HMIS Webinar 2023/2/15

JESSE JORSTAD: Hey, everybody. We're gonna get started in a minute or two, we're going to watch the number of participants climb up and when it kind of levels off, we'll go ahead and get rolling. Thanks.

JESSE JORSTAD: All right, everybody, welcome to the HMIS lead webinar. It's good to have you here. I'm going to go ahead and get started.

JESSE JORSTAD: Just to make sure you're in the right place. The purpose of this call is to inform HMIS leads and system administrators of upcoming HMIS events, information, and changes to guidance. We also provide overviews of HMIS guidance and foundational knowledge. Providing a forum for questions from the field from all of you. Reminding CoCs and HMIS leads about upcoming reporting deadlines and requirements. Using HMIS and other data sources, and then providing leadership to HMIS leads and system administrators for implementation success.

JESSE JORSTAD: Couple of things to know about this webinar. So all materials from past, present, and going into the future will be posted on the HUD exchange website. And during and after the webinar today, so let's see. So, during the webinar, you are muted. If you'd like to interact with us, you can use the Q&A feature of WebEx.

JESSE JORSTAD: It's helpful if you can use the slide numbers in your questions. Oftentimes the person who's going to field your question is the one who is presenting when you submitted it and so, you know, several minutes sometimes pass before we get to it. So, it's helpful to have that context about what you're asking about. There are times when we will ask you to submit an HMIS AAQ, just to make sure that we get you all the information that you need about a specific question that you're asking.

JESSE JORSTAD: Right. Today on the call with us we have Fran Ledger from the SNAPS office, pronouns are they/them. I am Jesse Jorstad with Apple associates, he/him. We have Meradith Alspaugh from the Partnership Center, she/her. Ryan Burger from ICF, he/him. Sam Kameyama from Abt Associates, she/her. Gwen Beebe from ICF, she/they. Alissa Parrish, ICF, she/her. Brian Roccapriore from Cloudburst, he/him. And then Kayla Thompson from Abt Associates, she/her, is helping us with some technical support today.

JESSE JORSTAD: Okay, here's our agenda. We're going to be talking about announcements and reminders, including reporting timelines. We're also going to cover a brilliant topic today called "What is HMIS?" What is it? What is it not? We'll talk about spring NHSDC registration, the advanced user groups, and what Eva can do for you.

JESSE JORSTAD: Then we'll do a deeper dive content section about the feedback that all of you provided during the December HMIS admin call. We will talk about APR specification updates. And then, regarding the 2024 data standards, going over the feedback that was received, particularly around demographic data elements, but some of the other data elements as well. And then some other data standards updates to expect.

JESSE JORSTAD: We will end by posing a couple of questions to all of you about how housing problem solving is operating in your community. So, for that section, we will open up the chat and you'll be able to submit your information that way.

JESSE JORSTAD: And with that, I will go ahead and turn it over to Fran.

FRAN LEDGER: Hi, everyone. I'm from the SNAPS office at HUD and, just like usual, we have the reporting timeline up here and I'm just going to draw your attention to two things. One is System Performance Measures; those are due on the 28th and you see a little bit of information there about submissions. We have 68 submitted and 118 in progress. So that's going to be wrapping up soon.

FRAN LEDGER: We have a little more information about the PIT and the HIC. So anticipated opening early to mid-March and closing in the end of April, those are the dates that we try to hit, we will provide more information as we move along. End of the month, we'll have some more concrete dates for you.

FRAN LEDGER: So, let's talk about the exciting conversation about what an HMIS is. So, HUD stays, gender-, excuse me, vendor, how about that, vendor neutral? And we don't often talk much about HMIS software as far as the different vendors are concerned, but we do have something that's come up. And so, I need to talk to you a little bit today about what an HMIS is, and what it is not. Just some very key things.

FRAN LEDGER: So, when a community is looking at buying an HMIS, we want to be clear about that these are data systems that are intended for CoCs to understand the nature and extent of homelessness for their community so that they can make some sound decisions about policies and resources that they have available. And it's to help service providers be able to move people out of homelessness into stable housing. And congressional mandates HUD to understand the nature and extent of homelessness and report it to Congress. So, that is the origin story for HMIS and where it got it start.

FRAN LEDGER: And we need to make sure that HMIS protects the use and disclosure of people's information and make sure it's protecting and supporting their safety and their ability to choose around their use and disclosure.

FRAN LEDGER: And that it meets the requirements of the McKinney-Vento act for each CoC and also for federal partners, right? Because we have some ability to collect data for our federal partners and some of our federal partners required its use.

FRAN LEDGER: So, what is it not? Let's talk about that for a minute. It is not a software that is intended to track individuals experiencing homelessness for law enforcement. If someone is trying to sell you HMIS for that, it is not an HMIS.

FRAN LEDGER: Furthermore, we just want to underscore that HMIS data should not be used to adjudicate services or benefits unless it's federally required. There are some instances in which we want, we collect HMIS data and that data that gets collected, there needs to be decisions about whether services, if that person qualifies for a service. But generally, that's not the intent.

FRAN LEDGER: And staff should not use or disclose HMIS data in a way that violates the Fair Housing Act, Equal Access Rule, or break state, local, or sovereign nation federal privacy laws. If you have questions about the Fair Housing Act, Equal Access Rule, we can drop the links to those things in the chat as we go later, as we progress through the conversation today. But we want to make sure that you're aware of that, and you can always go back and check out this recording later to take a look at that.

FRAN LEDGER: So, let's move on from that section and we'll talk about NHSDC, this is very exciting, it's coming up. April 3rd through the 5th, it'll be at the Gila River Indian Community in Chandler, Arizona. Registration is open. I wanted to talk to you today about what you can use your HMIS funding for. So, you can use CoC and ESG program funding just like we always have been able to do, and ESG-CV if you have admin funds, you can use it for that. But not ESG-CV training funds.

FRAN LEDGER: You'll see a list of the HUD sessions that we'll have there, and we are looking forward to doing a plenary. So, you'll have the Fran and William show at NHSDC this time. We hope to both be there and talk about all things HUD and the data standards at the conference.

FRAN LEDGER: Let's go ahead and talk about a really exciting opportunity that's coming up for us. Years ago, we used to have what was called an Advanced Users Group. We would get together, a small group of folks that were doing advanced practices so they could share those practices do some peer learning.

FRAN LEDGER: We're reinventing that idea into an Advanced Users Group that is looking, so we're looking for communities that are doing interesting things to highlight their efforts and their creative approaches to using HMIS. Those individuals will get to do peer learning, they'll get to receive direct technical assistance, and they also get to co-write some white papers with TA providers.

FRAN LEDGER: If you feel like you have an interesting project that you've been working on and you want to share with the world, you can demonstrate your interest just by sending an email to the email link that you see on the slide, and we can go ahead and drop that in the chat. And we'd be excited to hear from you. That would be great.

FRAN LEDGER: And I think that's it for my announcements. Yes, it is. And I don't know if we have any questions that I should answer, but if I do, I'm happy to.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: We have one that came in, Fran. Can you say more about how HMIS can and cannot be used for the coordinated entry process, which very much relates to how people can, or cannot get services.

FRAN LEDGER: So, it can be, so, are you, I'm not sure how deep I should go with the Coordinated Entry. So, you can, it's up to you whether you use Coordinated Entry for HMIS. If you have a coordinated project, you do need to use, for that coordinated project, you need to use HMIS. But some communities have chosen to use a separate system for coordinated entry. I don't know if that's really getting at the question though.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: Thank you for that. Oh, sorry, go ahead. Meradith.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: I was gonna say, I think the question is more related to the slide where you are referencing that you can't use HMIS data to adjudicate service provision or something to that effect. I don't remember. So, I think the concern is...

FRAN LEDGER: Okay, perfect. So, that helps. So, I'm talking more about if someone was seeking food stamps, right, and then somebody in the community looked at HMIS data and gave that information to somebody in the food stamp office, and that person was denied food stamps because of information that came out of the HMIS.

FRAN LEDGER: That was an illegal use and disclosure of information that then ultimately was used to adjudicate food stamps for some individual, that is not the intent of the HMIS. So that's more what we're talking about. Of people getting denied access to resources because of the HMIS.

JESSE JORSTAD: Okay, thank you so much Fran.

JESSE JORSTAD: All right, so Eva was released in about the middle of December. It's really exciting to see people engaging with that tool and we've appreciated your patience as we've worked through a few issues with file structure and stuff like that, you know, it's really expected that when you start using files in new ways, you come across some things that need to be addressed. So, thanks for your diligence on that, and your patience.

JESSE JORSTAD: Wanted to make sure that people were clear, though, about all of the functionality that Eva does have. We've heard that there are some communities who are going in, finding out that their file structure analysis says that there are no issues with their file structure, and then believing that that is all that Eva can provide for you and that's not the case.

JESSE JORSTAD: So we also provide a Client Counts function. The purpose of that function is mostly to make sure that the data that you were expecting to be in the file is the data that's there. And it can help you to identify things like, oh, maybe an organization isn't keeping up with their data entry. We'll be supplementing that with some data timeliness functionality in the future too. But it's sort of like, it'll give you a kind of a status of how many people are waiting for housing in a project, how many people are currently housed, how many folks have exited, things like that.

JESSE JORSTAD: It also takes a look at your project descriptor data and check some of those logical checks. For example, that your funding types line up with your project types and that there are no concerns there. But then it also gives you the same data quality checks that you would see in the original data quality tool plus a whole lot more. At the system level, which is how the previous tool was structured, but then there's also an entire tab that gives you the information at the organizational level. So want to make sure that you're accessing all of those things and getting the most for the time that you're spending with that tool.

JESSE JORSTAD: Also want to make sure that you're aware that Eva does have a Changelog. So, if you're interested in what has been released recently, you can go ahead and take a look at that Changelog and it'll give you a rundown of all the things that have been changing.

JESSE JORSTAD: I think one of the things that's really cool about this project is that it's our intention to release functionality as soon as it's built and ready to rock as opposed to having, you know, there will be some more substantial releases as we go along but essentially, as we get things programmed, we're going to go ahead and release them to make sure that you're, you know, that you have access to the most functionality possible.

JESSE JORSTAD: Some features that I wanted to bring to your attention that were released last Thursday is a download of that project level client count functionality that I just talked about. So that's now ex portal. We also separated out the timeout processing versus the crash processing. So that's going to be a little bit of a clearer functionality in the tool.

JESSE JORSTAD: And then this one is interesting. So, you know, the Coordinated Entry data standards came into being during the fiscal year 2020 cycle. And so, if you're using your HMIS for recording referrals, you might know that some of those referrals are expecting a referral result and a result date. We built a new functionality where you can tell Eva how many days you expect to have passed before you would consider a referral outstanding, right? The point at which you would expect there to be a result date but there isn't.

JESSE JORSTAD: So, you put that number in, it's defaulted to 14 days, and then anything where it's been longer than 14 days it will flag that for you so that you can investigate to see is this referral still outstanding and they are still working to fill it? Or is this something that needs to be closed out because it was unsuccessful? So hopefully that's gonna help a lot. We're looking at all sorts of data quality things that'll start looking at coordinated entry stuff, because I know that that's been a real lift for communities. So, we're excited to be going down that road.

JESSE JORSTAD: A couple of other things that are coming soon here, so, in the next couple of weeks. There's been a number of changes to the file structure analysis file. It has a new detail column that's going to provide additional information about which rows or columns are affected by a given issue. So, it's gonna get a little bit more specific for you.

JESSE JORSTAD: Text will also be clarified regarding, there's a check that's looking for null values and it'll explain that it's either considering it null because it is in fact null and it is not allowed to be or that it's actually an incompatible data type.

JESSE JORSTAD: Then, Eva's also going to be able to distinguish if a CSV is missing columns or if it has extraneous columns. And if it is extraneous, it'll allow you to have the file accepted but then it'll tell you, hey, these are columns, we were not expecting to see in the file. That was an issue that we ran into, and it was causing some problems with Eva not knowing really what to do with that, because there were extra columns in the file. So, hopefully, we're gonna get to a lot more accepted files overall with better details to all of you if your files not being accepted, in terms of what is going on there. So. Lots of exciting work on that front.

JESSE JORSTAD: As always, there is the Github site that you can log issues or questions or requests for enhancement, and we will be in touch with the tech team through that site.

JESSE JORSTAD: Okay. Are there any questions, Brian, about that information.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: You know there was. Back on slide 12, will Eva requirements for blank columns in data be reduced so we can get insights even if we are missing some required data elements.

JESSE JORSTAD: Yeah, so the intention is to narrow the times when a file is, essentially, rejected to times when the columns are actually being utilized by the tool to calculate other things. So, times when it would actually affect the results. So, we'll continue to move in that direction. Even if you have issues that are found in your file, though, it doesn't mean that the file was necessarily rejected. So, just to make sure that you're checking in on that. It will be clear if it was rejected.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: And then next one is not really a question, just a comment that says Eva is great and thank you for creating it.

JESSE JORSTAD: Wonderful. It is a pleasure to work on that tool and hopefully it's going to bring a lot of capacity to communities as they can focus on other things because Eva's going to do some heavy lifting for folks.

JESSE JORSTAD: All right, so we're going to go ahead and get into the deep dive content. And we're going to start with Sam.

SAM KAMEYAMA: So, the first thing we're going to talk about is the HMIS admin feedback that we requested from all of you during the December HMIS Lead call. Thank you, always, for the feedback that you give to us. So, at that point, we had divided up the questions, and everybody on this team assessed the level of effort for the requests that were coming in and we made recommendations as to what should be done about those requests.

SAM KAMEYAMA: So, you'll see here there is the level of effort there, went from not applicable, low, medium, high. And then the recommendations, either the resource already exists, maybe we just need to highlight it for y'all, or we need to explore what it would take to meet that request. Maybe we can go ahead and pursue it now or we have chosen not to pursue the feedback or there is no action needed and there was just some feedback that were given to us. There is a bit more information about the actual process through that, through the process of going through that feedback in the last HMIS Lead webinar.

SAM KAMEYAMA: So, please be aware that we did receive some feedback that were not directly related to the HMIS Lead webinar. Because that is not under our purview, we have passed on that feedback to the appropriate parties for them to consider so don't think we just ignored those. Next slide, please.

JESSE JORSTAD: So, Sam, if you'd like, you can progress the slides yourself at the top there, or I can do it.

SAM KAMEYAMA: I just did it, thank you. Sorry, this is my first time talking to y'all.

JESSE JORSTAD: You're doing great.

SAM KAMEYAMA: Thank you for that.

SAM KAMEYAMA: So, what we will not pursue. We will not be publishing the slides in advance because unfortunately, our slides can change up to the very last minute. So, we don't want to have different versions of the slides going around. We won't be sharing job titles because the job titles aren't really the same across TA firms. It might not be as meaningful as you think it would be, but we do want to emphasize that whoever is presenting on a specific topic, they are considered a subject matter expert.

SAM KAMEYAMA: Then we will not be presenting vendor specific content, we will continue to be vendor neutral in these calls. And we will not be doing content on adding custom, non-federally required data elements into HMIS. That is not really under our purview, so we won't be presenting on those.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And here are some things that we already do that we received feedback on. So, there was a request that links only be shared in the chat and not in the Q and A. That is something that we currently do but if you are receiving a link in the Q&A, that is in direct response to a question that you have asked.

SAM KAMEYAMA: There was a request to have more space for vendors and HMIS leads and HUD TAs to come together in the same space. So, vendors are invited to these system admin calls to hear about what we are saying to the system admins. They will continue to be invited to the sys admin calls.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And we will always plug that the HMIS Lead and System Admin webinar recordings, slides, and transcripts are shared after this webinar. But we do want to note that there are several steps that need to be taken before these things can be posted. We will try to send it out as quick as we can, but we do appreciate your patience as we try to make that process as quick as possible for all of y'all.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And some other resources that already exists, the HMIS Lead Series. So, this is a great resource that was targeted for use by HMIS Leads, sys admins, CoC data leadership. It's to help support communities advance their goals and improvement strategies that were kind of highlighted in the SNAPS Data TA Strategy.

SAM KAMEYAMA: Some of the resources that were asked for in the feedback are highlighted on the page for you. So, there are some questions about vendor accountability, are there resources on that, and also navigating HMIS roles and responsibilities. These are not the only things that the HMIS Lead Series covers, but we did want to highlight these specific resources for you because they were asked about in the feedback session in December, and they are also put in the chat.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And something else we also wanted to highlight is that on the HMIS Lead and Sys Admin Webinars page on the HUD Exchange you are actually able to see what topics were covered for the past webinars. You're actually able to search for specific topics. So, say, you're looking for a time that we talked about in the previous admin webinars, whether we talked about security or privacy, you can actually search for those and go through the recording, see the slides, see the transcripts if that is something that you are interested in. That is again posted in the chat, the link to that.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And the same thing, there is also a section in the HUD Exchange for past trainings, where you are also able to search, filter and you'll be able to see some of the trainings that were provided by HUD in the past.

SAM KAMEYAMA: Now, some of the subjects that were asked about in the HMIS feedback that was done in December, we're going to highlight some of the resources now. Please be aware that these are not the only resources that exist on these specific topics, but just wanted to show the wealth of resources that are available out there. We used... we're going to be... we used the HMIS admin previous webinars that were here. We looked through some of the previous NHSDC sessions so there's definitely a lot of places to look at.

SAM KAMEYAMA: Some of the questions were on dual enrollments and duplicate inventory. And then some questions about vendor accountability. So, I'm posting those links in the chat if you are interested in those specific resources. Some questions about data sharing and systems collaboration.

SAM KAMEYAMA: Some of these, please be aware that some of these NHSDC sessions that are linked there, they are HUD sponsored and it is highlighted in this slide which ones are HUD sponsored and which ones are not. And those links are in the chat as well. I'm sorry, I'm just throwing links at all of y'all.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And then other subjects that were asked about, incorporating persons with lived experience. And privacy and security. So some more links for you all there.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And next some feedback that we will explore or pursue. How to be a community presenter, so we did talk about this in the January slide deck. That link that you see on the screen is for that slide deck. It is on slide 26, if you're curious. We would just ask that you to submit an AAQ if you are interested in being community presenter and what topic you would like to present on.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And we are also going to be sending out the link to the webinar and also the agenda prior to the day of the meeting. This is new this month. The link to the call and the agenda will also be posted on the HMIS Lead and Sys Admin page. The link, it would also be sent out in the reminder email that goes out the week prior to the call and will still be sent the day of.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And then we will be working on incorporating data quality content and knowledge sharing throughout the year to assist with LSA preparation. It seemed like in the feedback some of you feel like the LSA and data quality and all those things kind of sneak up on you. So, we will try to incorporate that throughout the year so it doesn't feel like that way.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And then we are also exploring some things that were suggested. More interactivity in the webinars or letting attendees off mute. We're seeing what we can do about that. Resources to assist with front line workers and their needs. These were also specifically asked in terms of mental health resources for workers, et cetera, et cetera. And then additional tools and resources slash guidance to help improve data literacy.

SAM KAMEYAMA: And on your screen right now are just some of the suggested webinar topics that we got. This is not all of the suggested webinar topics that we have received but just so you know these are ones that we are thinking about pursuing and please feel free to continue to let us know what you would like to hear from us in these webinars.

JESSE JORSTAD: Perfect, thanks so much, Sam. Brian, were there any questions for Sam about that section?

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: There was one I'm answering right now about the links in the Q&A being available after the webinar's over. And my response is that yes, they're all going to be available after the webinars over. After these sessions wrap up, we go through, clean them up. So, the slide, the recording, the links, the Q&A, are all going to be posted to the HUD exchange shortly after the webinar is over.

JESSE JORSTAD: Perfect okay. We're going to go over to Gwen. And Kayla, I can't seem to actually give the presenter ball to Gwen so if you could help us out with that, I will go to the...no I won't. Great. Hey, Gwen's in charge. Go ahead, Gwen.

GWEN BEEBE: Amazing thanks, Jesse. Let me see if I can successfully advance...ah, I can advance slides. This is great.

GWEN BEEBE: So, I'm going to talk about the CE-APR today. We did an off cycle update to the CE-APR to resolve a couple questions that came up both in the AAQs and in internal TA reviews about areas that were just a little bit ambiguous and not quite capturing the intent of the question. So, we're gonna talk

about that right now. There's also these updated specs are available on the HUD Exchange, I believe as of this morning. So, we'll drop the link to that in the chat.

GWEN BEEBE: So, we've got 5 things we're just going to step through; each one has its own slide. The first one is project selection. In the specifications on page 5, it says select all projects regardless of type that are set up to collect coordinated entry data elements. This is a system setting rather than a PDDE, so it wasn't immediately clear how to select these projects.

GWEN BEEBE: So, the clarification is that on Q4, which is the question that's important here, we're looking at all projects that collected coordinated entry data, so either 4.19 or 4.20, for any client in the report CoC within the relevant date range. So, for assessments, that's just within the report itself. And for events, it's either within the report period or up to 90 days after the end of the period. So don't worry about the setup to collect just look at who actually collected that information.

GWEN BEEBE: For CoC filtering this only matters if you have a multi CSV implementation, otherwise you do not care about this slide. This we were seeing implemented inconsistently. So, this is guidance that already existed, we just needed to confirm it and make sure everyone's on the same page.

GWEN BEEBE: If a project only serves a single CoC per it's PDDEs, so if in project setup you only have one CoC code associated with the project, there's no client filtering on location that needs to happen after that. So, if the project in which they are assessed only serves one CoC their client location doesn't matter. The assumption is if it doesn't match that CoC it's a data entry error. They will be included on your APR.

GWEN BEEBE: For enrollment selection, you're instructed to use data from the enrollment with the latest assessment. Particularly in multiple CoC implementations this can get a little confusing. Is this the latest assessment in any CoC? If the latest assessment is in a different CoC but the enrollment started in the same CoC which enrollment do you use? I came up with an example, I'm not gonna bore you with it, but it could be interpreted four different ways.

GWEN BEEBE: So, we got some clarification. Our clarification we're providing to you today is that we filter assessments by location first. So, for every assessment for a given person, assign a location based on their enrollment, based on their update information, filter those out, and then of what's left, just those assessments that are within the CoC on which the report is being run, those are the ones that could possibly be considered for latest assessment. So latest assessment within your CoC, that's the enrollment that we're interested in.

GWEN BEEBE: Okay. The assessments on non-heads of household. So, in the data standards, assessments are only required for heads of household. That said there are a number of CoCs that have made part of their process they assess any adult within the household.

GWEN BEEBE: So, to make sure that those are all being picked up when the guidance in 4.19 says active at the time of that latest assessment, it's not just looking at the head of household's assessment. It's looking at the most recent assessment within that household. So, of anybody in the household, rather, of each person, find their latest assessment. Of those latest assessments, if there's more than one person in the household with assessments at that point, use the one that is more recent for reporting on that household.

GWEN BEEBE: So, if you have a couple, the head of household is assessed, a month later their partner is assessed, you would use that most recent assessment on the partner for reporting out that household.

GWEN BEEBE: Then last slide, this one's pretty minor. The household type for Q7a and Q8a were based on the clients in the household at any point in the reporting period. That's standard household type determination. But Q9a through d was only looking at clients in the household at point of assessment. So, if there was a child with a person when they were enrolled who then left before they were assessed, they would show up as a household with children on Q7 and Q8, but without on Q9.

GWEN BEEBE: So, we just aligned those for all household type reporting. We're going to be looking at the household members that are present at the time of assessment. That's just making sure that you're not reporting one household as one type on these two questions, and a different type over here.

GWEN BEEBE: Those are your CE-APR updates. Again, these are posted on the HUD exchange. We'll be sharing that link if we haven't already. Brian, any questions come in about this? Alissa's nodding.

ALISSA PARRISH: Yeah, I can actually take that because they were assigned to me so I can see them quickly. So, one of the questions was in a multi-CoC coordinated entry implementation, and this is related back to slide 28, If the client is missing client location but the project is only operating within one CoC, would it be expected to have that client counted or excluded.

GWEN BEEBE: Assuming that the single CoC in which the project operates is the CoC on which you are running the CE-APR, yes, they would be included. It does not matter that it is missing as long as the project only serves one CoC. We don't even check for the location.

ALISSA PARRISH: Great. Another question. I understood that we had to run the CE-APR by CoC, right, so this is a system level report or a CoC-level report. Wouldn't that approach be equivalent to running by particular projects since the coordinated entry APR only reflects results for participants with 4.19 and 4.20 responses.

GWEN BEEBE: So, that's a really interesting question. I'm going to answer as best I can. If this doesn't answer your question, go ahead and submit a follow up. This is going to depend on how your system is set up. It's possible to have your coordinated entry system set up so all your 4.19 and 4.20 elements are collected under a single project. That's valid, that's a fine way to do it.

GWEN BEEBE: You can also set it up so maybe your coordinated entry project and perhaps all of your shelters are all set up to collect 4.19, 4.20. Maybe any of your projects, emergency shelter, anything serving folks experiencing literal homelessness, maybe those collect coordinated entry data elements. Any of those are completely valid approaches.

GWEN BEEBE: So, if your system only collects coordinated entry elements in one project, then yes, running it on the system is the same as running it on a single project. But because there's different valid ways to set up that system, we make sure everyone runs it system-wide to pick it up no matter how you're set up.

ALISSA PARRISH: Perfect and then I think we kind of answered this, but maybe not really. So, for a household to be included in the coordinated entry APR, the question is, do they need to have an open enrollment in a CE provider?

GWEN BEEBE: No, because even if you're 4.19, 4.20 event/assessment is on an enrollment of a different project type, that project is still collecting coordinated entry information. That's fine. That enrollment is the one that's going to be used to report on them. We are not looking at project type when we're deciding whether to include assessments and events.

ALISSA PARRISH: Does the guidance around running the CE APR at the system or CoC level change if there is a CoC dedicated grant that is specific to a specific population like youth or like DV?

GWEN BEEBE: No. Submit an AAQ.

ALISSA PARRISH: I did not mean to stump you with that, it might be something we...yeah.

GWEN BEEBE: I'm 95% confident in that but I'd like to be 100. Oh, Meredith, your camera's on. Help me out.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: If I'm understanding the question correctly, so if you have like a VSP and it's time for them to do their APR, they would submit the VSP data for coordinated entry and the CoC. If you have a YHDP recipient who has a coordinated entry APR, the expectation from HUD is that it is a system level CE APR that is submitted. There is no expectation that there is like a youth specific or a VSP or DV specific sub-population report submitted. It is always the full CoC. The only exception if it's a VSP, they also want theirs. Does that help?

ALISSA PARRISH: Helpful. One last question and then we'll move on. If we assess two adults in the same household on the same day, will it matter which order we input them into the system or into HMIS? So if we record the head of household first and the additional adult second, which will it set as that household's assessment.

GWEN BEEBE: Does not matter even a little bit if they're on the same day. Essentially, what's happening is, once that date is determined for the household, household reporting move forward as normal. So, the counts household reporting would still work on the head of household. The only thing that's changing is that now when you're determining that date of the latest, not even necessarily changing, if anything it's been clarified, is that now when you're determining the date of the household's latest assessment, non-heads of household's dates can be included in that as well. So if it's the same date, that does not matter. You will see no difference.

ALISSA PARRISH: Great. Meradith, just to clarify on the question I had about DV specific CE grant versus, you know, general, in this scenario the coordinated entry grant lives within non VSP so that data is being inserted into HMIS. Does that change your answer?

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Nope, it's the entire system, always the whole system.

ALISSA PARRISH: Great. There's a lot of other questions coming in right now, but I think we can move on and Gwen...

GWEN BEEBE: We can type it out.

ALISSA PARRISH: Perfect. All right.

GWEN BEEBE: Thanks.

JESSE JORSTAD: We did drop this link in the chat for everybody. And now we're going to turn it over to Alissa.

ALISSA PARRISH: Thanks, Jesse, and thanks, Gwen, for all of that, and thanks everyone for being here today.

ALISSA PARRISH: Just wanted to give you another thanks. So, you all seemed to understand the assignment very well. So, we received a lot of feedback on the fiscal year 2024 data standards process, specifically around the demographic data elements, but also just around several of the other data elements. So, I think we synthesized somewhere around 350 pieces of feedback, and there were communities that really did a comprehensive process at the local level to incorporate a diverse set of voices and we received beautiful reports and graphics and visuals and local surveys that were developed to do all of this.

ALISSA PARRISH: So, it was really amazing, and I think the key takeaways here are that people really do have some really great ideas and perspectives, and the updates that will be made to the proposed data elements are based on all of that feedback. So, your feedback does matter, and we want you to hear that really loud and clear, and that this process really did highlight the importance of being intentional about reaching out to folks that are directly impacted by this data collection process to really understand what's needed. So, thank you. Thank you, thank you.

ALISSA PARRISH: So, we're going to go through each data element and we're not going to go through all of the feedback that was provided but we're going to give the top type of feedback, if you will, as the data was synthesized in the feedback was understood.

ALISSA PARRISH: So, for the Gender data element specifically, the top type of feedback that was submitted was around the language used specifically for transgender experience. There were thoughts around, like, experience feels like a point in time, rather than part of your identity. And there were just other really Important considerations to think about related to that specific verbiage.

ALISSA PARRISH: There were also several concerns submitted about safety and training needs and making sure that there was sufficient guidance available to the people that would actually be collecting this information from people experiencing homelessness around how do we make sure that this is collected in a way that keeps the person providing that information safe?

ALISSA PARRISH: And so, we have a quote here. "The transgender experience has created quite a bit of conversation, consternation, and confusion. Some people see the logic in asking a person if their gender response is a result of a transgender experience. While many others feel that those who are not transgendered will be insulted and perhaps someone who is transgendered but doesn't want to announce it will also not the answer."

ALISSA PARRISH: So that was the feedback on the Gender data element.

ALISSA PARRISH: For Race and Ethnicity, the top type of feedback was around adding other options and this really varied significantly by region. There was overall appreciation for combining Race and ethnicity into a single data element.

ALISSA PARRISH: And the quote that we had here was, "I like that race and ethnicity is now combined. In my experience, many Latinx people did not want to identify with any race, and many were categorized as white and Hispanic, despite them not really identifying as white." So, overarching appreciation for combining the race and ethnicity data element with really just asking for additional levels of specificity, based on where folks live and the people that they're seeing specifically in their homeless response systems.

ALISSA PARRISH: For Preferred Language, the top type of feedback was also around adding other options. American sign language came up often, probably the most often, but also the additional languages that were offered really did again vary significantly by region. We saw Russian, we saw Ukrainian, we saw Tribal nations and specific native languages, so it really did vary by region.

ALISSA PARRISH: There were also a lot of questions about why this data was being collected and what would actually be operationalized or actualized because of it. So how would this really benefit people experiencing homelessness?

ALISSA PARRISH: So, this quote was "A client's language preference alone does not convey whether the client needs language assistance services. To ensure equitable access to services for clients with limited English proficiency, this data element should also include follow up questions to capture whether a client needs an interpreter, written translations, or both."

ALISSA PARRISH: So, then there was a lot of feedback that was still related to those proposed demographic data elements. So, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Preferred Language, but weren't specifically related to any one of those. So, the top type of feedback around this was really around technical and reporting recommendations.

ALISSA PARRISH: I don't think it's a surprise to any of you that there was a lot of feedback about the open text boxes. How those would be reported on, what is the utility of them, how that would be useful either at the federal or the local level. And then how multi select options would be included in federal reports, like the APR. So, as we add in, I mean, Race is a multi-select option now, Gender's a multi select option now, how those are reported and how they would be reported on in the future.

ALISSA PARRISH: So, this quote was "Without a clear use in federal reporting, these open-ended questions serve only as additional burdens that clients must answer."

ALISSA PARRISH: And then we had this category of just other feedback around other fiscal year 2024 data elements and the data standards feedback. And the top type of feedback for this was also around technical and reporting recommendations.

ALISSA PARRISH: So, this feedback included all the feedback around Social Security Number, and whether to do away with it, whether to keep it, whether to do just the last 4. There was a lot around Social Security Number. There was feedback around how to approach, or how to word different data elements. I'm thinking Approximate Date Homelessness Started, that one came up. Other reporting recommendations or reporting specs clarity needed. And then some new data elements that were proposed as well as feedback.

ALISSA PARRISH: So, this quote was "Recommend eliminating any federal partner program data element that is not required to monitor grant compliance and/or resolve homelessness."

ALISSA PARRISH: And so, what's next? Again, sincere thanks for all of the feedback, we really did look at it and it really did impact the direction that the fiscal year 2024 data standards will go. We provided that feedback back to HUD and then, specifically the gender identity and race ethnicity work groups that have been working over the last well over a year at this point to provide proposed updates to those specific data elements, they've taken those and really come up with some additional final recommendations based on all of your feedback. And that will go to the federal partners I think actually tomorrow to provide final recommendations. And then we will update all of the products we have come to know and love, and we will launch and go live on October 1. But for the full timeline, I'm going to pass it over to Meradith.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Thanks, Alissa, I'm gonna steal the ball real fast.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Okay, so, yeah, this slide should look familiar we have looked at this before. This is the timeline for the data standards process for fiscal year 2024. We are smack dab in the middle of this February here, right? We are reviewing the changes with the federal partners. All of the information that Alissa shared with you we will be sharing with the federal partners with the final recommendations for changes to the demographic data elements. And like Alissa said, that meeting is tomorrow. Not that we'll get everything finalized tomorrow, but we'll have that conversation then we'll continue to work with them, continue to work with HUD through March to get that final approval, that final consensus of the changes.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: And then releasing materials starting in April followed by a wider release of more materials, data manuals, that sort of stuff, in May. With the expectation that there is a go live on October 1st. So that's gonna be, that means that your systems are all set up to collect the new FY 2024 data standards. That means your systems are set up to produce reports in the FY 2024 format.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, Sage will be accepting the FY 2024 APR, CAPER, and CE APR. Obviously there's gonna be potentially impacts on other reports, PATH report, the CSV will be updated for the RHY reporting and SSVF reporting. So gonna be a lot a lot happening on October 1st, much like we've done in the past for those of you that have been around. So that is what it is so stay tuned.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: We're going to today do a quick little preview of some of the changes that are forthcoming. We're not gonna get into a ton of details. We just want to sort of let you know the direction that some of the changes that are going. We want to give you sort of some insight into how we have heard your feedback and are responding to the feedback that we've received in the AAQs and through all of the other forums that we have received feedback through.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So again, these are proposed changes. They are not final changes. I might say that a thousand times because I just want to make sure that we're all clear. There is no expectation that your vendors are doing anything right now these are not final. So.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Starting out with the PDDE changes that we're anticipating. We're looking at changes to the Emergency Shelter Tracking method. So not necessarily having a method anymore, but instead having project types for Night by Night versus Entry/Exit to help with some reporting issues.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Potentially having the subtype for Rapid Rehousing projects. This has been one that we've heard, and you've all heard a million times, right? About these issues with Rapid Rehousing projects that are only providing services and not housing, causing dual enrollment issues, utilization issues, lots of potential problems there. So, we're hoping that the subtype addition for Rapid Rehousing that are only services only projects will help deal with that. You'll hear me mention this point a couple times, because there's some dominoes here, right? Like, it impacts other data elements the addition of this subtype.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Probably the hottest topic that lots of folks talk about is HMIS participation. We got a lot of pushback when we moved HMIS participation from its own data element to, we incorporated it under 2.02. We heard you; we are pulling it back out.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So HMIS participation, it's actually not going to just be limited to HMIS Participation either. We're looking at participation in general. So, whether a project is participating in HMIS or a comparable database, and we're gonna have dates of participation in there also, which I think was another point that lots of folks raised. So, there's that one.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: In the Funding Sources in 2.06, just a little clean up in there getting rid of some of the funding sources that aren't used, adding ESG RUSH in particular. That's the one that popped out to me that I put on the screen. That's a very specific funding source for a very, very limited use for disaster, presidentially declared disaster areas. So that's probably not going to be applicable to most people. But it is a new thing that's getting added in.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: And the Bed and Unit Inventory again, adjusting the applicability of this element for the new rapid rehousing subtypes. So, if you are a services only subtype, not reporting inventory.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Another PDDE to identify projects that are participating in Coordinated Entry, both projects that are making referrals and accepting referrals. And I think this will potentially help with some of the issues that Gwen was describing. This has been an ongoing challenge.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Again, those of you that have been around for a while since we've had the CE APR getting the right projects in there has continued to be a challenge for folks. In part because we didn't have anything like that. We didn't have any way of easily identifying participating projects, so this hopefully will make that process a little smoother and also have some other potential benefits for communities.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Moving on to some Universal Data Element changes. Many of these Alissa alluded to and sort of talked about. But a couple that we're making some adjustments for in the data collection guidance, updating some guidance for the Legal Name requirements in the data standards manual.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: We also, for months, talked and talked in this group about potentially removing the requirement to collect Social Security Numbers, changing what is or isn't collected, et cetera, so after much much feedback, lots of conversations, the plan at this point is to just have a data collection guidance change for HUD programs. HUD-funded programs would not be required to collect all 9 digits, only required to collect the last 4, and then other partners would set their own requirements. So, you'll see much more about that in the data collection guidance in the manual but that's where we are at this point.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: The Race and Ethnicity work, again, we've not yet had a chance to show it to the federal partners. So, we're not going to get into really too much detail about what's actually in those elements, but there will be changes. The combining... sorry, I got the thumbs down. Combining the race and ethnicities. Sorry, that was distracting. Race and Ethnicity combining into a single element is very likely to move forward.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Gender responses, there will be updates to the Gender responses, and we will share those in detail with this group.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: The other thing that is not on the slides, I realized, as we were getting ready for this call, but the other point that Alissa mentioned around Preferred Language, there will be an element added. Unsure exactly where it's going to be, that's why it didn't make it in the slides. Either a Program Specific Data Element, or a Common one versus a Federal Partner Program Specific Data Element. But again, we'll have more details after the federal partners review it. Let them weigh in on where it may live, and we'll show it to you all next month.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: We're doing some things with Destination. Regrouping, renumbering hopefully making things clearer.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: We've also, there may be some updates, additions made as a result of the Unsheltered and Rural NOFOs. So, just some, hopefully fairly minor updates in there. More to come on that.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: We're also making a change to the Client Location data elements. This is one we have gotten a ton of questions about also, and I think because I've probably been a thorn in y'all side for a while. We're gonna change the name of client location and we're gonna change the way it's collected and how it's used.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, it's only going to be collected at project start, there's not gonna be a requirement to update it when a person physically moves to a different location, and it will be associated with the funded CoC for that project. So, I think this is generally the guidance that's been provided in AAQs when you all have asked about this, and we just haven't necessarily been consistent with our documentation. So, we're making some updates there.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Moving on to the Common Program Specific Data Elements. A lot of the changes down here in the, both the Common and the Federal Partner Program Specific Data Elements are language changes. And really a big part of that came from the review of the data standards manual by the People with Lived Experience and Expertise team. They provided just a ton of really great feedback. They gave the feedback directly to the federal partners and the federal partners were really responsive and make quite a few updates.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, you'll just see here some label changes, just minor tweaks in the Health Insurance, Current Living Situation. Well, this is not an example, that the Current Living Situation and Date of Engagement there may be some updates there, again with the Unsheltered Rural NOFO. There has been some discussion about some potential changes there, the federal partners are talking more about that tomorrow and what maybe the street outreach projects operated by the different federal partners may want to do with that.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: We're also looking at consolidating 4.19 and 4.20 CE Assessment and CE Events. Pausing for the reactions on that one. As it stands right now, we've gotten a lot of concerns, comments, feedback about those data elements. We don't get good reporting out of those data elements because they are not associated with each other, right? That's probably one of the top questions I would see when we were getting AAQs about the CE APR. You didn't know necessarily the relationship between the assessment and the event, what assessment resulted in the positive event.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, we're trying to consolidate those two elements, make a few updates to some of the options, recognizing that this has been a challenge to implement for communities. And you all are doing so much great work here, we don't want to completely dismantle your systems and break everything, but we want to make the data being collected as meaningful as possible and as actionable as possible, right, and be able to evaluate things. So, more to come on that, but it's, again, we'll have the details next month, but we're getting there.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Let's see here. Okay. Moving into Federal Partner specific. Again, feedback here, we are retiring the C1 Wellbeing data element. It will not be collected anymore. We are also adding the R3 Sexual Orientation data element to Permanent Supportive Housing projects only. So, HUD will be requiring those two data elements.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: HOPWA's making some changes. Their label changes in the Services Provided, their Medical Assistance field, there isn't a response in there, that's just not relevant. And that was a really good example of the PLEE group challenging them to say, why are you collecting this if you're not reporting it? And they said, that's a really great idea. So, they just took it out. So, that's changed.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: RHY made quite a few changes in their language and their data elements. So, trying to use more gender-neutral language, trying to, I think we stopped using the word youth in some places and use clients just to be more consistent with how the rest of the data elements are and to use the appropriate language. So, you'll see some changes in there.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: VA has quite a few. I wanted to highlight Space Force because I know people asked about it last time. So, Space Force is being added as an option under Veterans Information. In SSVF Services Provided and Financial Assistance, there's a couple of label changes. In V3 there's a couple new response options, a new end date field. So, a couple of things happening there. Updating responses to the percent of AMI for SSVF eligibility. And then some label changes again, responding to feedback from the PLEE group. Trying to use more appropriate language in some of those fields.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, the one other thing I wanted to mention that we're also contemplating we'll be talking with the federal partners tomorrow about, waiting for their approval, is the use of the phrase Client Refused and changing it instead throughout all of the elements in the data standards, changing that to Client Prefers Not To Answer.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, again, that's one we've not talked with it all about to the federal partners, but we'll talk to them more tomorrow. That, I think, was one that we got quite a bit of feedback from folks responding to the demographic and just in general in the AAQs. So, I think we'll be making that update as well.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: So, I think that's it on data standards questions. Unless there's anything you want to raise out loud.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: One quick question for you, Meradith. For the social security collection requirements, the APR categorizes a non-full social security number as an error. If this update goes through, will those reports be updated, and those specifications changed as well?

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Right. So, in the data quality report, which is used in the APR and the CAPER, yes, those are counted currently. HUD is aware of that. HUD is considering what they're going to do with that. But I would anticipate things, either guidance or change or something about that data quality piece.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: Okay, and one more question for you about the sexual orientation being asked in PSH programs, why just PSH and not other project types.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: I can't answer this, but Fran, do you want to answer this?

FRAN LEDGER: Sure. So, this is the first time that we're collecting sexual orientation and so we're starting in PSH, which is obviously a program in which you have more kind of longevity and stability of participants in that program. So, this will be our attempt at first collecting sexual orientation. And then we'll see how that goes. If it's going well, we'll then expand that out to other projects. And we received a lot of feedback from advocacy organizations and communities that have really pushed the inclusion of sexual orientation in data collection. So, we're very interested in seeing how this goes and this seemed like a really good place to do for a start.

MERADITH ALSPAUGH: Thanks Fran. All right. I think that's it for me then. I'll turn it back over to Jesse.

JESSE JORSTAD: Sounds great, thank you, Meradith.

JESSE JORSTAD: All right. So going back to Eva for a minute. Our team has heard, so, as many of you are aware, we will be continuing to develop Eva and we're turning our attention to more performance-based analysis, right? And so, something that our team has heard from several sources is that CoCs need to better understand the effectiveness of housing problem solving interventions.

JESSE JORSTAD: What is housing problem solving? It's not a project type. So USICH defines it as one, identifying household strengths and existing support networks. Two, exploring safe housing options that are outside the homelessness services system even if temporary, when part of a diversion or rapid intervention. And three, connecting the household to community supports and services.

JESSE JORSTAD: So, we're going to actually open the chat here because we have a couple of questions for you all. We need to have a better understanding of how we should expect it to look in the data so that we can make informed decisions about how we need to structure the measures to make sure that we are capturing something that's meaningful.

JESSE JORSTAD: So, my first question to all of you, is when these approaches that USICH describes are being used with the literally homeless households, what term do you used to refer to this type of intervention? Are you calling it Diversion, Rapid Exit, Rapid Resolution, something else? So that's my first question.

JESSE JORSTAD: For any of you who are doing more than one thing in your community, let's say that you're doing diversion and rapid exit or something, would you mind dropping in the chat with the distinction is between those things in your view.

JESSE JORSTAD: Yes, so just want to make it clear for everybody that we're now using the chat function to respond to this question, not the Q&A, which is kind of confusing cause we don't usually open up the chat. Kayla are there any special things that folks need to do in order to be able to see the chat. Or is it just by default it's open?

KAYLA THOMPSON: If it hasn't opened for them automatically folks can open the chat panel by clicking the chat bubble icon on the lower right-hand side of their screen. And it should be located next to the participants menu icon, which is shaped like a person.

JESSE JORSTAD: Perfect, thank you.

JESSE JORSTAD: Okay so now my follow up question is, do these activities typically happen within one or two specific dedicated projects that are essentially only doing that type of activity? Or should we expect to see those types of services happening across several projects?

JESSE JORSTAD: Nikki, to your question, I do actually mean projects, so not just project types. Essentially is a dedicated, like we've got one diversion project for families and one for adults only or something like that, right? Or is it like a ton of projects that are encountering folks that are kind of beginning in their literal homelessness that folks are starting to try to divert at that area across several projects.

JESSE JORSTAD: Just kind of briefly scanning your responses. This is super helpful. It's good to know that it is as varied as it seems like it is from the distance that we're at. So, it will be really helpful for us to comb through these and see if we can find commonalities that we could program against or somehow empower all of you to be able to give us some information in the tool itself that will help you to parse the data and the way that you want to see it.

JESSE JORSTAD: I'm going to leave the chat open for a couple more minutes. Actually we'll leave it up until the end of the webinar in case there's anything that you guys want to add. But we'll just pause here for a couple minutes and then we will do our last few slides.

JESSE JORSTAD: Okay. I'm going to go ahead and move us forward. Thanks for all that information. Again, you can keep dropping it in the chat if you got something else to say on that topic.

JESSE JORSTAD: Okay, Sam mentioned this earlier in the call, but if you have a topic that you would like to present about from a community perspective on one of these calls, please go ahead and submit an AAQ.

JESSE JORSTAD: Next up, some of these links were dropped earlier in the chat, but we provide these every time. These are some foundational resources. These are things that we really feel like every HMIS admin should be really familiar with. So, hopefully, if you're new to this position, you take some time to check these things out.

JESSE JORSTAD: Next up wanted to just highlight some of the newer resources that have come out. So, in case you missed that listserv in all the emails that come out in a given week, we're highlighting them here.

JESSE JORSTAD: All right, we're gonna see you back here in one month on March 15th. And, just want to ask Brian really quick if there's anything else that we want to address from the question section before we close out.

BRIAN ROCCAPRIORE: I think we're ready to close out so I will just let Gwen take us home.

GWEN BEEBE: Great. So, I went to my 2nd grader for a joke for this. Hey, Jesse. Do you want to hear a joke about paper?

JESSE JORSTAD: I do.

GWEN BEEBE: No, you don't. It's tearable.

JESSE JORSTAD: Oh, wow. That is a memorable joke. Nice work. Okay.

GWEN BEEBE: I'll pass this feedback on.

JESSE JORSTAD: I feel like your 2nd grader really nailed the spirit of these HMIS jokes. So, well played. Okay, thank you, all. I hope you have a lovely rest of your day. Indeed, Mary would be quite proud. We'll have to send that joke over to her. Okay, have a great day everybody, thank you.