

## MEETING NOTES

### Quarterly HMIS Users Meeting

Wednesday, January 27, 2016, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Cesar Chavez Plaza, Davis

Community Room

**Meeting attendees:** Tracey Dickinson, Yolo County HHSA; Ginger Hashimoto, Yolo County HHSA; Niomi Michel, Empower Yolo; Amara Pickens, Fourth and Hope; Bill Pride, Davis Community Meals; Sandra Sigrist, Yolo County HHSA; Sergei Shkurkin, Shores of Hope

### SSF Privacy and Security Plan

- In January, SSF implemented a new Privacy and Security Plan. Some of the plan's policies and procedures require compliance from Yolo.
  - IP Address Whitelist
    - The County collected server IP addresses from all agencies and submitted them to SSF. Please contact the County if users experience any problems with accessing HMIS.
  - Mandatory Security Checks
    - Starting in January, agencies seeking HMIS access for new users must conduct a background check to ensure the user does not have a criminal history of any white collar crimes such as identity theft or fraud.
    - To verify the background check, SSF revised their HMIS New User Account Request Form and added a background check clause that requires a signature by the agency's Executive Director or Human Resources Director. If requesting HMIS access for a new user, please be sure to use the revised form.
    - For agencies that do not conduct background checks, the County will research options and help the agencies comply with this new policy.
  - Security Officers
    - Starting in April, all agencies must designate a Security Officer. The Officer must attend a mandatory Privacy and Security Training, hosted by SSF, on **April 19 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., location TBD**. At the training, the Officer will learn more about his or her responsibilities. Two important duties that SSF already specified was that the officer must conduct semi-annual self-audits as well as coordinate annual on-site audits with SSF.

### AHAR Presentation

- AHAR Overview
  - AHAR is an annual report submitted to the U.S. Congress documenting the nature and extent of homelessness in America.
- Data Sources
  - The AHAR consists of three data sources: (1) point-in-time count information, (2) housing inventory count information, and (3) 12-month summary counts of service provision and housing utilization derived from HMIS.

- Reporting Categories
  - There are 12 different AHAR reporting categories with veterans constituting their own categories: (1) emergency shelter for individuals, (2) emergency shelter for families, (3) transitional housing for individuals, (4) transitional housing for families, (5) permanent supportive housing for individuals, and (6) permanent supportive housing for families.
  - At this time, the types listed above are only AHAR applicable programs. AHAR will never include domestic violence shelter programs.
- Data Quality Requirements
  - Each reporting category is assessed independently for data quality, using three primary thresholds:
    - The first is a 50% HMIS bed coverage rate, which is a hard cutoff. HUD is unable to use any categories where less than 50% of beds in a category are in HMIS. This is because HUD uses the bed coverage rate to extrapolate homeless counts for beds that are not in HMIS.
    - Second, HUD looks for reasonable bed utilization rates, typically between 65-105%. Bed utilization rates above 105% or below 65% may indicate data quality issues. For instance, if utilization rates are above 105%, it could indicate that projects are not exiting clients out of HMIS.
    - Third, HUD looks for reasonable missing data rates. Missing data rates above 5% may indicate data quality issues.
  - Should some of the reporting categories not meet the data quality requirements, AHAR is not an all or nothing process. For example, if the data on people in transitional housing and permanent supportive housing is not usable, HUD will allow an agency submit data only on emergency shelters.
- AHAR Deadlines
  - On October 1, AHAR data collection begins in the HDX. At that time, HUD will assign Yolo a Data Liaison.
  - Mid-November is the draft deadline. Draft data does not need to have all data quality questions fully addressed by this date, but communities must submit data to give their Data Liaisons a chance to review their submission and provide feedback.
  - Mid-December is the final submission deadline.
- Provider Implications
  - One of the biggest provider implications is that agencies will need to go back to clients active as of October 1, 2015 and fill out one additional question that SSF added to address HUD's new chronically homeless definition.
  - In addition, agencies must accurately enter and exit clients in HMIS, particularly near the September 30 reporting deadline.
  - Agencies must also be willing to address some data quality or missing data issues.
  - Overall, however, AHAR does not place much of an additional burden on HMIS users. Most of the burden will fall on the County who will work with HUD's Data Liaison to submit the final reports.
- The group agreed to try to submit some AHAR data this year.
- The County will provide more information on how to address the chronically homeless question for clients active as of October 1, 2015 within the next few weeks.

## **HMIS MOU**

- The group reviewed the draft MOU and agreed to extend the notice of termination from 30 to 90 days. Since the next all-HPAC meeting is not until March, the group agreed to submit edits at the end of February and submit a final draft for HPAC ratification at their March 23 meeting.

## **Lead HMIS Designation**

- Since HUD requires that every CoC select a Lead HMIS agency, the group discussed whether to change Yolo's current designation from YCCC to the County. The group needed to clarify this in order to use accurate language within the MOU.
- Per SSF, the group also needed to create a Partner Agency Agreement in order to allow the Homeless Analyst proper access to the data.
- The group agreed to leave YCCC as the HUD HMIS Lead Agency, but allow the County to assume day-to-day HMIS operations.

## **Open vs. Closed System**

- The group discussed the benefits and drawbacks of opening Yolo's HMIS system.
  - In an open system, basic client profile information including demographic and programmatic data is shared among participating agencies. As long as agencies obtain client consent, an open system enables users to search for a client and view his or her service history with partner agencies. Client case notes are not shared. Aggregated program data is not viewable by partner agencies. Some benefits include reducing inefficiencies and duplication of services. It also allows for the development of coordinated entry.
  - A closed system does not allow the sharing of client information among agencies. Thus, a closed system only allows agencies to search and view service history for their own clients. Benefits of a closed system include increased privacy and confidentiality as well as reduced security and data sharing concerns.
- The group agreed that opening the system would be advantageous and the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.
- The County will begin working with SSF to start opening the system. The first action is to create and send out a Yolo-specific Interagency HMIS Data Sharing Agreement form for all HMIS agencies to sign.

## **Adjourn**

- The group discussed future meeting times. The group agreed that meeting directly before or after HPAC is not necessarily a convenient time. Rather, the group would prefer to meet on a different day at either the beginning or end of the day. The County will send out a Doodle poll to determine the best reoccurring time for future quarterly meetings.
- The County also asked each agency to confirm which staff they would like to have invited to these meetings.