NH-HMIS Happenings

Five Years Already?

Our team truly believes in the power of using data to better serve our clients. HMIS is the vehicle we can use to help drive additional funding. We look forward to working with you all to help New Hampshire meet and exceed its HMIS goals.

Inside this issue:

Harbor Homes, a nonprofit organization, became the NH Homeless Management Information Systems lead agency on August 1, 2010 with the aim to better equip New Hampshire agencies to provide accurate data quality. As we approach the 5 year milestone of running this project, we are proud of the partnerships we have created with each of the COCs as well as the work we have been able to accomplish together.

The system has really grown and changed. We started out with just Emergency Shelters, Transitional and Permanent housing programs, and since then have seen the HPRP (Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing) program that began in 2009 morph into the SGIA (State Grant in Aid) Homeless Prevention, and ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing projects.

We have seen the addition of the three SSVF projects at three agencies. The addition of the Runaway and Homeless Youth project includes twelve projects in MCOC and BOS: Street Outreach, Basic Center projects, Maternity Group Homes and Transitional living project. We have also seen the addition of eleven HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for People with AIDs) project in BOS, MCOC & GNCOC.

We will soon be adding the PATH projects (Project for Assistance in the Transition from Homelessness).

There have been many improvements, both from the user perspective and behind- the-scenes cleanup projects that have improved the system. We provide support for over 120 HMIS users and over 230 projects.

The NH HMIS team looks forward to continuing our efforts together. Thank you for all of your feedback to improve this project!

New HMIS Technical Writer

In March, the HMIS team welcomed a new technical writer, Lisa Tsiopras (formerly Lisa Brown) to the team. Lisa's background is in technical writing for the hardware electronics and software industries. She will be focused on updating and creating HMIS forms and training materials and will assist in improving HMIS data collection.

Lisa can be reached via email at l.brown@nhpartnership.org.

NH HMIS Policy and Governance Documents

Did you know that your HMIS Advisory Council updates the NH HMIS Policy and Governance document annually? We are in the process of reviewing the draft documents now, and so can you!

Check out current documents and let us know if you have any questions or feedback before our next meeting on **June 16th.**

Thank you!

http://nh-hmis.org/sites/default/files/reference/NH-HMIS-Policies-&-Procedures.pdf

http://nh-hmis.org/sites/default/files/reference/HMIS_Governance_Model.pdf

Data Quality/BHHS Annual Report

In December 2014 and January 2015, Michael Puleo sent a series of emails explaining that data would need to be updated/corrected because a new HUD data standard is taking effect. Since then, he has run and distributed data quality reports on a monthly basis. He has been lenient with the data correction turnaround time because of the amount of records that must be addressed.

It has come to our attention, however, that not only has data not been corrected, but reports have not even been downloaded for review. In addition, for most of the agencies that received his email, there are several months of reports that had not been opened.

If you need assistance with correcting data, the HMIS team is available to help. Just open a ticket and we will schedule a time to work with you.

Report Training/AA/ART, etc.

We do not have the Advanced Reporting Tool (ART) turned on in the training database due to cost. Because of this, each agency administrator may sign up for a program-specific ART training with someone from the HMIS team. If you'd like training, just open a ticket and we will schedule it.

Password Security

Security of a user's password is essential. If a user misplaces a password or shares it with someone else, there is a risk of breaching confidential client information. When you fail to protect this confidential data, not only do you jeopardize client information, but you could also lose your job, or face legal action.

Passwords must be 8 to 16 characters in length and must contain at least two numbers. The system allows only one active login per password at a time. In other words, you cannot log into the system on two terminals at the same time using a single password. Passwords automatically expire every 45 days. When your password expires, you must enter a new one; you cannot re-enter the same one.

Training Tips : Refresher Training

Would you like refresher training?

Did you know that the HMIS team uses GoToMeeting, a web- based screen sharing application, and can train you in the comfort of your own office?

All you need is a computer with an internet connection and a phone. We can customize the training to your needs!

? Do you need help with entering a household or maybe with data quality corrections? **Let us help!**

? Is online training impossible for you due to frequent interruptions? **Take a field trip to sunny Nashua and visit the HMIS think tank located in Harbor Homes at 45 High Street.**

? Would you like training, but prefer in-person training? **We will come to you! We want to help let us know what works best. Just open a ticket** http://support.nh-hmis.org/, **and we will work to schedule a day and time that works for you.** Data quality begins at data collection, not just data entry.

? Do you have case managers that collect HMIS data but do not enter the information into HMIS? **The NH HMIS team recognizes not all HMIS data is collected by the end users and agency administrators who have been trained in HMIS. We would like to help this group by offering a webinar on** *Filling Out the HMIS Paperwork*. **We will be sending out an email with the details soon.**

HMIS Wellness Checkups

In the winter news letter we mentioned the HMIS Wellness check up. HMIS will be sending out preliminary documentation soon to help agencies prepare for the wellness checkup.

Housing Inventory Count (HIC) Updates

The HMIS team has completed updating the HMIS database so that we can ensure that the numbers are accurate for the AHAR Annual Homeless Assessment Report and the up-and -coming System Performance Measurement reports.

System Performance Measures Update from HUD

System performance will be the foundation of HUD's evaluation of Continuums of Care (CoCs).

Last July, HUD published the System Performance Measures Introductory Guide that helps CoCs understand how HUD expects CoCs to calculate and use system-level performance measures. HUD has updated this guide to clarify some of the measures. HUD recommends that all stakeholders review this document to understand HUD's intent for system performance measurement and each specific measure.
HUD has created a new resource on the HUD Exchange called the System Performance Measures Tools page. This page will provide tools to help CoCs report on system performance measures.

This page has two newly released resources, listed below.

- System Performance Measures HMIS Programming Specifications: This document instructs HMIS vendors how to program their HMIS software to calculate the system performance measures. This document is written specifically for HMIS administrators and vendors to provide very specific instruction on what is included in each measure.
- System Performance Measure Table Shells: This document provides a visual representation of how HUD plans on collecting the system performance measures data.

HUD recognizes that HMIS programming takes time and is aware that it may take a few months for HMIS in each CoC to be updated to report on system performance measures per the System Performance Measures HMIS Programming Specifications.

HUD plans to release additional system performance resources in the coming months.

System Requirements for ServicePoint and ART

<u>HMIS Requirements</u>

Workstation Specification

The *minimum* desktop specifications for ServicePoint 5 are:

- **Computer –** PC only (Bowman does NOT officially support Macintosh).

- **Mobile Devices –** The only mobile device that is officially supported by Bowman Systems is the Apple iPad running the latest version of iOS. At the time of this writing, testing has been completed with version 8.1.2. However, many mobile devices may be able to run ServicePoint, but if the device does not support Java, or does not run Java version 7 release 76, then it will not run ART. ServicePoint will not display correctly on a screen smaller 1024 pixels wide, and may be too small to on screens less than 7 inches.

- **OS/Memory**

  #### Windows XP

  As of April 24, 2014 Microsoft has ended all support for Windows XP. As a result of the discontinued support, Microsoft is no longer providing updates to this operating system. This can result in security vulnerabilities that could render the installation unstable or even insecure. Because Microsoft is no longer supporting Windows XP, Bowman Systems cannot recommend using Windows XP with ServicePoint.

  Windows Vista – 4 GB recommended (2 GB minimum)

  Currently, there is a known issue using Internet Explorer 9 with Windows Vista. If using this configuration, it is impossible to download reports from ReportWriter. However, other versions of Internet Explorer allow the report to download fine, and Internet Explorer 9 will allow report download in other Operating Systems.

  Windows 7 – 4 GB recommended (2 GB minimum)

  Currently, Windows 7 is the most stable operating system for both ServicePoint and ART. Both architectures, 32bit and 64bit, run ServicePoint very well. However, if running the 64bit version of Windows 7 with Chrome, be sure to use the 32bit version of Java (see Java in Browsers Section). Chrome will not run 64bit Java.

  Windows 8 – 1 GB (32 bit), 2 GB (64 bit)

  There should be no issue with running Windows 8 as long as the most current version of Java that is installed is version Java 7 release 76. Be aware that within windows 8, there are 2 different versions of Internet Explorer. There is the "Modern" version of the browser as well as the classic "Desktop" version. The "Modern" version, that runs from the Live Tile interface, is not compatible with ART, however the classic desktop version is, as long as the proper version of Java is installed.

  Internet Explorer "Modern" version can cause the pop-ups to appear in difficult to read locations while in split screen mode as well as causing the browser to close unexpectedly. This is not a complete incompatibility issue, but it is a bug that can cause frustration. If the window unexpectedly closes before data can be saved, the data will have to be re-entered into the system upon re-load.

  #### Windows 8 RT

  Windows 8 RT, which is a version of Windows 8 for tablet devices, is not compatible with ART. This is because there is no other browser on the operating system except for the incompatible "Modern" version of Internet Explorer. Windows 8 RT only allows apps to be installed that are available in the Windows App store. Currently, no other browser is allowed in the Microsoft App store, making the incompatible version of Internet Explorer the only browser allowed to run on Windows 8 RT. Microsoft has begun to phase out Windows RT and it is being replaced with Windows 8.1.

  #### Windows 10

  With the soon to be released version of the Windows operating system, Windows 10, we urge all users to not upgrade to this operating system until thorough testing has been completed and all compatibility issues, if any, have been addressed. All users will be notified via a newswire when ServicePoint is compatible with Windows 10.

- **Java**

  Java is a required component for the Advanced Reporting Tool (ART). However, not all versions of Java are compatible with ART. Currently, Java version 7 release 76 (32 bit) is the only version of Java that is recommended by Bowman Systems in order to run ART. We do not recommend the 64 bit version of Java because Chrome is a 32 bit only browser and the 64 bit version of Java does not function in Chrome. This version of Java is no longer available from Oracle. If you need to download the correct version of Java, please contact your Bowman Systems CSS. Earlier versions of Java are not recommended due to other issues with Java itself that make it unstable, but versions back to version 6 release 45 can be used, although they are not recommended. If newer versions of Java are installed on your system, we recommend that they be uninstalled, and Java version 7 release 76 (32 bit) be installed. We also recommend disabling the "automatic update" feature to prevent unwanted updates to an incompatible version.

- **Monitor**

  Screen Display - 1024 x 768 (XGA)

- **Processor**

  A Dual-Core processor is recommended. Avoid machines with single core processors, which are usually much older computers.

- **Internet Connection**

  Broadband

Reminder: System Requirements for ServicePoint and ART

- **Browser**

⇒ ServicePoint is designed to be compatible with the newest versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Apple Safari

⇒ **Browser Performance**- In the context of ServicePoint 5, there are three factors that outweigh all others: data transfer efficiency, memory management, and machine speed.

⇒ **Data Transfer -** We have observed that transfer efficiency may quickly become an issue if the user's machine's internet connection or their browser has abnormalities. A very bad internet connection will have different effects in different browsers.

- ♦ How to find out if you have data transfer problems:
  - If things are fast, you don't have data transfer problems. If pages seem to load slowly or not at all, you may have data transfer problems; or you may have browser problems. At this point, a transfer problem is not certain, but may be possible.

⇒ **Memory Management -** Some browsers handle memory differently than others. The best practice for determining the best browser is to see if you experience any of the following issues.

- ♦ **Effects of poor memory management:**
  - Your overall system performance may degrade.
  - Your browser may suddenly seem to completely stop working. Blank pages may appear or certain page components won't work.
  - Your browser may run more and more slowly.

- ♦ **What to do:**
  - If you suspect that you may have poor browser memory management, try updating your browser to a more recent version before switching to a different brand of browser. More than likely, any major issue will have been fixed with a more current release. If you still have issues, try switching to one of the other 3 major browsers. If you need help updating your browser, contact your IT Department.

⇒ **Machine Speed -** Avoid machines with single core processors, which are usually much older computers. If your computer is a single-core machine operating at less than 2 GHZ, and you are not content with its performance:

- ♦ Switch to one of the fastest browsers. Chrome is recommended, Firefox is a good alternate; Internet Explorer versions 8, 9 and 10 are acceptable (see below for information regarding Internet Explorer version 11).
- ♦ Run no unnecessary programs while using ServicePoint.
- ♦ Monitor your CPU usage in Task Manager. If it is frequently at 100%, you need a more capable machine.
- ♦ Think about getting more RAM. But before you buy enough RAM to max out your computer, consider replacing your old computer with a new or used dual-core machine. Even an old dualcore tends to outperform a fully-upgraded, single-core in ServicePoint 5. Buying a used computer may actually cost less than buying a gigabyte or two of obsolete RAM for an older machine.

NH HMIS Advisory Council

The NH-HMIS Advisory Council advises and supports NH-HMIS operations in the following areas — resource development, consumer involvement, and quality assurance/accountability.

The Council will support the overall initiative, in particular advising the Management on HMIS operations. The HMIS Advisory Council shall meet at least quarterly, at which time HMIS decisions can be raised for discussion and/or approval. The HMIS Advisory Council shall designate a committee or task group to develop and help enforce the implementation of HMIS policies. More information about the Advisory Council can be found on the New Hampshire HMIS website at http://nh-hmis.org/content/hmis-advisory-council.

Council Members

Bureau of Homeless & Housing Services
Patricia Jackson
Michael Puleo

Balance of State CoC
Craig Henderson
Barry Quimby
Lori Hathaway
Susan Ford

Greater Nashua CoC
Miles Pendry
Abigail Alicea
Samantha Cassista

Manchester CoC
Cathy Kuhn
Richard Doyle

HMIS Lead Agency
Donna Curley
Tony Nappo

Harbor Homes is a non profit organization dedicated to creating and providing quality residential and supportive services for individuals and their families who are experiences mental illness and/or homelessness. The non profit organization became the Homeless Management Information Systems lead agency on August 1, 2010 with the aim to better equip New Hampshire agencies to provide accurate data quality.
For more information, see the New Hampshire HMIS website www.nh-hmis.org.

New Hampshire HMIS

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