# HMIS 101:
# Understanding the Interconnectedness of HMIS Data

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# About NHSDC

The National Human Services Data Consortium (NHSDC) is an organization focused on developing effective leadership for the best use of information technology to manage human services. NHSDC provides information, assistance, peer to peer education and lifelong learning to its conference participants, website members and other interested parties in the articulation, planning, implementation and continuous operation of technology initiatives to collect, aggregate, analyze and present information regarding the provision of human services.

NHSDC holds two conferences every year that convene human services administrators primarily working in the homeless services data space together to learn best practices and share knowledge. The past 3 events have been put on with HUD as a co-sponsor. Learn more on our web site www.nhsdc.org.

National Human Services Data Consortium

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Community Planning and Development

# Learning Objectives

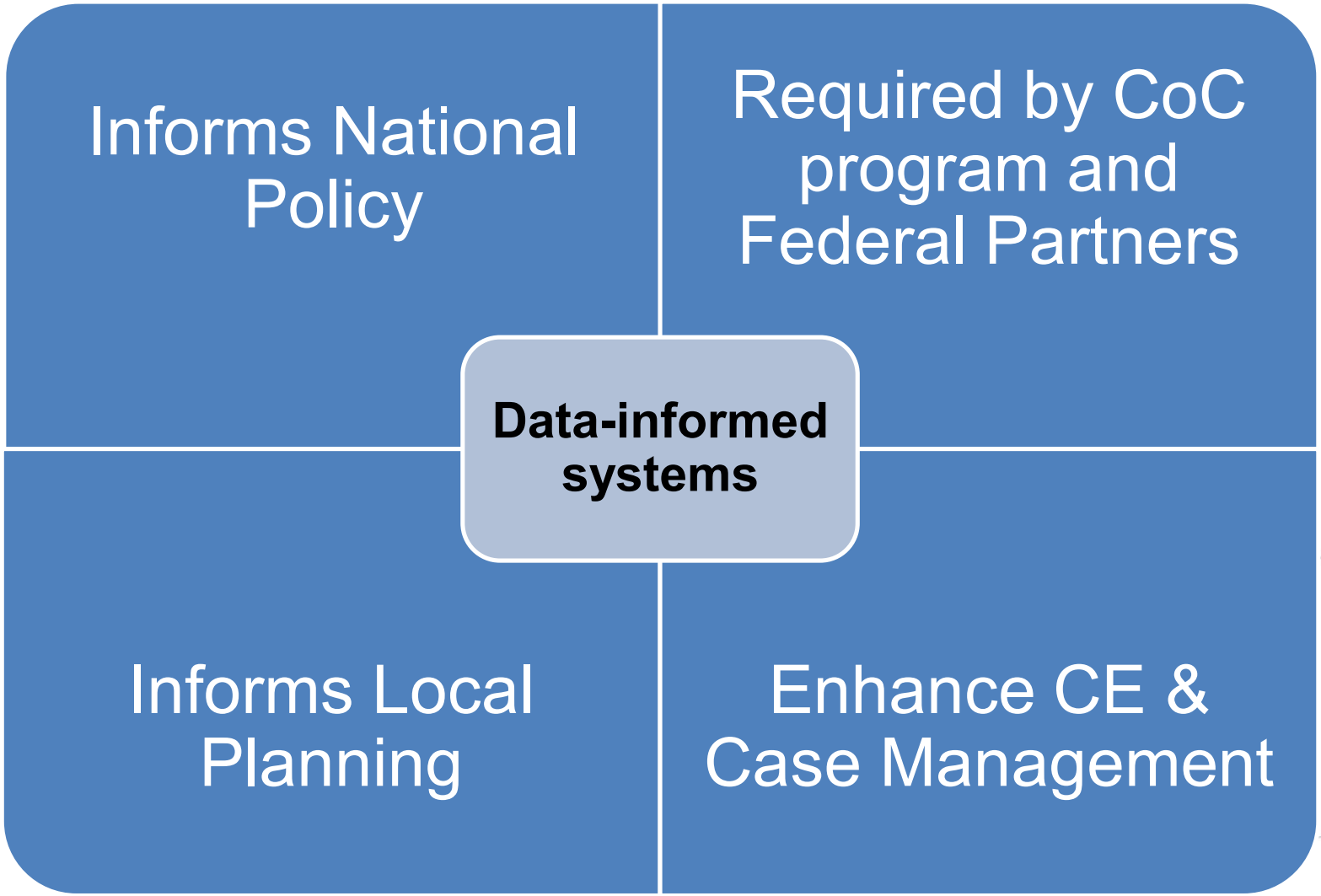
- Identify the data collection and reporting requirements for HMIS
- Understand how HMIS data elements are used for reporting
- Identify HMIS resources and supports to utilize after the session

# Overview of HMIS

# What is HMIS?

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a *locally administered*, electronic data collection system that stores longitudinal person-level information about persons who access the homeless service system

# Why is HMIS Important?



# The History of HMIS: Early Days

Late 80's to early 90's: Grassroots efforts to better understand homelessness

Communities banded together to look for new software products through a joint RFP published by National Human Services Data Consortium (NHSDC)

As this effort grew, it caught the attention of Congress (2001 Congressional directive)

# The History of HMIS: 2001 Congressional Directive

Congress directed HUD on the need for data and analysis on the extent and nature of homelessness and the effectiveness of the McKinney-Vento Act Programs including:

- Developing unduplicated counts of clients served at the local level
- Analyzing patterns of use of people entering and exiting the homeless assistance system
- Evaluating the effectiveness of these systems

HMIS became an eligible activity under 2001 SuperNOFA

# The History of HMIS: CoC Program interim rule

CoC program recipients must participate in HMIS.

CoC must participate in Consolidated Planning process.

HUD provided the framework for establishing and operating a local Continuum of Care with three major duties:

1. Operate the CoC
2. Designate and operate the HMIS for the CoC
3. Plan for the CoC

# Federal Partner Participation

HUD:

- Continuum of Care Program (CoC)
- Emergency Solutions Grant Program (ESG)
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)

Veterans Affairs programs:

- Grant and Per Diem (GPD)
- HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)
- Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY)

# Data Strategy

**A strategic vision for how communities use data to end homelessness.**

- Provides a clear, uniform vision and set of three strategies and related characteristics

- Developed over the course of several months of work with HUD SNAPS and its Data Workgroup

- Not intended to be achieved instantly; strategies provide goals that extend over the next 3-5 years

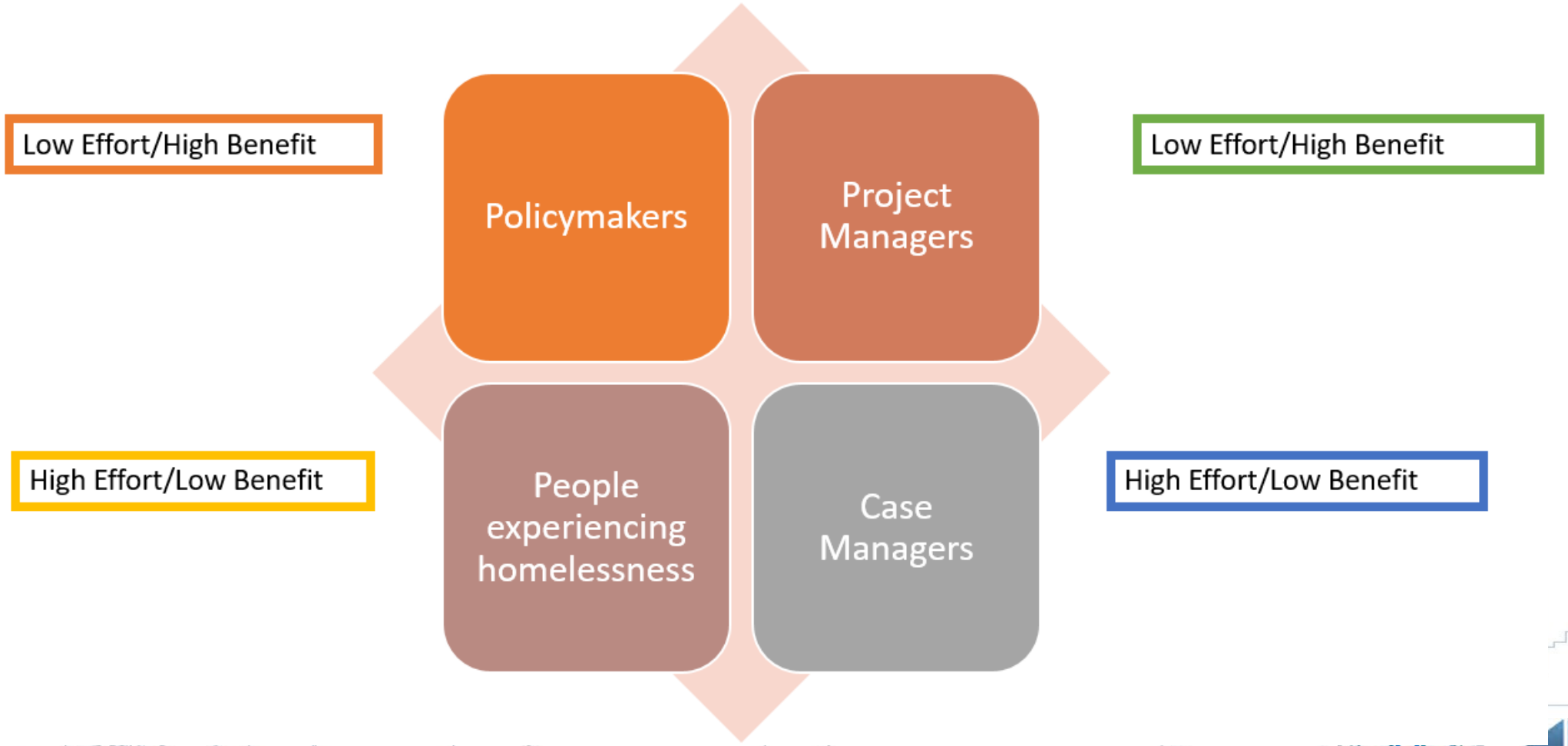
# Data Strategy

**Strategy 1:** Improve the capacity of people setting up, operating, and benefitting from data systems

**Strategy 2:** Data systems collect accurate, comprehensive and timely data

**Strategy 3:** Continuums and stakeholders use data to improve efforts to end homelessness

# Benefits vs. Effort



# Benefits for Homeless System, Public Policymakers, and Advocates

- Identifying service gaps
- Calculating unduplicated counts of clients served
- Understanding the extent and nature of homelessness
- Informing systems design and policy decisions
- Measuring the performance of the community system to prevent and end homelessness

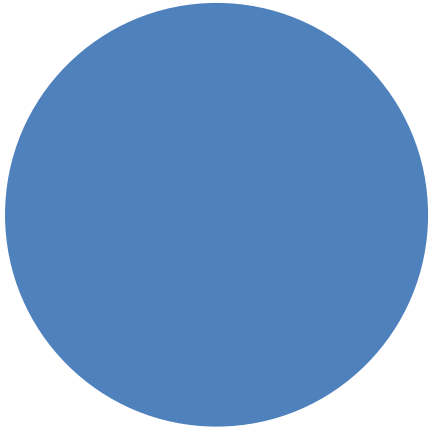
# Benefits for Agency Directors and Project Managers

- Measuring client outcomes
- Analyzing performance of projects
- Coordinating services internally among agency projects and externally with other providers
- Preparing financial and programmatic reports for funders, boards, and other stakeholders

# Benefits Case Managers, Intake Workers, & other Direct Service Staff

- Knowing waitlist or enrollment status
- Viewing client history, assessment scores, involvement with other providers
- Storing and sharing documents securely, such as eligibility verification, ID's, leases

# Benefits for People Experiencing Homelessness



- Benefit eligibility
- Streamlined referrals
- Coordinated case management
- A decrease in duplicative intakes and assessments

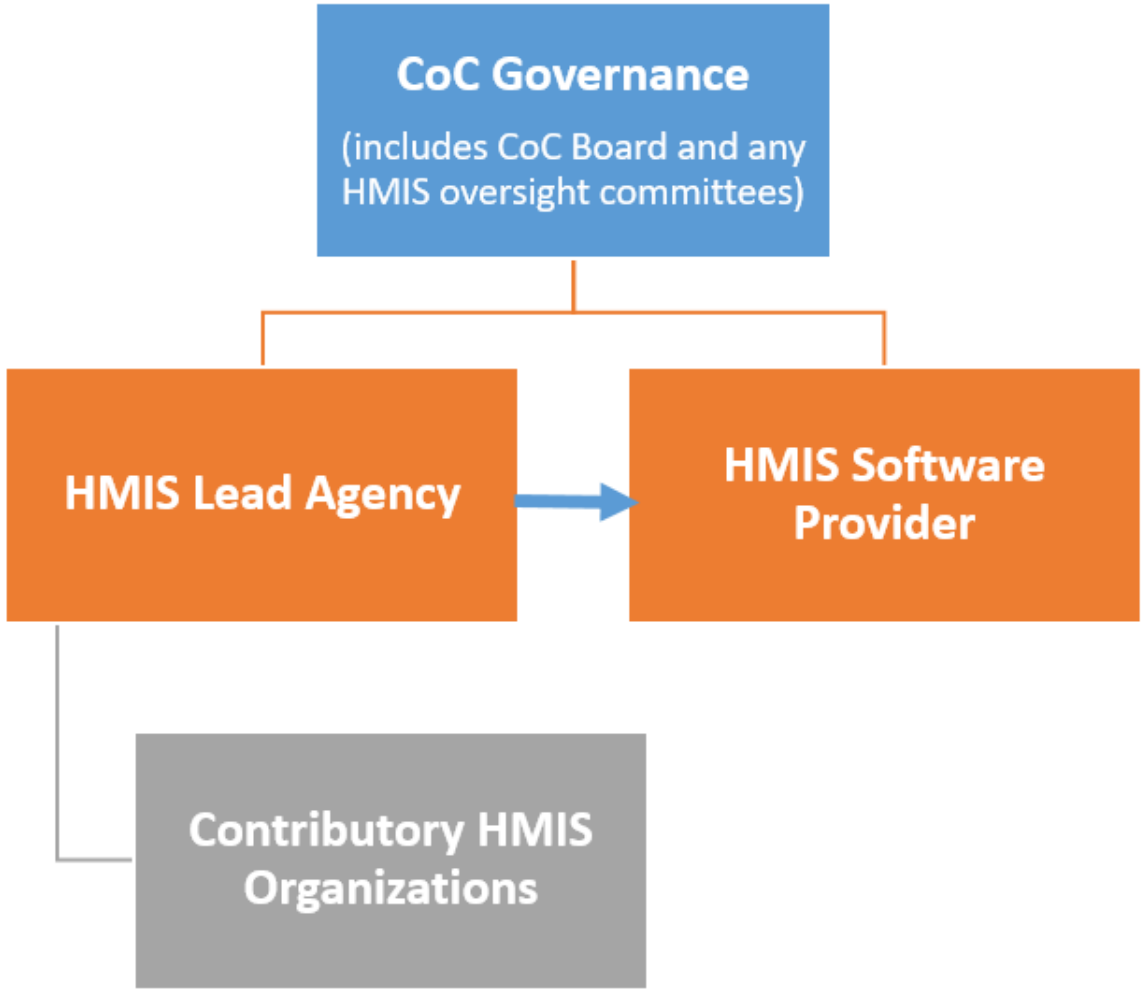
# Purpose of Governance

HMIS governance:

- Defines the relationship between the HMIS implementation and the CoC
- Formalizes roles and responsibilities
- Formalizes leadership and oversight expectations
- Provides structure for decision-making

**This means formal, written agreements!**

# HMIS Roles and Responsibilities



# CoC Role

The CoC must:

1. Designate a single HMIS for the geographic area;
2. Designate an eligible applicant to manage the CoC's HMIS (i.e. the HMIS Lead Agency)
3. Review, revise, and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS.
4. Ensure consistent participation of recipients and subrecipients in the HMIS; and
5. Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD.

# HMIS Lead Agency Role

- The day-to-day functions of operating the HMIS, such as training, help desk efforts, etc.
- Develop local HMIS policies and procedures, including data quality, privacy and security plans for CoC
- Execute HMIS participation and end user agreements with CHOs
- Monitor compliance with applicable HMIS standards
- Administer HMIS Software Provider contracts and agreements

# HMIS Software Provider Role

- Without an HMIS software, there is no HMIS
- The HMIS Software Provider should establish clear expectations with the local HMIS Lead Agency in contracts or agreements
- HMIS Software Providers are responsible for the development and management of HMIS software, so it's important as well that vendors are clear on federal partner HMIS expectations

# Participating Project's Role

Data Collection & Entry

Compliance & Monitoring

- Data Quality: timeliness, completeness, and accuracy
- Privacy and Security
- HMIS Policy and Procedure

CoC Participation

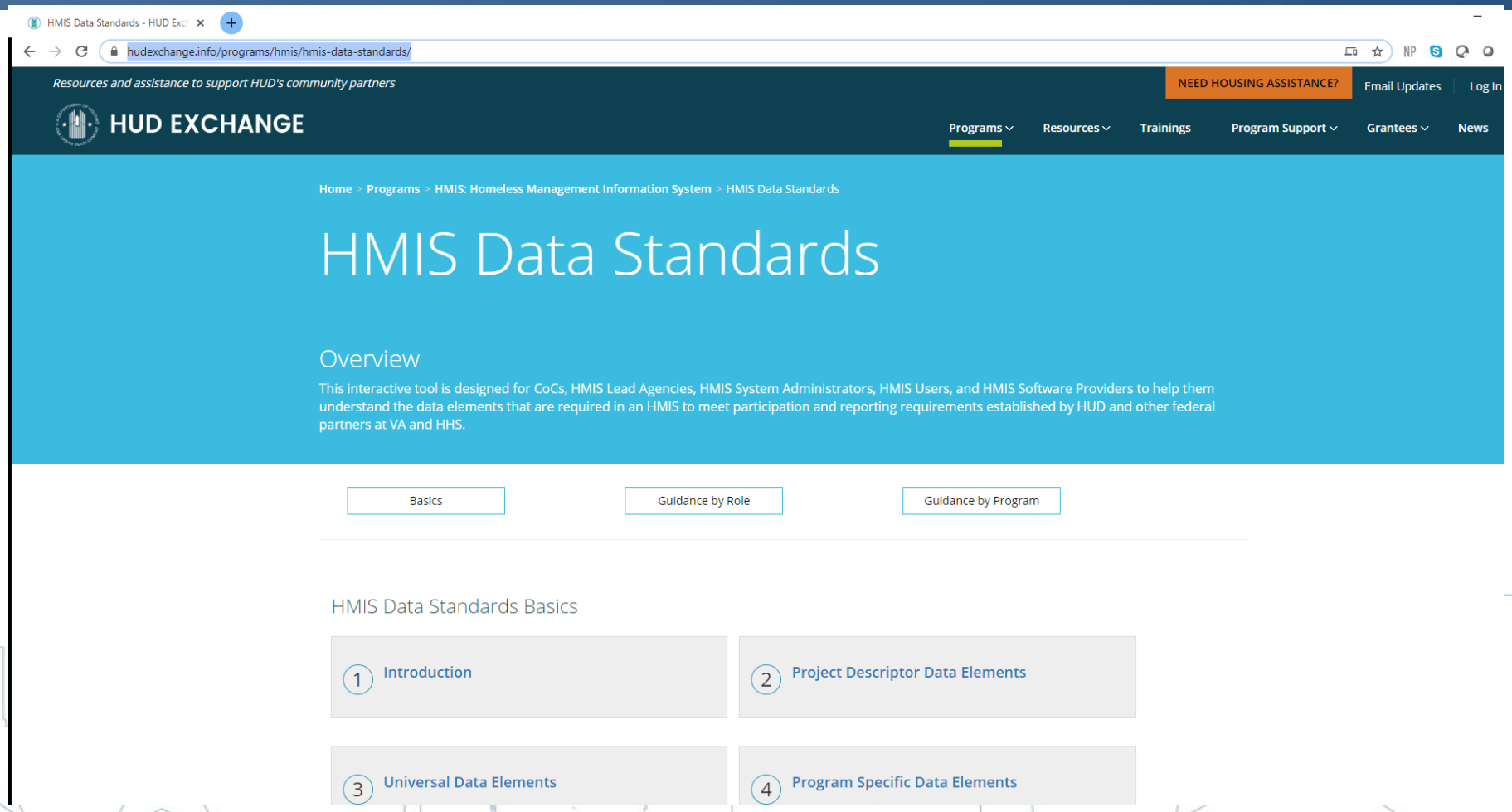
- Provide quality data for community planning
- Participate in Point In Time and Housing Inventory Processes
- Participate in CoC meetings and workgroups
- Coordinate with other service providers

# HMIS Data Collection Expectations

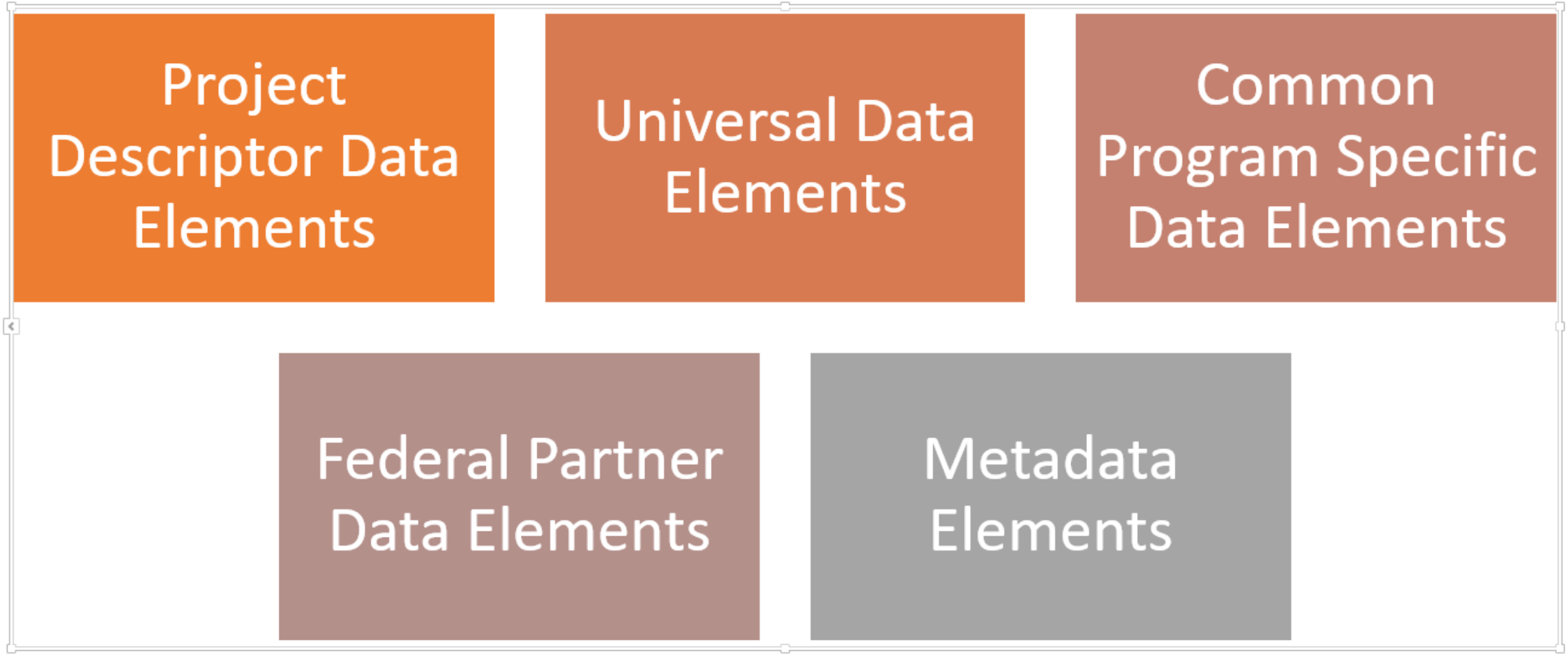
# Guidance on HMIS Data Collection

- HMIS Data Standards Manual serves as the primary guidance document for data collection expectations
- Each Federal Partner also has a unique HMIS Manual, that details the nuances of any data collection expectations for their programs, and describes any data elements that are specific to just their program
- **The Federal Partners updated the HMIS Data Standards for FY2020; changes went into effect on 10/1/2019**

# Resources on Data Collection Expectations



# Types of Data Elements in HMIS



# HMIS Reporting

# Data In, Data Out

- The UDEs will be the building blocks for client records, and allow you to do very basic reporting across all participating projects
- The PSDEs are leveraged for annual reporting at the project level, and give more detailed insights into clients than just the UDEs
- If you're collecting data, make sure that it's being used in a report!

# Types of Reporting

***System-level***

System Performance Measures

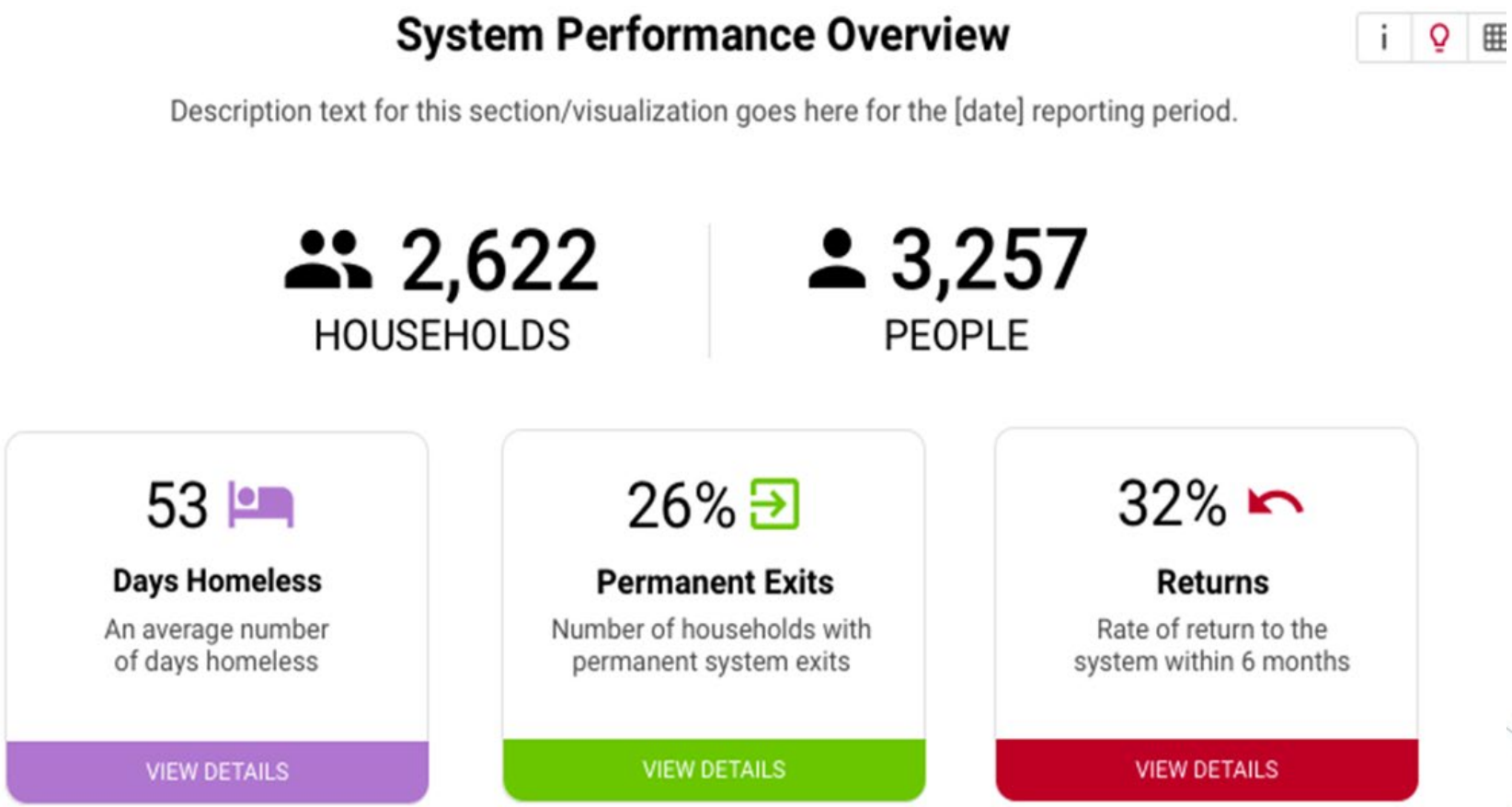
Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA) that is then used for both the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) and Stella

***Project-level***

Annual reports (APR, CAPER, PATH, SSVF and RHY uploads)

Data Quality Framework Report

# Meet Stella




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT

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Thank
you!!!