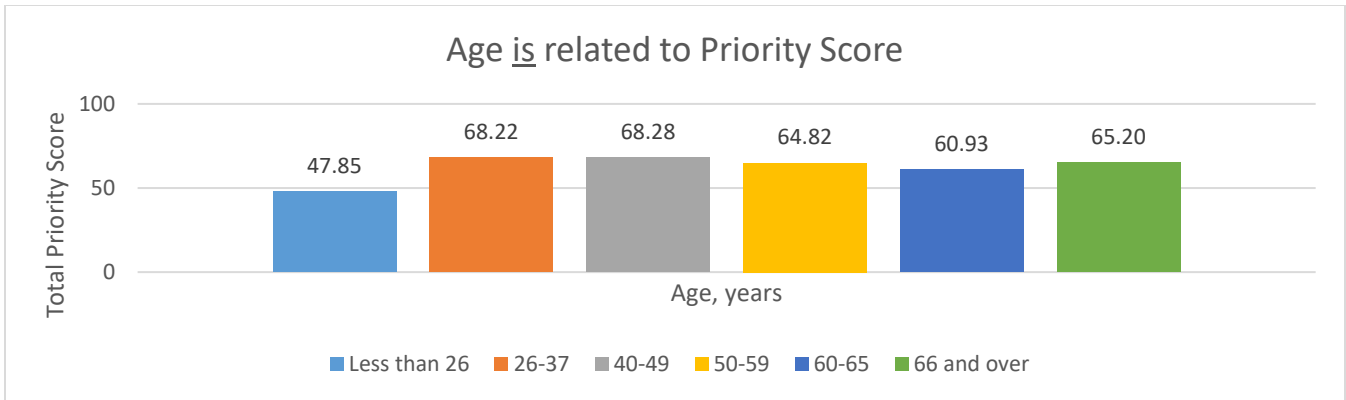
c. The Relationship of Descriptor and Demographic Variables to Priority Score

The next set of analyses investigated whether any demographic characteristics (including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age) were related to priority scores. There is no reason to suspect that any of these variables would have an association with the score.⁴ Of these demographic variables, only ethnicity and age are related to priority score. Specifically, those who report being Hispanic have significantly lower scores than those who report being non-Hispanic, and young adults 18-25 years old have statistically significantly lower scores than those aged 26-39 and 40-49 years old.⁵ The graphs below illustrate the findings. We explore possible factors related to these associations below.

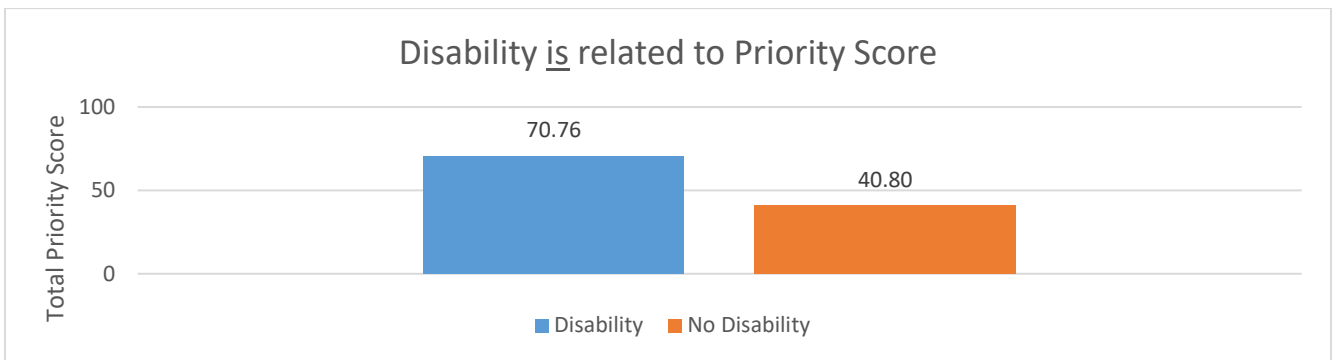
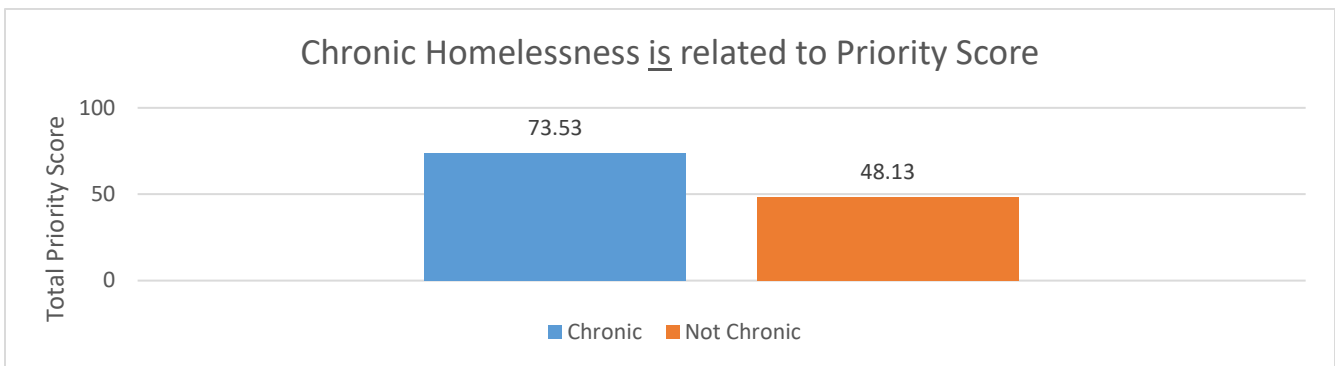
⁴ See Appendix C for data tables and results of all statistical analyses.

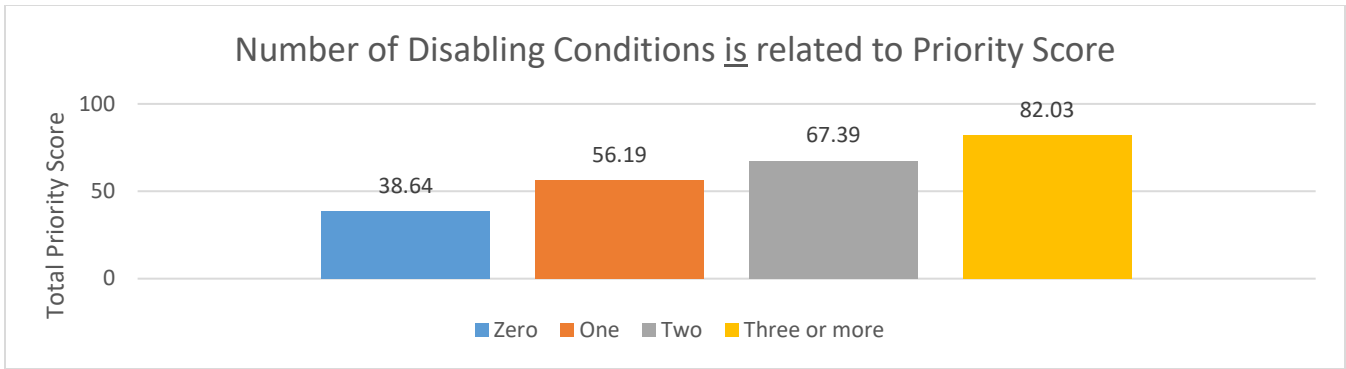
⁵ $F(5,245) = 2.72, p < .05$ (one-way ANOVA) for all groups. $p < .05$ for both 18-25 v 26-39 and 18-25 v 40-49 (post hoc Tukey HSD).



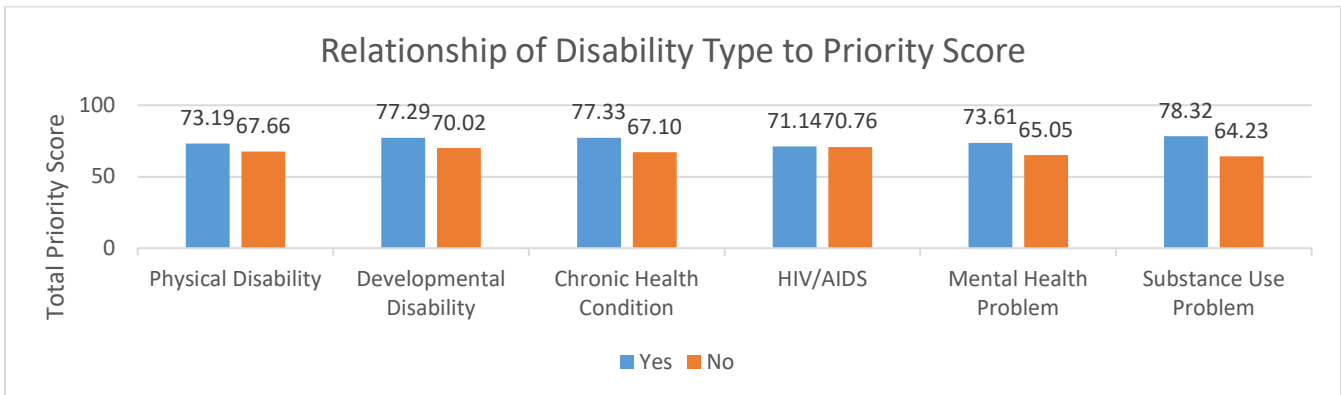


In contrast to the expectation that demographic characteristics are not related to priority scores, we did expect to find an association between chronic homelessness and disabling conditions and higher priority scores. The next graph illustrates the strong relationships found for chronicity and disabilities in the surveyed group, with those characterized as chronically homeless, those with a disabling condition, and those with more than one disabling condition showing significantly higher scores. Note that while prioritization points are given based on the number of disabling conditions, the difference in total prioritization scores between groups is larger than the number of points given specifically due to disabling conditions.





Clients who indicated that they had one or more disabling conditions were asked to identify which type of disabling condition(s) those were; clients were allowed to select as many as applied to them. Clients who had a chronic health condition, mental health problem, or substance abuse problem had higher average priority scores than those who did not. There were similar trends for physical disability and developmental disability, but those trends were not statistically significant. There was no association between HIV/AIDS and priority score. Average scores for each type of disabling condition are displayed in the figure below.



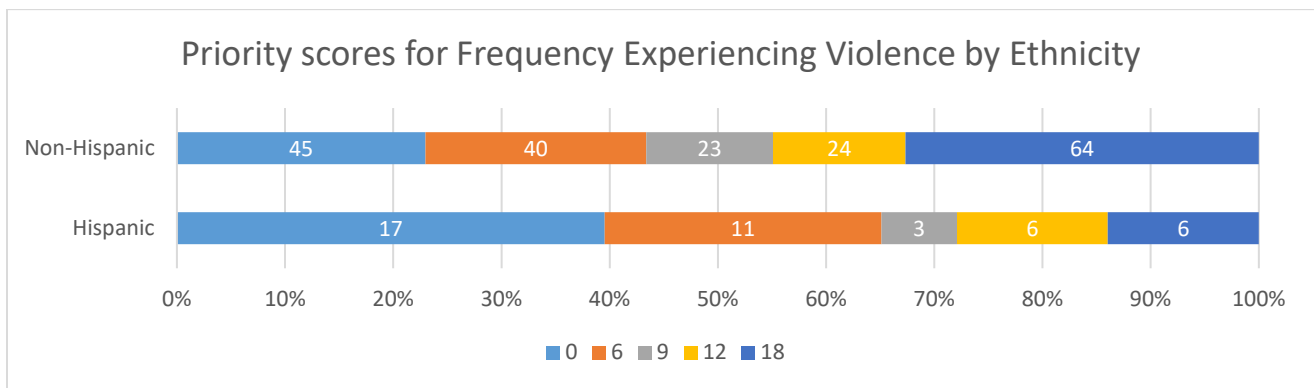
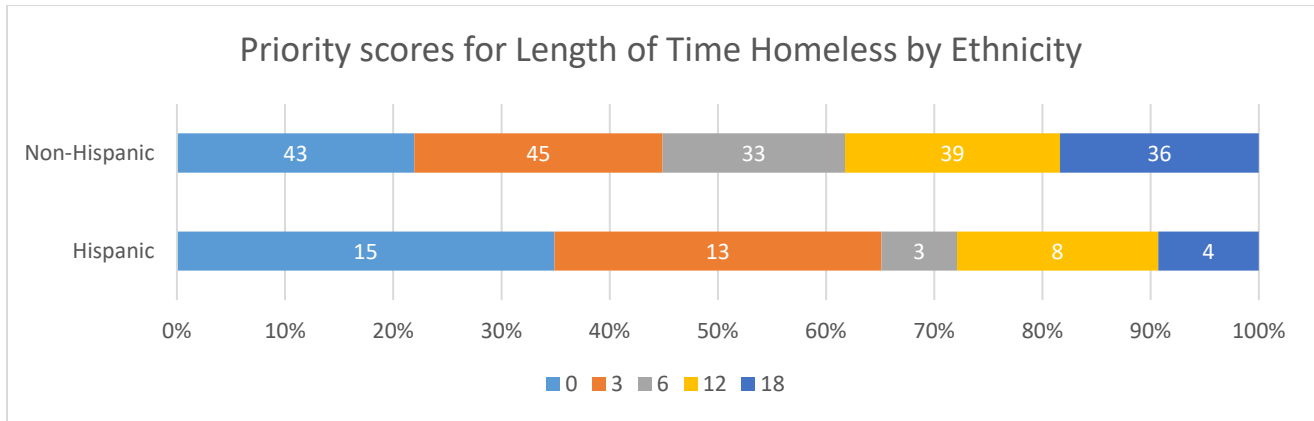
d. Are Age and Ethnicity Related to Specific Items Comprising the Priority Score?

To investigate possible causes for the unexpected relationships between both age and ethnicity and priority score, we next looked closely at each item in the assessment to determine which, if any, of them had an association with age or ethnicity.

Of the 11 items that sum to the priority score, none showed significant differences in the score distribution for Hispanic adults compared to non-Hispanic adults. Two items, while not significantly different between the groups, may warrant future attention and exploration in a larger sample size: the total length of time a person has been homeless, related to their age, and the frequency with which they experience violence while literally homeless. These two relationships are illustrated below.

Emphasizing that neither of these associations is significant, it appears that there are trends toward Hispanic adults being less likely to:

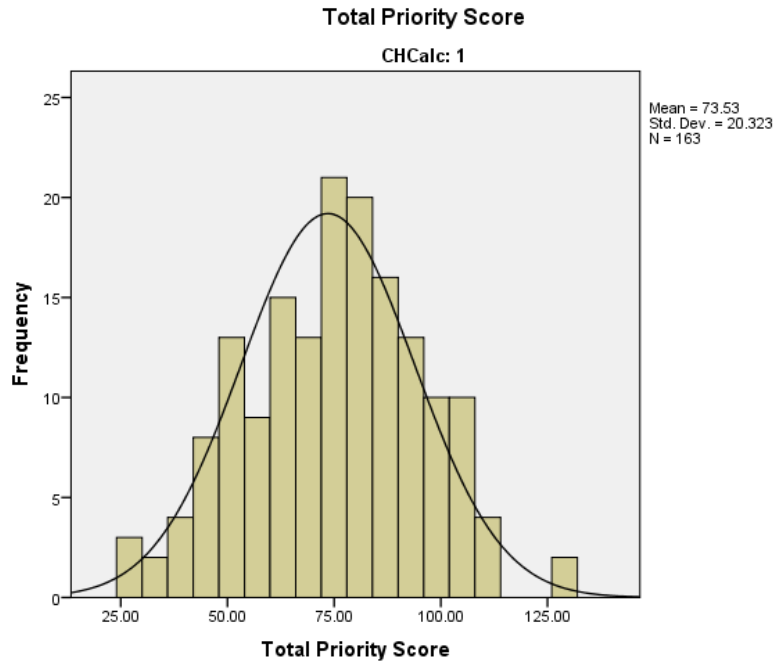
- have longer lengths of time homeless relative to their age; and
- report experiencing frequent violence while homeless.



We next investigated whether those aged less than 26 years differed on these same 11 items and found that they scored distinctly on four items: young adults have been homeless for less time “this time”; they are less likely to report disabling conditions; they are more likely to have first experienced homelessness during their teenage years; and they are less likely to have income of any kind.

e. Score Distribution amongst Chronically Homeless Adults

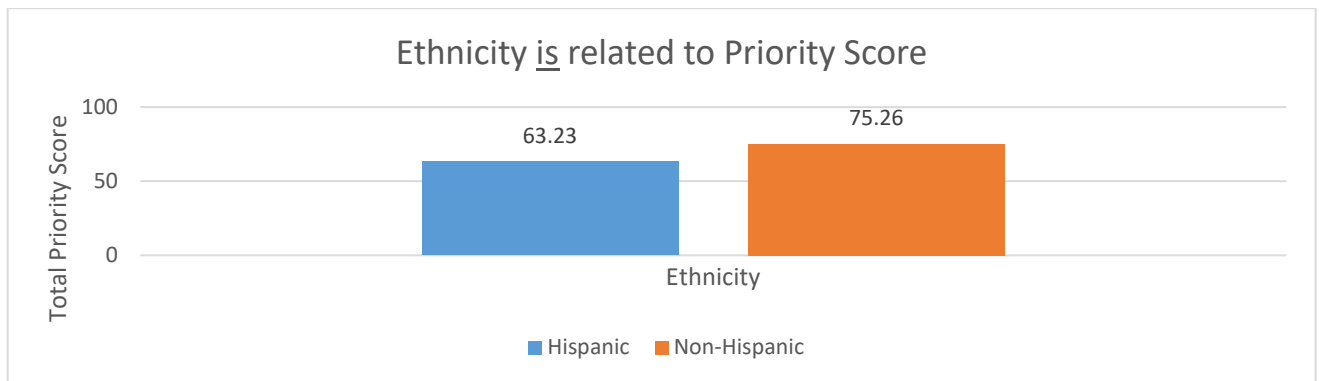
San Francisco’s adult prioritization tool is intended to prioritize chronically homeless adults for placement in permanent supportive housing. It is therefore critical that the tool yields a sufficient score distribution amongst the chronically homeless population to allow reliable prioritization. As mentioned above, we oversampled chronically homeless adults to gather as much data as possible to evaluate this distribution and the factors that may affect it. Chronically homeless adults in the current sample had total scores that ranged from 27 to 126, indicating that while the highest scores seen in the total population were also seen in the chronic population, the lowest scores were not found for chronically homeless adults. The basic statistics associated with the Total Priority Score for chronically homeless adults indicate that the distribution of scores is fairly normal. The mean (73.5), median (75), and mode (72) are all similar, suggesting that outliers are not having a significant effect on the score distribution. The graph below illustrates the distribution of scores for chronically homeless adults.



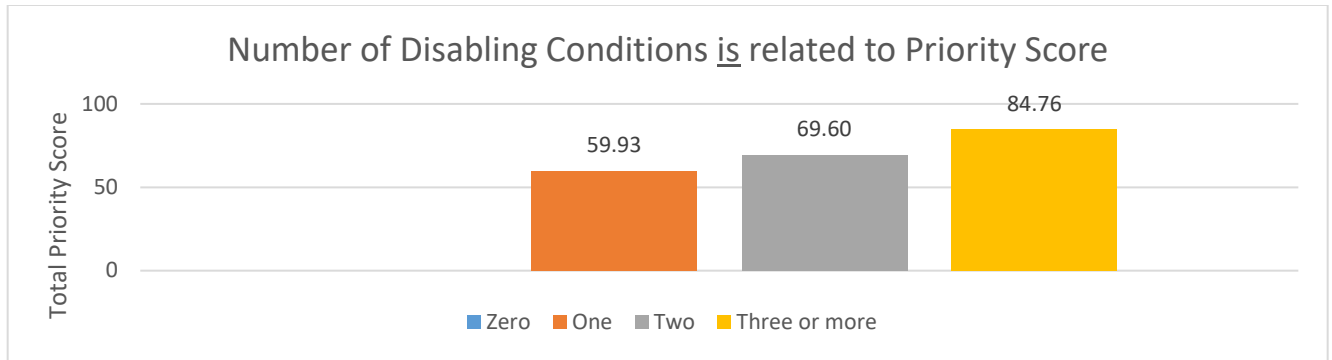
f. Relationship of Descriptor & Demographic Variables to Priority Score for Chronically Homeless Adults

Demographically, the chronically homeless adults surveyed were not significantly different from the non-chronically homeless adults, with the exception of age; chronically homeless adults ranged from 23 to 80 years old, with an average age of 49, compared to an average age of 44.5 for non-chronically homeless adults. Chronically homeless adults were also more likely to have disabling conditions, which is expected since the HUD definition of chronic homelessness requires that the individual have at least one disabling condition.

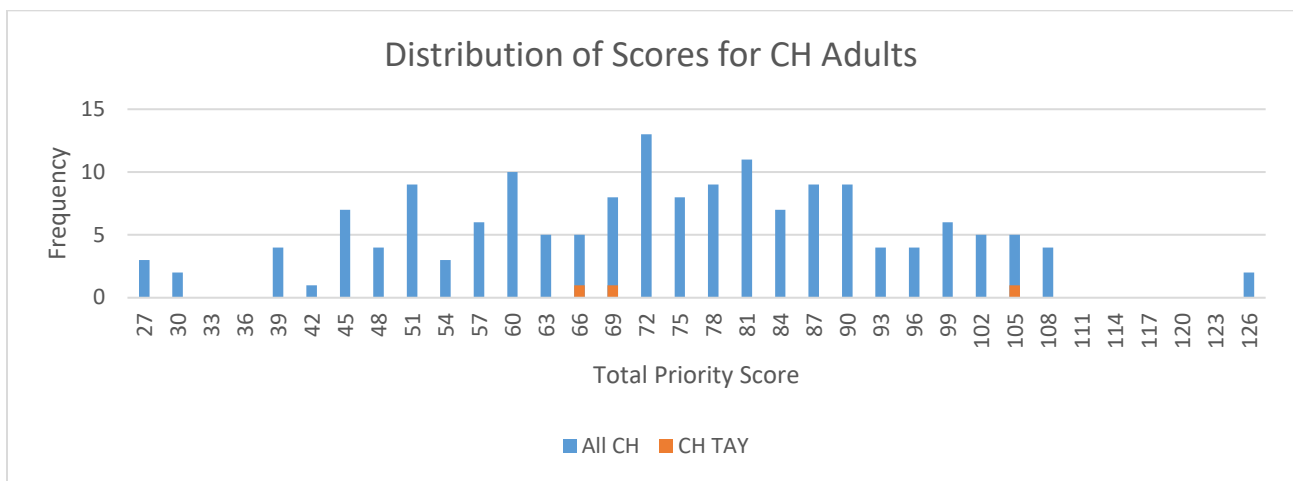
Only ethnicity and number of disabling conditions were associated with priority score amongst chronically homeless adults.⁶ Similar to the associations seen in the full population, Hispanics had lower average priority scores than non-Hispanics, while adults with more disabling conditions had higher priority scores. The graphs below illustrate the relationship between priority score and ethnicity and number of disabling conditions.



⁶ See Appendix D for data tables and results of all statistical analyses.



Recall that in the full population, there was an association between age and priority score; it is noteworthy that the same association does not exist for chronically homeless adults. Because there were only three individuals less than 26, we also determined where they fell in the distribution of chronic individuals. The graph below shows that the young adults (indicated by orange) fall in the mid- to upper-mid range of the distribution. These data suggest that there is not a bias against younger chronically homeless individuals in these data. This finding should be followed up with a larger set of data.



g. Which Factors Influence High Priority Scores for Chronically Homeless Adults?

To determine which items do relate to score distribution within the chronically homeless population, we examined the score difference for each of the 11 scoring items between the top quartile of chronically homeless priority scores and those for the remaining chronically homeless individuals. With the exception of age and income, all items statistically differentiated those in the top quartile from the rest of the chronically homeless individuals, suggesting that the items all contribute to differentiating the highest scoring chronically homeless adults.

h. Analysis of Feedback on Question Wording

In addition to analyzing the priority score results, Focus Strategies also reviewed the qualitative feedback we received from interviewers about question wording. Below we summarize questions where we concluded that revisions are needed to elicit more consistent and accurate responses.

Question	Issue Identified
How frequently have you experienced violence or felt you were in danger from other people since you have been living outside or in shelter?	Respondents had difficulty defining a frequency with which they experienced violence. Many described specific incidents they'd experienced rather than selecting one of the answer choices.
If you are exiting an institution, where did you stay before entering the institution? How long were you in the institution you are exiting?	Interviewers thought we should clarify that these questions could be skipped unless respondents selected "institution" as where they stayed last night. Many respondents answered these questions unnecessarily.

Other feedback we received related to the wording of questions that are HUD HMIS Universal Data elements (such as race, ethnicity, length of time homeless and episodes of homelessness). These should be addressed as part of the broader ONE System implementation rather than in relation to the prioritization tool. We also received a range of feedback about additional questions that respondents thought would be relevant to ask as part of the assessment process. Appendix E provides a summary of all the feedback received.

4. Recommendations

Based on our analysis, Focus Strategies makes the following recommendations for adjustments to the tool.

a. Question Weighting

Our analysis revealed the tool is functioning as intended and generating an appropriate score distribution with no evidence of disparate results based on race, age or gender. We did find that Hispanic respondents had lower scores than non-Hispanic ones but we do not recommend any changes at this time to address this finding. We recommend conducting a follow-up analysis once the CES is fully implemented to confirm that there are no indications of disparate results that are not explained by actual differences in the population.

b. Question Wording

To address the issues relating to question wording, we make the following recommendation:

Original Question	New Proposed Wording	Explanation
How frequently have you experienced violence or felt you were in danger from other people since you have been living outside or in shelter?	How many times have you experienced violence or felt you were in danger from other people since you have been living outside or in a shelter?	Answer choices with suggested weighting might be: five or more times (12), two to three times (9), once (6), never (0), and don't know/refused to answer.
If you are exiting an institution, where did you stay before entering the institution? How long were you in the institution you are exiting?	(Skip to Q2 unless the client stayed in an institution the previous night.) If you are exiting an institution, where did you stay before entering the institution? How long were you in the institution you are exiting?	Added instruction on the flow of questions.

Appendix A: SF DSH Adult Prioritization Questionnaire

Instructions to Interviewer:

- Please ask each question exactly as phrased.
- If the person you are interviewing does not understand a question, you may provide clarification or re-word the question. If you had to re-phrase or clarify any questions, please make a note at the end of the survey in the area provided.
- Don't know/refused to answer is an acceptable response to any question.
- Most questions are designed to have a single answer; please do not mark more than one box per question unless so instructed.

Instructions to Analyst:

- Please add a Survey ID Number to the bottom of this page and the top of the next page.
- Please complete the items on the last page of this survey using information found in CCMS for the client name and social security number (SSN) listed below.
- Remove the portion of this page below the dashed line prior to submitting data to Focus Strategies.

Interviewer Introduction: *Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. We have a set of questions for you about yourself and your recent experiences. We are using this information to help improve services and housing for adults experiencing homelessness. All the information you provide will be used solely for improving services and will not be entered into the Online Navigation and Entry (ONE) System; it will not affect your eligibility to receive services in any way.*

Are you willing to provide your name and social security number? If no, please complete the information on where the client was interviewed and proceed to the next page.

(Please detach and remove everything below this line)

Survey ID Number: (to be completed by analyst) _____

Client Name (First and Last): _____

Client Social Security Number (SSN): _____

Where was this client interviewed?

Location Type (e.g. shelter, streets, etc.): _____

Area of the City: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Interviewer Organization: _____

This page is intentionally left blank.

Survey ID Number: (to be completed by analyst) _____

INTERVIEWER: *Next, we will move into some questions about where you are staying and what your living situation has been over the last few years.*

1. Where did you stay last night?

- A place not meant for people to live (e.g. outdoors, in a tent or camp, in a car or other vehicle, on a train or bus, in a bus station or airport, storage unit, abandoned building)
- Emergency shelter (including motel paid with a voucher)
- Institution (e.g. jail, hospital, substance abuse treatment program)
- Transitional housing
- Staying with a friend or family member
- My own apartment
- Other location, specify: _____
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

1a. If you are exiting an institution, where did you stay before entering the institution?

- A place not meant for people to live (e.g. outdoors, in a tent or camp, in a car or other vehicle, on a train or bus, in a bus station or airport, storage unit, abandoned building)
- Emergency shelter (including motel paid with a voucher)
- Institution (e.g. jail, hospital, substance abuse treatment program)
- Transitional housing
- Staying with a friend or family member
- My own apartment
- Other location, specify: _____
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

1b. How long were you in the institution you are exiting?

_____ days/months/years (circle one)

2. How long have you been homeless this time?

- Less than one year
- One year or longer, but less than two years
- Two years or longer, but less than five years
- Five years or longer, but less than ten years
- Ten years or longer, but less than 15 years
- 15 years or more
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

3. How long in total have you lived in an emergency shelter or place not meant for people to sleep, including today?

- Less than one year
- One year or longer, but less than two years
- Two years or longer, but less than five years
- Five years or longer, but less than ten years
- Ten years or longer, but less than 15 years
- 15 years or more
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

4. How many times in the past three years have you lived in a shelter, outdoors, in a vehicle, or other place not meant for people to live?

- Zero times
- One time
- Two times
- Three times
- Four or more times
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

5. How old were you when you first experienced homelessness (living in shelter, outdoors, in a vehicle or other place not meant for people to live)?
_____ years old

INTERVIEWER: *Now we will move into some questions about your health.*

6. Do you have one of the following disabling conditions, or been told you have one of the following by a healthcare provider: Physical disability, developmental disability, chronic health condition, HIV/AIDS, mental health problem, substance use problem?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

6a. If the answer to question 6 was "yes"— What disabling condition(s) do you have? You may list more than one.

- Physical disability
- Developmental disability
- Chronic health condition
- HIV/AIDS
- Mental health problem
- Substance use problem
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

7. How many disabling conditions do you have?
_____ conditions

8. Do you have any challenges that cause you to need help with daily activities or help with maintaining housing (e.g. a serious medical condition, mental health problem, substance problem, other issue)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

9. How many times have you used crisis services in the past year (for example, mental health crisis services, hospital, emergency room, detox, suicide prevention hotline)?

_____ times

10. In the past five years, how many times have you been arrested by a police officer? This can include being arrested and going to jail/prison, or just being arrested then released.

_____ times

11. How frequently have you experienced violence or felt you were in danger from other people since you have been living outside or in shelter?

- Never
- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- A few times a year
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

INTERVIEWER: *Now I will ask you a few questions about how you would describe yourself.*

12. How old are you? ____ years old

13. What race do you identify with? You may select more than one.

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Other, please specify: _____
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

14. What is your ethnicity? Do you identify as Hispanic or Latino?

- Hispanic
- Non-Hispanic
- Don't know
- Refused to answer

15. What is your self-described, current sexual orientation? You may select more than one.

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Heterosexual / Straight
- Lesbian
- Queer
- Questioning
- Don't know
- Refused to Answer
- Not Listed, please specify: _____

16. What is your current gender identity? You may select more than one.

- Boy/Man
- Genderqueer / gender non-binary
- Girl/Woman
- Intersex
- Questioning
- Transgender Boy/Man
- Transgender Girl/Woman
- Don't know
- Refused to answer
- Not listed, please specify: _____

17. What sex were you assigned on your birth certificate at birth?

- Male
- Female
- Don't know
- Refused to answer
- Not listed, please specify: _____

18. Considering all sources of income, what is your total monthly Income?

Enter dollar amount: _____

19. Based on interviewer's observation – Does the client demonstrate significant functional impairment (e.g. due to active substance use, mental health or health condition)?

- Yes
- No

INTERVIEWER: THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER MY QUESTIONS. *Again, please remember that all the information you provide will be used solely for improving services and will not be entered into the Online Navigation and Entry (ONE) System and it will not affect your eligibility to receive services in any way.*

Interviewer Notes: In the space below, please record any observations you feel are important to share with Focus Strategies about this interview, such as any questions that the person you interviewed seemed to think were unclear or confusing, or any instances where the person did not appear to be comfortable providing the requested information.

For Focus Strategies to complete

Is the individual chronically homeless? (This answer is based on answers to Questions 5, 6, 8 and 10.)

Yes

No

Monthly income as percentage of AMI

10% AMI or less

10% to 30% AMI

30% AMI or above

Don't know/refuse to answer

For Analyst to complete

Did the client provide identification data? Yes/No (Circle one)

Did the client have a record in CCMS? Yes/No (Circle one)

If Yes, complete the information below using data from the client's CCMS record.

Client Age:

_____ years

Number of times client has used an adult shelter:

_____ times in the last year

_____ times in the last three years

_____ times in the last five years

Number of times client has used crisis services in the past year:

_____ times

How long has the client been homeless?

_____ months

Number of disabilities (Elixhauser conditions) the client has:

_____ disabilities

Appendix B: List of Responses for Demographic Questions that Allow Multiple Choices

Race

	N	Group 1	Group 2
White Only	78	White (1)	White (1)
White + Black Only	1	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
White + Black + Pacific Islander	2	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
White + Asian + Pacific Islander	1	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
White + Pacific Islander Only	3	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
White + American Indian Only	2	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
White + American Indian + Other	2	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
White + Other	2	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Black Only	97	Black (2)	Black (2)
Black + Pacific Islander Only	4	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Black + Pacific Islander + Other	2	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Black + American Indian Only	4	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Black + Other	1	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Asian Only	2	Asian (3)	Other (3)
Asian + Other	1	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Pacific Islander Only	3	Pacific Islander (4)	Other (3)
American Indian Only	12	American Indian (5)	Other (3)
American Indian + Other	1	Multi-racial (6)	Other (3)
Refused to Answer	5	Refused (7)	-
Other	29	Other (8)	Other (3)

Sexual Orientation

	N	Group 1	Group 2
Asexual Only	5	Asexual (4)	Other (2)
Asexual + Heterosexual Only	1	Multiple (7)	Other (2)
Bisexual Only	16	Bisexual (5)	Other (2)
Bisexual + Lesbian Only	2	Multiple (7)	Other (2)
Gay Only	15	Gay (2)	Other (2)
Heterosexual Only	200	Heterosexual (1)	Heterosexual (1)
Heterosexual + Not Listed	1	Multiple (7)	Other (2)
Lesbian Only	4	Lesbian (3)	Other (2)
Questioning Only	1	Questioning (6)	Other (2)
Don't Know	2	Don't Know (8)	Other (2)
Refused to Answer	5	Refused (9)	-
Not Listed	2	Not Listed (10)	Other (2)

Current Gender Identity

	N	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Boy/Man Only	164	Male (1)	Male (1)	Male (1)
Girl/Woman + Not Listed	1	Other (4)	Other (3)	-
Genderqueer + Girl/Woman Only	1	Other (4)	Other (3)	-
Girl/Woman Only	73	Female (2)	Female (2)	Female (2)
Girl/Woman + Transgender Girl/Woman	1	Transgender Female (3)	Other (3)	-
Intersex + Transgender Girl/Woman + Don't Know	1	Other (4)	Other (3)	-
Transgender Boy/Man Only	1	Transgender Male (6)	Other (3)	-
Transgender Girl/Woman Only	11	Transgender Female (3)	Other (3)	-
Refused to Answer	3	Refused (5)	-	-
Not Listed	1	Other (4)	Other (3)	-

Disabling Conditions

	N
Physical Disability Only	18
Physical + Developmental + Mental Only	9
Physical + Developmental + Mental + Substance Only	2
Physical + Developmental + Mental + Chronic Only	3
Physical + Developmental + Mental + Substance + Chronic	1
Physical + Chronic Only	11
Physical + Chronic + HIV + Mental	1
Physical + Chronic + HIV + Substance	1
Physical + Chronic + Mental Only	10
Physical + Chronic + Mental + Substance	17
Physical + Chronic + Substance Only	5
Physical + HIV Only	3
Physical + HIV + Mental + Substance	1
Physical + Mental Only	15
Physical + Mental + Substance Only	13
Physical + Substance Only	6
Developmental + Chronic + Mental + Substance	1
Developmental + HIV + Mental	1
Developmental + Mental Only	2
Developmental + Mental + Substance	4
Chronic Only	7
Chronic + HIV Only	1
Chronic + HIV + Mental	1
Chronic + Mental Only	3
Chronic + Mental + Substance	9
Chronic + Substance Only	3
HIV Only	2
HIV + Mental + Substance	3
HIV + Substance Only	1
Mental Only	23
Mental + Don't Know Only	1
Mental + Substance Only	18
Substance Only	11
Don't Know Only	3
Refused to Answer	5

Appendix C: Prioritization Scores by Demographic Groups

Priority Scores by Demographics

Demographic Characteristic	N	Mean	Median	Range
<i>Race</i>				
White	78	67.12	70.5	21-126
Black	97	62.78	63.0	9-126
Other	72	64.88	66.0	15-108
<i>Ethnicity⁷</i>				
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	196	66.05	67.5	9-126
Hispanic/Latino	43	56.86	63.0	15-99
<i>Current Gender Identity</i>				
Male	164	64.52	63.0	15-126
Female	73	62.63	69.0	9-108
<i>Gender Assigned at Birth</i>				
Male	174	64.57	63.0	15-126
Female	78	63.35	67.5	9-126
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>				
Heterosexual	200	64.64	66.0	9-126
Other	49	62.45	60.0	21-126
<i>Age⁸</i>				
Less than 26	20	47.85	43.5	21-105
26-39	46	68.22	69.0	9-126
40-49	67	68.28	72.0	18-126
50-59	74	64.82	67.5	21-108
60-65	29	60.93	57.0	15-102
66 and over	15	65.20	66.0	27-105
<i>Chronically Homeless⁹</i>				
Chronic	163	73.53	75.0	27-126
Not Chronic	95	48.13	45.0	9-108
Total	258	64.43	66.0	9-126

⁷ Hispanic/Latino adults had significantly lower scores than non-Hispanic/non-Latino adults. $F(1,237) = 5.5, p < .05$.

⁸ Priority score differed by age group. $F(5,245) = 2.7, p < .05$.

⁹ Chronically Homeless adults had significantly higher scores than non-Chronically Homeless adults. $F(1,256) = 92.6, p < .001$.

Priority Scores Related to Disabling Conditions

	N	Mean	Median	Range
Disabling Condition¹⁰				
Yes¹¹	201	70.76	72.0	12-126
No	50	40.80	37.5	9-99
Physical Disability				
Yes	113	73.19	75.0	24-126
No	87	67.66	69.0	12-108
Developmental Disability				
Yes	21	77.29	78.0	30-108
No	179	70.02	72.0	12-126
Chronic Health Condition¹²				
Yes	72	77.33	78.0	12-126
No	128	67.10	67.5	24-126
HIV/AIDS				
Yes	14	71.14	69.0	51-102
No	186	70.76	72.0	12-126
Mental Health Problem¹³				
Yes	134	73.61	75.0	27-126
No	66	65.05	60.0	12-105
Substance Use Problem¹⁴				
Yes	93	78.32	81.0	27-126
No	107	64.23	63.0	12-108
Number of Disabling Conditions¹⁵				
Zero	33	38.64	33.0	9-99
One	59	56.19	54.0	12-102
Two	56	67.39	69.0	30-105
Three or more	90	82.03	81.0	45-126

¹⁰ Adults with disabling conditions had significantly higher scores. $F(1,249) = 84.5, p < .001$.

¹¹ One individual said "yes" for question 6 but did not provide information on which type of disabling conditions they had, therefore $n=200$ for each type of disabling condition.

¹² Adults with chronic health conditions had significantly higher scores. $F(1,198) = 11.3, p < .01$.

¹³ Adults with mental health problems had significantly higher scores. $F(1,198) = 7.4, p < .01$.

¹⁴ Adults with substance use problems had significantly higher scores. $F(1,198) = 24.5, p < .001$.

¹⁵ Adults with a greater number of disabling conditions had significantly higher scores. $F(3,234) = 54.3, p < .001$.

Appendix D: Prioritization Scores within the Chronically Homeless Population

Priority Scores by Demographics for CH Adults

Demographic Characteristic	N	Mean	Median	Range
<i>Race</i>				
White	55	74.45	75.0	30-126
Black	55	74.13	78.0	27-126
Other	48	73.06	73.5	27-108
<i>Ethnicity¹⁶</i>				
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	128	75.26	78.0	27-126
Hispanic/Latino	26	63.23	64.5	27-99
<i>Current Gender Identity</i>				
Male	105	72.89	72.0	27-126
Female	43	75.70	78.0	27-108
<i>Gender Assigned at Birth</i>				
Male	114	71.95	72.0	27-126
Female	46	76.70	78.0	27-126
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>				
Heterosexual	129	73.65	75.0	27-126
Other	29	72.31	69.0	39-126
<i>Age</i>				
Less than 26	3	80.00	69.0	66-105
26-39	31	78.29	78.0	39-126
40-49	46	73.57	75.0	27-126
50-59	51	72.76	75.0	30-108
60-65	20	71.25	72.0	39-102
66 and over	10	72.60	76.5	27-105
<i>Number of Disabling Conditions¹⁷</i>				
0				
1	46	59.93	60.0	27-102
2	40	69.60	70.5	30-105
3 or more	75	84.76	87.0	45-126
Total	163	73.53	75.0	27-126

¹⁶ Hispanic/Latino adults had significantly lower scores than non-Hispanic/non-Latino adults. $F(1,152) = 8.6, p < .01$.

¹⁷ Adults with more disabling conditions had higher scores. $F(2,158) = 31.8, p < .001$.

Breakdown of Priority Scores for CH Adults

Subscore	CH Top Quartile		Remaining CH	
	N (48)	%	N (115)	%
2-2 (Length of Time Homeless, this time)¹⁸				
0	3	6.2	3	2.6
3	4	8.3	18	15.7
6	8	16.7	40	34.8
9	10	20.8	21	18.3
12	4	8.3	18	15.7
15	19	39.6	15	13.0
3 (Length of Time Homeless by age, total)¹⁹				
0	1	2.1	24	20.9
3	2	4.2	37	32.2
6	8	16.7	18	15.7
12	17	35.4	21	18.3
18	20	41.7	15	13.0
4 (Number of Times Homeless)²⁰				
0	18	37.5	59	51.3
3	4	8.3	18	15.7
6	0	0.0	7	6.1
9	26	54.2	31	27.0
5 (Age at First Homelessness)²¹				
0	17	35.4	76	66.1
12	31	64.6	39	33.9
7 (Number Disabling Conditions)²²				
0	0	0.0	2	1.7
6	5	10.4	41	35.7
12	5	10.4	35	30.4
18	38	79.2	37	32.2
8 (Challenges with Daily Activities)²³				
0	8	16.7	49	42.6
9	40	83.3	66	57.4
9 (Crisis Service Use)²⁴				
0	3	6.2	39	33.9
9	26	54.2	59	51.3
12	10	20.8	8	7.0
18	9	18.8	9	7.8
10 (Arrests)²⁵				

¹⁸ Score for length of time homeless this time differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (5) = 19.2, p < .01$.

¹⁹ Score for length of time homeless by age differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (4) = 36.1, p < .001$.

²⁰ Score for number of times homeless differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (3) = 12.8, p < .01$.

²¹ Score for age at first homelessness differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (1) = 13.0, p < .001$.

²² Score for number of disabling conditions differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (3) = 30.3, p < .001$.

²³ Score for challenges with daily activities differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (1) = 10.0, p < .01$.

²⁴ Score for crisis service use differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (3) = 19.7, p < .001$.

²⁵ Score for arrests differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2 (2) = 8.5, p < .05$.

0	24	50.0	73	63.5
3	13	27.1	34	29.6
9	11	22.9	8	7.0
11 (Frequency Experienced Violence)²⁶				
0	1	2.1	32	27.8
6	7	14.6	34	29.6
9	1	2.1	17	14.8
12	8	16.7	10	8.7
18	31	64.6	22	19.1
12 (Age)				
0	26	54.2	56	48.7
3	19	39.6	52	45.2
6	3	6.2	6	5.2
9	0	0.0	1	0.9
18 (Income)				
6	19	39.6	61	53.0
9	29	60.4	54	47.0

²⁶ Score for frequency experiencing violence differed for the top quartile of chronically homeless adults. $\chi^2(4) = 42.5, p < .001$.

Appendix E: Prioritization Interviewer Feedback and Comments

Interviewer Feedback and Data Observations – Transcribed from Surveys

Question 1: Where did you stay last night?

- 2 participants left this question blank
- Some confusion about whether she was living on her own or with someone.
- Place not meant for human habitation was confusing to clients

Question 1a/1b: If you are exiting an institution, where did you stay before entering the institution? How long were you in the institution you are exiting?

- Should say go to next set of questions
- 41 participants answered question 1a and 35 participants answered question 1b unnecessarily

Question 2: How long have you been homeless this time?

- Participant was confused about whether or not he has an SRO, but is staying at the shelter
- Did not identify with “homeless” but liked the word “houseless” instead
- The numbers didn’t add up always between this and Q3

Question 3: How long in total have you lived in an emergency shelter or place not meant for people to sleep, including today?

- 40 participants answered they had been homeless for a shorter period of time in total (Q3) than they had been homeless this time (Q2)
- Participant did not understand, had to repeat
- Rephrased to “How long in total have you been homeless?”
- Need to make the difference between Q2 and Q3 more clear
- Was difficult for participant to answer and add up all instances of homeless, was several times
- Interviewer had to repeat the question, explain the difference between Q2 and Q3
- Client was confused by this question
- Interviewer had to specify “throughout your life”

Question 4: How many times in the past three years have you lived in a shelter, outdoors, in a vehicle, or other place not meant for people to live?

- Had to follow up, clarify, and ask directly whether she has been homeless continuously for the last three years
- Participant could not answer – was difficult since he has been in and out of shelters, streets, and housing for the past few years
- Wrote “continuous”
- Was difficult for participant to answer, had to repeat and rephrase
- Q4 needs more clarification, the client didn’t always understand what it means when there is a break in homelessness
- Clients have questions about this one if they have been continually homeless
- This question confused a client who had been living continuously in the same location

- Question was confusing to interviewer
- Client was confused by this question
- Too many
- Had to do some back and forth with the participant through each instance of homelessness to figure out how many occasions of homelessness he has experienced in the past three years

Question 5: How old were you when you first experienced homelessness (living in shelter, outdoors, in a vehicle or other place not meant for people to live)?

- 3 participants left this question blank
- Client began to get anxious around Q5. Client began to remember the incidents related to his 1st homeless encounter. I had a hard time moving him past this question

Question 6: Do you have one of the following disabling conditions, or been told you have one of the following by a healthcare provider: Physical disability, developmental disability, chronic health condition, HIV/AIDS, mental health problem, substance use problem?

- Interviewer observed some injuries the participant had, which looked like she had been beaten up. She was partnered. It may be useful to ask whether people are partnered and/or experiencing violence.
- Didn't let me finish reading #6 - said "military, I am really healthy"
- People would often understate this and Q7. If someone said "0," the interviewer would ask if they had disability income and then they could come to an answer.
- Seemed resistant to talking about substance abuse, and seemed to be under the influence
- Client needed clarification, as she used to have more conditions
- Client suggested adding a question for what substance is being abused, because as an alcoholic he has different needs than someone using other substances
- Client answered no until interviewer asked about chronic pain specifically
- Answered no until interviewer asked about limp

Question 6a: If the answer to question 6 was "yes" – What disabling condition(s) do you have? You may list more than one.

- 1 participant answered "yes" to Q6 but did not answer Q6a; 7 participants did not answer "yes" to Q6 but provided answers for Q6a
- Client did not identify substance use. He has been under influence of substance(s) often during his time at navigation center
- Client did not know how to answer – had substance use issues and has been homeless for 20 years
- Client was unsure
- Interviewer noticed client exhibited signs of mental health/substance abuse. Suggests that an option be added for "interviewer observed health issues"
- Client has been diagnosed with a condition, but claims the diagnosis is wrong
- Did not identify as having a mental health disorder, but the interviewer believed that he has one. Interviewer was uncertain what to do in these circumstances.

Question 7: How many disabling conditions do you have?

- 20 participants left this question blank, 2 of those said "yes" to Q6

- 5 participants said “no” to Q6 but listed one or more disabling conditions here

Question 8: Do you have any challenges that cause you to need help with daily activities or help with maintaining housing (e.g. a serious medical condition, mental health problem, substance problem, other issue)?

- Client needed an explanation of what “daily activities” meant
- Large amounts of medication
- Client was confused, had to have examples listed
- Client stated that his substance abuse caused him to quit jobs, but that it did not impact his ability to maintain housing
- Initially answered no because issues are not physical

Question 9: How many times have you used crisis services in the past year (for example, mental health crisis services, hospital, emergency room, detox, suicide prevention hotline)?

- He goes whenever he hurts too bad, further discussion sounded like “because of rain”
- Owned house, but did not have a lease.
- Client did not know how to answer, interviewer had to prompt him

Question 10: In the past five years, how many times have you been arrested by a police officer? This can include being arrested and going to jail/prison, or just being arrested then released.

- 4 participants left this question blank
- Don’t know/can’t remember
- Homeless charges – public intox sleeping on
- Pulled over many times for driving erratically, speeding and assault and battery on police officers
- Jail time weren’t too guarded about, but some people would share about stays that were short and then one guy stayed a long period of time and there was no way to track that in the tool; need to break out into more questions to clarify

Question 11: How frequently have you experienced violence or felt you were in danger from other people since you have been living outside or in shelter?

- Answered with number of instances, had to be prompted with the choices
- Wrote “once” and did not check any boxes
- Difficult to answer because he experienced violence only at his job a few times per week
- Some back and forth about frequency of violence – answer was 2-3 times
- Participant could not answer – could only describe specific instances of violence
- Clients/staff arguing, fighting
- No physical altercation – many arguments
- Between young M/F couple
- Made box and checked for “witnessed client attempt to stab another client with scissor at Msc. South”
- Answered both “Daily” and “Weekly”
- Difficult to answer when violence was random/sporadic
- 1-2x/year
- Interviewer had to reword question several times

Question 12: How old are you?

- 6 participants left this question blank; one answered “6”

Question 13: What race do you identify with? You may select more than one.

- 6 participants left this question blank
- Did not check any boxes, wrote “human being” on side
- 18 participants described their race as Hispanic or Latino
- Client felt this question was silly
- Interviewer felt this was too invasive, suggests a handout that can be answered privately

Question 14: What is your ethnicity? Do you identify as Hispanic or Latino?

- 1 participant left this question blank
- Participants still have trouble with ethnicity vs race. Suggested to roll race and ethnicity into one question.
- Client felt this question was silly
- Interviewer felt this was too invasive, suggests a handout that can be answered privately

Question 15: What is your self-described, current sexual orientation? You may select more than one

- 3 participants left this question blank
- Client felt this question was silly
- Interviewer felt this was too invasive, suggests a handout that can be answered privately
- 1 or 2 people said they were hetero but intoxication could change behavior
- Described himself as “asexual” because he doesn’t have time for romantic relationships

Question 16: What is your current gender identity? You may select more than one.

- Client felt this question was silly
- Interviewer felt this was too invasive, suggests a handout that can be answered privately
- Initially answered “don’t know” until she was told she could select more than one

Question 17: What sex were you assigned on your birth certificate at birth?

- 2 participants left this question blank
- Participants sometimes provided information on where they were born
- Client felt this question was silly
- Interviewer felt this was too invasive, suggests a handout that can be answered privately
- Client asked for question to be repeated

Question 18: Considering all sources of income, what is your total monthly income?

- 10 participants left this question blank
- Total source of income was extremely guarded; no way to capture funds made off of illegal sources or to make a distinction between them
- Seemed not to want to talk about off the books income
- Response sheet should allow input of range

- If the client received housing, income would go down by \$90

Question 19: Based on interviewer's observation – Does the client demonstrate significant functional impairment (e.g. due to active substance use, mental health or health condition)?

- Seemed drunk but ok to answer questions
- Circled mental health
- Client did not have any problems with answering question, but was heavily medicated