

HMIS Lead / Sys Admin – Q&A

Questions from 01/18/2023 Webinar

For any questions that were not addressed on the webinar, or if there are specific questions to your own systems, please submit an HMIS AAQ to receive a thorough answer:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/my-question/>

Q: Is LSA data compiled nationally?

A: The LSA data is presented in AHAR Part 2. That is foundation for the annual national estimate that is reported in that report. We absolutely encourage you to look at that report and get the national perspective.

Q: We would like to conduct our PIT count across a period of six days using the same date for the night of information, is this allowed?

A: Yes.

Q: If a community is conducting the PIT count across 6 days, must those days be after the night of the PIT, and not the days prior to the night of the PIT?

A: Correct. This is because people don't always know where they will be in the future. You need to ask about where people actually slept.

Q: We had a call with HUD a few years ago about PIT, and it was said that HUD doesn't expect that CoCs do any data quality for their PIT. They can just run the HMIS reports on the next day and don't need to have agencies confirm that those reports are correct. Is this still HUD's stance?

A: In using the HMIS data as the basis for your sheltered PIT count we assume that you are doing data quality efforts all year round. HUD wants that to be as accurate as possible and want you doing the effort to ensure the data is clean. Communities also need to ensure you are including data on projects that are not participating in HMIS. That requires more effort if HMIS bed coverage is not 100%.

Q: What is the deadline for PIT/HIC data submission?

A: There is no exact deadline yet, but it is expected to be the end of April. An announcement will be made through the HUD Exchange when the date is decided.

Q: Is there a release date for the updated PIT count extrapolation tool?

A: There is no date, but it is expected to be released shortly and will be announced through the HUD Exchange.

Q: Will there be virtual sessions for the NHSDC conference?

A: HUD is working to live stream some of the HUD sessions, more information on that will be available as we get closer to the conference.

Q: Is there funding for the advanced user group projects?

A: No. There will be technical assistance available, but not funds for any program implementation.

Q: How do we know if a program needs to use a comparable database?

A: Victim Service Provider (VSP) is an agency level designation - HUD produced this decision tree to help navigate these questions: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HMIS-When-to-Use-a-Comparable-Database.pdf>

Q: Will there be an addition of "Space Force" to the Veteran section?

A: HUD is working with the VA on this, and nothing has been decided yet.

Q: I've heard there will be a workgroup of HUD and Vendors about updates to the Personal ID. Will there also be a workgroup that includes HMIS Leads as well?

A: The group is working on the HMIS Glossary updates, which may also include discussion about the Personal ID. We are incorporating the feedback that has come in from the AAQ about Personal ID, where relevant. If you have other feedback you'd like to make sure is incorporated, please submit via AAQ. We will also discuss with HUD the idea of incorporating HMIS Leads into that discussion in the future.

Q: When the technical changes are released to HMIS vendors, can they also be released to COCs? My organization programs our own CSV file set for upload into a larger HMIS system, and my programmers are asking for as much lead time/information as possible on the data standards changes.

A: We are working on more closely aligning the release dates of the technical changes while also giving vendors time to review and provide feedback that may result in updates before release to communities.

Q: Are vendors REQUIRED to provide Sandbox before the 10/1 go live date for the data standards?

A: No. We strongly encourage vendors to do this, but we have no authority to hold the vendors accountable to this deadline. We would encourage you to use your contracts or other methods for ensuring the vendors have a sandbox or testing site available before the 10/1 date.

Q: For those of us who enjoy doing the math, is there a simplified example System Model that gives us a "peek under the hood" and see how the assumptions we input are in turn computed to produce the results?

A: There is some information in the User Guide about the calculations and there are plans to create additional products for the System Modeling Toolkit that will help understand the calculations in more detail. <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/System-Modeling-with-Stella-M-User-Guide.pdf>

Q: Is Stella M going to be restricted to PSH, RRH, ES, SH, & TH only? How can we incorporate CES-SSO?

A: Stella M is not restricted to specific project types. The LSA project types are available as defaults to help folks get started but users can set up any project types they wish.

Q: Will Stella M include Coordinated Entry Data or is it based off of the LSA?

A: No data is included - all the fields in Stella M are user entered. The Data Guide addresses strategies for using a variety of data sources, including CE data and LSA data (Stella P) to develop assumptions.

Q: Are system costs in Stella M fields prefilled with grant awards tied to HMIS participating projects?

A: There are no default values or connections to grant awards for project type costs as these costs vary by location.

Q: Can you export the results in Stella M?

A: Yes, there is an export of everything in Stella M (except some of the system map math), including

notes and descriptions-

Q: Will there be a HUD course on using Stella M?

A: There is a System Modeling Toolkit on the HUD Exchange:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/stella/stella-and-system-modeling/#System-Modeling-Stella-M>

Q: It was stated that Stella M is available for all CoCs. What if you are in a Balance of State? Do all of the CoCs still have access to Stella M or is it just our Region or the Balance of State itself?

A: Stella M is accessed by all CoC through HDX2.0. It can be used for a balance of state or a sub-geography of a CoC.

Q: Is HUD going to publish specs that require vendors to create reports which will give us insight into the types of metrics we need to use Stella M? For instance, an Inflow report or a report that actually tells us what rate of growth has been seen?

A: Thank you for your suggestion. Several existing tools can help with these data inputs, including Stella P and Eva. See also the System Modeling Data Guide:

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/System-Modeling-Data-Guide.pdf>

Q: The Stella M content should be its own training session, is there a plan for this?

A: Instructional videos are being produced, and will be included on the HUD Exchange.

Q: Will there ever be a component where communities can use this tool to calculate staffing cost for the programs?

A: You can use stella M to calculate the operating costs for a project type, which would include staffing costs.

Q: Will you be posting this training video again so we can review?

A: Yes - the video will be posted shortly here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/hmis-lead-sys-admin-webinars> - and a notice will be sent through the HUD Exchange when they are posted.

Q: I understand that individual assumptions should be entered by the user, but there seem to be so many different assumptions to develop. I think it would be helpful to either a) display historical information from Stella P when available or b) include next to a field a tool tip with suggestions of where/how to develop assumptions.

A: There is a link to the System Modeling Toolkit in the information pop-up windows in Stella M. The Toolkit is available here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/stella/stella-and-system-modeling/#System-Modeling-Stella-M>

Q: I would assume that the current baseline could be based on data from the LSA plus how the excluded projects are currently performing?

A: Stella M accounts for baseline inventory and households, but not baseline system performance. For guidance on determining the baseline inventory and households, see the System Modeling Data Guide: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/System-Modeling-Data-Guide.pdf>

Q: Stella M is based on the LSA Exports, right?

A: No. LSA exports are not included in Stella M. All fields are user-entered, though you can use LSA data to inform the assumptions.