
TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

HMIS Committee

February 19, 2009 Minutes

Co-Chairs: Karen Caldwell, Mary Beth Landis-Jantzen

<p>Next Meeting: Thursday, March 19, 2009, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue</p>

<p>Report to TPCCH General Meeting March 12th</p>

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Request for April vote on HMIS Participant Agreement |
|--|

TOPICS DISCUSSED

1. **Minutes.** Brian Smith moved, and Susanna Rodriguez seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as presented. **Motion passed.**
2. **Training/implementation update.** Don Logue reported. The next training, Monday, March 9th, will be a catch-up training for those programs already added who have new personnel and or who feel a need for additional training. The April training will be for additional emergency shelters, including the Gospel Rescue Mission, if their management group approves. The June training may also be a catch up training. The schedule may be moved up to add eviction prevention programs to the system in July to coincide with those programs' fiscal year start. After that, additions will be complete with the exception of TPCCH Winter Shelter Programs, which should be added in November. Gary Bachman noted that a year's funding was expended in approximately six months to get the new system up and running. The training schedule may be less frequent in the coming year. Don distributed the list of all programs added in the past five months.
3. **Data quality report.** As of yesterday afternoon, there are 1,376 clients in the system. Data quality remains very high, with only 12 records having null fields. However, there have been approximately 10 duplicate clients (individuals entered into the system twice). This most often happens because a client record has been closed by one agency if they didn't sign the HMIS release or the data entry operator fails to search for the individual in the database. Nick Jones and Karen Caldwell noted that if agencies sharing clients enter different client entry dates, it causes additional data entry and clean-up.
 - **Next step.** Don will contact people whose entries have null fields and merge records as appropriate.
4. **Low User Participation.** Karen noted that some programs appear to be entering a very small amount of data. Thus, it appears that some agencies may be behind in data entry. Don asked that program heads check on the status of their data entry.
5. **User licenses.** All 60 licenses funded for this budget year have been assigned. If additional licenses are needed, unused licenses will need to be reassigned. More licenses may be added in the next fiscal year (beginning in April) if necessary. All programs are asked to review their number of users and the distributed list of users versus the need for licenses. If you have one or more unused licenses, contact Don at dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com so that they may be reassigned.
 - **Next step.** Committee members will check their agencies for licenses not currently being used.
6. **User Group Meetings.** Don noted that user group meetings are once-a-month forums for users who need refreshers, or have specific questions. The February meeting was devoted to APRs, and went well. Additional special topic sessions are planned. The March HMIS User Group Meeting will be Wednesday, March 11th, 1:00-3:00 p.m., and will be a report writer workshop. Karen noted that attendance improved greatly with a specific topic, and that topic-based sessions will probably be more frequent in the future.

7. **Governance Protocol.** Gary Bachman reported, and distributed copies of the governance protocol draft (attached). He led the group through the structure and contents of the protocol, which is an annual agreement with provision for annual review before consideration of renewal, providing a process for change of grantee. Participants discussed how to proceed. Consensus was as follows.

- **Next steps:** a.) Committee members will review the document and send comments to Gary at gary.bachman@pima.gov .
 - b.) Gary will present the protocol at the March TPCH General Council meeting.
 - c.) Text of the protocol will be distributed to all TPCH members with request for comment.
 - d.) Committee will discuss comments at its March meeting.
 - e.) General Council vote on the protocol will be requested at the April meeting.

8. **Next Meeting.** Thursday, March 19th, 3:00-4:30 p.m., SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue.

Submitted by Settle Madden

Attendance

Name	Organization	Email
Eva Ahumada	COPE	eahumada@copebhs.com
Karen Button	Comin' Home	kbutton@cominhome.org
Gary Bachman	Pima County CDNC	gary.bachman@pima.gov
Jodie Earll Barnes	City of Tucson	jodie.barnes@tucsonaz.gov
Karen Caldwell	Primavera Foundation	kcaldwell@primavera.org
Kim Cook	New Beginnings for Women & Children	kcook@nbwctucson.org
Olivia Gutzman	CPSA	olivia.gutzman@cpsa-rbha.org
Nick Jones	Old Pueblo Community Services	nickjones@helptucson.org
Mary Beth Landis-Jantzen	SAAF	mjantzen@saaf.org
Don Logue	Symmetric Solutions	dlogue@symmetricsolutions.org
Rosanna Mendoza	TMM Family Services	rrodriguez@tmmfs.org
Susanna Rodriguez	City of Tucson	susanna.rodriguez@tucsonaz.gov
Phyllis Russell	Esperanza en Escalante	prussell@eetuccoxmail.com
Mark Salcido	Old Pueblo Community Services	marksalcido@helptucson.org
Cheryl Sanchez	Jackson Employment	chsanchez@pima.gov
Brian Smith	COPE	bsmith@copebhs.com

Pima County Homeless Management Information System

Protocol for the Governance of the Homeless Management Information System in Pima County, Arizona

I. Purpose

Pursuant to the requirements established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, this Protocol sets forth the intended governance structure for the implementation and operation of a Homeless Management Information System in Pima County, Arizona. This Protocol will define the intended roles of the various entities that provide services to the homeless in Pima County. In order to ensure an effective, efficient, and secure system, this Protocol includes: general parameters for the system, confidentiality and security practices, network operations, and HMIS user training availability.

II. Glossary

<u>ADOH:</u>	Arizona Department of Housing
<u>AHAR:</u>	Annual Homeless Assessment Report, an official report to the U.S. Congress
<u>CDNC:</u>	Pima County Community Development and Neighborhood Conservation Department
<u>CoC:</u>	Continuum of Care, the providers of services to the homeless in Pima County that participate in the activities of TPCH
<u>Consultant:</u>	Symmetric Solutions, Inc., contractor providing training to HMIS users for the implementation and use of HMIS, a contractor to Pima County
<u>Continuum of Care:</u>	Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless, the lead decision-making group for homeless services funded by HUD
<u>DES:</u>	Arizona Department of Economic Security
<u>ESG:</u>	Emergency Shelter Grant
<u>Grantee:</u>	Pima County, through CDNC
<u>HMIS:</u>	Homeless Management Information System, software utilized by member agencies to track the provision of services to and needs of the homeless in Pima County

HMIS Committee: A subcommittee of TPCH established to make policy recommendations regarding the selection and use of HMIS

HMIS Grantee: Pima County (See *also* “Grantee”)

HMIS Users: Individual staff members of participating agencies authorized to access and enter data into HMIS

HOPWA: Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS

HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

NOFA: Notice of Funding Availability issued by HUD for CoC funds

Participating

Agencies: Community and faith-based organizations, government entities, businesses and individuals that participate in TPCH and that receive HUD CoC funding to provide services to the homeless

TPCH: Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless, a coalition of community and faith-based organizations, government entities, businesses and individuals committed to the mission of reducing homelessness and to addressing the problems associated with homeless in Pima County (see “Continuum of Care”)

Vendor: Bowman Systems, L.L.C., contractor providing ServicePoint, the HMIS software, a contractor to Pima County

III. Background

There are a number of entities and individuals in Pima County, Arizona that endeavor to provide a variety of services to the homeless population of the County. TPCH activities seek to ease the stress on the homeless and to reduce homelessness. Activities include: identifying available services and gaps in services; determining the general demographics of the homeless population in Pima County; and, the development of comprehensive plans to efficiently use available funds to address the needs of the homeless in Pima County.

Participating agencies receive federal CoC funds from HUD in order to serve the homeless. Coordinating activities through TPCH, participating agencies in Pima County provide services such as: homelessness prevention; emergency shelter; transitional housing;; permanent supportive housing; supportive services associated with the provision of shelter and housing; specialized programs; outreach for unique homeless subpopulations; and, integration of CoC programs with other government and community service programs. ADOH and DES provide statewide coordination and planning for homeless services. TPCH and Pima County desire to participate and collaborate efforts to coordinate and plan services. In order to meet the federal requirements for HUD CoC funding, TPCH must maintain an electronic database (HMIS). Consequently, HMIS will be implemented in Pima County as a collaborative project of TPCH, ADOH and Pima County.

The County, along with the City of Tucson, has historically supported the TPCH application, on behalf of numerous grantees and sub-recipients, for Continuum of Care funding from HUD. In order to retain CoC funding, TPCH voted, at its regular monthly meeting in June 2008, to have Pima County take on the role of HMIS Grantee and to assume HUD HMIS Grant Agreement for the CoC. The HMIS Grant Agreement provides funding for the purchase and use of software for HMIS. Additionally, TPCH supported having the HMIS Grantee contract with Bowman Systems in order to use Service Point software for the system.

On August 5, 2008 the Pima County Board of Supervisors, approved the assumption of the HUD HMIS Grant Agreement. Subsequently, as the HMIS Grantee, Pima County contracted with Bowman Systems, L.L.C. for the necessary software and with Symmetric Solutions, Inc. for consulting services and training for the implementation and use of HMIS in Pima County. These contracts will be administered by Pima County’s Community Development and Neighborhood Conservation Department.

A functional HMIS will enable homeless service providers to collect client information in a uniform format to assist in streamlining and targeting the provision of client services and to provide accurate statistics for the development of public policy and advocacy efforts. The homeless in Pima County will benefit from improved coordination in and between agencies, informed advocacy efforts, and policies that result in targeted services. TPCH, and its participating agencies, have expressed strong support to incorporate information on the services provided in to the homeless in Pima County into HMIS to the greatest extent possible.

IV. Funding

Funding and support for HMIS in Pima County is provided as follows:

HUD	\$181,089
Local cash match	\$43,117
County	Indirect support

Additionally, Pima County and ADOH have agreed to provide matching funds for HMIS to the extent that funds are available.

V. Term

This Protocol is intended to guide HMIS activities from April 1, 2009 through March 31, 2010. An annual review and, if warranted, amendment, within 30 days of publication of the NOFA and prior to the submission of the next HMIS application, is recommended to insure the most effective use of HMIS in Pima County.

VI. General Parameters and Goals for HMIS Implementation and Use

A. Pima County and TPCH intend to work cooperatively to:

1. Develop HMIS policies and procedures that will maximize the utility of HMIS.

2. Develop and timely submit the HMIS grant application.
3. Determine the appropriate process for securing local match funds.
4. Regularly review HMIS data and reports required by HUD.
5. Encourage participating agency compliance with all Federal and State laws and regulations relating to the operation of HMIS.
6. Encourage HMIS user compliance with HUD HMIS Standards relating to the collection, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of client data.
7. Encourage the use of HMIS data to inform policy decisions and to establish TPCH performance measures.
8. Adhere to the HMIS grant parameters.

B. Pima County has designated CDNC to:

1. Designate liaison(s) to coordinate HMIS efforts with HUD and TPCH.
2. Attend and, when appropriate, provide input at TPCH HMIS Committee meetings.
3. Provide TPCH with regular reports regarding HMIS utilization.
4. Pursuant to County procurement policies and procedures, procure and administer the vendor and consultant contracts related to the HMIS grant and abide by the terms and conditions of such contracts.
5. Remain in good standing with HUD as an HMIS Grantee.
6. Submit reports required of the HMIS Grantee to HUD in a timely manner.
7. Provide AHAR data received from Consultant to HUD.
8. Provide HMIS data received from the Consultant to TPCH, ADOH, and DES.

C. TPCH, through its Executive Committee will:

1. Ensure that:
 - a. The TPCH Executive Committee meets prior to the completion and submission of each annual HMIS CoC application to confirm Pima County's continued willingness to serve as the HMIS Grantee.

- b. The HMIS Committee works with Pima County to conduct an annual performance evaluation of the HMIS vendor and consultant prior to the submission of the HMIS application.
 - c. The HMIS Committee recommends a process, consistent with the Pima County Procurement Code and procurement policies and procedures, for the selection of a subsequent vendors and consultants for HMIS.
 - d. Participating agencies implement HUD HMIS standards.
2. Monitor HMIS successes and failures to validate system effectiveness.
 3. Designate a TPCH representative to chair the HMIS Committee and serve as liaison for coordinating HMIS efforts with Pima County, HMIS Committee and participating agencies.
 4. Educate and instruct participating agencies:
 - a. To collect data from consenting clients as mandated by HUD.
 - b. Not to transmit information in violation of any Federal or State laws or regulations, including, but not limited to, copyright law, protected trade secrets, obscenity, or threats.
 - c. Not to release HMIS data to any person, agency, or organization other than TPCH, other participating agencies, HUD, ADOH (when required by law or a participating agency's contract) and Pima County (for the administration of the HMIS Grant), unless specific consent is received from the client.
 - d. That Pima County is the sole contractor for HMIS software and services with Vendor and Consultant and that participating agencies and HMIS users cannot instruct Vendor or Consultant to act outside the scope of their contracts with Pima County.

VII. Network Operations

A. Pima County

1. With regard to the HMIS Vendor and Contractor, Pima County:
 - a. Retains all authority for the administration of the contracts and is the sole liaison with the Vendor and Consultant for any contract performance issues.
 - b. Will monitor performance of Vendor and Consultant to ensure that necessary technical support and the appropriate training to HMIS users for HMIS implementation and use is provided.

- c. Will ensure that any Vendor or Consultant is required to provide an Information Services Help Desk for HMIS-related questions from participating agencies.
2. Pima County and the Vendor will monitor software and license use. Pima County or the Vendor, in consultation with Pima County, may restrict participating agency access to HMIS for inappropriate use or terminate a participating agency's licenses to maintain the integrity of the HMIS.

B. Participating Agency

Each participating agency will be required to:

1. Establish and enforce agency-level policies and procedures for all staff.
2. Maintain an electronic data security program, Internet connectivity, and computer equipment in such manner as not to disrupt continuation of project participation.
3. Take all necessary precautions to prevent any destructive or malicious program from being introduced to the System, including virus protection software.
4. In the event that a virus, worm or other code is introduced to HMIS through the agency's computer network notify Pima County immediately and employ all appropriate resources to efficiently disinfect the systems as quickly as possible.
5. Either prior to, or immediately upon change, notify Vendor of turnover of HMIS users.
6. Monitor use of HMIS and insure HMIS users comply with license requirements.

VIII. Security

A. Pima County:

1. Work with the Vendor to obtain, for each HMIS user, login IDs and passwords.
2. May deny HMIS access to any HMIS user.
3. Maintain on file copies of all HMIS User Agreements.
4. Maintain records of login IDs and passwords assigned at each participating agency.

B. TPCH:

1. Identify each participating agency authorized to use HMIS.
2. Monitor each participating agency to insure that:
 - a. HMIS users are properly trained in HMIS use and security;
 - b. Participating agencies agree to keep login IDs and passwords confidential and assure that HMIS users do not share same with any unauthorized employee, volunteer, or entity;
 - c. Internal security protocols are established and followed to prevent unauthorized utilization, access or transmission of HMIS data;
 - d. That HMIS equipment, data, and software is secured and access limited only to individuals with a specific job-related need.
3. Develop a process for dealing with the violations of any of the HMIS information security protocols.
4. Notify Pima County of any deletion of an authorized participating agency either prior to termination to insure timely deactivation of the HMIS users ID and passwords.

IX. Training

- A. Pima County will contract with Consultant for initial and ongoing training of HMIS users, including, but not limited to, the following areas:
 1. Software application.
 2. Data entry.
 3. System security.
 4. Maintaining client data confidentiality.
- B. Participating agencies will ensure that HMIS users attend and participate in the initial and all ongoing trainings provided by Consultant.

X. Amendments

Amendments, including additions, deletions, or modifications to this Protocol may be proposed in writing by either TPCH or Pima County. Proposals will be presented to the HMIS Committee for consideration. If approved by the HMIS Committee, TPCH and Pima County the Protocol will be amended in writing.

XI. Attachments

The following documents are important to the functioning of HMIS and are, therefore attached:

- A. Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless – Operating Policies (as amended on July 10, 2008)
- B. Exhibits 1 & 2 – Tucson/Pima County Continuum of Care Application
- C. HMIS Organizational Flow Chart

XII. Non-Binding Agreement

This Protocol is signed by Pima County and TPCH to memorialize the intended governance roles in relation to HMIS. Both Pima County and TPCH acknowledge that this Protocol is non-binding and that it does not establish any rights, remedies or obligations for either signator.

 TPCH Chair
 Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless

Date

 Print TPCH Chair Name

 Margaret M. Kish
 Director
 Pima County Community Development and
 Neighborhood Conservation Department
 2797 E. Ajo Way, 3rd Floor
 Tucson, Arizona 85713

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

 Karen Friar
 Deputy Pima County Attorney

Date