

HUD Exchange - Data Quality 201 DQ Management Program, Part 2, 5/6/20

Alissa Parrish: Okay. Hello. Good afternoon, everybody. We are really glad you're here today. My name is Alissa Parrish and I am with ICF. Today we're going to be discussing "Data Quality 201 Part 2" and diving into some examples as well that can be used about your local data quality management program.

In the chat, I did already post a link to the tools that we will be discussing today. So I hope that you can see that. It's probably the first thing you should see -- one of the first things you should see, but I will post it again and trying to continue to post that throughout the session so that you have access to that.

They will be really important for you today, because you'll be able to pull them up. You know, in person, we would give them to you on paper so that you could kind of see them as we're walking through them, but hopefully you are able to [inaudible]. Before we really dig into the content, just want to go through a couple of housekeeping items.

So the webinar is scheduled to last about 60 minutes. We will post a link to the recording and the slides at some point in the near future. So during the session today, all participants will be in listen-only mode. We do have a couple of wonderful humans, John Panetti [ph] and Chantel Key supporting us today in the background.

So if there are any technical issues, you may hear from them. They may jump in and help you out with that. We do encourage you to use the chat box. So on the right side of your screen you should see the chat box open. If you do not, if you click on the little circle with three dots on the lower part of your screen, there should be the chat that you can click on to open.

While we are in a very different reality right now we do encourage this to be a very interactive session. We know we have some queens and kings related to data quality in the room. And so we want to hear from you. We want to hear about what you've been doing in the communities related to data quality and a comprehensive [inaudible].

So please use that. Real quick note about NHSDC, for anybody who is unfamiliar, this virtual event and the past couple of events have been co-sponsored by NHSDC and HUD and then after this virtual conference, which I hope you all have been able to sit in on a few of the sessions over the last couple days, NHSDC will be sending out surveys to get your feedback about how this [inaudible].

So be sure to take a minute and respond. So we're going to dig right into the learning objectives before we get really deep into the tools. Again, we're really excited to have everybody here today, definitely appreciate the flexibility with doing this virtually given the current situation we're all dealing with.

We are hoping that you are all staying safe and sane. Again, we do want this to be interactive as possible. So while you are in listen-only mode please make sure to use the chat box to chime in and ask questions and also share best practices that you are doing in your community.

During this session, we are going to give you a sneak peek of the data quality management program tools that will be available. So the link is in there and this is a temporary link right now. I think they will have a permanent home on the HUD Exchange at some point in the future, but for today you are able to open that link and open up those tools and download them and give them a [inaudible] them.

The tools are really meant to fit into the communities' overall efforts and addressing data quality in HMIS and then we will end by helping -- so we'll talk through each of those tools and how they fit into the DQMP and then we'll end by helping think through an action plan for next steps that you can bring back to your communities to address your DQMP regardless of what stage you're in [inaudible].

So quickly the session agenda, it does build upon the Data Quality 201 DQMP Part 1 session that Mike and Natalie did on, I want to say, Monday. If you weren't able to join that one, that one will also be [inaudible] at that time. We will go through a quick review of what a DQMP is and then we will dig into the tools, which you see there are five of them.

So in the vein of trying to make this as interactive as possible knowing that we're all in our own little homes at this point, we do want to kick off with a poll very quickly to ask who is currently in the room with us. And so we are going to start that. You can select all that applies.

So if you represent both a CoC and an HMIS lead or a participating organization and the CoC, please feel free to select all that apply. Most votes are in, it looks like we have a lot of HMIS lead administrators, a few representatives from CoCs, a couple of participating organizations, government entities and otherwise. Thank you.

So the next question that we have is let's talk about DQMP, what is it? And so this isn't a poll, but we would like you to use the chat functionality to answer this question, in your mind what is a data quality management program? And while you're doing that I see a couple of questions that have come in on the Q&A.

One is about call-in information. John, are they able to call in on their phones if they need to?

Mike Lindsay: [inaudible] chat, Alissa, but if you want to go ahead and talk through it now, that'd be great.

Alissa Parrish: Oh, the question. Should the data quality report consider a client [inaudible] information or should it only capture data not collected as missing information? So Mike's response was, "Client doesn't know, refused."

Should not be considered data not collected because it is a valid response that a client can give to any given data element, but your community should still be considering appropriate or expected levels of that client doesn't know or client refused option.

Mike Lindsay: And Alissa, sorry, I was muted there for a second, but John Panetti is working out the call-in detail with a couple of folks. So that's being handled privately. Thanks for addressing the question that came into the box. If there are any other questions that come in, you can go ahead and address them now. If not, we'll just keep them in there.

Alissa Parrish: All right. So a quick review on the data quality management program. So we kind of think of this as a study guide in an open-book test. It's the framework and the way in which all entities involved in a community's data quality understand their roles and responsibilities related to that program.

It does also set the baseline requirements for all organizations participating in HMIS by project type and covers all of the different components of data quality, which are completeness, timeliness, accuracy and consistency. DQMP also includes the goals the CoC has related to HMIS data quality and the tools it will take to get from the baseline to the ideal.

So we want the DQMP to be comprehensive, clear and include all the information any entity involved will need to succeed. And just quick review here, so when we talk about data quality, we are specifically speaking to the data that's in HMIS. We know that HUD relies on data from HMIS to inform how communities are doing and addressing and ending homelessness.

We know that communities are using data in HMIS to inform them on how they are doing at addressing any homelessness and we know that even at the project level they are using HMIS data to inform them on how they are doing at addressing and ending homelessness and without high data quality we aren't providing an accurate reflection of homelessness or homeless services system that's needed for effectiveness.

So the question you want to be able to answer yes to is does your community's HMIS accurately reflect your homeless services systems, the persons you are serving and how they navigate through that system and their outcomes. So real quickly touching on the components of data quality, which I'm sure you all have heard of many, many times.

So completeness of how many of the data elements required to be entered into the HMIS were actually entered and this also includes system coverage. So how many beds that are dedicated to serving clients experiencing homelessness are entered into your system? Timeliness, how quickly is the data entered into the system after [inaudible] from the clients?

Accuracy, which can be a little bit more difficult to measure, but how much of the data entered into the HMIS a reflection of the client's reality? And then consistencies, so is the way in which the data elements are interpreted and entered at organization A the same way in which they interpreted at organization B and are they using -- entering -- and are users entering that data into the system on a consistent basis?

So are those definitions the same? And then a quick review on what a DQMP is. So it's a non-static thing, it constantly evolves as the community's baseline of data quality changes and then as the expectations change because there's progress made. So it should be ambitious and not unrealistic and you should start with where you currently are.

So where is your system currently related to completeness, timeliness, accuracy and consistency and then know where you want to get, create actionable steps to get there with timeliness to get from here to there. And the framework integration [inaudible], so the entire process from creation to [inaudible] revision, because again, this was an iterative process.

[inaudible]. So trust is a really big piece of a DQMP. Each entity needs to trust that the other entity's involved, know what their roles and responsibilities are and also struggles and that's part of what the enforceable agreements help with. So they're a big part of the DQMP. It's what codifies what happens when any given entity isn't upholding their part of the process.

So reviewing enforceable agreements also define how an entity will benefit when they do uphold their part of the process. So incentives and enforcements within those agreements. So Mike, I'm going to hand it over to you and before you get started, I am going to post the link to the tools again just to make sure that everybody saw that, because [inaudible] tool.

Mike Lindsay: Great. Thanks, Alissa. Okay. Guys, we're going to go ahead and jump more specifically into the data quality management program tools and resources that have been developed. So combination of Alissa and probably John Panetti as well will drop links into the chat where you guys can pull down the resources that we want to talk you through today.

Just to be clear, those resources are going to be available on that link probably just throughout today. We have to pull those resources back down. They will be made available through the NHSDC site. They'll probably take two to three weeks to get there. So for everyone on the call today, pull those resources down, download those resources.

They can start to be used in your community today. So myself and Natalie, Alissa had already talked briefly about it.

So myself and Natalie, on Monday, did the overall data quality management program overview 101 session and what we really heard specifically from folks -- I think most of the questions that came in probably came in from folks that are on the call today were looking for tools, looking for resources, looking for examples.

I mean, we know as TA providers that's the most valuable tools and pieces of information available to communities. So this data quality management program, just to be clear, like it is a product that has been worked on by a number of TA providers. It is going to be made available to communities and published, we're going to cross our fingers and say sometime this year.

It is in its final stages of review, just not quite ready for distribution. It's going to be critical for you to access that resource, walk your community through that process, but the tools that we're able to make available today are just as valuable as the process. The process document really is

going to follow what Alissa and I are going over today, what Natalie and I went over on Monday.

These tools and resources are going to be part of the suite of products that come out, but we can give you access to those today. So pull those down, save those to your computer, print them out, start to use them -- start to utilize them. They have a lot of utility through this process but also this utility in your community as well.

So if you were with us at NHSDC in October in Austin -- I almost had to think a little bit too hard about where we were, but we were in Austin in October and myself and Chris Picture [ph] did this session there as well. It's the same resources we're going to talk folks through them today.

It's not the perfect format for this type of interactive workshop. So we're going to talk through the resources a little bit. Please, take a look at the resources, if you have any questions, drop them into the chat. If you used these resources locally over last six months since the last NHSDC session, we would love to hear your experience.

Right now in today's session we're not going to have an opportunity to talk through your experience. Drop your experience in the Q&A box, we'd love to hear it. We'd love for you to be able to share with other folks. If you have challenges, etc., we want to hear about those as well.

So there are five resources that are made available for today's session and Alissa and I are going to spend some time briefly talking through each one of those. While we're on the call today feel free to look at them. If we were in person, we'd be having you work through in small groups how to use these tools, how to implement these tools.

Go ahead and do that on your own today. If you have questions, drop them in the chat and we'll talk through things. There are five resources that are available today, will be available in the final product. It's a roles and responsibility worksheet.

We're going to talk about that one in a moment, but I think this is a really valuable resource, regardless whether we're thinking about setting up a data quality management program in a community or we're just thinking about HMIS governance as a whole. So I'll talk through this in a moment.

We're also going to talk through a sample data quality plan. The data quality plan really is based off of best practices. You may see pieces of your current data quality plan show up in the report or overall structure, it was developed based on what we saw in the field based on what was working in the field.

There's also a sample HMIS participating organization agreement. You know, again, language, knowledge, content that you can pull, you can lift, you can adjust, you can copy-paste, you can use in your agreements as well. Alissa talked about the need to have enforceable agreements in place in your community.

Most communities want to know like how do we get those established, what do those look like? I think what we want to talk about overall with the data quality management program is how do you enforce those agreements, not only what needs to be part of those agreements.

So I think when you're going through your roles and responsibility worksheets and you're thinking about enforcement, like where does that actual enforcement happen in your community. And then we're also going to talk through a sample data quality monitoring visit report and improvement plan.

In a lot of communities that we work in, that's the missing piece. There's a lot of HMIS leads that do a lot of work around data quality, don't necessarily have an informed, documented like monitoring process, follow-up process, corrective action process. Some sample data quality monitoring tools and resources are also available in that.

And then the last one that we're going to talk about is the HMIS data quality improvement strategies. Again, I think this is a really valuable resource.

Even if you already have a data quality management program or you're not quite ready to embark on one but want to understand the details this roles and responsibilities worksheet and the improvement strategies can tell you a lot about how your system is functioning as well as how appropriate your governance structure is.

So with that, want to talk just a little bit about this specific resource. So this one, the roles and responsibility worksheet, we just have a very quick copy and paste of it on the slide itself, but if you download the full document, there's a lot more here. It walks through what we expect to be the major responsibilities around data quality and everything -- back me up for one second, Alissa.

So everything from data collection to operations, policy and procedure development, etc. to the monitoring process. This gives your community two opportunities.

One, to think about how you roles and responsibilities should be established to enforce a strong data quality management program and the expectations in it but also, and I think just as important, this is a very valuable process to put your community through to understand how your HMIS governance is currently set up.

So to do this process, you should be pulling your governance charter, pulling your -- any charters that you have, if you have work groups, charters, etc., pulling those together and understanding where your governance structure says these types of responsibility sit. In a perfect world, your governance structure should tell you enough to complete all of this and it should make sense when you're done.

What we would say is -- well, probably not. We'd probably -- I mean, we know right now we don't live in a perfect world, but even last year at this time we probably didn't live in a perfect world then either. More than likely your governance charter doesn't necessarily call out all roles

and responsibilities that folks need to have identified in their community or they're not clear or they're confined to one organization.

This type of process gives you the opportunity to rethink that through the lens of data quality but more important, rethink it through the lens of governance of your system. Go ahead, Alissa, you can move it forward. So when we think of governance of your HMIS system, this is a good time to check it.

This is a good time to make sure it's accurate, make sure it's complete, make sure it's concise, make sure it's clear. If it's not, it won't stand up this type of exercise, walking through roles and responsibility process. This process has proven pretty valuable in most communities that we're applying it not only through the data quality work but also just through general governance work as well.

So we certainly suggest that you take the opportunity to walk through this through the lens of your data quality management program, soon-to-be data quality management program but just through the lens of establishing strong HMIS governance in your community.

For data quality management, it'll benefit your process for your greater community. It'll benefit you at some point. Stronger governance, or better yet weak governance, doesn't really rear its head in most communities until there's a problem, until there's a challenge.

Communities, like HMIS vendor goes out of business, HMIS lead isn't interested in playing that role any longer, like that type of challenge or crisis in a community really identifies how weak a governance structure is, how unclear roles and responsibilities are.

Before that happens, this is a great time -- if that happens, before or if, this is a great time, through the lens of your data quality management program, revisit your governance structure, make sure it has clear roles and responsibilities in place, make sure everything is not sitting with the HMIS lead, should be a community-based process.

This is a community-based system. The quality of the data in the system is the responsibility of everybody in your community and is of value to everyone in your community. So as you're moving towards a data-driven decision-making process, data-driven leaders in your community, they should be just as invested in the quality of data as your HMIS leads are.

Certainly encourage you to think about different work group structures and how work group structures made up of folks that don't only reside in your HMIS lead can help to set policy, help to do monitoring, help to do data quality monitoring, etc. A lot of communities are sharing these responsibilities outside of their HMIS lead through very structured work group processes.

Go ahead, Alissa. So again, we would love to like interact with you, talk our way through it, troubleshoot things with you, answer questions.

We are not going to have that flexibility today, hopefully in October we'll all be back together in person somewhere and we can get into that level of discussion, but for right now if you've had an

opportunity to work with this product or if you have thoughts on how you can use it, what challenges there might be, etc., drop them into the chat, I think, or into the Q&A.

It's great to get your feedback or collecting all of your feedback. We'll address as much of it today as we can -- address questions, but we're capturing everything on today's call. So if you have experience, please drop them into the Q&A, we'd love to hear about it. And I will turn it back over to Alissa to move onto the next tool.

Alissa Parrish: Thank you. So the next tool that we're going to go over is the sample data quality plan. It is what I would consider the big guy or the framework related to all of the DQMP tools. So just a couple notes of -- Mike was hitting heavy on the governance side of this, that the data quality plan does need to meet the community's needs and to use your governance structure and the roles and responsibilities from that first tool.

So I think throughout this session you will see that there's a running theme that these tools don't function in a silo in and of themselves, they're all connected back to each other in some way, shape or form. So roles and responsibilities worksheet will help you -- help inform your data quality plan as you're building that out.

Data quality plan should also be informed by actual data quality measures of your current system. So where is your system currently related to completeness, timeliness, accuracy, consistency that covers all those things that are components of data quality?

So measuring your baseline today, knowing where you are now and then setting standards that the community knows that they can start towards that isn't crazy and is realistic but it's also ambitious.

We didn't mention this today, I don't know if you and Natalie mentioned in DQMP 201 Part 1 on Monday, we mentioned it in Data Quality 101 yesterday but the HUD TA data strategy really lays out where HUD hopes to see communities in the next three to five years related to data quality.

And so keep that in mind as you are also building out your data quality plan. Again, you can kind of gauge where you are today -- where your system is today related to those different pieces of data quality and then right-size your data quality plan and your baseline for your year over year.

So going back to the initial review of a data quality plan and a DQMP, it's not static, it's iterative, the process is ongoing. It should be reviewed on a regular basis, ideally annually, and as your system improves in those different pieces, your baselines will change as will what you're striving towards, your [inaudible].

So the sample data quality plan, just to note, it is a large [inaudible] document. You can use it as a sample, but we highly encourage you to work with the CoC to make it -- to right-size it -- to fit it and use it to make real decisions on the [inaudible] data quality for your specific CoC.

So this is an example. These are pieces that you can put into a data quality plan, but it really needs to be customized for your community. Data quality planning does need to be done regularly and by more than just the HMIS lead. So that goes back to the roles and responsibilities worksheet.

It is a CoC-wide effort. Everybody who cares about data quality, everybody who's involved needs to be at the table in creating a data quality plan to help with buy-in [inaudible] into your community's plan. The component of a data quality, as we have that pulled up, we've just listed here just important pieces.

I think in the example -- or sample, you will see the different components of data quality are broken out by project type. So different pieces or different projects may have different expectations of their thresholds or their goals for the next year related to data quality, because their baselines are somewhat different.

And then it also speaks to data quality monitoring and we will get into another tool later on that will go further into the monitoring visit and an improvement plan. I've seen a lot on the chat. Anything we need to address, Mike, before we move onto the next tool?

Definitely want to hear from communities on how they've built out their data quality plan to-date, if there is a timeline on how often you review that and who's involved in reviewing that on how you set up your baselines, how you found what is in your plan now and where you hope to go.

Mike Lindsay: So Alissa, I didn't see any questions come in through the Q&A, but there may be a couple sneaking in through the chat. Can you look in the chat and check for questions there? I'll go onto the next tool and then we can bring it back around, we can answer questions -- or address the questions there. Thanks.

Okay. Thanks, again, everybody. So we want to jump into and talk a little bit about potential HMIS participating organization agreement. Again, communities are pretty consistently looking for templates, looking for resources, looking for what works in other communities for folks that have walked this path before me, like what did they use, what did they develop.

The participating organization agreement that is part of the data quality management program, we can make available to you guys today, is built off of best practices. Again, it's built off of agreements that have been put in place in communities probably going back 10 to 15 years ago, have a lot of TA lenses on them, TA eyes on them as well as being passed from one community to another.

As those resources get developed, they get strengthened. What we see is a lot of communities -- early adopters sometimes have like the early adopted version of the template that was being used, folks jumping in 5 years, 10 years later may have a best practice that they're building from.

Makes sense for all communities, regardless where you are in that lifecycle, to revisit your participating organization agreements consistently but definitely through the data quality

management program setup process. Rethink -- so yeah, I want to go back to like the goal of the participating organization agreement is to be clear, is to set expectations.

It is to set expectations that you can monitor towards, but it is more importantly -- and I think for HMIS leads on the call today, it is to ensure that you have something enforceable in your community so that your work can be enforced.

Most HMIS leads we work with one of the first things we hear is data quality is a problem, I can analyze data quality, I can follow up on it, I can write emails, I can send reports, but the data quality never seems to get any better, at least for some organizations, some usual suspects.

Putting a very strong agreement in place, enforceable agreement, with either carrots or sticks applied to them, either it points to a NOFA process or the lack of points to a NOFA process or local funding decisions being made particularly with a piece of or a lens being applied to HMIS participation or data quality is really valuable.

In communities where we see a seamless process, the HMIS lead with help and support from some type of HMIS work group, data quality work group, does the majority of the monitoring, does the majority of the reporting, does the majority of the follow-up, does the majority of the TA all the way up until the point where like progress isn't being made any longer.

And then instead of the HMIS lead in those communities continuing to try what isn't working in those communities, CoC steps in and enforces the agreements, again, either enforces it through a carrot or enforces it through a stick. I think Alissa and I see better results in communities where it can be identified as a carrot, bonus points on an application, bonus funding.

A lot of communities just celebrate, data quality wins and stars in their community. We see that type of positive reinforcement work a lot better. That said, for those communities who have tried specifically positive reinforcement at times, like holding funding up or requiring a specific level of HMIS participation of data quality through your funding decisions is a viable option either way.

So there's language and there's tools that you can pull from. There are -- there's language in the tools that you can pull from that I think working with your CoC to ensure that the buy-in and the commitment, some of the points that Natalie and I went over yesterday, are reflected in your organizational agreements but also are ready to be imposed in your communities.

I think the only additional point I want to make on these, in a lot of communities, these types of agreements are seen as formalities. I think from our experience, there are absolutely not formalities. This is what your community -- what you have to rely on in case you are not able to make progress through very gentle emails or the offer of technical assistance or come out to an organization and try to help them troubleshoot some data.

These are the agreements that you can rely on your CoCs to enforce on your behalf. Think it's the buy-in and the commitment that is just as important as the language that's in your agreements.

We can go ahead and move past that, Alissa. So there's, I'm sure, a discussion question coming up.

Obviously, don't have the opportunity for this today. When we think about your participating organizations and how you're able to hold them accountable, what kind of issues or challenges do you have and have you tried to put more enforceable agreements in place or are you having difficulty in actually enforcing them?

Again, it's not necessarily the HMIS lead's responsibility to enforce as much as it is to analyze, report, follow-up on, but if there are communities that are making a lot of headway and getting the buy-in and support from your CoCs, we'd love an opportunity to hear a little bit about that.

Alissa, have you had an opportunity to check any of the questions in the chat, anything you want to talk through here?

Alissa Parrish: Yeah. There was a question about what sanction CoCs are using and I think for enforcements and incentives, enforcements can be as small as hosting [inaudible] in a public space and that can also be an incentive. Going all the way to the other end of the spectrum of money involves a carrot and a stick.

I don't know if you've seen specifically sanctions that work well versus enforcements that work well.

I know that we've worked with communities where -- and we talked about this yesterday a little bit too where visualizing data -- so just putting the data out there in a dashboard or a simple-to-read graphic and especially for those non-participating organizations where they want to be able to show that they're part of the homeless services system and they're making a difference and they're serving clients not being included in said graphics can be a fairly powerful motivator as well.

I don't know whether that's an incentive or an enforcement [inaudible] the tool that can be used. I don't know if you have other thoughts on that, Mike, that you've seen.

Mike Lindsay: Yeah. I think the -- you know, using the incentivizing participation and incentivizing high data quality goes a long way in communities.

I think the -- we've seen a lot of communities kind of celebrating success in their communities for their highest-performing organizations as well as highest-performing users and by doing that like public acknowledgement, what they're also doing is a little bit of public shaming or at least if you're not acknowledged this round, there's a higher desire to want to be acknowledged next round.

So I think utilizing like scorecards or identifying your highest-performing communities, highest-performing programs, highest-performing users -- I mean, there are ways to incentivize ways to celebrate success that doesn't necessarily specifically publicly shame folks or to use the stick approach but can accomplish the same thing.

So being flexible about how you think through this -- I think being flexible and being innovative goes a long way.

Alissa Parrish: There's one other question real quickly, so going back up a little bit, and I think it had to do with the data quality plan and the baseline. So high turnover at the staff level can be an issue related to maintaining high data quality. I think that there's something to be said for an organizational culture of data quality.

So for participating organizations, they find a participating organization agreement ideally there's some level of investment at the organization level related to HMIS data quality and being invested in that. And so regardless of the staff and how often they're turning over and the users that are there, that organizational culture still stands.

And so that any new staff members that -- any new team members at that organization that are going through training and orientation that that culture of data quality is instilled in them from day one. I don't know if you have any other thoughts on that, Mike.

Mike Lindsay: No. I think that's great.

Alissa Parrish: So the next tool -- I don't even know what the next number this is at this point, but it's the sample data quality monitoring visit report and improvement plan. I think if we were building out this specific document, we saw that it could be -- like the data quality improvement plan could be used separate from the monitoring visit report.

So the monitoring visit report is really meant for onsite monitoring, for security of privacy, fidelity to HMIS processes and procedures. Definitely, I think for all of this entire DQMP process, like there's a grace period and an understanding or acknowledgement that if these things are new for the participating organizations, that there is a period of time where there's a grace period.

And this is especially the case for onsite monitoring, especially if that has never happened before or if it has happened in the past, it's been more informal. So then you get clarity about what will happen with the monitoring report and improvement plan. So some questions to answer at the community level, who will be involved in that process?

Does it go to the CoC, other providers? Is this a public process? And then going all the way back to the governance structure we've [inaudible] talked about related to roles and responsibilities, that will need to support this specific process. So some other questions to answer related to monitoring, who is going to do that, who will the information be shared with, what happens with the improvement plan process?

What happens is that plan that is implemented doesn't actually improve data quality. What changes the improvement plan and where does this information get shared? I think data quality monitoring onsite visits can be difficult if you have a very large geography or you don't have

proper HMIS budgeting and staffing resources, but it is critical that the DQMP be monitored for fidelity and the improvement plans make the desired improvements.

So who is going to enforce that DQMP? Who has the ability to do that? I think when it comes to monitoring, there's some stuff that can be done remotely or desk monitoring. So running data quality reports. I think that as we start thinking more about accuracy, there's just something that I think --

I've seen some of it mentioned in the chat where in the system, everything looks fine and it's not really until you're able to either go onsite and compare if an agency is still using CAPER files to what's in the system or really be able to talk with users about what's happening on the ground where accuracy really becomes more focused.

So I think there is a piece to be said for the onsite monitoring piece. So the second part of that document, if you have it pulled up, I do not, but the improvement plan, like I said, can be used separate from the monitoring visit report.

It was just a single document as the template or an example, because I think an onsite visit really lends itself to determining whether or not any given organization needs to implement a data quality improvement plan, but if you are doing desk monitoring or you are running reports and you're noticing a consistent theme of this organization isn't improving or worse yet, this organization is doing worse, I think a data quality improvement plan could be implemented then, but that all needs to be [inaudible] into your overall data quality plan.

So again, we'd love to hear from you on how monitoring and improvement processes function in your community who have involved -- who hears about those results. Are these public-facing? And what happens ultimately is the data quality improvement plan doesn't improve the data.

Mike Lindsay: Hey Alissa, we had a couple questions come in through the Q&A that I think would be helpful to talk through. So folks, you can keep dropping your questions in the Q&A and we'll address -- talk through as many as we can here.

We had a question come in from Erika [ph] that asked, "In smaller communities, how do you avoid conflicts of interest when monitoring or making decisions for incentives and enforcement using a working group to make or support management of those decisions?" Do you want to talk through that a little bit, Alissa?

I can start us and then you can react to it. I mean, this is a challenge in most communities, whether they're large or small. In most communities that we work in -- that you guys work with or in your community, there are only so many folks that are engaged and informed in like an HMIS kind of conversation.

So yes, establishing working groups that don't have conflicts of interest is a difficult process. So we're looking in those types of communities for community and data-driven leaders to become a part of their continuum, HMIS decision-making process, etc. that may sit outside of their standard homeless providers.

So a lot of communities are looking towards local researchers, whether that's through their local colleges or universities, to have some folks like that start to join the conversation as well. I think it's surprising when those -- when the -- that opportunity is opened up a little.

It's surprising how many folks in your communities may have an interest being part of this process. So one, it's opening up that door a little bit broader outside of just your standard homeless response organizations or providers. And I think other one is in a lot of communities, like that conflict of interest is going to exist.

So it isn't necessarily the HMIS working group that would be developing a policy or approving a final plan, that should really be done at the CoC level. The -- some type of working group can operate on that CoC's behalf. So we're looking for very objective tools, very objective processes, very objective feedback loops as well as review processes.

So if you're utilizing an HMIS committee to do some monitoring, to do some follow-up, yeah, watch out for those conflicts of interest, ensure that you have objective processes built in from start to finish, ensure that your HMIS leads understand how they'll be monitored and who they're monitored by and that there is a clear and transparent process.

And again, it's not the HMIS -- it's not a working group that's responsible for everything, it might be the working group that's responsible for like delivering the monitoring process that's reviewed and approved at the CoC level. So increasing that objectivity, but I think there are -- these are natural perceived or actual conflicts of interest in most communities.

And so I think there are certainly some ways that it can be worked out. And then the next question, Alissa -- so there was a question that came in -- oh, I lost it. It was about don't know and refused -- so there was a question that came in, Alyssa, if you want to talk through this one, can client doesn't know and refused and data not collected be combined into one benchmark or should they be separated?

So Alissa, can you talk a little bit around the different expectations around those responses?

Alissa Parrish: Yeah. So I can give my perspective and Mike, obviously, feel free to weigh in. But client doesn't know and client refused are allowable options in the [inaudible] standard. So you ask the client the question, they say I don't know, you ask the client a question, they refuse to answer, those are allowable answers for any of the HUD data elements in the system.

I think the client -- or data not collected is really an answer that's used if you, as the intake worker, didn't even ask the client the question. So I personally see those two things as very distinct, separate issues where data not collected is the intake worker didn't ask the client a question for whatever reason. And the client doesn't know, client refused, client got the question, you just don't have an answer. I think there should be a threshold or that should be addressed for client doesn't know, client refused option. If it is high percentage in, say, a permanent supportive housing project, I don't know if it's -- like there should be a flag there; right?

There might be something going on with the way in which the intake workers are asking the questions to get the client to say I don't know or I refuse to answer that or there might be something else going on that's facilitating a high percentage of those answers for those clients.

But I do see client doesn't know, client refused over here and data not collected over here and keeping them separate makes sense to me.

Mike Lindsay: I think that's exactly right, Alissa, and I think a good description for why you don't want to bucket those things together. They don't mean the same thing. I think to Alissa's point, you do want to watch out for client doesn't know and refused -- like watch out for those response categories.

Should be setting some type of expectation for how many of those type responses are showing up in your system but not the same way you're setting it for null or missing; right? Like keeping an eye on it, seeing how it reacts, potentially setting like some expectations based on historically what your data has told you, but they're not the same response categories.

There's a difference in our case workers or intake workers aren't asking the question versus the client chose not to provide the information or didn't know the information. So there's a process change there, there's a workflow change there and yes, we should be collecting that information definitely.

As Alissa pointed out, like how you follow up on it may be different based on the scope of the project or the project component. If it's a permanent supportive housing program, that's telling and concerning and you should probably take a realistic look at it. If it's your shelter systems, you might need to look at that slightly different depending on how your shelters operate. So we can go ahead and keep moving.

Alissa Parrish: Yeah. There was one other question about [inaudible] not collected or services only, I think that's a really good point to make, because it circles back to the data quality plan and looking at the baseline based on different project types where street outreach may have a very different baseline than permanent supportive housing for the different components of data quality.

I think for outreach, just remember that there is that point -- like that date of engagement of which data quality actually matters after that. Prior to that it doesn't matter.

I mean, I shouldn't it doesn't matter, but like the expectation is that prior to date of engagement in an outreach project you are building that relationship with that client to be able to get better data quality and build that relationship to provide them better services after that specific date. This is you, Mike.

Mike Lindsay: Yeah. I'm just responding quickly to a question in the chat -- or in the Q&A. If folks have additional questions, drop them in there, Alissa and I will respond verbally or in writing to as many questions as we can. But again, I want to highlight one more tool before we talk about potential next steps and start to wrap up with you guys today.

So this tool, I think, is just as valuable as the first one that we looked at, valuable in the sense of not only valuable for -- as you are thinking through a data quality management program, it's valuable today even if you don't have an actual management program in place.

If you're able to run data quality reports, you can measure your overall data quality across your system, this is a valuable resource for you even if you're not ready -- your community is not quite ready to embark on a full-blown data quality management program.

But as you begin to operationalize your strategy or if you're looking at your current data quality, there are tools that are built into the data quality management product suite to assist you in identifying problem areas and establishing strategies to address.

So this tool specifically goes through each of the key, you can move us forward, Alissa, components of data quality, why they matter, how to address them, how often across all of the major domains, completeness, timeliness, accuracy, entries, exits, all clients served, etc.

It identifies the critical components of that -- or the critical aspects of that component, why it's important to you, why it's important in your communities, how you can address or troubleshoot areas and how often you should be taking another look at it.

So for folks that are asking or having challenges around completeness, the tool sets you up with some potential resources or strategies to address lower than expected completeness rates as well as timeliness, consistency and accuracy. I really want to flag consistency and accuracy for folks.

We talk a lot about like the lifecycle of HMIS as a whole. HMIS has existed, depending on who you talk to and how long they've been involved in the work, somewhere around 20 years. The first 5 to 10 years feel like they were very focused on just standing HMIS systems up, trying to encourage participating, just trying to get communities, agencies, providers to utilize the system.

Then the next couple years started to really focus on the completeness rates of the data in those systems. Some communities are still looking at completeness rates, but I think the next five years or so are going to be focused on the accuracy part. How do we really understand accuracy in a data system, specifically for the types of populations that our communities serve and how do we start to ensure that there's accuracy built into that?

There's some tools built into the process. There are some behind-the-scene technology tools that could be used.

There's also a lot around like actual in-person monitoring that may have to happen in some communities to be able to manage the accuracy of the data in their system, but if you think about how your data systems are being used to -- being leveraged for coordinated entry, assessing folks, referring folks, accepting folks into programs, making funding decisions based off of your data in a health crisis like we're in, we're all in right now making decisions based off the data in your system.

These data systems have been built over the last 20 years. We're going to collectively want to learn more about how to protect the accuracy of the data in the system.

The tools provide some ways to get started, we're going to be looking to folks like you guys over the next year, two years to really learn what you're doing around accuracy and see if we can identify more strategies, more best practices, but the tool can help you whether you're thinking about completeness rates or accuracy rates. They'll help you work with your community, put some strategies in place to continue to move forward.

Alissa, we have about four minutes left. You can probably take us to the next steps slide and start to wrap us up.

Alissa Parrish: Great. So I think [inaudible] slides are really just your action plan, thinking to reaffirm the content based on the tools that you now have in your hand [inaudible] what are your next most important steps to take back to your community related to the DQMP.

Is it based on what you're going to focus on, who you're going to try and get at the table, timeline for when these things will occur or -- and also like why are these steps important? Why are these next steps the most important ones for you to take? So would love to hear from you in the chat on those questions.

I see some more questions coming in that we can try and answer here. Here is a question about anyone diagnose where their accuracy issues are in their HMIS data?

And I think -- I mean, some of them are mentioned in the sample data quality plan and I think they're based largely on like the LSA data quality table that really lays out what the LSA looks at, multiple heads of household or no heads of household for any given household, project start and date of birth being the same date especially for heads of household, minors who are veterans, things like that.

And I think, yeah, the response from Lynn [ph] that [inaudible] going to be different based on the project or the [inaudible] organization. Each one might have [inaudible].

Mike Lindsay: Okay. Folks have any final questions or comments? Alissa and I are more than happy to take them or address them. Alissa, any other questions in the chat that you want to address today?

Alissa Parrish: No. The chat was really active. Thank you guys for being as interactive as we can in this new virtual reality in which we all live. We really hope that you find the tools useful and we thank you for your time today. Anything else, Mike?

Mike Lindsay: So just real quickly to Renee's [ph] question about downloading the chat, good information there, we're downloading all that information and collecting all that information, I'm not exactly sure, across all of the sessions, what we'll do with all that information, but to Renee's question, yeah, it's being collected.

We're going to work with HUD to figure out how to pull the most valuable pieces out of the multiple dialogue boxes over multiple sessions and put together some resources that get out to folks. So yes, anything that was dropped in the chat or Q&A is all part of this session, we're all collecting it and we will do our best to ensure that resources and material from the sessions get back out to participants.

So thanks, everybody for joining today. Thanks a lot, Alyssa, John and Chantel, appreciate your support. Thanks, everybody for joining today. Please be safe, take care of yourselves, take care of the folks that you're doing your best to serve in your communities. Thanks a lot, Alissa. Thanks, everybody.

Chantel Key: Thank you. Take care.

(END)