0:00:01 Mary Schwartz: And we are going to watch our participant rates climb and climb as we get rolling here on our November HMIS Lead and System Administrator Monthly Webinar. Welcome to the call. We have computer audio this time, yay! We have a recording that's happening. We will post-recording and slides next week. Let's see, there is a phone number if you need it, if you're not hearing me. You would know you aren't hearing me if you aren't hearing me, but if you need a phone number, it's available to you, but we will keep everyone on mute. A couple of housekeeping items, of course. You are here because you're an HMIS leader or system admin, first and foremost. You might also be invested in the data strategy in your community. We're actually going to touch on the data strategy in a little more detail on today's call. You might also be participating in ESG-CV uploading due to CARES Act funding. There are a multitude of reasons why you would be on this call, and we are happy that you are here.

0:01:13 MS: We will continue to watch the participant numbers rise. I'll go over a few more housekeeping items for you before we get into the content. If you need access to past calls, if you are anxious to get the slide deck for this call, all of those can be found on the sys admin Hub. If you are not a current member of the Hub, you can send an email, we have that information a little later in our slide deck. If you have not logged into the Hub recently, you might want to go do that. You might be purged if your activity on the Hub is not frequent enough. So definitely, make sure that you go in. That's how you're going to get emails from us, that's how you're going to get access to the materials from me to the calls. And there's a whole wealth of past meeting information and other resources for folks who have access to the Hub.

0:02:14 MS: So again, welcome to the call, the HMIS Lead/System Admin call. It's November 18th. We are so excited to have you here. We have a big, full agenda. We're probably going to go up almost towards the 90 minutes that we have scheduled. All participants are muted, but if you need to interact with us, please do. We want to hear from you, we want to answer your questions. So use the Q&A panel there on the right-hand side of your screen to ask us questions. We will respond to them as quickly as we can. We definitely have had an uptick in not only people attending the call, but the number of questions and issues that have come along with the harder and busier jobs of mine, that we all live these last couple months. So definitely, give us a slide number reference if you can because we may not be getting to your question until a little bit past when the content was being delivered that prompted your question. And the same is true if you get asked to submit your question to the HMIS AAQ desk on the call. You've asked something that is unable to be answered right away or could use a little more thought from this team. So if you submit a question on the AAQ after the call, please reference this call and even content or slide number as you're able so that we can have the best context to give you the best answer possible.

0:03:46 MS: So welcome to the other presenters that are on the screen with us today, thank you all for being here. We have Fran Ledger from the SNAPS Office. William Snow is with us from the SNAPS Office, as are our HUD staff on this call. And we have Meradith from the Partnership Center here to help answer questions. Ryan Burger is here from ICF. He's a new face, but of course, you all know Ryan already because he led the effort to get the HMIS Lead materials produced, and we have exciting news there. Scott Golden is here from the Partnership Center. He joined us on the last couple of calls, and he'll be presenting on the technical updates today. Jesse Jorstad from Abt Associates is here as well, and also a familiar face now that are on a few calls with us. Brian Roccapriore is your AAQ king and answering most of the questions that come in. So thanks, Brian. I am Mary Schwartz of Abt Associates, and Melissa Witham from C4 Innovations is in the background helping us out with all of the technology. It's been a fun ride. We've got a lot to cover.

Clearly, that's true for the amount of folks on the call, so let's get started. I gave you an agenda rundown while I was doing introductions, so let's get into Fran's HUD updates.

0:05:13 Fran Ledger: So I just want to start, and thank you all for joining us today. I appreciate your time. SNAPS is very aware of all of the hard work that you're doing right now. Of course, October is very a kind of a high stress, high energy, high level of effort for the HMIS Lead organizations. So we're very aware of that. We know that that goes into November as you guys are submitting your LSA files, so we very much appreciate your time and your energy and the work that you're doing in your communities. I have a couple updates that I'll go through. This, I'll go through my stuff fairly quickly, and then we'll get on to the Point-in-Time count, which I'm sure people are very excited to hear about. I do want to say that the fall conference for NHSDC completed. It was very exciting, there was a lot of great presentations. HUD did two plenaries; one at the beginning and one at the end. And the CARES Act one with Norman Suchar and Amy Bickford, that's going to be available on the HUD Exchange, along with the one that was done by William and Meradith, who will both be talking today. So we're going to make these both available on the HUD Exchange. We're just working to make sure those are all 508-compliant before those get on and are available so they're both accessible.

0:06:32 FL: During the conference, for those folks that had... Who were attending that conference, there was a forum, and we were asking folks to provide thoughts on the FY 2022 HMIS Data Standards. Anybody can do that, they could just make a submission to the AAQ. So if you weren't registered to that conference and you do have thoughts and you want to provide those to us, you can always do that through the AAQ. There'll also be other opportunities where we'll ask folks to provide feedback so it's not your only opportunity, but that's a great way that you can give that to us.

0:07:09 FL: For those that attended the conference, if you attended a bunch of foundational courses and that was... There was an indication at the conference of which once those were, then you can submit a request for completion. And then the final thing that I want to say is that on the Spring Conference, NHSDC is going to make an announcement soon about the status around logistics for the Spring Conference because they... Of course, there's the... Of course, working on having a vaccine available, we don't know that that's going to be available or how widely it's going to be available, so they're trying to figure out the logistics, whether it'll be a virtual conference again or not, or partially. So they'll announce that soon. So if you are wanting to know that information, make sure that you go to nhsdc.org and get on their announcement list. There's no updates to this, this is our typical calendar of events. These are the things that are happening now. So I just threw that up there, you'll be able to have access to the slide deck so you can take a look at it in the future. So I won't stay long on this slide. And I'm going to turn this over to William, he's going to walk us through the HIC and PIT information.

0:08:40 William Snow: Alright, thanks, Fran. Excited to join you all today. Let's talk through 2021 HIC and PIT. How's the inventory count? Probably most relevant to you guys here on the phone. It will be conducted as normal. So that's... Everything we collected last year will be the same as what we collect for 2021. Sheltered Point-in-Time count, same exact thing. Everything we collected last year will be the things that we collect this year in 2021. Unsheltered Point-in-Time count. So technically, we're saying it is the same as last year with all of the guidance that we have that gives flexibility, plus the ability to seek an exception to some, perhaps even all of the requirements. Well, I'll touch on that. I think that's relevant, especially for our CoCs. We know with COVID, there are

some CoCs that can't do a count. They just do not have staff capacity. They don't know how to safely conduct a count with lack of volunteers and again with the current COVID state. So we have and will grant exceptions to do the entire unsheltered PIT count for those who ask that provide some details. And we actually have information in our guidance about what information you need to provide us.

0:10:05 WS: Most CoCs at this point that I have been talking to have sought an exception not to conduct a count at all, but do conducting the count as they did in the past. For instance, the most common one is CoCs are asking for an exception to conduct just a headcount. We strongly encourage that. We think that's a good way to go. This can be done relatively safely. We know that there are issues in terms of data quality with that. It's not going to be the count that you did last year. We recognize that we're messaging that to you, we're messaging that to the public. The core purpose of the unsheltered PIT count... Well, actually, I should turn the slide and we'll talk about it. But the core purpose is to get a general sense of what's going on. It is important to get some information about your unsheltered population. We, and when I say we, I mean HUD, and I mean you as continuums, need a general idea. Is your unsheltered population going up or down? Do you need to dedicate different resources or change how you're using existing resources? This is part of the reason we do the PIT count always. But this year, more than ever, having some general sense of what's going on is really, really critical.

0:11:24 WS: So that's something we're definitely pushing for. Again, the way we message it is that it will give us a general idea of the direction folks are going, probably not even a national. I suspect will have enough exceptions, and the change in methodology will be enough locally that we won't even say, "Nationally, we went up 3%." I don't think even communities should message in the way of, "We went up 2.8% or 3.1." Focus on directions. "We went up, we went down. Because we went up, we need to focus these kind of resources. Because we went down, we need to look at where people are, if those people are doing better, worse." Those are the things that we want you to use the data to answer and to help people understand outside of your direct sphere of influence within the continuum. Let the public know what's going on.

0:12:18 WS: With all of that being said, HUD has developed a sample. That sample has different strata that represents geography tides and where people are in terms of unsheltered and sheltered rates. We've created a sample and we've invited, I believe if it's 82 CoCs, to conduct some form of unsheltered Point-in-Time counts so that we can use that to be able to give a general sense of what's going on in, say, rural areas or in major cities or...

0:12:48 WS: But something that gives us a little more than, "Yeah, it looks like we think everyone went up or everyone went down," it's actually, I think it's more meaningful if we can say, "In general, in rural areas, unsheltered homelessness is up or down." So that's the purpose of the sample. And again, we're hoping we can use that to also inform our larger decision-makers around funding, specifically Congress, or even locally, your own funders. Help them understand what you're doing. So that's a core driver for why we're structuring it the way we are.

0:13:20 WS: Alright, so what unsheltered Point-in-Time count flexibilities do you have? The unsheltered guidance that we published has a lot of this. I will say with all the flexibilities, our first priority continues to be safety. Again, if you're in a CoC where you know you cannot safely conduct an unsheltered Point-in-Time count, you do have the ability to seek an exception. From what we're seeing, it looks like most can do something. We're grateful for that. And again, do it within the

bounds of safety. So you'll know best how to do that. Some of the flexibilities that you have. You can do an observation count. Lots of people have asked, "Can we do one? Do we have to seek an exception to do that?" Yes, you can do one. No, you do not need to seek an exception to do that. However, if you're only doing a headcount and you're not going to submit demographic or sub-population data, then you will need to seek an exception. So the exception, we're calling it the full count or something less than the full count like part count. So full count would be all data that you submitted in the past for unsheltered Point-in-Time count. If you're going to do something less than that, you do need an exception.

0:14:33 WS: But again, observation. It's a way to go, safer. It's not perfect. I think our Point-in-Time counts are not perfect to begin with, but they have a measure of accuracy that we're comfortable with. Observation's going to take some of that away. So in some ways, we'd encourage you, if you're going to do an observation-based count and you're going to submit more than a headcount, really think about how comfortable you are with that data, like gender, race. These are things that people identify as. They're not always as clear on the surface as a visual representation of who they are. So that's the type of thing we just caution you. Be a little careful. You can use sampling within the existing data sets you have to help bolt through that if you're going to go that route.

0:15:19 WS: Other things, longer count window. So you can count throughout the 14 days, instead of seven. I will tell you that that's a benefit to you as CoCs. That really isn't intended to benefit the people you're counting so much because it actually is a challenge. If you're going to count somebody and ask them 14 days from the day that you're seeking information on, if you're asking about where they slept on January 21st, and you're into February, you're asking me a lot of that person. It's hard for them to remember that. So we know that there's limited staff capacity for those doing the counts, so we extended the window, but again, that's more for you guys, the staff, to be able to figure out: How do we do this? The longer the window, the more important it is for you to consider whether you ask one or two survey questions. If you do a blitz count and do it over three days where there's not a whole lot of transfer between areas, they're fairly regionalized, you don't have to seek any sort of exception for that. You can definitely do that. If you're doing a count over, say 10 days, and people tend to move a lot within your jurisdiction, yeah, you should probably consider doing some sort of minimal survey. The, "Who are you," question and, "Where were you sleeping on the night of," and that would be the first night of your PIT count. So just something to consider there.

0:16:41 WS: We are encouraging sampling. Again, we are grateful for all the hard work you guys have done historically. It's a lot of effort to develop Point-in-Time count methodology to date. And not a whole lot of sampling. We're not afraid of sampling. Sampling's not a bad thing. And in this context, it is a very good thing. We strongly encourage you to think about whether you can do a sampling routine, so you do not have to go and visit as many areas. You won't have volunteers for the most part or a very limited number, so this is a way to get around that. You just need to also consider with sampling: Do you have access to statisticians like university staff or state staff or someone on your own staff that can help you with that? Some CoCs have that; many do not, or they're not currently engaged in the Point-in-Time counts. So just consider that. Engage your partner early if you're going to use, again, like a university. They're great to help you develop your strata and work upfront.

0:17:41 WS: Use of other comprehensive data sets. This is a fun one. A lot of people have asked,

actually, prior to COVID: Can we use our by-name lists? Or can we use HMIS street outreach data? This is going to be somewhat of a test run because we're saying, "Yes, but this is another area where you need to reach out to me to talk through why you think that data is comprehensive." Most by-name lists are not the entire population. So I will say no if your by-name list only has veterans. If it has everyone, yeah, we can definitely consider it. What you need to show is that you have some confidence that it truly is comprehensive. I have had a few CoCs say, "This data looks exactly like what we did in our Point-in-Time count in terms of numbers, where it was within 2%-5%." That's pretty good. And especially given COVID, I would say, "Yes, absolutely. Take that, use it. That's going to be as good as sending a bunch of volunteers out or even your own staff." So we do encourage that, but again, come to me if you want to do that. I'm concerned that many CoCs don't have a comprehensive data set and are not validating whether their data can map their unsheltered data, and their systems can map to what they've done in the past in terms of Point-in-Time counts. So just going to make you work a little harder on that one, show me that it works.

0:19:06 WS: Alright, so that's not every flexibility, but that's a large part of them. So I think what people need to know is like, "Why do I need to go to HUD? What are the things that force me to go to HUD?" So these are the three things. I amended this slightly from the Friday office hours for those who attended based on questions and something that I admittedly have forgotten. So here's your three things: Exceptions to some or all of the count. So if you are going to not submit demographic, sub-population, household-type data, you're going to send, submit something less than that in your unsheltered Point-in-Time count data, you need to seek an exception. And that again could be an exception to the entire unsheltered count. This is not an exception to the sheltered count. We're not giving exceptions for that. You need to submit that along with your housing inventory.

0:19:54 WS: The second thing, this is when you use an existing data set. As I mentioned just a few minutes ago, you need to send me an email and we'll talk through whether or not that actually will meet the needs in terms of comprehensiveness and how well it matches your unsheltered data. And the last thing is an exception to this date. So this is actually normally in the notice, and we'll give notice again. It's always an option to change the dates of your Point-in-Time count in the last 10 days of January. Here are the things you have to consider, though. One, your date of submission timeline is not likely going to change. So if you come and tell me you're going to do it April 30th, I'm going to say no, because we're likely going to submit your data on April 30th. If you can tell me that you can do it at the end of March and still have your data by April 30th, I'll consider it.

0:20:47 WS: That gets into the other factor of how similar are the conditions in March to the conditions in January. That's really, really important. And we look at things like, are you counting at the beginning of the month or end of the month? Most areas, people receive assistance checks in the beginning of the month, and by the end of the month they're gone, which definitely impacts your numbers, so that's why we do it in the last 10 days of January. So again, these are a variety of things we think of, but the main thing is we will consider exceptions to the date of data collection, but not to submission at this point. So no matter what, you got to be ready to go, April 30th, hit send to HUD. So we still need to publish for sure that we're collecting by April 30th, but I imagine we will give a March 1 to April 30th data collection timeline as we have in the past.

0:21:44 WS: Other changes that are not these three, do them. If you're going to do an observation count and you're still going to submit or collect on all the data and submit the whole thing, you don't have to ask us, just do it. If you're going to change how you do sampling, or you're going to do

sampling and you haven't done it in the past, but you're going to submit all the data, just do it. You don't have to ask us for it. So that's a really big thing. I want you to realize that there's not a whole lot that you should have to come to SNAPS for. You should have enough to move forward, unless you think you fall in one of these camps, and I'll be honest, I expect most of your communities will want to pare down their unsheltered data collection somehow, but that's your call to make, it's not mine. So you can reach out to us if you have one of these three things.

0:22:30 WS: Alright, there are some resources out there already. The *Conducting the 2021 Unsheltered PIT Count Guide* is available. It has all those flexibilities and a discussion on safety. I want to thank our CDC and Healthcare for the Homeless partners who helped us shape this up. It's very useful, I think, I hope. I certainly encourage you to look at it. We also updated guidance around submitting for things like non-congregate shelter, and hotel/moteling. So we added this to the HMIS project setup guidance that was released early in COVID. We just added another page that covers these things. That would include something like temporary emergency shelter as well. People have asked about that. If temporary emergency shelter would get funded by ESG-CV, we're going to count it as shelter. You don't have to say it's temporary emergency shelter, you're just going to submit it as shelter. There's a funding type that you'll identify in the data as ESG-CV funding, but I just want to put a note there as well. People have been asking about types of shelter. What if you're in a sanctioned encampment. Well, no, a sanctioned encampment is not considered temporary emergency shelter. That's still unsheltered for HUD's purposes, and you're going to report it that way. Same with these other circumstances that we can talk through with your questions.

0:23:54 WS: So that's a whole lot of things. I want to put the last two resources out there for you to be aware of. We will do Point-in-Time count office hours. We want you to bring very technical questions. We'll go over that guidance, the first one on the list, in the very first office hours and deal with questions, but the ones after that, we're going to focus on very nitty-gritty sample-based questions, so grab your statistician or whoever's leading your count, bring them, and ask us those questions. We have five Point-in-Time count office hours to get us to the end of January, so we're looking forward to that. That PIT count notice, I don't know when it's going to come out. Hopefully by the end of December or might be early January. I think the important thing to know is all that you need is in the existing Conducting a 2021 Unsheltered Point-in-Time Count Guide, and last year's notice. We're essentially doing everything we did last year, except broadening on exceptions. So do not wait for the notice. You need to get moving now. We're already really late, and I'm sorry for that. But yeah, move forward with what you got. Alright, with that, I'm going to turn the time over. Who's next? Whoever's...

0:25:05 FL: It's back to me. [chuckle]

0:25:06 WS: Thank you.

0:25:10 FL: So Ryan and I are going to talk about some products that are coming out that are...

0:25:16 MS: Wait. Can I pause you and Fran? I'm sorry. Can we just do a few verbal explanations of some of the questions for William, just because there were a few that came in that...

0:25:25 FL: Perfect.

0:25:25 MS: He could probably pretty easily answer. Sorry. Thanks. Brian?

0:25:30 Brian Roccapriore: Yeah, sure, thank you. So, William, the biggest question we've got is: What is the deadline for submitting a request for an exemption for the Point-in-Time count?

0:25:38 WS: Great question. So there's not a deadline. There's kind of an implied deadline at the end of January. We need to know something, but we don't have a deadline, and that's intentional. We want you to have lots of time to think about this. Many of you have boards that have to vote, or you have various parties involved. If we said December 15th, some of you would say, "That's impossible. My board will never vote on it by then." So we're cautious with that, and we know it may take to middle of January, for some of you to finalize this. Even if you're planning locally, you won't have a final decision until then, so we don't have a technical hard-and-fast date, but once we get to the last 10 days of January, if you want an exception, you should submit by then.

0:26:23 BR: And someone wanted a clarification that an observation does not require data collection or exemption from HUD.

0:26:30 WS: Say that again. Say the first part.

0:26:35 BR: That an observation survey would not require data collection or an exemption from HUD is the question.

0:26:42 WS: Yeah, observation counts don't require an exemption as long as you're submitting all of the normal sets of data. If you're going to just do a headcount, for instance, or something less than the normal, then you will need to seek an exception. You're not seeking an exception to do an observation count, you're seeking an exception to submit less than the full unsheltered Point-in-Time count data.

0:27:05 BR: Right. And one more, and then we can move on. If a CoC does get an exemption on the unsheltered Point-in-Time count, would they need to do one later in the year or would that just move into the next year?

0:27:16 WS: That would definitely move into the next year. That would be crazy for us to incur that harm on you. We won't do that.

0:27:24 BR: Thank you, William.

0:27:26 MS: Thanks, Brian. William, you've quite a few questions, just a few more, more detailed questions to answer that we've assigned you in AAQ, if you don't mind going through those while Fran and Ryan, take it away.

0:27:41 FL: Thanks, William. So what I want to talk about for a minute before we talk about the products is the SNAPS data strategy, which really informed the products, and for those of you who've been a system administrator for a while, you're familiar with the SNAPS data strategy, so I'll quickly go over this and then I'll turn it over to Ryan. So a few years ago, SNAPS got together with some strategic partners to think about how we lift the floor up for all of our communities around data and performance, and what would be some key metrics or characteristics that we think would be important to see if we want CoCs and our partners to be able to use the data for looking at

performance, to do analysis and then be able to use that data. And so we came up with a set of key indicators, and then what we did is layered on top, what would SNAPS have to do as far as providing TA, technical assistance, to communities to support communities moving in that direction.

0:29:00 FL: And we did a matrix which looked at three to five years. Where do we see communities starting in three years, where do we see the majority in three to five years, and then for more advanced communities, where do we see those advanced communities? And the indicators you see here are what we see for the majority of communities three to five years, and you see that these are really goals that are illustrative tools. There are things that we know not everybody is going to reach, but we set the bar high because we are trying to put in technical assistance resources with the idea that communities can reach that goal. And what do we need to put in place to be able to support that?

0:29:48 FL: And so the resources you're about to hear about are resources that were developed with that in mind. So how do we build the capacity around these three strategies? And the first one is to really help the people that run the systems, and the systems be able to improve. Their capacity gets better. And the second one is that the actual data in the system, the quality of that data is better, and then the third one is that CoCs and stakeholders then are able to use that data in ways where they can do analysis with that data, and maybe they can do things like they can partner with other communities to do strategic things around that data. Maybe they're doing data integration projects, or maybe they're looking at resources across different kind of data systems to help support people in getting stable housing. So more advanced uses of the system. So we look at... Those are the three overarching goals, we have the indicators, and then we'll put the TA resources in place to support that. So Ryan's going to now talk about some of those resources and then I can add some more to that. Ryan, do you want to go ahead?

0:31:03 Ryan Burger: Great, thanks so much, Fran. So, good afternoon, everybody. I'm really excited to talk about these new resources that HUD is making available to communities. I think just to build a little bit off of what Fran just talked about in reference to the SNAPS Data TA Strategy, I think we're all very confident that these products, tools, and resources are not just going to be very practical and usable for folks in the community, and particularly our HMIS Leads, our system administrators and our CoC data leadership, but they're also filling I think what's fair to say some gaps in the field in terms of how we work really collaboratively with our HMIS Software Vendors, how we are best able to support some of our HMIS end-users, those folks on the frontlines, on the ground engaging with clients, collecting their data, really using our HMIS implementations on a day-to-day basis, and then other stakeholders that we have across our continuums of care.

0:32:00 RB: So just continuing to try to make these resources available in the context of the SNAPS Data TA Strategy, but also again, really trying to provide some practical guidance and resources to you all as really, I think what I would consider to be our subject matter experts. So I wanted to walk through, just spend a few minutes talking about what these resources are, what they're intended to do, and how we think that they can best be applied to your specific HMIS software, your end-users, your CoC data leadership, but really your overall holistic HMIS implementation. So in the context of that, I wanted to think through what these products are doing and just give you a quick overview around each individual product.

0:32:42 RB: So the first one that we wanted to talk through is what we're calling the HMIS Lead

improvement evaluation matrix. It is not necessarily an HMIS Lead monitoring tool. This does not really present any new requirements for each plant's lead. This is really to provide you all with a transparent, objective baseline for what we would consider some of the core roles and responsibilities of our HMIS Leads and system administrators. I think this product specifically ties in very nicely with both strategies one and three of the SNAPS Data TA Strategies. They're certainly building the capacity of folks who operate power HMIS implementations, but also trying to make sure that we are using our HMIS data in the most value-added and productive way possible, so increasing the ability of each HMIS Lead to support system planning efforts, to provide coordination of care strategies and supporting our CoC partners in the prioritization of resources.

0:33:45 RB: So this provides... This specific product provides across, I think nine different domains, the ability of CoC data leadership to assess an HMIS Lead capacity to meet the needs of our HMIS stakeholders and these are broadly construed. I think a lot of focus on folks who use data to inform policy decisions, to make resource allocation decisions, a lot of CoC board and CoC leadership stakeholders but also very much directed at our HMIS end-users. What do our participating agencies and organizations need in terms of training, in terms of awareness of system updates, in terms of communication? So we designed this matrix very purposefully. We got a lot of input from practitioners and local system administrators to think through what are some of the core components that we want to see our HMIS Leads and system administrators providing, really as a service to COCs and making sure that we can set up a very transparent and objective assessment process against shying away from that monitoring word.

0:34:57 RB: It's not necessarily meant to be a monitoring tool. We would encourage folks to think about this product in the context of formalizing or codifying your contracts or agreements that you may have between the CoC and your HMIS Lead. Some communities might have that well-defined, other communities may not. There's a lot of of local circumstantial and structural considerations we'd want to think about. But really, this tool is meant to, again, provide that transparent baseline of what we would strongly encourage, strongly suggest HMIS Leads to be providing, in terms of training, communication, reporting, just strengthening all of our partners within the CoC context.

0:35:38 RB: The second product I want to highlight is what's called the Data Quality Management Program. I know a lot of folks are working through updating your data quality standards, maybe revising your data quality plan, thinking through data quality, in the context of reporting requirements that are coming up. We set this product up, I think, in a very, very usable and practical way. It's a high-level overview of what we mean by data quality, but it provides, I think, five different appendices, in terms of very actionable tools, guides, templates that you, as community data leadership can take and apply, adapt and incorporate into your own data quality monitoring processes.

0:36:25 RB: So this, I think, very clearly ties into data strategy too, making sure that the data in our HMIS is timely, accurate, and comprehensive across our projects, but also really focusing on a collaborative relationship, again with our CoC data leadership, as well as our HMIS participating agencies and end-users. So it provides sample HMIS participation agreements. It provides a sample data quality monitoring template, things that are very practical, things that may or may not exist in your own community, but again, just really want to make this a very action-oriented resource, something that you can take, adopt and start to apply in your own community to ensure that we are continuously improving the quality of our data, but making sure that we're doing things in a very transparent and consistent manner.

0:37:17 RB: The third product I want to highlight today is the HMIS Software Vendor monitoring tool. I think this and the fourth document, the contract management tool kit really feel outside of the box when we think about the types of tools and resources that HUD has provided to community partners in the past. The HMIS Software Vendor monitoring tool provides a template, a guide for communities to very clearly and easily compare and contrast HUD's requirements of HMIS software with what we see in local communities or thinking through the reporting requirements, thinking through file structures, thinking through all the things that we can point back to HUD's data and technical standards as far as guidance and additional data standards and vendor-related guidance as well.

0:38:11 RB: So this clearly tying into strategy one, again, trying to improve the capacity of people who set up, operate, and benefit from data systems. And one of the characteristics in here from the previous slide was that HMIS Leads are in a position to monitor our software providers to the terms of our contracts. I think we would expect to see in lots of communities, clearly compliant HMIS Vendors, vendor softwares, but communities have taken it upon themselves to ask for more from their HMIS Software Vendors as well. And so, thinking through, how do we incorporate the contract monitoring process, overlaying that with what we've asked for in the local community of our software provider. So this becomes a very clearly defined process and speaking to HUD's requirements of HMIS Software Vendors is the intent of this product.

0:39:03 RB: And then lastly, the Contract Management Toolkit. This is a, I think, another very practical document that outlays the five process steps or the five stages of the contracting life cycle. Again, we understand that there's lots of different HMIS implementations that look differently. We might have HMIS Leads designated perhaps at a state-wide HMIS implementation but it's managed or administered locally, CoC by CoC. And understanding the relationships in terms of roles and responsibilities: Who is the actual contract holder, what are the defined and documented needs of, again, everybody from HMIS system administrators to CoC data leadership? How can we ensure that the contract management process, which is very critical but unfortunately oftentimes overlooked, how can we make that front and center? Again, thinking through a robust, consistent and very easily documented contract monitoring process is what this product is intended to accomplish and help communities achieve.

0:40:11 RB: So these are the next four in a series of nine, thinking all the way back to maybe early 2019. Time is a very strange sense over the last couple of months. [chuckle] I hope I'm not the only person who feels that way. A few checklists have been made available, I believe in early 2019, specific to HMIS system administrators and HMIS Software Vendors. These are the next four in a series of nine. So these products will be available. The four that I just touched on will be available in the coming days on the HUD Exchange. We're working to get the product page hosted and product descriptions ready to go. And then coming soon, we can see three more, so an HMIS Lead monitoring tool, Contract Management Toolkit, and the HMIS Lead standards and the other products that are under development.

0:41:09 RB: So we're really excited about this. It's a cross-firm effort. Folks from lots of different TA providers have been involved in the process, and especially want to thank Fran and Abby's leadership from HUD for making this possible. So, again, we're really excited about these. We strongly encourage folks to use these products in a way that is meaningful and adds value to your community and, yeah, we're happy to take questions, or I think maybe in the interest of time, we

will keep moving on, so I appreciate everybody's time and support on these products, and I'll turn things over, I believe, to Scott and Meradith.

0:41:51 Scott Golden: Hi, everyone. So just to recap from last month's call, the VA is now able to share an export of HUD-VASH client data with CoCs from their database HOMES. Doing so will help CoCs use that data to improve coverage or perform needed analysis. However, the data is not exported from HOMES in the HMIS schema. To help communities who wish to import this data directly into HMIS, HUD has developed a HUD-VASH translator tool, which is exactly how it sounds. It's taking the HUD-VASH data that is exported from HOMES, and it's translating it into a zipped HMIS CSV file, which can then be imported into HMIS. That tool is now available on the HUD Exchange. Also on the HUD Exchange is a commonly asked question document that offers a more full review of the HUD-VASH data sharing process.

0:42:48 SG: So briefly, we want to offer a few key reminders and stress that this is an optional data sharing process. If a CoC already has a data-sharing process that's working for their community, that's great. There's no need to change anything that is already effective. HUD also appreciates that this data-sharing partnership will mean more work for communities not consistently capturing HUD-VASH data as it stands, but anticipates the benefits will be meaningful and ultimately outweigh any costs that are associated with the data entry or the data importing. Finally, HUD recommends that leads focus on how to incorporate this data no later than the 2021 HIC, which means with the last couple of months of the year, it's time to resolve any issues and get out ahead of it for next year's HIC.

0:43:37 SG: ESG-CV reporting. As of 10:30, only a third of recipients submitted ESG bundles with their initial report submission. In many instances, this is due to grants not being executed or funds are not extended. However, the main takeaway is that leads should expect more bundle requests during Q1 reporting that updates those initial submissions. Also, many recipients have been asking about how to backdate start dates in Sage for projects that weren't included in the initial report period and will be submitted during Q1. Sage is now set up to allow recipients to set that initial report start date for those projects. The screenshot on the page here is of Sage, which again HMIS Leads do not have access to for ESG-CV reporting, but hopefully provides some clarity and context from what the recipient is doing to indicate those start dates.

0:44:31 SG: Now, moving forward with regard to new quarterly reporting periods, a project can start and end on any day for the reporting period, and Sage will tie the new project start dates to the first of the month. For example, a project beginning in November will have a start date of November 1, set in Sage. Sage will also populate available end dates in the drop-downs based on the start date that's sent and the project component. So keeping these discussion points in mind, Q1 ends on December 31st. If you haven't heard from your recipient or received any Sage bundle requests by mid-December, reach out to them. Many recipients did not begin the report until the end of the month, placing strain on HMIS and BST contacts. As well, there's still a three-day review window, which will need to be managed accordingly. Regarding requests to delete or change bundles, all requests must be made by the recipient using the AAQ doc. It is not the HMIS Lead's responsibility to make those requests for edit.

0:45:35 SG: ESG-CV-funded Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention projects must be set up as a new project in HMIS. Many CAPERs that are being submitted show the clients who are enrolled into those projects prior to the reporting state, meaning they were enrolled into existing

projects. So again, Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention that are funded by ESG-CV must be set up as a new project in HMIS.

0:46:05 SG: Other housekeeping items. ESG-CV reporting requires a lot of HMIS Lead work. Please remember that HMIS is an eligible expense. If you're in need of help to complete reporting, please work with your recipients to get the support measures that you need funded so that reporting can go smoothly, and not be a burden to HMIS teams. Lastly, in order to make sure the AAQ desk can provide better assistance, please review the HMIS contact information on the HUD Exchange and ensure contact info for the HMIS Leads is up-to-date. I believe the link in the presentation will take you to the request form that needs to be completed, should there be any changes. I believe that's all for technical updates that I have, so it would be on over to you, Jesse.

0:46:52 Jesse Jorstad: Thanks so much, Scott. Okay, so just a couple of words about the LSA, which we are in the middle of here. So just a review of the timeline and where we're at. So right now we are in the middle of the data quality review phase. If you have a successfully uploaded file that is the official HUD submission file, and you have submitted it for review, and that happened before Sunday, you should have received an errors and warnings file for your review that is in the final format, which means that you can make annotations in that file and be able to submit those back to us. This phase will go through November 27th, and that is when we expect things to end. I want to be really clear that if you're not quite finished on the 27th of November, it's our intention to support communities in participating and not shut communities out. So this is more like guidance that we're looking at the end of November to wrap this up. But you'll know that you've finished this phase when you and your vendor have addressed all the issues that you can address.

0:48:08 JJ: We'll then move into the data finalization phase for the month of December. It's good to know that you can still make corrections and confirm your data through this phase. Your liaison and reviewer will be in touch to finalize any outstanding issues. Once you have reviewed your data issues, and if you have notes to communicate to your liaison about the warnings that you've received, that file that you have received is something that will be uploaded back up into HDX 2.0. So the same place that you downloaded it from is exactly where you will upload it. So once you're in the LSA tab, there is a tab that says "data quality flag views," and then there's this blue... It's so tiny and yet so blue, so hopefully you can see that. And it says "Upload errors and warnings file." So you will click that and then upload that file. This does keep a history of all the files that are going back and forth, so if you did need to reference something that has already been submitted, it will be there for you to take a look at. That's everything I have, so I'm going to pass it back to Mary and Brian.

0:49:24 MS: So, thanks, Jesse. You have a few specific LSA questions in the box to answer, but nothing that I don't think can be quickly addressed verbally, so let's move on to commonly asked questions and we have a quick overview of the last couple of months of AAQs for you just to kind of know. This gives us also a sense as TA providers where the community's at with needs, and what other assistance or guidance can be developed or provided, so this is just... Usually, I just look at the HMIS desk when I'm doing this for you folks, but because of the environment we're in right now, our HMIS Lead issues tend to permeate into, of course, the HDX desk, and the Sage desk was hot, hot, hot on the last couple of months, and I pulled ESG questions in here too, because we know a lot of the ESG-CV HMIS-related questions came through the ESG desk and either made it over to HMIS or Sage from there or stayed there and got answers.

0:50:45 MS: So just to give you a quick sense. Again, kind of small writing, sorry about that. We will pay a little closer attention to that next time around, but you can see over the last 13 months of AAQs these kinds of ups and downs, and where big events have been happening in our HMIS Lead lives. We are actually down in terms of counts of AAQs submitted on the HMIS desk this October versus last October, because last October in 2019, we were rolling out data standard changes. So you can expect a year from now when data standard changes are rolling out yet again for fiscal year 2022, HMIS questions tick way up. In this case, that highest uptick of AAQs being submitted in September and October are of course on the Sage desk and due to the ESG-CV bundling, this kind of brand new process that we are all going through. So hopefully that's helpful. Again, we will post the slide deck next week, early next week to the Hub, and you can dig into this data a little further.

0:52:03 MS: I did want to just detail a little more insight for you guys as you think about your AAQ and use the desk and how you can get answers from us. We analyze as well the topics and sub-topics under which AAQs come in. So on the HMIS desk, for example, so the chart on the left, you can see in blue ESG desk total ticket count, HDX desk total ticket count, HMIS Sage total ticket count, and then underneath each of those, breakouts by topic, and I've highlighted in yellow for you which topics on each of those desks were the hottest, and this is just the data from the last four months, not the last 13 months.

0:52:53 MS: And then I took the HMIS topics and broke them out even further as to the sub-topics under each of those. So we had for example, under federal partner programs, there were more RHY questions than anybody else. That makes sense because RHY had a brand new upload process this year, and a new system was being used, and so there was more traffic on the AAQs about RHY programs in there than there were for other federal partners. Within the HMIS Data Standards topic then, we addressed HMIS Data Standards, and those end up not getting categorized into one of those other categories, like universal data elements or meta-data elements or project descriptors data elements, when they're very specific to your unique situations that are going on for you, how to tackle the data standards in the specific scenario that you're presenting to us.

0:53:53 MS: So all that to say we are paying close attention. This drives our technical assistance in terms of what we feel like are the hot topics for you in the HMIS community. We do examine several of the other desks, like Sage and HDX when we know it's kind of a big moment in our lives and you're seeking help for the things that are going on on the ground for you. So just know we're paying attention, and we want you to have this information too. This is a little small. These slides will be available soon for you to examine a little more thoroughly, and if you have any questions or want clarification, just enter an AAQ and it'll get added to the next analysis. From there, we're going to touch on a few of the frequently asked AAQs that we've had in the last couple of months on... This is just HMIS desk specifically... So these are going to hopefully resonate with a lot of you in terms of issues you might be tackling locally as well, and Brian's going to walk through the frequently asked AAQs from the last couple of months.

0:55:08 BR: Thank you, Mary. So once a quarter, so we put together the frequently asked questions that come in through the HMIS Leads, so we figure if we get five questions on the same topic, it's probably worth going over with everybody so everybody can hear what's coming out of the HMIS desk. And the first is prior living situation per permanent housing transfers. The short is that prior living situation should always reflect the reality of where a client's staying. Now, that's not always going to necessarily line up with eligibility criteria, and eligibility criteria and data collection practices don't alway see eye to eye, and this happens to be one of those cases when it's a PH to PH

transfer.

0:55:54 BR: When that happens, do make sure you keep documentation of eligibility for the client. That needs to be retained in their file for monitoring and reporting, and if there's a notes section on the report that you're submitting, just make sure that that's indicated in there, but it should always be the reality of the situation of where that client was staying the night before that they were enrolled in that next project.

0:56:14 BR: The next question we've been getting a lot of is with ESG-CV. If you're paying for PPE or something like a hand washing station, for the recipients CAPER reporting purposes, HMIS data for people served with PPE does not have to be an individual client level stuff, but a quarterly reporting from the recipient's going to include just the financial reporting on the expenditures and a narrative of what it was spent on. So there doesn't have to be a project enrollment for every single person that touched a hand washing station.

0:56:48 BR: And I have the ability to move the slides, so I will go on to the next question, which is: Can a victim's service provider participate in HMIS if they're doing it for coordinated entry? That is a quick no. Victim service providers are prohibited from entering any personally identifying information into HMIS, be it for their own project or for a coordinated entry. The decision tree that's linked right there can help folks figure out if their projects fall under that VSP designation, which is that and agency level. And the follow-up question that we usually get is can HS enter it under a code? Can they do it in some form of a hashed fashion? That's also no. The model is pretty clear about that and HUD doesn't have any authority over VAWA. If you need some extra guidance, the coordinated entry management and data guide is a good source there. It expands on HUD's policy and management guidance and goes deeper on data privacy and security requirements.

0:57:50 BR: A number of people are concerned about the coordinated entry APR, and they all came in with something to the effect of, "We heard a rumor that you don't expect the coordinated entry APR to be accurate." And just to clarify, there is not really a rumor there, that the anticipation is that this is going to be a transition period, for sure, on the coordinated entry APR. Whether that's related to training on how that data is collected or systems working out the kinks on how to get the setups appropriately configured for reporting, but that said, the first APRs generated using these specifications might not be correct, but the vendors and system administrators just need to work together to make sure that future APRs are accurate.

0:58:35 BR: Geo codes is another hot topic recently as we get into a Point-in-Time count season. So geo code should always reflect the locations of the project's principal site. If a project has multiple sites, it's going to be where the majority of the project's clients are housed. Any tenant-based projects or scattered-site projects, only are required to complete the geo code may use their administrative address if it is not centralized. So for something like a street outreach project, it's going to be the source of the actual agencies' addresses where you're going to use that geo code.

0:59:15 BR: And last but certainly not least, there's been a couple of questions about HMIS participation agreements, are there guidelines? Are there requirements? There is not a requirement for HMIS participation agreements in the 2004 data and technical standards. But there is a lot out there on guidance and best practices when it comes to this stuff on the screen, generally includes stuff like having a start and end date, so you can make sure that everybody's on the same page and it

clearly outlines rules and responsibilities, and so you can constantly iterate that and make sure everybody in your system is on the same page about what they're doing. There are, however, requirements for HMIS end-user agreement in the 2004 data and technical standards, so those need to happen, but there is no official requirement for HMIS participation agreements. I'll be the best practice if you need more information on that, that was covered thoroughly in a bunch of the NHSDC sessions, which are all available through NHSDC or on the HUD Exchange. Right, I think that brings me up to back to Mary with 2022 data standards.

1:00:22 MS: Awesome. We are just kicking it out here, folks, I love it. So Jesse, do you want to go over LSA due dates one more time before I move into the next topic?

1:00:37 JJ: Yes, I do. So I realized that it's kind of confusing. So there were three phases that we thought about in the LSA submission. The first one we've completed, and that was the initial phase, and hopefully all communities who plan to participate have been able to submit a file. If you have not been able to submit a file and you are still planning on doing that, that's okay. You can keep on working on that. Okay, you can reach out to your data liaison if you need assistance, and the email address for that is Ahar_region and then the number for the region that you're in, and that's @abtassoc.com rather. I will write that in the question box, or Mary will write it since she's here for us and supporting us. Thanks, Mary.

1:01:29 JJ: Okay, so we are now in the second phase, and that's the data review phase, and this is driven primarily by the communities looking at their errors and warnings file and actively working to resolve all of those issues. We are aiming to wrap up this phase at the end of November, so November 27th is the target date. If you are not finished on November 27th, you will still be allowed to participate. So it's not really a due date as much as, it's just a guideline in terms of the rate at which we want to move forward. You will know that you've finished phase two when you have resolved and your vendor has resolved all the issues that you are able to resolve. We will then go into the data cleaning phase for the month of December, and that will be driven mostly by the data liaison when they have questions about your data and need additional information. During that period of time, you can continue to upload files to get your data to be as accurate as possible. So the final date that the LSA has to be resolved and totally done is December 31st. Back to you Mary.

1:02:37 MS: Okay, cool. Type in this one last answer and here we go. So what we want to go over now is the fiscal year 2022 HMIS Data Standards timeline. This is to help us all have the right expectations around when we should hear and know what the next data standard change will be. What it will contain. I was having some fun with some icons today, sorry. So fiscal year HMIS Data Standards timeline. Right now and into winter, early 2021, we are working through requests. When I say we, I mean William, Fran, Brian, Jesse, all your team here, and some other TA providers, Meradith and Scott, and just keeping the list of things that have been suggested. There are suggestions that come in from the central partner stakeholders, there are suggestions that came from you guys through the AAQs or the NHSDC topics that Fran posted during the fall.

1:03:52 MS: There are lots of suggestions that bubble up through various stakeholders and avenues. So we gather everything and we kind of methodically look through that list and sync through and talk through. We also start draft documentation, and you guys know there's 20 documents that will need to be updated, probably more, 50 documents that will need to be updated once the final data standard changes are decided upon and there's lots of considerations that go into this, so it's not just a single person or a single entity making these decisions. It's a big group team

effort and lots of conversations go into what that final list becomes. So through the winter, we develop the documentation and get to final data standard changes and that needs to happen basically spring 2021. Our goal is April 1st. It's somewhere around that timeframe.

1:04:49 MS: The final list of changes, programming specifications for reporting purposes, data collection instructions, everything, all the thoughts and decisions that go into each data standard change get published to the HMIS Vendors and HMIS Leads. Then those get programmed locally, and at the same time, what's happening locally is you're working through training issues, roll out, what are the schedules for when you're going to see the actual changes take place in your software locally, and what it's going to take to make sure your end-users know about the changes and have time to get up to speed with what the requirements are.

1:05:31 MS: That all happens in summer 2021, and along that same timeline, the CA folks are then focusing on the extra supplemental guidance and documentation that needs to come out with data standard changes. So think about the federal partner manuals, the HMIS Data Manual, the Interactive Data Standards tool that's online, all the programming specifications. Again, as the vendors and you guys look at what the changes are, we definitely get feedback from the spring to the summer on those changes and make final decisions and notes and documentation around the programming specifications for all the reports that will start being due as of October 1 and beyond. So starting in October 1, 2021, that is when the fiscal year 2022 HMIS Data Standards go live.

1:06:27 MS: So just to summarize that, we are currently in Fiscal Year 2020 Data Standards, even though we're in fiscal year 2021 now. Timeline-wise, the data standards change every two years, and it takes about a year to really fully do all of the things that need to happen to get to that October 1 date for when the next data standard comes out. So we will be working hard, you will be providing us feedback, you will get as much information and updates. We start to get... And William, hop in here at any point too, if you want to clarify anything I'm saying... But we start to get a final wish list or just start to know what's going to happen with the data standards, and as soon as we do, we try to start talking about those early on this call so that you guys have as much of a heads up. The HMIS Vendors get the information as early as we can. Even if things aren't totally final, we can start floating the things we know as early as possible, to get everyone oriented to what the changes will be coming October 1, 2021.

1:07:37 MS: So that's the data standard, the timeline that we're looking at. It's very exciting, I think. The mood I was in was I love data standards, so lighting's going to strike in 2021, but then it'll be rainbows when October 1, 2021, hits and we're in our next fiscal year 2022 world. Not in 2020 anymore. That's basically all I really want. So we have resources on the screen now. There's an updated guidance. William talked about it already during the Point-in-Time discussion earlier. We have put some extra HIC guidance in that project setup and inventory changes during infectious disease document. We also have a ton of stuff on the COVID page. Again, we're still under the 2020 HMIS Data Standards, so those are available to you online, and all of the things that go along with helping you stay implemented well in your communities with HMIS stuff.

1:08:44 MS: Same slide as before, just make sure when you're looking for these slides that you go and find them on the Hub. We'll put them out next week, as early in the week as possible, along with the recording, the transcripts, the slide deck, and we pull together the Q&A panel, and make sure that you have all the questions and answers that were asked and answered on this call at the same time too. We are going to maintain our same schedule that we're on for the coming year. Next

month, or probably if we have a meeting, we will have it be more of like an open Q&A office hours type chance to just touch base before the New Year, and then we will get back to a full agenda in January, and we will continue to meet on the third Wednesday of every month at 1:00 Eastern, and we will cancel or change that schedule via the listserv if it needs to be changed. I think that's it. So there were a few slides that people wanted to go back to on the AAQ. Anybody, Brian or Fran, want to go back to a certain slide? I can make that happen. No?

1:10:14 BR: There were some requests a while ago just to review the LSA timeline, if we can go back to that.

1:10:22 MS: I think the HUD-VASH data was one as well as... Where's the timeline one. Is this it?

1:10:32 JJ: That is the timeline slide. Maybe we can hover here and allow people to peruse that. So again, the important dates are the 27th of November is when we're targeting the wrap-up of the data quality review phase, so data quality review will be communicated through HDX 2.0 and the data quality files will be run on Tuesdays and Thursdays and provided the following days. That's a little bit maybe behind schedule for this first week just because literally everybody has review files, so if you can give us a little bit of grace this week, and then the finalization phase will go through December 31st. You can still make corrections and confirm your data through this phase, and your liaison and reviewer will be in touch to finalize any outstanding issues.

1:11:28 MS: Thanks, Jesse. William or Fran, anything we need to go back to in the HUD section, anything you saw on the questions that came in that you want to address again, just make that really clear?

1:11:39 FL: I just... I saw two questions come in, and so I could just... If you haven't read through the responses yet, just say... We don't have an announcement on the competition, you can register for the listserv on hudexchange.info for making sure that you get notified when there's any kind of notice or announcements that come out. And that's where we'll put those types of announcements. And then, there are some questions on victim service providers, entering data into HMIS or coordinated entry. Just remember, victim service providers are prohibited under VAWA from entering their data into an HMIS. They must use a comparable database, that your coordinated entry system, you're using an HMIS for, it cannot enter their data into that system. Was there anything else from the questions that came in that we should cover?

1:12:42 MS: Meradith is going to talk a little bit more about the HUD-VASH, and I did go back to that slide, Meradith.

1:12:50 Meradith Alspaugh: Thanks, Mary. I just wanted to hit a couple of reminders, and we talked a little bit about this last month, so we didn't go over it again. I would encourage you to check out the slides from last month, which are available on the Hub. But I just want to say a couple points here. So the CoCs or HMIS Leads should be working with the VA Med Center to identify their points of contact. Streamlining the points of contact between who the point of contact is at the CoC or in the CoC and who it is at the VA Med Center. The VA Med Center will be providing the CoC with a report. There's not an expectation that the VA Med Center is entering any data into HMIS or doing any manual work on the HMIS side. They are providing the report to the CoC. It is up to the CoC how that data gets into HMIS.

1:13:47 MA: We know that there are lots of COCs that have hundreds, if not more, HUD-VASH participants, and manually entering that HOMES data into HMIS could prove to be very challenging. So HUD was trying to create a way to streamline an import process, using standard HMIS CSV specifications to again, streamline, simplify the way that this data gets into HMIS. There is no requirement that your CoC uses this import tool, the link there on your screen. If you have an existing process for getting this data into your system, please use that process. The intention is to do what works, what's easiest for your community, to get that data into HMIS, because it really is about the coordination of care for those veterans, as well as the HMIS bed coverage and inventory stuff, getting that data into HMIS.

1:14:47 MA: But really... There's a desire to improve that coordination of care to help COCs really more fully understand their system and use that information for planning purposes and improving the system, and really, again, HUD recognizes this as a burden, but hopefully the benefit outweighs the cost here at the end of the day. So I just want to help people keep that in mind, that this is something that is intended to be helpful for communities for CoCs and for the veterans that are participating in these projects. Please read through those commonly asked questions. The HUD translator tool also has an instructions tab in the first page. You will need the data from the VA in order to run it through the translator tool, just to be clear. If you haven't already, please make sure you're talking with your VA, whoever your contact is, is talking with the VA contact. Thanks, Mary, that's what I want to say.

1:15:50 MS: Totally, thank you. It's hard. There's a lot going on. I think we've totally acknowledged that, and we want you to be as successful as possible. The HUD-VASH data import is optional, not a requirement. I think that sometimes these things that we talk about on this call land, like it's a requirement, or like you've done something wrong, or any of that, and this is an optional tool. It's one of those things that is meant to be helpful if you can make it work locally. So, with that, I am going to allow for a moment for Brian or Jesse or Fran or William or Ryan or Meradith or Scott to come up with any other questions that we might need to talk about verbally, and if not we can... And assuming it's early, give people a little bit of time back.

1:16:51 BR: There's one question from a community that received a file from the VA that only had four clients in it. If that's the situation, do they reach out to their HUD-VASH liaison or what would be the proper next step for them?

1:17:07 MA: I'm going to assume that you're expecting more than four clients in that file, so yes, I would reach out to the VA. If you aren't expecting more than four though, you could just enter those clients' data into the HMIS without going through a whole import process, but yes, I would certainly encourage you to work with the VA. The VA has the ability in HOMES to do some filtering to identify the right clients that should be included in this report. I know as you all, many of you all know anyway, COCs and VA catchment areas don't always perfectly align and so you're going to have a CoC, rather a VA in catchment area that is bigger than your CoC. And as the CoC, you don't want all of that data from that entire catchment area. So the VA can filter down to specific public housing authorities, they can filter down to using date ranges, they can filter by individual clients. Again, making sure that you're working closely with your VA Med Center staff to identify those right clients is going to be really critical here.

1:18:30 MS: We're wanting clarification on that requirement part, maybe I can... And maybe you want to address this Meradith, or even William, and I would just say...

1:18:40 WS: I think what...

1:18:41 MS: What I think is the answer... Oh sorry, go.

1:18:44 WS: I don't mind addressing it.

1:18:45 MS: Great.

1:18:46 WS: You guys are probably looking at HUD side, right, is this the requirement, is this optional? So, this is not a requirement that you take this upload and put it in your system. However, this is where it becomes sticky, during the competition process, we ask the question, do you have full HMIS bed coverage? And this is where we track that, right? We use the hits to track whether or not you have full HMIS bed coverage. So, it is not a requirement, however, it does impact your score and your ability to analyze your data. So, we would encourage you, if you're going to put it in, if you choose to do that, we would encourage that, do it by the next time we do the housing inventory count, which is coming real fast, right in January, if you want to be able to report those beds in HMIS for the purposes of bed coverage.

1:19:49 MS: Great, thanks, William.

1:19:50 MA: Can I... or do you have more?

1:19:55 MS: Meradith. No, please go on. [chuckle]

1:20:00 MA: I just want to say a couple more things because I see these questions come in and it's a little easier I think to talk through some of them than to try to answer them and go back and forth. So, the VA file that's being generated by HOMES is a CSV file. It is a single CSV, their own HOMES format for this file. It's not an HMIS CSV, it's not in a format that, in the HMIS world, we would recognize sort of as a standard format. That's where the translator tool comes into play. So, the purpose of the translator tool is to take that file from HOMES and convert it into a file that looks like the HMIS CSV file. So, the data from HOMES is being mapped into the client.csv file, the enrolment.csv file, the... I can't think of them on top of my head, but you know what I'm talking about. It's being formatted into those individual files, again to hopefully make it easier for your software to import it into your system. We did some piloting with some communities who were able to import this data into their system.

1:21:04 MA: So, it's going to vary based on your community's technical capacities and your software's capacities, and there's just... It's not an easy thing to say, you know, it's a one and done kind of thing, everyone can do it this way, it's just going to depend on each CoC. So, to answer all of those questions, yes, the data is going to be converted into an HMIS CSV that then ideally can be imported into your software. Your vendor has been provided with the export that comes from the tool, and they have the tool itself. So again, if you have questions, I would encourage you to contact your vendors and talk with them about it too.

1:21:50 JJ: Mary, can I give a clarification? So, one of the things is that you should have received the errors and warnings file if the following things took place. You submitted... You uploaded a file successfully, that file was an official HUD review file, you pressed submit for review. If you

instead uploaded a local use file, that's okay, you can go in and change that status, and then it will go into the queue to process your errors and warnings file. So, if you don't have one and you think you should've gotten one, that would be the first thing to check. If you aren't sure how to change the status, there is a submission guide, and if you go to your browser and type in LSA submission guide, it's going to get you there. And it has specific instructions on how to switch that status so that it can get into the queue.

1:22:50 MS: Questions are still coming in, so I think we should answer them if we can. I've got a few, if there's anything we can verbally address. So, how frequently does the VASH data need to be imported then if you get it in the first time and everything goes great, how convenient to do it. The 2004 Data Standards talk about an at least annual update to consider a bed participating in HMIS, so... But it's really a thing that will be locally defined as you figure out what it takes to use the import tool and set up the relationships locally to do it.

1:23:40 MA: And again the commonly asked...

1:23:42 MS: For whatever frequency.

1:23:42 MA: The commonly asked questions document, please check it out. I know this is new information to all of you, so you're coming up with these questions real fast. We have addressed a lot of them in the commonly asked questions document so please check that out too.

1:24:08 MS: Okay, I know we'll stay on a little bit longer and answer questions that haven't gotten answers yet if we can, and I do want to let you go if you need to get on to your next meetings of the day. Thank you so much for your time today, we really appreciate your thoughtful work, and we wouldn't be here if we didn't really want you to be successful and help that happen. So, gosh I really... I've vacillated between two different jokes today. Maybe I'll do one now and the next one next time but here it is. Why did the ghost cross the road? Because it was a poultry-geist. No? Okay, alright, fine. I'll do the other one next time. [chuckle]

1:25:07 MA: I feel like we should hear the other one right now.

1:25:08 MS: Oh should we? Has it been that kind of a call?

1:25:12 MA: Yeah.

1:25:14 MS: I mean this one might be even worse. Why is the cow always silent on these video calls? Because it keeps getting moo-ted.

1:25:29 MA: There you go.

1:25:29 MS: No? Alright.

1:25:30 MA: That's a good one.

[chuckle]

1:25:33 FL: No, no that's a good...

1:25:36 MA: That's a Mary joke.

1:25:38 MS: My dog's looking at me like, no. Alright you guys, thank you for your time.

1:25:43 FL: Thank you, everyone.

1:25:44 MS: And stay on a little longer if you need to and answer some questions but you are free to go and we appreciate your time. Thanks to all the presenters.