

HMIS 101

Homeless Management Information System

(HMIS)

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on behalf of
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Overview

- Define HMIS
 - History
 - Data
 - Standards
- Define Continuum of Care
- HMIS and PATH
 - Why HMIS
 - Benefits
 - Future Plans

What is HMIS?

- Computerized data collection tool specifically designed to capture client-level information over time on:
 - The characteristics and service needs of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness
 - The services provided to these clients
- HMIS implementations can encompass geographic areas ranging from a single county to an entire state. An HMIS knits together homeless assistance providers within a community to create a more coordinated and effective housing and service delivery system.
- Administered locally within the community (Continuum of Care) by one lead agency that is responsible for standards and privacy compliance as well as HUD and other funder required aggregate reporting.

HMIS Software

- HUD approved HMIS software (i.e. software that meets the HUD HMIS technical standards) is provided by several vendors.
- HMIS software that is selected by a Continuum of Care, region, or state is used by all service providers within that community or geographical area. (Service providers do not choose their own HMIS.)
- HMIS is managed and administered by the lead agency for the CoC or other designated department of the county or state.

HMIS History

- 1980 – early 1990s: Cities with large homeless populations pioneer the use of computer-based tracking systems
- 2001: Congress directs HUD to develop an unduplicated count of persons who are homeless; HUD requires all McKinney-Vento funded homeless grantees to implement HMIS
- 2004: First HMIS Data and Technical Standards published

HMIS History

- 2009: Grantees receiving Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) funds required to use HMIS.
- 2010: Revised Final HMIS Data and Technical Standards published including new program specific data elements including “street outreach” data relevant to PATH reporting

HMIS Data and Technical Standards

- HMIS is governed by a set of data collection, privacy, and confidentiality rules called the HMIS Data and Technical Standards.
- Includes data elements to be collected, valid response categories for those data elements, and describes standards for the privacy and security of personal information collected and stored in an HMIS.
- Originally published via Federal Register in 2004 and updated in March 2010 to accommodate the HPRP program data collection and reporting requirements and include data elements needed to report on the voluntary outcome measures for PATH.

HMIS Data

The HUD HMIS data standards, aside from specifying the data that must be entered into an HMIS, also indicate a limited set of values that can be entered for the data. For example, there are 5 accepted values allowed for Race, and 4 for Housing Status. These are the standard HMIS required fields.

Client/Consumer (Universal Data Elements)

- Name
- Social Security Number
- Date of Birth
- Race *
- Ethnicity
- Gender *
- Veteran Status *
- Disabling Condition
- Residence Prior to Program Entry
- Zip Code of Last Permanent Address
- Housing Status *
- Program Entry Date
- Program Exit Date

HMIS Data

Street Outreach Programs

- Date of Contact *
- Date of Engagement *

Other Program Specific

- Income & Sources
- Non-cash Benefits
- Physical Disability
- Developmental Disability
- Chronic Health Condition
- HIV/AIDS
- Mental Health *
- Substance Abuse *
- Domestic Violence
- Destination
- Financial Assistance Provided *
- Housing Relocation & Stabilization Services Provided *

HMIS Data

Optional Outcome/ Self Sufficiency Measures

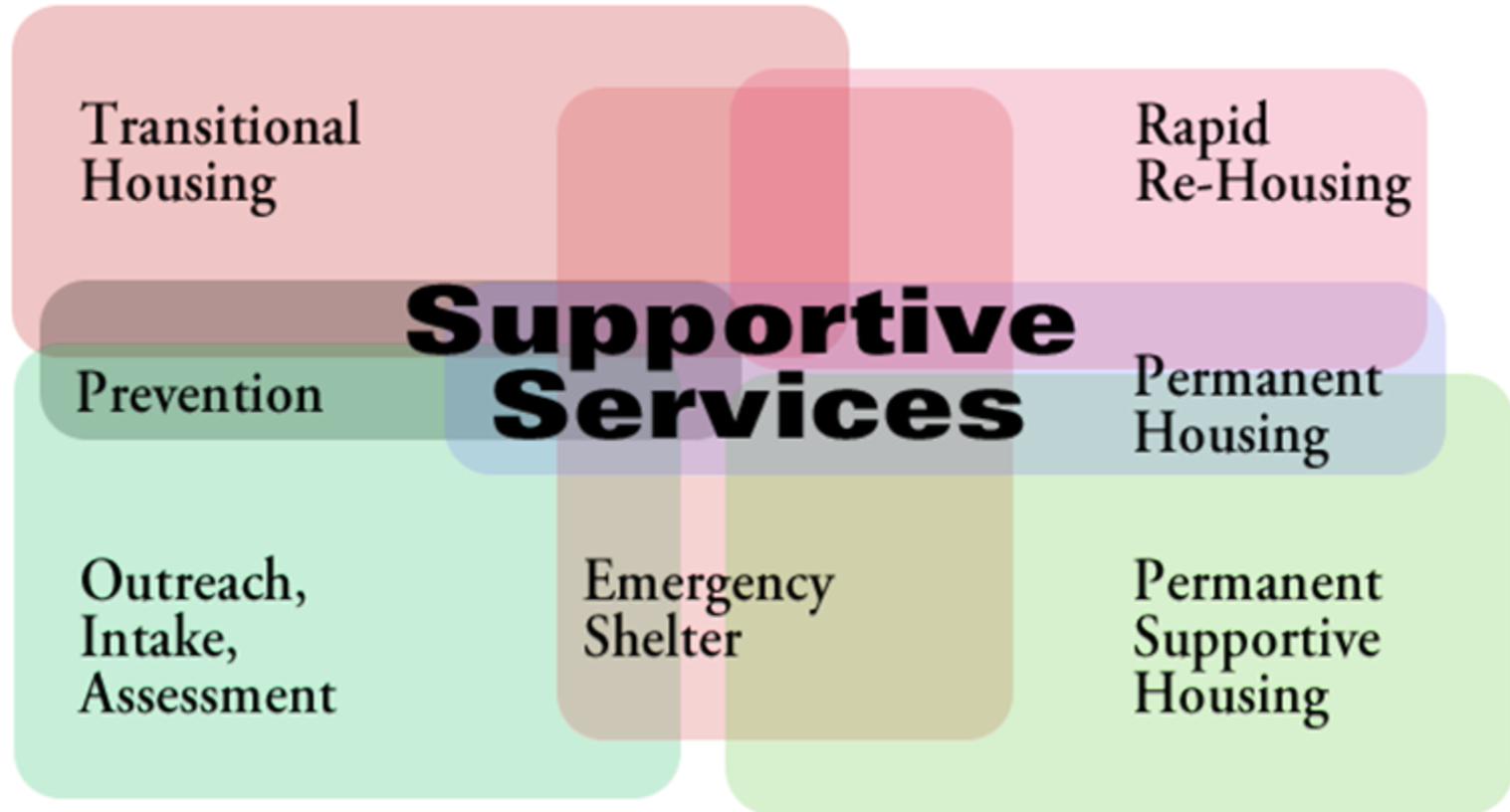
- Income
- Employment
- Health Care
- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse
- Services Provided: Referral

What is a Continuum of Care?

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a collaboration among local agencies and service providers to address the problems of housing and homelessness within the community. A CoC developed plan is utilized to organize and deliver housing and homelessness supportive & preventive services in a coordinated, comprehensive, and strategic fashion.

There are about 441 CoCs across the country.

Continuum of Care Services



PATH and HMIS

- In November 2006, the Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) at HUD and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at HHS entered into a formal collaboration to:
 - Assess the potential for alignment of data collection, reporting, and performance measurement practices for homeless outreach programs
 - Evaluate requests by PATH and SHP grantees to align reporting requirements and investigate the broader use of HMIS for PATH data collection and reporting
- HUD and SAMHSA worked collaboratively on alignment of data collection and performance measures to support the goals of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
- Resulted in a proposed set of common data definitions, outputs, and outcome measures to ease the reporting burden of individual PATH grantees who were also required to use HMIS for data collection and further integrate HHS PATH programs into the Continuum of Care process

Why HMIS?

- HMIS collects client-level data that is well aligned with the needs of PATH data collection
- Other systems in use, such as TRAC are oriented more toward clinical data collection
- HMIS is used in every state for HUD reporting and in most states by a number of PATH providers
- HMIS promotes collaboration among all homeless service providers within a community but utilizing a continuum of care model

Current PATH HMIS Usage

As part of the administrative review of the annual 2009 PATH applications for funding, the Government Project Officers in the Homeless Programs Branch of the Center for Mental Health Services requested that the State PATH Contacts ask the PATH provider to respond to questions about current HMIS usage. Following are the statistics based on the 326 responses received.

- 46 % of PATH providers currently use HMIS for PATH data entry and reporting
- 60 % of PATH providers use HMIS for other program data collection (i.e., HUD, VA, HHS or state/local funded programs)
- PATH providers in 41 states currently use HMIS in some capacity
- PATH providers in 39 states currently use HMIS for PATH data entry and reporting

The Importance of Data

- Program Level
 - Annual Performance Report
 - Program Evaluation & Design
 - Local Funding Requests
- CoC Level
 - Integrated Case Management
 - Service Referrals & Access
 - CoC Application

The Importance of Data

- State Level
 - PATH Funding Request Application
 - State Funding
 - Funding Requests
- National Level
 - Annual Homeless Assessment Report
 - GPRA & NOMs Measurement
 - PART Review

HMIS Benefit Summary

- Provides reliable information to HHS and Congress
- Supports funding requests and program expansion
- Shows the impact of PATH programs on linking clients to housing, services, and treatment
- Supports PART reviews, NOMs, and GPRA measures
- Validates the work of PATH providers

Benefits for Clients

- Benefits for Clients
- Decrease duplicative intakes and assessments
- Streamlined referrals
- Coordinated case management
- Benefit eligibility and acquisition

Benefits for Providers

- Tracking client outcomes
- Coordinating services
- Consistency in data collection and reporting
- Decreased reporting burden and duplication of work
- Streamlined data entry
- Preparing financial and programmatic reports
- Informing program design decisions

Benefits for the Community

- Understanding the extent and scope of homelessness
- Unduplicated count
- Identifying service gaps
- Informing systems design and policy decisions
- Development of a forum for addressing community-wide issues

HMIS & PATH – Future Plans

- Regional Meetings
- Online Trainings
- Webcasts
- PATH Grantee Meeting
 - HMIS Workshops
 - Beginner
 - Intermediate
 - Advanced

Resources

<http://pathprogram.samhsa.gov>

<http://HMIS.info>

<http://HUDhre.info>

Questions

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