Katrina Aid Today
A National Case Management Consortium

Preparing for Program Closures:

Client Service Preparations

Purpose: As Tier III affiliates look ahead to their date of program closure, preparations must be made in advance to ready client services for this transition. This guidance recommends programmatic preparations to ensure that client services are transitioned in a responsible and considerate manner.

Considering a Last Day of Intake: In anticipation of KAT program closures, agencies are assessing their capacity to intake and serve new and/or returning clients throughout the remainder of their KAT case management program. KAT's recommendation is that each Agency or Consortium Member give thoughtful consideration to this decision, and draft policies accordingly. While the quality of case management services may not be ideal with the time and resource constraints pending program closure, it is hoped that all agencies will extend case management services as long as possible.

<u>Refer to KAT's "Decision Making Framework" document</u> to assess the appropriateness of setting a last day of intake to your agency's operation.

Recovery Planning: Disaster recovery case management (and thus the partnership plans) will naturally need to be amended for new clients that approach an agency for services when the agency is preparing to close its case management program. Katrina Aid Today recommends that all agencies extend case management services as long as possible so that instead of refusing new client intakes, the agency engages clients in recovery planning that is considerate of limited timeframes for client services.

The recovery planning process should provide clients with sufficient information and resources so as to allow them to manage their ongoing recovery independently or with community support following KAT program closure.

<u>Refer to KAT's Disaster Recovery Partnership Plan" templates</u> and consult your Case Management Technical Supervisor to review the application of this amended form to your agency's operations.

Reviewing Caseloads: Understandably, not all cases at the time of a KAT program closure will be at the point of case closure as "goal met." At least 30 days prior to the closure of a KAT program, it is recommended that all case files be reviewed so that all cases near the point of case closure might be resolved and closed prior to the close of the KAT program. This can be accomplished by individual supervision between the case manager and the lead supervisor or as a group review during a staff meeting. The Case Management Technical Supervisor assigned to the state of the closing program may be contacted for consultation in the case reviews.

<u>Refer to KAT's Guidance #15, Program Closures</u> for guidance on transitioning cases to closure or transfer.

Long Term Recovery Committee Presentations and/or Means to Recovery Applications: To ensure that resources are able to be accessed, it is recommended that all LTRC presentations and MTRC applications be made 30 days prior to the program closure date. This does not mean that applications should not be made within 30 days but that case managers should allow adequate time for approval and/or necessary follow up. Closing programs should make their program status known in writing to the LTRC and MTR at the time of presentation/application, as well be prepared to appoint a designee to follow through with the case management of the case if there are outstanding issues at the time of program closure.

Communicating Program Closures to Clients: Case managers should be provided with a framework on how the Tier III affiliate wants program closure to be communicated to clients and the public from their Supervisor or Program Director. This communication should identify the date of program closure and the date that direct services will be discontinued to clients, if different.

<u>Refer to KAT's Program Closure Communications Recommendation; Guidance #15 Program Closure and Sample Program Closure Communications</u>.

Assessing Ongoing Sources of Case Management: For programs closing in a given geographic area, all due effort should be made to assess and collect referral information for other case management programs including; other KAT partners, disaster specific case management programs; or general social service case management programs. This information can either be compiled as a general outreach tool that is distributed to clients or a tool for case managers so that they have information to make informed direct referrals and/or transfers of case management within 15 days before the date of program closure.

Preparing Cases in CAN: Tier III affiliates are required to notify CAN of the program closure by completing their "Disaster Conclusion Notice." This Notice will prompt CAN to change the case managers CAN user statuses to "inactive" and that a point of contact for the agency/program be identified in case follow-up is required.

Case records in CAN should be prepared so that inquires regarding cases managed under a Tier III affiliate may be responded to after the program's closure. Preparation options include the following:

- Reassigning the case manager assignment on all client records to a singular point of contact or other identified person that will maintain CAN access after the affiliate's program closure; OR
- Updating the contact information (email and phone number) of each of the case manager no longer working with the agency that a a point of contact or other identified person that will continue to check email and follow-up on requests for transfers and other communications. This will allow all emails to go to someone able to respond and still working with the agency; OR
- Keep all records as is. This is another option for when no staff will be available to answer emails. In this instance, all transfer requests in CAN will wait the 10-day default period after which their case manager assignment will be unlocked.

For more information about readying your caseload for program closure, contact info@katrinaaidtoday.or or support@can.org.