2025 CASE STUDY

Using Real-Time Sentiment to Stop Homelessness Before It Starts

Partner Spotlight: Families Forward & CalOptima Health

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THE CHALLENGE

Addressing Housing Insecurity Upstream

A landscape analysis from January 2025 revealed a significant crisis in Orange County, with 397 total families receiving coordinated entry services and 242 children aged 0–5 experiencing homelessness.

Families Forward, a partner agency of CalOptima Health, is dedicated to preventing and ending family homelessness in Orange County. They identified a critical gap:

- **Shrinking Resources:** Funding for rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing is decreasing.
- **The "Upstream" Gap:** Many families facing housing insecurity do not qualify for limited government resources until they are already homeless.

THE RESULTS

Insights Behind the Data

The Pulse For Good dashboard revealed clear desires from the community that were previously unheard:

THE SOLUTION

Pulse For Good's Autonomous Listening Engine

To close this gap, Families Forward implemented Pulse For Good self-service kiosks at their facility.

Autonomous & Anonymous

The kiosks provide a safe, private space for members to share true feelings without staff intervention.

Real-Time Dashboards

Staff gained instant access to a survey dashboard, transforming raw sentiment into actionable data.

Consistent Monitoring

Results can be reviewed 24/7 to ensure any issues are addressed immediately.

Diversity

Surveys showed desire for diverse food options.

Desire for Choice

Members expressed a strong wish to choose their own meals rather than receiving pre-made bags.

Dietary Needs

There was a critical need for food options that accommodated specific dietary restrictions.

Comprehensive Support

Members desired staff support for personal needs and situations outside of just food security.

IMPLEMENTATION

From Feedback to Transformation

Families Forward utilized these insights to revamp their entire food pantry model into a market-style format.

1. The Community Market

They transitioned from "pre-made bags" to a "Community Market" where members select their own groceries.

3. Resource Navigation

They hired a dedicated Community Services Navigator to provide the personalized support members requested.

2. Increased Selection

They implemented survey feedback to enhance food selection options.

4. Dignified Experience

The new model focuses on "Low-Barrier Access" and "Harm-Reduction" principles to reduce the number of families experiencing homelessness.

CONCLUSION

Bridging the Gap Through Listening

The key to improving social services is not just collecting data, but fostering a culture of safe and honest listening. By implementing Pulse For Good kiosks, agencies like Families Forward have successfully bridged the gap between member needs and service delivery.

Integrating real-time member feedback into social services allows for "upstream" interventions. By listening to member needs, your organization can move from generic emergency assistance to data-supported models that better address the root causes of instability.

WHY CHOOSE PULSE FOR GOOD?

Go Beyond Traditional Surveys

Families Forward transformed their operations by listening to their community's voice. You can achieve similar results by utilizing Pulse For Good's purpose-built feedback system:

Safety First

Pulse For Good kiosks are designed specifically for high-risk environments, ensuring that fear and power dynamics do not skew the truth.

True Anonymity

Unlike traditional surveys that may carry a risk of retaliation, PFG kiosks provide a secure, private way for members to share their real experiences.

Real-Time Insights

Access feedback data immediately through intuitive dashboards, allowing you to identify and address trends before they become major issues.

Proven Results

Organizations using PFG kiosks see more than 7x higher response rates than traditional paper surveys, leading to earlier detection of issues and more confident decision-making.

Better Begins With Listening

Transform your organization's approach to community feedback and create meaningful change through real-time insights.

Learn More About Pulse For Good at pulseforgood.com