Submitting Your System Performance Measures Report in HDX

June 21, 2016
Transcript

NORM SUCHAR: I just wanted to kick this off by just, sort of, reiterating the importance of the System Performance Measures in our overall work. And just, sort of, encouraging everyone to really spend the time and resources and work on this that it really needs.

We have been working on these System Performance Measures for several years, both from a policy perspective and from a technical perspective. We have invested a lot of time and resources into them. There are numerous resources on our website, including a resource guide about System Performance Measures, some briefs and short documents that describe the System Performance Measures; and a series of short videos, whiteboard videos that really go into some depth about how the measures are constructed, what they mean and how to do some analysis and how to really, sort of, use these locally.

The other thing I want to really re-iterate is that for us here at SNAPS, and for the Continuous Care Program in general, system performance is really the future of the program. We are focusing very much on the outcomes our programs are achieving, and system performance is the way we´re going to be measuring those outcomes.

So, what you´ll see in the coming year and in more so in every year going forward is an increase in emphasis on system performance. When we review communities and raised communities and score communities and their applications and such, system performance will be a growing share of that score and it is really how we´re going to be organizing our policies, our technical assistance, and various other resources.

So, I know this is just sort of the start of this process, but I just wanted to give everyone an understanding that we at the SNAPS office view this as the beginning of a very, very major undertaking, a very big shift in how we think about success in the Continuous Care Program. So, with that, I´ll turn things back to Tracy and Julia and go ahead, thanks.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Thanks so much, Norm. Before I get started, I just want to double check, Julia can you, is your phone working? Okay, so we´ll just go ahead and plow on through. So, welcome everybody. Due to the number of participants, we´ve gone ahead and muted the phone lines so you won´t be able to talk, but you should be able to submit questions. So, go ahead and type in your questions. The webinar should last about 50 minutes and we will try to offer some time at the end for question and answers. Next slide please, Hannah. Hannah, next slide. Thank you.

Okay, so the learning objectives for today is we want to really run through how to set up and update your account in HDX. Excuse me, how to open a new report, how to upload your CSV data, if you have that available, and how to review, finalize, and submit your data. Questions today are really going to be focused on how to get your data from your HMIS into the HDX and not so much focused on technical aspects of system performance measures.

So, we´re going to first cover the background and available resources. There are a lot of resources on the HUD Exchange that are available to you for the System Performance Measures. So, we´ll make sure that you have access to those. We´re going to talk about the submission timeline, which is really important. We´re also going to tell you a little bit about the number of things that you need to do to prepare for submission. We´re going to talk about how to create a report in HDX. And if you have it available, we´re also going to talk a little bit about how you can import your system performance measurement data into the module. We´ll show you some of the pictures and how you navigate through the module. We´ll talk about validations, how to make sure your submission is final and then we´ll take questions. So next slide please.

The other thing we think is important is to go through our acronyms. So, as soon as that slide pops up, must be very slow today, we´ll show you what some of new acronyms are. So, for the System Performance Measures in the HDX, the acronym, this is a new one, is Sys PM. So, that´s what that means when you see that acronym and, of course, most of you know that the Homeless Management Information System´s acronym is HMIS. The HUD Homeless Data Exchange, where you´ll enter your data HDX. There is a section on Point-in-Time Counts, so PIT Counts is the acronym for that.

So if we could just go ahead and transition to the next slide, and while we´re doing that, Julia if you do get access to your phone, just start talking and then I´ll transition slides back over to you. But in the mean time, before we dive into the specifics of the HDX system, we just want to remind you about a few key basics of the System Performance Measures and also to point out some of the resources and tools available to you to help you prepare for submission. So, if you can go ahead and go to the next slide, Hannah.

So, as you know, there are seven HUD System Performance Measures. And, we´re waiting for the slide to pop up, and the first one is a Length of Time Homeless. And then the Returns to Homelessness, Number of Homeless Persons, number four is a fun one, Employment and Income Growth for CoC Funded Projects only. Number five, for Persons who Become Homeless for the First Time. Number six is the Homeless Prevention and Housing Placement of Persons defined by category three. When you get into the HDX system, you´ll see that that question is there. Because of some of the changes and because many of the CoCs haven´t reached the point of being able to do this yet, you won´t have to answer question six. Successful Placement from Street Outreach, and Successful Placement or Retention and Permanent Housing.

So, I´m going to go ahead and move over to the next slide, which shows where you can get all your different information about guidance and resources. And, the HUD Exchange. If you think of HDX as the place where you put data, and the HUD Exchange as the place where you get all your information, the information posted about System Performance Measures is in the HUD Exchange and the link that is shown here, is like the “landing page”. So once you get to the “landing page”, you can get to all kinds of resources and tools for the System Performance Measures; including the introductory guide, and high level summary for your CoC stakeholders, the whiteboard graphics that visually explains each measure, and the System Performance Measurement tools, including the things that your vendors used to help you program them in HDX.

So, Hannah, if we could just move on to the next slide, and this sort of highlights the really cool videos that have been posted to the HUD Exchange and you can all wave at Norm there. He´s sitting there. He does the videos. So you are strongly encouraged to watch and share those videos that HUD has prepared on each System Performance Measure. The videos have been available on the HUD Exchange website for several months and provide very useful overviews of each measure. Each video is only about ten minutes each and each one provides a detailed description of each measure as well as an illustration of how each measure is calculated.

Each video also concludes with suggestions from HUD and how communities can use the results from the measure to inform local planning efforts, which is really nice. You´re now getting into the position where you´ve got your data and now you can use it locally to help you serve homeless persons in your community.

So if we can move on to the next slide, Hannah. So now we´re going to turn to the details of summiting your HMIS generated System Performance Measures report into the HDX. And we can just go right on to the next slide.

So the next slide is going, is a biggy, and that´s your deadline. The HDX is now open and CoCs must submit the 2016 System Performance Measure data by Monday, August 1st at 8:00 pm Eastern Time. CoCs must submit all data to HDX by the deadline in order to be considered complete. And please note, big in red there, meeting the data submission deadline is a factor considered by HUD in the annual CoC program competition. So don´t miss the deadline. And, Hannah, next slide please.

There are basically three steps that your CoC should complete to prepare for submission. First, recommend that you download and review the System Performance Measures 2016 Data Entry Guidance. All the information you need, including the step-by-step instructions to enter your CoC System Performance Measures into HDX, can be found in the Data Entry Guidance document.

Number two, it is really important that your CoC collaborative applicant or the individual signed as the primary contact in HDX visits the HDX to confirm that the individuals who will be responsible for entering and submitting the data have appropriate access privileges in HDX. Do not wait until the last minute to make sure that the people who need to enter and summit the data have access right. So you should probably get in there right away, look and make sure that everybody who needs to have a log in can log into HDX.

And number three, complete any necessary data cleaning in your HMIS system, and run your System Performance Measure report from your HMIS. You may have to do it a lot of times. You might want to run it and make sure that the data looks right to you. You might need to go back and forth with your vendor to make sure that the programing that they did to pull the report works. And it might sort of highlight for you some errors that was in your data that you´re going to want to clean up before you actually enter the data into HDX.

The System PM report generated from your HMIS, remember, is created at the CoC level, meaning that you might have one report (or multiple reports depending on your HMIS vendor) and it should be generated for the entire CoC. The report should include tables for each System

Performance Measure that is consistent with HUD specifications and very importantly, the reporting period for the 2016 System Performance Measure report is the federal fiscal year and the fiscal year that we´re going to be reporting on is October 2014 to September 30th 2015. So therefore you must generate the Performance Measurement Report at the CoC level for your HMIS for this time period. And remember the HMIS-generated report is your data source for your CoC and the information needed to complete the System Performance Measurement Module.

Okay, that was a long one. Accessing… Let´s move on to the next slide. So once you have your HMIS report, and your log in ready, there are two ways to access the System Performance Measurement Module in the HDX. The first way you can access it is from the Dashboard, by clicking on the View Sys PM link in the bottom, right hand corner of the System Performance Measurement box, which you can see on this screen there. And the second way is by clicking on the System PM tab on the blue navigation bar at the top of the page.

All right, next slide please. Thank you Hannah. Now you can do, you can enter your data in two ways. One way is manual data entry. So to manually enter your 2016 PM data, you must first create the report in HDX. To do this, all you need to do is click on the New Report blue button on the top left hand corner of the screen and the screen will then automatically navigate to the correct reporting period for measure one. Next slide please, Hannah.

Okay, so importing System Performance Measurement data into HMIS, a CoC may chose to upload the System Performance Measurement data in a CSV format that has been generated by the HMIS application, if your CoC´s HMIS and your vendor offers that functionality. The CoC System Performance Measurement´s schema – so if your vendor needs to know "where do I go to get the schema?", it can be found underneath the HMIS XML and CSV schema link that´s located right on the main page of the HDX homepage. HMIS vendors only recently received this schema for importing the data into HDX, so you may just have to enter the data manually. But it´s not a big deal, it´s not a lot of tabs, not a lot of fields. So if you have to enter it manually, it shouldn´t be a big deal. To import the CSV data, you can navigate to the import tab, on the grey tool bar; you click on the Select CVS file option. You select the files from the folder that contains the data, and then you select Upload File. And next slide please Hannah.

When the data is successfully imported, the screen will display a green box indicating the data has been validated and that the user can submit the data into the module. You can then click on the grey Submit button to submit the imported data into the System PM module.

Okay, next slide please. And once you´ve done that, you get this grey-green box and it says "Your file has been successfully processed for the current CoC". So now you know you have a successful submission and then your file has been saved into the current database.

I´m going to take, Hannah if you can go on to the next slide, I´m going to take a quick break here just to double check-in with our other presenters to see if questions have been submitted and whether or not the person who´s answering those questions can see them. I don´t want you to have to submit a whole bunch of questions and not get answers. So I´m just checking here. Okay, all right. So what we´ll do, I hate to do this to you guys, but it looks like for some reason we had some technically difficulties this morning and you´re submitting a bunch of really good questions.

What we will probably do is download all those questions, and we´ll work something out with HUD on how to put answers to these questions. Maybe we´ll add them for an FAQ and post them on the the HUD Exchange. So, keep asking those questions. They´re great questions. We´ll download and we´ll figure out how to get you answers to those questions after the webinar.

All right, so Hannah, you´re one ahead of me. If you can go back one to the Unsuccessful Import, there you go. The other thing that the HDX system will do for you is, if you have some bad data and you try to enter it or import it, the system is going to automatically tell you that there are some errors. So, data that can´t be imported due to errors, will be indicated on the screen with a red box showing that there has been an error and that the user cannot submit the data. The data validation box will show the field that contain the errors and the description of what the error is. So, the sooner you can get in there and try this, the better, because then you can take this report back to your vendor and say, "Okay these are the things that are not working when you try to submit data or import data into HDX."

All right, next slide please. So: navigating the module. So now what we´re going to do is we´re going to walk through each tab to show you how to manually enter the data for each measure. And just, I just want to check with Julia to see if she´s on yet or see if she´s got her phone yet. Julia, are you there? Okay, Julia, when you do get in, if you do get in, just interrupt me.

So, navigating the System Performance Module, the System Performance Module includes seven Measure links on the secondary navigation bar which direct you to the distinct data submission tabs, as you can see there on the screen.

Next screen please. So what we´re looking at on the next screen is Measure One, and that's the Length of Time Persons Remain Homeless. This is table 1A. As soon as we get there. Next slide. So Measure One is the length of time persons remain homeless. Includes two metrics, 1.1 and 1.2 in a single table. And it´s consistent with the HMIS reporting specs throughout the module. You´ll note that the submission interface is designed to mirror the table shells, provided to the HMIS vendors, so that as you´re manually trying to enter the data, it should be as straightforward as possible. It should look very similar; your report should look very similar to what the screens look like in the HDX.

For this particular measure, there are two identical tables, 1.A and 1.B and here we are looking at table 1.A which is "time in projects where a person is experiencing homelessness". This measure excludes data gathered about time on the streets through the current data element 3.17. So, you´ll be using the previous definition. You´ll note that the interface is set up so you can only enter data in the white cells for the current years. In future years, the previous year data will populate automatically from what you submitted in previous years. So this is the first year. You only get one box per year. So they´ll be no data in those cells this year. If we could go on to Measure Two.

All right, so thank you. Measure Two, Persons who Exit to Permanent Housing and Return to Homelessness. This measure begins with clients who exited to a permanent housing destination in the date range two years prior to the report gate range. Of those clients, the measure reports on how many of them return to homelessness, as indicated in the HMIS system, for up to two years after their initial exit. There are two metrics, 2.A and 2.B and they have been combined into a single submission table, which is consistent with HMIS specs.

Okay, let´s go on to Measure Three. Okay, so Measure Three, again is divided into two tables. Metric 3.1 is the change in counts of clients using PIT count data submitted in HDX. Here´s the good news: this particular table is going to auto-populate for you from the data that you´ve already entered into HDX for the 2014 fiscal year and the 2015 fiscal year. Note that if you´re CoC did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2014, the data has been merged with your unsheltered count in 2013. So you´ll see the previous count will include your 2013 unsheltered count and your 2014 sheltered count, if you didn´t collect data for unsheltered in 2014. Next slide.

So the next slide is Measure Three, but it´s metric 3.2 and this is the change in counts of clients using HMIS data, and this table captures the unduplicated counts of active clients for each of the projects types throughout the reporting period. Note that your total sheltered count really should be fairly close to the count of persons who were sheltered in the Emergency Shelters, Safe Havens and Transitional Housing from Measure One metric 1, 3.1, and would like, may be slightly less because it excludes persons who exited on the first day of the reporting year. And this particular metric does not. But, you know, the data should be fairly comparable.

Okay, if we can go on to Measure Four, employment performance measure. So Measure Four is divided into six tables. The project types reported in these metrics are the same for each metric, but the type of income and the universe of clients differs. In addition, the projects reported within these tables are limited to CoC funded projects. Okay, so let´s go ahead and move on to the next slide, Hannah. And these are the next three measures from Measure Four. Remember I said there was six tables? These are the next three tables. Note that this measure is calculated slightly different from the APR measure and at the system rather than just at the project level. But, if you have concerns about the numbers you are seeing, you can look at the APRs for the relevant projects and that may be able to help you point in the right direction to find out where that error might be if you are seeing numbers that you´re not expecting in there.

Okay, Measure Five. Next slide. So this particular table is divided into two tables and metric 5.1 is the change in the number of persons entering Emergency Shelters, Save Havens and Transitional Housing with no prior enrollments in HMIS. And the second table looks at the change in number of persons entering Emergency Shelters, Save Havens, Transitional Housing, and the addition of Permanent Housing with no prior enrollments. So, you can see that´s what the tables look like in HDX, and Hannah if you want to go ahead, we´ll go on to Measure Six.

Here´s the easy one. It´s not applicable for 2016, so there´s a place holder in there so that there is a Measure Six for Category 3 Homelessness, but you don´t have to do anything in there. Just kind of skip right over that tab. Let´s go onto Measure Seven, which should be the next slide.

So this is Successful Placement and Permanent Housing Retention. Note that this measure is calculated slightly differently from the APR measure and that at the system level rather than at the project level. But, again if you have concerns about the numbers you are seeing, you can look at the individual APRs of all the relevant projects that submitted APRs, and you maybe able to find out, you know, what´s reporting wrong in the overall System Performance Report.

Okay, so now we´re moving on to Validations and Final Submissions. Let me just check, it´s hard to talk and read at the same time. But let me just check and see where our other panelists are. And, okay. We´re going to just keep moving on through.

So now we´re going to talk about the ways that the system structures data and how to finish your submission. So next slide, please. All right, so the HDX System Performance Module contains validation warnings to assist your CoC in identifying and addressing inconsistencies in your System Performance Measurement data. These warnings will appear once your data is saved in HDX, and will be displayed on each sub-tab. Now if you´re going to, you know sometimes you get in there and all these yellow flags come up and you can´t even see what you´re looking at. So to hide the yellow validation warnings, simply click on the Hide Error Messages link at the top of each page, new this year in the HDX. Once you´ve hidden those flags, all the text that had warnings will be in red. And you´ll be able to sort of move your cursor over the red text to see what the validation warnings are.

The validations, generally speaking, are limited to notifications that we might expect a certain percentage to be, like, less than a 100%, or that we expect certain entries to be positive rather than negative, etc. The measures all capture different universes of clients, so there are very few inter-measure validations. But by and large, these are common sense error checks that are likely to have already been addressed in your preliminary review of your System Performance Measures report from your HMIS, that you of course have already downloaded and looked at. Next slide please.

Now we´re going to talk about making notes. So users should leave a note of explanation for each validation warning received. This is going to really help HUD determine what´s going on out there the communities, so leave a really good note of explanation for each warning so we can see what´s happening out there in the communities. A note of explanation should be completed for each warning and all you need to do is click on the field where the warning is, and then Note function will pop up and then you can enter the note and then you click on the Save Notes box at the bottom left of the notes box to save your explanation. So in other words, if you don´t click on that Save Notes, I think the Notes goes away. So make sure you click on Save Notes before you exit out of the Notes box. Next slide please.

Now it´s always nice to know, what are all of my Validation Warnings. So, if you go to the Reporting Status tab, you can see a list of all the Validation Warnings. And if you see Validation Warnings there, there´s a little minus sign. When you click on that, it will be positive when it´s collapsed and if you, it´ll then be a dash when it shows all of the Validation Warnings that you have. If you click on the Fix This Link, the system will take you automatically right to the field that contains the warning. So, if you want to do all your warnings at once, you can use this system this way. You can also print out your validation warnings so you can review them. Next slide please.

Okay, Reporting Status tab. This is a very important tab, because there´s a lot of things that you can do from this tab. So, on the System Performance Reporting Status tab, users with appropriate privileges can submit their data, they can access a System Performance Measurement Summary Report, in PVS or Excel format. You can see when and by whom the CoC´s system performance Data was last updated. You can see when by whom your Performance Measurement Data was submitted for prior years. You can see and read all your Validation Warnings and at the very bottom there is a message function and you can see messages related to your CoC´s data. So, for example, when you´ve clicked on the Submit Data button, an automated message will come back to you saying, "You have successfully submitted your data."

So to submit your data to HUD, remember the deadline. You must submit all your data by Monday August 1st, at 8:00 pm Eastern Time. To submit the data, you click on the Reporting Status tab on the grey tool bar, and then click on the blue Submit Data button. If you are in the Reporting Status tab, and you don´t see the blue Submit button, then your CoC collaborative applicant has not provided you with submit rights. So please contact your collaborative applicant right away and have them either submit the final data for you, or provide you with submit rights. Do not wait until the day that it´s due to find out that you don´t have submit rights and can´t access the person who can give you authority to do that, because you could end up submitting too late if you do that. So check first hand that you can see that Submit Data button.

All right, next slide. So, preparing a System Performance Summary Report. It´s always a good idea to print a copy of the Summary Report in either PDF or Excel format, or both. And then you can use this report to review your submission, you can retain the documentation that you did in fact submit your report. And in order to access that report again that´s still on the Reporting Status tab, you just click on the link for the System Performance Measurement Report and you can download it in either PDF or Excel format.

All right, before I move on, we´re almost done. Hang in there guys. Julia, have you been able to get on yet? Nope, okay. So we´re going to wrap up here with a summary. So let´s go on to the next slide. All right, Overview of Submission Steps. So again, this is nine sort of step overview of all your difference Submission Steps. So one, you need to confirm that you have access to HDX and that you have the authority to write and submit data and if you don´t, the guidance document has step by step instructions of how to change your access, how to change the collaborative applicant, how to assign the access rights in the system. So make sure you look at that guidance document. You should prepare your HMIS System Performance Measurement Report and look at it ahead of time. You know don´t wait until the day before to run your report. Go ahead and run your report. Look at it, make sure everything is working with your vendor. You can then either manually enter your data into HDX, or if you have the capability, you can try importing your data into HDX. You should review your submitted data, address and validation warnings, and don´t forget to collect on the blue Submit Data button. Just because you have your data in there, until you tell us it´s done and final and submitted. So make sure you click on the button then generate the report of your submitted data and then retain that report for documentation purposes.

Next page. All right, next steps. HUD has announced that the fiscal year 2016 CoC Program competition, the current competition coming up real soon, will be the first to include data on the HUDs System Performance Measures. First year of data will be a baseline. So focus your efforts on improving data quality, your ability to actually generate the system performance data and the understanding of the data. As you review your first run of the HMIS report, you may find reviewing the System PM video series that Norm put together very, very helpful in thinking about what you can learn from the data and how to share it with your stakeholders in your continuum, whether you are the HMIS lead and needing to communicate with the CoC, or the CoC board who wishes to share the results with providers. Okay next slide please.

And now we are going into questions. There are two places you can submit questions on the AAQ, so for technical questions related to the HDX, like, you know, I can´t log in, or I´m logged off or I´m logged out and I´ve been locked out, or things don´t look right with the HDX, you can submit those technical questions to the Ask A Question page through the HUD Homelessness Data Exchange for the HDX at the top of the page, under the reporting system headline. If you have questions related to policy or how to calculate the measures, or in stuff going on with your vendor, please submit those questions underneath the HMIS Ask A Question page. And—

JULIA: Hi Tracy, can you hear me?

TRACY D'ALANNO: Oh yes, thank you. I´m so glad I can hear you.

JULIA: Hi, this is Julia. I´m so sorry, the perils of traveling while I´m trying to do a webinar. Always dangerous. I know that Tracy is has just transferred over to the questions portion of the conversation, but I thought I´d just jump in and what we´d like to do is read some of the questions that folks have submitted and we will hear from Norm, from Tracy and then also from me if there are sort of more technical questions, Tracy and I can cover them. So Norm, are you ready to go ahead and answer some questions?

NORMAN SUCHAR: Yes, absolutely. Thank you.

JULIA: Fantastic. So, I´ll just go ahead and scroll through and pick out a few that seem like important questions for folks to hear about. One of the questions is, "What is the explanation for how CoCs are going to be, sort of, held responsible for the entirety of the Homeless System, and in particular for those projects that are not, perhaps, funded by Continuum of Care Program Funding or ESG Program Funding where they might have less influence?"

NORMAN SUCHAR: So that´s a very good question, and I think this is something that a lot of CoCs struggle with. You know, we are making a shift in how we, sort of, try to end homelessness and how we, how our programs fit into the larger context of efforts to end homelessness in this country. And so, the shift is toward a more community based and community focused response, rather than a project-by-project response. So, we do plan on evaluating whole communities' efforts to end homelessness regardless of the funding source of those projects, regardless of whether we have any sort of direct money or connection to those projects. And I think this makes it challenging for CoCs. We certainly understand that. But, this, we feel like it´s so important that there be a systemic response to homelessness that we need to go forward in this way.

So, we know there are projects out there that don´t feel responsible to HUD policies and trying to achieve better system performance and those kinds of things. We just encourage CoCs to keep trying to work with those partners, work with your local governments, work with you know, whoever you can, so your community leaders and your community to try to engage those projects and bring them into the fold, but from a policy perspective and a data perspective. And again, we know that it´s a tough task, you´re not going to be able to get a 100% of those projects engaged right away. Just, you know, keep plowing forward and try to engage those partners as much as you can and try to get as much data from them as you can, and try to work together on this task of ending homelessness. So we recognize that it´s challenging, and in some ways a little unfair. But we think the concept here that communities end homelessness, and not particular projects, is so important that this is really the best way to go forward.

JULIA: Great! Thank you so much, Norm. A couple of technical questions. Folks asked if this presentation will be made available. And we will go ahead and post the recording of this presentation on the HUD Exchange as well as a transcript of the presentation as well.

Folks have asked if it´s possible to view and update or to correct if they submit their data and it´s wrong. Can they submit again? Tracy, I think that might be a question for you.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Oh sure. If you´ve already submitted your data, or you submit it and you find out that it´s wrong and it´s before the deadline, just submit a question to the HUD Ask A Question HDX page, and we will open the data back up for you to submit different data. If it´s after the deadline, that goes back to Norm, as far was whether you can change the data after the deadline.

NORMAN SUCHAR: So, well I would say that that sort of depends on the particular circumstances or case. We just have to be careful because if we use data in a competition and there are certain rules about what we can and can´t do. In any case, we will create some FAQs that sort of make clear every year when you can and cannot re-submit data if you have found some errors. But let me also say, we know that year one is tough and there are going to be a lot mistakes. People are working on data quality and this is a work in progress. So, we understand that and we´re just going to try to do the best we can going forward.

JULIA: Okay, someone else asked if the specs for the CSV have been published and they are published and available on the HDX page in the Data Exchange section of the HDX page. Okay, some folks have noted that they don´t necessarily, haven´t seen or don´t have access to the blue Submit button. I believe that is a user access issue. Tracy, did you want to address that? I think you have to be set up with a certain kind of user to be able to actually submit.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Yeah, absolutely. And really the easiest way to figure out why you can´t see the blue Submit button is to download that guidance document, because it really clearly walks you through the process of what´s going on if you can´t see it. But, primarily then if you were a user and you don't see the blue Submit button, it means you don´t have the authority to submit the data and so your collaborative applicant needs to log in and provide you with authority to submit.

JULIA: Great. I have a couple of questions from a few different folks about Domestic Violence Agencies. How do we include information from Domestic Violence Agencies? Do we include information from Domestic Violence Agencies? And whether you need to submit a separate report, possibly, for Domestic Violence Agencies? You do not need to include information from Domestic Violence Agencies, but I will defer to Norm if there is more to say about that.

NORMAN SUCHAR: So, that´s correct. I just asked, I know William is on the phone as well. If, William, if you have anything to add? I don´t know if there is anything to add.

WILLIAM: Yeah, that´s a great question. So, the System Performance Measures don´t include data from Victim Service Providers. Victim Service Providers are prohibited from entering data directly into HMIS. However, there are a lot of other service providers that are not specifically Victim Service Providers that serve clients that may include victims of domestic violence. The only ones who should be excluded from this data, from the data submitted in as part of the System Performance Measures, are those who are in projects that are Victims Service Provider projects. Otherwise, the projects, all project data should be included.

JULIA: Great. Some folks are asking a question that is both sort of technical and policy related. So when folks are logging in, they are seeing that for most of the measures, the previous fiscal year column is greyed out and there are no data in there. So, folks want to clarify and confirm that there should be no data in there, meaning that HUD will not want to be comparing their performance for this year to a previous year, aside from the PIT measures.

NORMAN SUCHAR: So yes, that is correct. This is for most of the measures, other than of course the PIT measure. For all those other measures, this is really a year to set baseline information. So, yeah there´s no way to compare the previous years. And we´re not asking you to go back and calculate the measures for the previous years.

JULIA: Okay, folks have a lot of questions about the PIT count inclusion in the module. First of all, sort of, if you didn´t count an, if you didn´t do an unsheltered count last year, what PIT data are included as your prior year data? Also, some folks seem to be having some technical issues with their particular PIT counts that were auto-populated for the prior year and for the current year. So, for those technical issues, if you do have a concern that what the data you´re seeing there don´t reflect what you think your PIT count should have been for 2015, or for whatever the prior year that you conducted the count, do submit an AAQ and let us know so that we can track that particular issue.

In terms of what data are pulled, William or Norm did you want to speak to the decision about how that information was determined?

NORMAN SUCHAR: I´ll hand this one over to William. William, do you have an answer for this one?

WILLIAM: Yeah, so the Point-In-Time counts, we will look at, similar to what we do in our current application process. So, we will use last year´s data. If you didn´t do a Point-In-Time count in 2016, we´ll carry forward your unsheltered numbers for your 2016 count. And that will be what will be used. And so that´s, again, similar to what we´ve done in the past, and that´s what we anticipate doing going forth.

JULIA: Some questions around Measure Four. Is Measure Four limited to only HUD-funded projects? There´s also several questions asking about the focus on increased income rather than what folks are maybe used to, which is a maintain or increase income measure?

NORMAN SUCHAR: So, the answer to the first question is yes, that these, that that measure is limited to CoC funded projects and William, do you want to take the increased or flat income question?

WILLIAM: Yeah, that´s a really good one. We struggled a little bit with this. I think the core is actually the statute itself. So the statute requires a look at increases in particular. So for us to meet the statutory criteria, we´re looking at increases.

JULIA: I´ll also add that the narrowing of the list of projects to Continuum of Care Projects should happen, or sorry, to HUD funded projects should happen in the reporting process. It´s written into the specs, to make that limitation. So it´s not necessarily going to be something you´re going to see in the HDX interface, because that´s part of the HMIS report that gets run, is limiting it to CoC projects. CoC Program funded projects. Okay, I´m scrolling the questions, so forgive me while I find a new question.

NORMAN SUCHAR: It sounds like there are a lot of questions about whether the report requires data from outside of HMIS, and I just wanted to provide clarity on that. So, William, do you mind talking about, you know, which data is required to be reported in this and what about, what happens to providers who are not entering data into HMIS? So what happens to that information?

WILLIAM: Yeah, yes. So this is, to some extent, an age-old issue, right? Since the start of HMIS, we´ve always wanted to get all… all Homeless Service Providers in HMIS, with the core understanding that the desire here is we want you to understand who you are serving in all your projects that are serving homeless persons. This expectation is only brought further home through the System Performance Measures. We will continue to require that all those projects that serve homeless persons be included in the measures. We´re not saying that this is easy. We know, again, many of you, probably all of you to some extent, have been working on this for years. From our perspective, we don´t want to discount that effort and we appreciate it. And again, we´ll keep pushing for it.

The only way to track whether or not your entire system is meeting the standards in the Performance Measures is to have all of the right players in the system. So we´ll continue to offer technical assistance. We´ll continue to do what we can to assist you in that effort. I think a big tease here is using the various levers, right? There are many communities who access state funding and other local funding and the CoC has been able to make HMIS usage a requirement, even though it´s not HUD funded projects. And in other communities, the greatest success has been seeing and just showing the power of the data. Right? Even those who are non-HUD funded, are still in, they want to see the power of their projects, right? They want to see that the people they are serving are actually ending their homeless experience. And so using that data to show success and using the data to show where people can improve, has had a lot of, had a lot of benefit and moved the needle in many communities to get folks on board the HMIS.

NORMAN SUCHAR: But I think, from a technical perspective also, it´s not that we are, that they´re, that you put in data into these System Performance Measures from a system outside of HMIS. We are, you know, a 100% encouraging people to put, to get every project whether it´s

CoC funded or not into HMIS. But there is no, all of this data, other than the PIT counts, all of this data is actually coming from HMIS.

WILLIAM: And one more thing is there´s, that´s one of the reasons we do bed coverage. We recognize, especially in this first round, there is going to be a lot data quality issues and bed coverage will continue to be an issue. We want to see what´s going on in bed coverage so we know how much is included in your HMIS, and the again, to re-iterate Norm´s point, there´s really one system in play here in terms of technical system and that´s HMIS. So if you´re seeing a lot of holes there, that´s going to show up as your bed coverage rate and we will look at that and that will be an important scoring criteria for us, or something we weigh carefully and heavily.

JULIA: Another related question, I think, to that concept of sort of incorporating this into the competition is will there be a guidance at any point of the acceptable levels of change that you are looking for for these various measures?

NORMAN SUCHAR: So, I´m not sure we know the answer to that question yet. In general, our approach to these is that we´re going to be grading communities compared to themselves. So, what we want to see is we want to see change over time in a positive direction. Now as far as benchmarks for how much change, how quickly, etc. We´re not ready to answer that question yet. We don´t know the answer to that question yet. We also don´t know yet what an appropriate benchmark is for levels. What is the average length, what is a reasonable average length of time?

So, we, you know, we´ll do a lot of analysis of these measures as we start getting data in. We´ll do a lot of different kinds of modeling and testing to figure that out and, obviously, let everyone know as soon as we have something. And if people have recommendations we are certainly interested in hearing them. But right now, we don’t have any sort of set benchmarks or targets for improvement or anything like that.

WILLIAM: One more thing to add there is the reality that we´re going to be looking at improvement from a CoC standpoint, right? We want to see your growth as a CoC. We, the degree to which we compare you to other CoCs will be limited at best. We may set a threshold over time when we have enough data to do them, but the core for us is holding you to your own standard, right? Are you doing better from your past performance. And there will come a point where you´ll have hit a good spot. So we won´t force that necessarily any further. But I just want to raise that as this is a, you´ll be compared against your own performance over time, not so much against other CoCs.

JULIA: Okay, I think we have time for one more question. Let´s see, were vendors – so aside from, I guess, the specs which venders were provided, are there any, sort of, minimum error checking requirements or drill down tables that will offered to venders at any point related to the measures?

NORMAN SUCHAR: So we´re looking at what we can provide vendors. We certainly provided things like the HMIS specs. Data quality is a big question all around. This is a very complicated set of data. With the APR we provided some test data. The System Performance Measures are much more complicated than that and we haven´t been able to provide a test set. We´ll continue to look at what things we can provide and do our best to support you in that. And we love feedback in that regard as well. We want to support you in this. This is not a gotcha game. This is a chance to use data to serve people to the best of your ability, and we at HUD are a partner and want to help you in any way we can.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Hey Julia, it looks like there is several common questions on here about technical issues. So if you´re having a problem with HDX or you think you have a bug, go ahead and summit your questions to the Ask A Question page HDX, that way we can track the question come in and make sure that the bug is being addressed and then respond to you when the bug is fixed. So, if you´re having some weird issues like you think you have access, but for some reason you don´t see the blue Submit button, or those kinds of things, submit the questions to the Ask A Question page and we´re really pretty good about getting back to you within like two or three days.

JULIA: Folks, also asked just to, I´m just going to provide two quick responses similar to what Tracy did and then we´ll wrap up. If you do want to explain an answer, for example you find that you think you´re particularly high or particularly low on some measure, you can use the Note feature that Tracy described earlier in the presentation and just make sure you save your note related to a particular entry. And, I believe that´s it. Just scanning really quickly, there´s lots of questions that folks asked, so we´ll make sure to try and add these in to the FAQ´s as well that we´re preparing.

So thank you guys all very much for joining us. And Hannah, actually, I think there is one more slide left that shows the link back out to the resources page. Just make sure to remember to go and visit the System Performance Measures page and see all of the instructions and guidance and tools that are offered to you there. Thanks so much.