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# TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

## Homeless Management Information System Committee

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### May 21, 2009 Minutes

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

<b>Next Meeting:</b> Thursday, June 18, 2009, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue
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<b>Report to TPCCH General Meeting June 9<sup>th</sup></b>
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### TOPICS DISCUSSED

- 1. Minutes.** Jodie Barnes moved and Cheryl Sanchez seconded that the April minutes be approved as presented. **Motion passed.**
- 2. Checking Your Data.** Don Logue noted that, with most grant years ending with the standard fiscal year, it is important to check the quality of your data regularly to facilitate the APR process. Symmetric Solutions will continue to offer report writing workshops periodically. Overall system data quality is good, with more than 2,700 unique clients and 3,700 total clients, many of whom are in multiple programs. There are currently only 65 null fields.
- 3. User Requirements.** Don noted that all users at each agency should be employees. Volunteers are generally not to be trained and issued user IDs. Before a new user may obtain a system id, that user must attend at least the basic training class and sign the system user agreement. He reminded participants that user IDs are not to be shared.
- 4. Upcoming Training.** The next training will be Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at the Kino Service Center. There is room for additional trainees. Please respond to Don at [dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com](mailto:dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com) if you wish to attend or have a new employee attend. Mostly new and additional users from emergency shelters are scheduled. The next advanced training workshop will also be at Kino on Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-3:00 p.m. It will cover the Shelter Point bed-and unit-tracking module.
- 5. Participation of all Homeless Programs.** Don noted that he attended a meeting with the TPCCH Continuum of Care Consultants (CoC) and Continuum of Services (CoS) committee members to determine the correct programs to include in the TPCCH housing inventory chart. TPCCH should have 65% bed coverage for the community (This includes providers who do not receive HUD funds), but the TPCCH goal is 85%, the highest rating that can be entered in the HUD application.
  - **Next step.** The workgroup will continue working to ensure that the appropriate programs' beds are added to the HMIS system to reach precise and goal-achieving bed coverage.
- 6. AHAR.** Having sufficient bed coverage for a complete fiscal year in its HMIS makes a continuum eligible to participate in the national Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), and earns additional points for the continuum's grant applications. Bed coverage includes separate categories for individual emergency shelter; family emergency shelter; individual transitional shelter; family transitional shelter; individual permanent supported housing; and family permanent supported housing. Don noted that it currently appears that TPCCH's system may be eligible to participate in at least three categories. He is unsure whether it will be possible to achieve adequate coverage on a fourth category in time for the next HUD application. He believes that the system is at approximately 94% coverage on permanent housing.

7. **New Data Standards.** Don reported that HUD has released the draft of their proposed new data standards, which total more than 130 pages. Some of the changes are the additions of:
- housing descriptors (which the software developers will need to add to the program);
  - homeless status to the universal data elements (in order to add in “at risk” status in relation to upcoming Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing (HPRP) Program services);
  - “Don’t know” and “refused to answer” options for most categories;
  - Changes in program specific elements, where a number of data points that were previously required have been termed “optional, but recommended”
  - A self-sufficiency matrix (based on the Arizona matrix) with the requirement for each program to track a minimum of one domain;
  - fields to capture data relating to the HPRP services (which the developers will also need to add);
  - and the requirement to capture clients’ income at entry and at least once annually during program enrollment.
- Some retraining will probably be needed once the standards are made official and the software updates completed. Don noted that he is unsure of the date.
- **Next step.** HMIS representatives will check with Arizona DES regarding the appropriate way to integrate the new required information.
8. **Governance Document Responsibilities.** Karen noted that now that the protocol is official, the committee needs to proceed to fulfill its responsibilities under that agreement, including security protocols and conducting annual evaluations of software, system administration and the grantee. **Consensus was that the annual review should be planned for next year, given that the new HMIS grant year has already begun, and that policy and procedure development delayed until all aspects of the new HUD data and governance standards may be incorporated into policy and procedure development.**
9. **Spanish Forms.** Mary Beth noted that SAAF policy requires that all client forms must be available in both Spanish and English, and distributed a proposed Spanish language form that had been written and proofed by several Spanish speakers. The form is effective until revoked. **Consensus was to adopt the form.**
- **Next step.** Don will have the form posted on the web with other HMIS documents.
10. **Standard Timeframe for Data Entry.** Karen noted that there are not yet timeframes for when clients should be entered. She added that Primavera is using Service Point for their internal system; found reporting difficult when some programs delayed data entry to month’s end; and adopted a two-day turnaround standard for entering intakes, service updates, and exits. Participants discussed appropriate timeframes for entering data, including the fact that emergency shelter programs, transitional and permanent housing programs may need differing standards. Don noted that he has seen timeframes of one to five days in other. Also noted were: that the standards may need to be included in the grantee-sponsor contracts, as only grantees will have the option of withholding funds if the standards are not met; and that not all agencies appear to have complied with the committee request to complete data entry to date by the end of February. Participants reached agreement to announce that the committee is leaning toward two weeks for transitional and permanent housing and a shorter timeframe for emergency shelters, but waiting on official adoption of a timeframe until the new technical standards are made official.
- **Next step.** Participants will get feedback from their staff regarding data entry timeframes.
11. **New Business.** Don noted that Gary Bachman has suggested that the committee consider how TPCH will handle continuum-level reporting in addition to APRs, including how the data will be used to inform continuum decision making and planning, and what may be released to the public.
12. **Next Meeting.** Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 3:00-4:30 p.m., SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue.

**Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Email</b>
Jodie Barnes	City of Tucson	Jodie.barnes@tucsonaz.gov
Karen Caldwell	Primavera Foundation	kcaldwell@primavera.org
Olivia Gutzman	CPSA	olivia.gutzman@cpsa-rbha.org
Mary Beth Landis-Jantzen	SAAF	mjantzen@saaf.org
Don Logue	Symmetric Solutions	dlogue@symmetricsolutions.com
Elizabeth Lopez	Old Pueblo Community Services	elizabethlopez@helptucson.org
Cheryl Sanchez	Jackson Employment Center	chsanchez@pima.gov
Megan Sanes	Our Family Services	msanes@ourfamilyservices.org
Misty Weigel	Comin' Home	Moonchild_13@yahoo.com