



**GOVERNOR'S
HURRICANE CONFERENCE®**

WS108 Thursday May 14, 2026 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

CASE MANAGEMENT AS THE HUMAN GPS of RECOVERY:

**Strengthening Systems and Guiding Survivors Through
Complexity**



Doug



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WHY DISASTER RECOVERY IS SO HARD



- Multiple programs, multiple agencies
- Different eligibility rules and timelines
- Documentation and compliance requirements
- Survivors under stress, trauma, and displacement

Inspections/Assessments after a Disaster

Assessments are an essential part of the response and recovery process and are critical for assessing the size, scope, and severity of an event.

THE CHALLENGE

When a home is damaged as a result of a natural or man-made disaster, numerous damage assessments are performed to assess the safety of the structure, quantify the damage, and determine financial aid from the government and/or insurance company. While each assessment is conducted for a specific purpose, this puts a significant burden on the survivors and community and often times delays recovery efforts.

THE SOLUTION

Consistent standards and data sharing mechanisms are needed so various programs and agencies (e.g., state and local authorities, federal agencies, statutory authorities, non-profit organizations) can leverage the same data collected during the preliminary damage assessment. This will help avoid duplication of effort, conflicting information, and delays in bringing relief to the homeowner.

Urban Search and Rescue (US&R)
Assess if the house is safe to enter for rescue operations.

Public Assistance (PA)
Individual Assistance (IA)

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP)
Mitigation (Building Code inspections)

Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams
Small Business Administration (SBA)
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Homeowner Insurance Adjuster
Auto Insurance Adjuster
State Inspectors
Local Inspectors
American Red Cross

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THE COST OF FRAGMENTATION

Delayed assistance or missed deadlines.

Duplicated or conflicting applications.

Increased survivor frustration.

Strained state and local staff.

Late discovery of unmet needs.

Loss of trust in the recovery system.





WHAT CASE MANAGEMENT IS (AND IS NOT)

Case Management Is:

Single point of contact for survivors.

Navigation across programs and services.

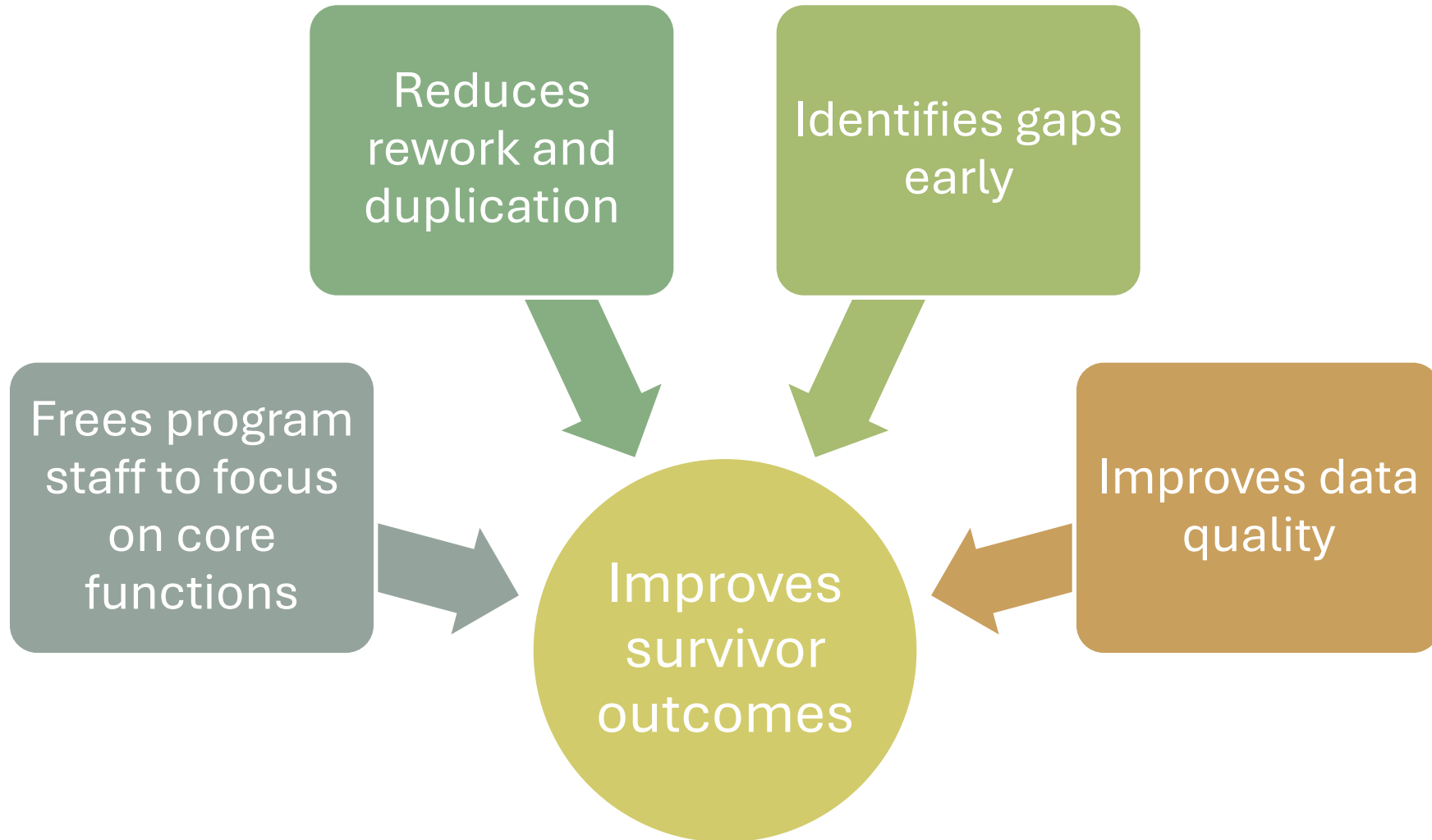
Needs assessment and recovery planning.

Advocacy and coordination, not decision-making.

Case Management Is Not:

- Not program eligibility determination.
- Not a replacement for programs and services.
- Not limited to social services.
- Not reactive only.

CASE MANAGEMENT AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER



LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIELD



2018 Hurricane Michael
Housing Recovery



2020 Panhandle Wildfires



2021 Surfside Building
Collapse

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIELD



Common Themes:

- Demand far exceeds initial estimates.
- Survivors rarely qualify for just one program.
- Needs evolve over time.
- Staffing shortages are the norm.

Success Indicators:

- Faster application completion.
- Reduced appeals and escalations.
- Better coordination across agencies.
- Reduced strain on EMAs.
- More equitable access to assistance.
- Improved survivor outcomes!

BUILDING CASE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY *BEFORE* DISASTER



Embed Case Management in Recovery Frameworks

- Include in Recovery Plans.
- Define roles across agencies.
- Establish activation triggers.
- Align with housing, mitigation, and human services.



Establish Governance & Ownership

- Clear lead agency.
- Defined coordination roles.
- MOUs with partner agencies.
- Integration with voluntary organizations.



Design Flexible Surge Staffing Models

- Core staff and surge capacity.
- Tiered case manager roles.
- Use of contractors and NGOs.
- Rapid onboarding and training.

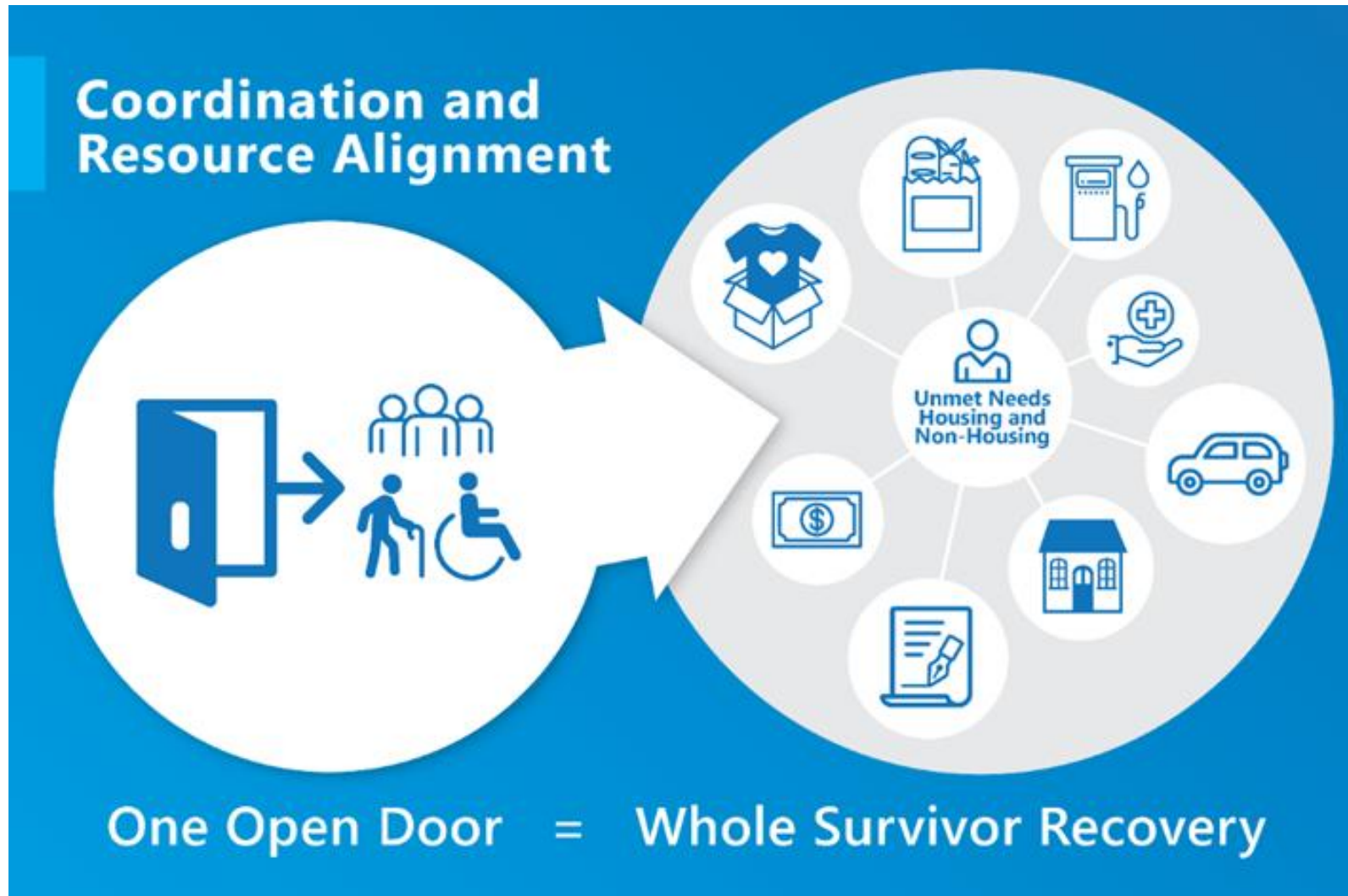
BUILDING CASE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY *BEFORE* DISASTER



A SURVIVOR'S JOURNEY THROUGH DISASTER HOUSING AND RECOVERY



BUILDING CASE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY *BEFORE* DISASTER



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Complexity is unavoidable, fragmentation is not.
- Early and robust case management improves outcomes and efficiency.
- Planning before a disaster is critical.
- Flexibility and coordination matter more than perfection.

THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW



- Assess current case management capacity.
- Inventory non-profit, volunteer, and faith-based organizations who provide similar services in your community.
- Review recovery plans for case management roles, triggers, and coordination points.
- Explore systems and training.



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Thank You!



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