

From Case Management to Crisis Response: Responding to Client Needs

The landscape of service provision for forcibly displaced families has changed rapidly in recent months. What was once a proactive, comprehensive and preventive model of case management now is characterized by reactive actions to address immediate and acute needs – or crisis response. These crises have arisen due to converging pressures such as economic instability, resource scarcity and increased community threats and require new tools, strategies and support to meet families' and providers' evolving needs.

Forcibly displaced families are navigating multiple challenges including economic retraction as seen in rising cost of housing and daily necessities such as food and clothing, alongside a stifling job market. Community-based organizations, food banks, legal and medical providers that once filled resource gaps are also facing funding reductions or have closed essential programming due to federal program cuts. Finally, the uncertainty and fear of immigration policy changes and enhanced enforcement leave many families isolated and at worst separated from caregivers and loved ones.

Agencies are facing their own set of challenges, navigating financial instability, staff burnout and layoffs. These losses erode institutional knowledge and reduce the capacity of agencies to meet the growing needs of the community. Facing these immense barriers can be exhausting and demoralizing for all.

Resources for Crisis Response

Recognizing the urgent needs of forcibly displaced families within a crisis response framework not only validates the intensity of this work but also ensures the alignment of appropriate tools to support them. Resources for crisis response should be adaptable and meet community needs, providing relevant information such as what services exist, who is eligible, and how best to access. Providing families with accurate, accessible, and timely information during a crisis supports informed decision-making, so they can make choices that best suit their circumstances. Reliable information also offers clarity and a sense of control, which can ease the emotional strain of uncertainty. Informed families are more likely to share resources and guidance with others in similar situations, strengthening communal resilience. To

support these goals, CARRE has curated recently published resources tailored for families navigating immigration related crises.

[Resources for Planned or Unexpected Departure](#) – A template including practical, multilingual resources to support families facing planned or unexpected departure. It includes tools organized by topic area and a structure for listing local community resources.

This level of responsiveness and emotional labor places significant demands on providers, who are often navigating the same systemic pressures as the communities they serve. Without adequate training, and emotional support, staff risk burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and diminished capacity to serve effectively. A crisis response model must also include parallel support for staff to be sustainable. Please see previous CARRE documents and Kaya hosted training for staff training and mitigation of secondary traumatic stress:

[Best Practices for Client Care during Service Disruption and Uncertainty](#) – Guidance document for managing service disruption, including best practices for continuity of care and staff wellness.

[Talking with Clients Expressing Fear and Distress Related to Potential Immigration Enforcement Actions](#) – This document offers general guidance and supportive resources to help providers effectively respond to individuals and families who express heightened anxiety, fear and distress due to current immigration enforcement.

[Self-Care Essentials for Direct Service Staff](#) – Asynchronous training that focuses on common stress responses that direct service staff may experience and coping skills and self-care strategies to mitigate impacts of secondary traumatic stress.