
TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

Homeless Management Information System Committee

July 16, 2009 Minutes

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

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 20, 2009, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue
--

Report to TPCCH General Meeting August 11th

■ n/a

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- 1. Minutes.** John Davis moved and Susanna Rodriguez seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as presented. **Motion passed.**
- 2. Data Quality/Statistics.** Don Logue reported on data quality and database statistics, and circulated a data quality detail report. Data quality is generally very good with only 47 remaining null fields in more than 4,700 records representing more than 3,600 unduplicated individuals. He noted that only seven agencies have null fields, and that he believes that the recent Annual Progress Report (APR) workshops will result in correction of these.
 - **Next step.** Users will continue to enter data and correct existing null fields. .
- 3. APR Workshops.** Don reported. Nine APR workshops of approximately one hour each were held this week for the TPCCH collaborative grants. Participants reviewed and checked their client lists and both their individual and their collaborative's APR. They discussed deadlines and issues around goals; demonstrated how to check the reports; and outlined where the typical problems are. An APR tip sheet was distributed. Participants found and fixed simple errors. Feedback on the workshops was very positive.
 - **Next step.** HMIS participants with a stand-alone SHP grant will contact Don at dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com for individual assistance.
- 4. HPRP.** Don reported that a number of groups have attended meetings with the city and county and agency participants to provide input and speed progress on the program design for using the \$3.7 million in Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) funds coming to Tucson/Pima County. HPRP legislation requires the use of HMIS to track the funds expenditure, recipients, and outcomes. Software manufacturers Bowman will issue Service Point Version 4.06 by July 31 to accommodate the new required fields. He will test and report on the demo of that upgrade very soon.
- 5. Data Standards.** Don reported that the new HUD data standards appear to include some very useful changes such as changing options for answering a number of questions to "Yes/No, Don't Know and Refused to Answer". He will continue to monitor data standards, and report on changes. If needed, a new training will be designed to familiarize users with the changes.
- 6. AHAR.** Don noted that HMIS was mandated in part to facilitate compilation of the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. Communities can participate in AHAR if their HMIS tracks at least 50% of the community's beds in the categories of Emergency Individual and Emergency Family Shelter plus Transitional Individual and Transitional Family Housing. AHAR participation earns a continuum of care additional points on its HUD application. He said that he is sure TPCCH meets the 50% requirement in both transitional housing categories, but may not have a full year of data for the emergency shelter categories. He will urge users to get the entire year in. He has asked HUD consultant Meagan Medina to help determine if TPCCH participation this fall will count on this year's HUD application.

AHAR cont'd.

This year HUD will do a separate AHAR for armed services veterans. Susanna noted that the HUD webcast yesterday reported that the notice of fund availability will not come out before August 24. Generally, the period for preparing and application is usually 90 days. It was also noted that HUD is currently issuing quarterly Homeless Pulse Project reports to track trends in homelessness in the current economic crisis. Both the 2008 AHAR (<http://www.hudhre.info/documents/4thHomelessAssessmentReport.pdf>) and The Firsts Quarter 2009 Homeless Pulse Project report (<http://www.hudhre.info/documents/HomelessnessPulseProjectJul09.pdf>) were issued recently.

7. **Service Point 5.0 Upgrade.** Don reported. Software manufacturer Bowman has just released the demo of this major upgrade. It has a much more professional and user-intuitive appearance. There do not appear to be any apparent changes to data requirement or the backend database. Because of the need to incorporate HPRP requirements first, Bowman plans to delay the roll out of Service Point 5.0 until January.
8. **User Momentum.** Don encouraged everyone to continue entering new clients and follow-on data and ensuring data quality. He asked for suggestions for incentives beyond the requirement for monthly reconciliation that is in city contracts.
 - o **Next step. a.)** Members will email suggestions to the co-chairs (kcaldwell@primavera.org and mjantzen@saaf.org) or Don, dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com
 - b.) Committee will discuss incentives at the next meeting.
9. **Future Trainings.** Don asked whether users would like to see demos of and provide feedback on the two Service Point upgrades next month. Consensus was "yes". This will help the system administrators understand the impact of the upgrades on users, and whether a great deal of retaining will be needed. He may re-present these for HPRP users when they are selected/known. La Paloma Family Services has joined the system due to a new youth grant with a DES mandate to use HMIS.
 - o **Next steps. a.)** Don will schedule review of the Service Point upgrades demos the week of August 17th.
 - b.) Don will schedule new user and refresher training in August.
10. **User licenses.** Gary Bachman reported that in October, system implementation began with 60 licenses. We now have 75 licenses and requests for another 15. All current licenses are assigned, and it takes time to get the request for additional licenses through the procurement process. Currently, if any new people need licenses, Don redistributes licenses that aren't being utilized. Agencies should contact Don if there are licenses that aren't being used or were assigned to staff members no longer employed.
11. **Data sharing and use of HMIS data.** Gary reminded participants that, as the HMIS Grantee, Pima County is the only party authorized to share data. If someone (for example a newspaper, DES, etc.) requests information, the request should be submitted to Gary at Pima County. This led into questions of use of the data for project evaluation and other purposes.
 - o **Next step:** Next month's agenda will include discussion of HMIS data sharing, using the data to evaluate projects, and other uses of the data.
12. **TPCH Website Wording.** Mary Beth presented an updated HMIS Committee description for the TPC website. Participants discussed and revised the description. One purpose of the description is for the HUD application. Some additional information such as the goals of the committee may go into the HUD application but will not be included in the committee's website description.
 - o **Next step.** Mary Beth will revise the draft (revision at end of minutes) and send to Susanna.

13. Next Meeting. Thursday, August 20th, 3:00-4:30 p.m., SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue.

Submitted by Settle Madden

Attendance

Name	Organization	Email
Joyce Alcantar	City of Tucson	joyce.alcantar@tucsonaz.gov
Karen Caldwell	Primavera Foundation	kcaldwell@primavera.org
Laura Carrillo	Comin' Home	lcarrillo@cominhome.org
John Davis	Compass Health Care	jdavis@compasshc.org
Olivia Gutzman	CPSA	olivia.gutzman@cpsa-rbha.org
Mary Beth Landis-Jantzen	SAAF	mjantzen@saaf.org
Don Logue	Symmetric Solutions	dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com
Susanna Rodriguez	City of Tucson	susanna.rodriguez@tucsonaz.gov
Phyllis Russell	Esperanza en Escalante	prussell@eeetuccoxmail.com
Mark Salcido	Old Pueblo Community Services	marksalcido@helptucson.org
Cheryl Sanchez	Jackson Employment Center	chsanchez@pima.gov
Megan Sanes	Our Family Services	msanes@ourfamilyservices.org

HMIS Committee

The purpose of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) committee is to provide guidance to Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless (TPCH), which is responsible for HMIS implementation, including planning, software selection, and management of the database according to HUD's HMIS Data and Technical Standards. The HMIS Committee is comprised of representatives of HUD Continuum of Care Grantees and providers and other participating agencies.

HMIS is the software utilized by member agencies of TPCH to track the provision of services of the homeless in Pima County. Agencies receive federal Continuum of Care funds from HUD in order to serve the homeless. In order to meet the federal requirements for HUD CoC funding, TPCH must maintain an electronic database (HMIS).

HMIS enables 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 benefit from improved coordination in and between agencies, informed advocacy efforts and policies that result in targeted services.

HMIS Grantee: Pima County

HMIS Vendor: Bowman Systems, L.L.C., contractor providing ServicePoint

HMIS Consultant and Training: Symmetric Solutions, Inc.

Updated: July 16, 2009