

## Session 4: HUD Listening Session

**October 25, 2022**

**Fran Ledger, HUD**

**[Fran Ledger]** Please feel free to talk to me about things that you're experiencing challenges that you may be having, maybe having issues that you think are important for HUD to hear this is an opportunity. I know when I was sitting on the other side, when I was a system administrator years ago, this was like an important moment for me to be able to come and be able to be in front of HUD and talk about what was happening locally for me. And so I want to be able to take back what you have to say to me, back to my colleagues in SNAPS, and be able to speak for you, on your behalf on what you need. I have the TA providers here in the room. And so, if we have special technical questions, I can't answer I'm going to be happy to fling those questions over to the TA providers, so they may pipe in from time to time, and Brian's on the chat now. So, if we have people who are live with us who are going to have some questions, Brian will let me know. So, we'll get some questions that way. It's okay, if you have something to say to me that's challenging. It's okay if we don't agree, and I won't have all the answers.

I got my start at HUD in 2017, and before that I was a technical assistance provider for 11 years. So, I was sitting with this group, and before that I was system administrator for 6 years. I was based out of HUD headquarters for a few years, and just recently have I'm been stationed in New Orleans. So, the SNAPS office, you guys have just finished your competition, right? You just all submitted your applications. I think we have – Yay! I am now into a deep, dark hole of review. So, my brain's a little muddled but we're going to get there together. We have a lot of exciting things going on, and if you were in the session right before this, you heard a lot about that. We have the data standards that we're updating. We're trying to work really hard to pave some new ways around comparable databases to make things easier for communities. It's been a difficult road lately. We're trying to get out a lot of new guidance. We have, if anybody is unaware, our 2004 data and technical standards, our data standards get updated on a regular basis. But our technical standards are a little ancient, right? 2004. Certainly working on getting some more updated guidance out there for communities. We'll be working on that. And if you also if you were in here, you heard that the data work group had identified some clear needs that were happening communities, and that really drove some of the sessions that you're seeing here at NHSDC and so you'll be seeing over the next about 2 years products coming out that we're hoping will improve things for folks. Better guidance around areas that HUD has not been so clear about. So, I will open the floor up, does anybody have, let's just start off with changes in the data and technical standards. Does anybody have any questions for me around changes that are happening in the data to technical standards that you've heard about? While you're here at the conference or things that you've been hearing about in the community are on system admin calls?

**[Participant]** Thank you, so I'm sure that everybody has thought about this so but, I just would like to hear it out loud. With as excited as everybody is for the increased, you know, categories for all of the

demographic standards, I still worry about most CoCs, I serve multiple CoCs, the 'N' is going to be so low for some of these groups that you're not going to actually be able to properly evaluate equity and things. Like that among those groups. So are there going to be any standardizations about the concatenation of certain groups that are likely to be facing similar sort of challenges in the community. Based off of the new, you know, kind of expanded demographic categories?

**[Fran Ledger]** We haven't gotten discussions on that part of it. Okay, sorry. I'm not using being live I'm more used to just being in a room and talking really loud. Sorry about that, for the folks at home. We haven't been digging into that too deeply. We've just gotten into having the conversations with Census and with the folks with lived experience and the advocates about making that expansion in that data element. So, we will be doing some cross-walking to help communities think about what that looks like with the data and kind of cross-walking back some of the stuff. But we definitely are going to have to look at that absolutely. I think that's an important comment. And I'll say that any of the thoughts and suggestions that you're making today, we'll be taking that back to the technical team to have a discussion about that, because we don't have all of this stuff figured out, and it takes being in a room with folks like you to start to raise some of these concerns and issues. Thank you. Yes.

**[Participant]** Kind of on that same lines, in regards to, we're having a big issue right now, due to the changes of gender and clients can go into a shelter and relate to one gender. But we're also seeing in the data that we're getting a lot of duplicated records, and it's been hard they may relate as one and use say Joseph and then go to another shelter, and they're Jesse and so although the social security number may match, you know the users are duplicating, not knowing, or they may leave out their date of birth on one so we're piecing together. Are there any best practices on how to handle that since they are allowed to have you know, different identities when they're going into specific shelters for safety reasons?

**[Fran Ledger]** Gender identity is very important. Right? This is across several of the demographics that are changing we want people's identity to be able to be for people to be able to identify when they come to the front door and to be recognized. And so, we understand that there's a lot of communities that haven't been trained and aren't educated and don't have the experience. And so, we're putting out products and Brian I think posted, was it the last session or the session before last? I feel like. So, at some point today we posted up what was recently put on the HUD exchange around gender identity.

Okay, So on the HUD Exchange. If you went to the news section just recently, we released along with this request for reaching out for feedback from your communities. We also published 2 documents, and this is just an introduction into this. But taking a look at gender identity and race and ethnicity. And how can frontline folks actually ask these questions in a way that are both trauma informed and showing cultural humility. Excuse me, and it's the beginning so there'll be additional technical assistance products that are developed that will become available to communities.

It's been an interesting process for HUD this is not an area that we've stepped into before. Usually, HUD puts out rules and regulations. Right? And technical documents and AAQ's. and you know a lot of if

you've noticed and you submitted an AAQ. You don't always get a very specific answer because we leave it to local communities to make decisions. But we see here that there's a serious gap, and we also know that this is an area where HUD needs to do better and has needed to do better. And so, we're investing a lot into racial equity, LGBTQI equity, disability equity. And so, you're going to see a lot more coming out from us and we're doing that both we're taking steps to make sure we're addressing this internally and SNAPS within our own office within our technical assistance that we're providing, voices that we have at the table, and now products that we're producing. Very long response to that.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** We have a couple coming in on the zoom here. One is there's a number of people who are just appreciative that they're able to watch this at home without having to come here and a call for that to continue. And the next one was comparable database for VSPs remain a major issue. Is there a reason why HUD cannot create a universal, comparable database for VSPs. Since they created HMIS? Why, are VSPs is expected to shoulder the burden of figuring this out when other homeless providers are not?

**[Fran Ledger]** We actually we don't have the single HMIS, either. The comparable database is comparable to the HMIS. The same standards we have for the HMIS are generally the same standards we have for the comparable database. But I think this speaks to a deeper issue. Which is: communities have a lot more resources for setting up HMIS systems, resources that victims service providers, it's extremely difficult for victim service providers to bear what is required to set up a comparable database. So that is why we're setting up this 3-to-5-year data and performance strategy effort that is bringing together a victim service providers, survivors, HUD, technical assistance providers, safe housing partnership and NNEDV together, and that's an advocacy group, to figure out how we can lessen the burden for victim service providers. but still meet the requirements we have of HUD recipients that are receiving Federal dollars to account for the resources that they're receiving and making sure that people are moving quickly into stable housing. So, it's a balance that we have to do and we're trying to make that a better situation all around.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** Alright, I got one more. How soon will the importance of authentic participation of lived experience folks who are waiting to be housed and already housed in data collection grievances and data security commence? Sometimes we are often left at an advisory role, at best.

**[Fran Ledger]** I'm hoping that, so at HUD that is changing absolutely, and I'm hoping that communities are getting that message loud and clear that that needs to change locally, too. I know we hear from communities that had that has changed right. We have, we hear from best practices, out of communities that they're starting to make sure that they're engaging people with lived expertise and experience from the git-go in the design of the data collection all the way to reporting. But that doesn't happen everywhere and so we want to encourage that, and we are trying to reflect that ourselves. And so we are making sure now that when we develop a product that we engage people with lived expertise and experience at the very front end, instead of having people come in afterwards and take a look at a document and say hey this is where you missed the boat on LGBTQIA equity or racial equity, because

that doesn't work right. That's not that's not how we want to do things anymore. And so, we hope that that that then we could mirror that back for folks on how on what's the appropriate way to do that?

**[Participant]** Could we get a microphone over there, please.

**[Participant]** Hi Fran, I have 2 questions / comments, and the first is coming from the perspective of a relatively small, mainly suburban and rural CoC. That is also heavily affected and impacted by natural disasters. We are feeling very tired, quite frankly burned out, and it is really difficult, and I think I just kind of talking to peers, it is really difficult to do an annual application because we're always responding, and we're checking boxes and we're giving short shrift to items because we're responding to be scored and there's never time for implementation, because we're you know small, we just don't have as many resources as the bigger communities. So, is there any thought at HUD about switching to a 2-year application cycle? Please, please, please.

**[Fran Ledger]** Not only would we love that for you; we would love that for ourselves. Yes, I mean there are. There are things that are outside our ability to control that within the SNAPs office, right? But that is something that we are advocating for. We would certainly like to have fewer application processes. We understand what a heavy burden that is on communities, and we would like to see that lifted and made easier, made less frequent.

**[Participant]** I mean and my second comment is, I felt that the ESG-CV tool guide was particularly helpful in the suggestions that it gave for staffing. It was really in depth. I really appreciated it, and I just wanted to say that but, also, if we could get more reference and guidance documents like that with specific examples for staffing configurations etcetera. That would be really helpful.

**[Fran Ledger]** That was great to hear. That's great feedback. Thank you.

**[Participant]** Yes. I'm Mike Smith. I'm with the Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition, worked with several CoCs across Tennessee, and I interact with all of them. And I would be remiss if I didn't ask this question: Has there been any you talk with SAMSA about requiring the pad data to be automatic upload into the PDX path is a pain in the butt, and we have no stick, but you get it. It impacts our data quality and the overall health of our system.

**[Fran Ledger]** Does a TA provider when respond to that one with the mic in hand? I remember, I know Meredith, you have a long history I don't know, Alissa. Do you have a long history, I mean long don't know. Oh, not you.

**[Alissa Parrish]** I knew you're going to ask that, I knew you're going to ask that. So, it is on the radar but it's definitely not happening this fiscal year. So that's as much as I know. Meredith. Do you know anything more? That's what we know.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** While we are waiting for the next one. we have one online. Someone is calling in from a 12 HMIS lead single HMIS implementation. Who has the question of: I see many of our smaller leads struggle with the demands of HMIS, as the reporting demands become more complex, does HUD have any plans to provide more support to HMIS Leads with less experience and capacity?

**[Fran Ledger]** Yeah, so we did a NOFO a few years ago that targeted 37 of the lowest capacity HMIS communities. Providing them with several years of technical assistance and funding to build the capacity of their communities because of COVID that got extended out. It was meant to be a shorter term HMIS capacity building NOFO and it's ended up it will I guess, in next September, maybe, I can't remember now. And I think that that was an amazing opportunity, and we learned a lot about some of the struggles that are going on in communities that are really low, have really low capacity, and what we've done with that information is starting to instill that in some very like foundational resources, training and thinking about like, whenever we walk into conversations about data collection, reporting, changing things to the system, the conversation always has to be about what is the burden that we're looking at the feet of those folks that were asking this information for, but also the system Administrators not thinking about just the system administrators that generally are doing well, but those that are really struggling to think about how are they going to manage with the requirements that we have and they are getting more complicated from year to year as our systems. You know, it gets exciting for some of these systems. They can produce this amazing data where we can do Stella P, Stella M, and you can start doing modeling and think about how you can change your system - all these interesting and amazing things. But if you're still at the place where you are struggling to get coverage, and maybe you only have one person staffing your HMIS and you have a lot of difficulty even getting the data into the HMIS, that's a that's a that's extremely aspirational. And so, we want to be able to support those in individuals. So, it's definitely a part of our day-to-day business. When we think about what we're doing is how we can support those with lowest capacity and remove burden where we can.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** And I will add to that that I was an HMIS Lead for the first year of the LSA. Which drove me out of the business. And there has been a lot of improvements there over the last couple of years. They, from when I was a lead to today is night and day in terms of like, how I don't want to say smooth process, but how much that process has improved over time. So, there's things like that that HUD is putting a lot of effort towards improving what already exists, and through the data work group there is a focus on the new-er people coming into the system. So, it's not going to be Brian left his job. Jesse takes his job and comes in blind. There's going to be more supports there for the new staff. Just looking around this room, and all the other workshops I've been a part of. We asked how many people have been in their job for over a year, and I think like a half a dozen hands went up. So, there's a lot of new folks here and there's a lot of opportunity there for that fundamental learning that HUD is putting investments behind.

**[Participant]** Hi Amy McDonald with Jackson West Tennessee, and first of all, I'd like to thank the YHDP reviewers for our grant awards. So, we're very excited with that. But could you give us a timeline? on award announcements for the special NOFO?

**[Fran Ledger]** Nope.

**[Participant]** Are we hoping to be contracted by this July?

**[Fran Ledger]** I can't even let you know when I'm going to get them finished reviewed. So no, I don't we don't have a date sorry about that. We still we still have communities with an extension to submit because of the disaster recovery happening in Florida and Puerto Rico.

**[Participant]** Okay, are we ready. Looking at the recommendation changed on gender. I'm getting ready to present that to some of our committees like; what's your feedback and thinking of my answers for them. How am I going to answer when they question, why are we changing Female to woman/girl and male to man/boy?

**[Fran Ledger]** Because female and male is a sex identity and not a gender identity.

**[Participant]** Okay, thank you.

**[Fran Ledger]** There is, and I will probably not get this acronym right but, there's something called the NASEM report - National Association of Science. Engineering and math. Yeah, science, engineering and math and they looked at Sexual orientation. General identity collected by a vast number of data collection sources from all over the country.

From Federal reporting to non-federal reporting and they did an analysis of the data of what was actually reported, how good the reports looked, what was the validity, and reliability of that information. And they came up with recommendations and in there they do very good at explaining differences between sex identity gender identity, sexual orientation.

So, it's a good reference document if you're wanting to get yourself rounded in all these things to go there. There's also the document that we released along with that feedback document has a really good unicorn graphic in there that that is like a two-second little peak that's also good if you want to, you know 2 second look to see but if you want to dive in deeper that document's really good.

**[Brian Roccapiore]** I was very happy that we were able to get a unicorn on an official HUD document. It was one of the crowning achievements of my career. NASEM, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine is what it officially stands for. And, while I'm talking in the microphones going to somebody else, there was a follow up on the VSP question.

**[Brian Roccapiore]** CoCs are able to apply for funding through the NOFO to fund their HMIS database. This is not the case for VSPs comparable database. Is there any way for Hud to change the NOFO scoring and ranking process to allow VSPs to apply for funding for comparable databases in a similar method?

**[Fran Ledger]** VSPs can use funding for comparable databases. Yes, it can be used for it. So, when, when they apply, for a project that funding can go towards a comparable database. I don't know if that clarified the question, though.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** I'm going to say yes, yes, I only have the question on Zoom. So, let's see if there's a follow up if there's a provided the zoom chat at all.

**[Fran Ledger]** I am happy to expand on that. But yes, they can use it for comparable database.

**[Participant]** Hi! This is Debbie Charles-Beckon with Stomach County. I am kind of adding to your earlier response regarding the emphasis HUD is expressing toward racial equity. Does HUD have any plans to provide additional technical assistance to CoCs's regarding the intersection of racial equity, prioritization, and coordinated entry and fair housing?

**[Fran Ledger]** Yes.

**[Participant]** Soon?

**[Fran Ledger]** Yes

**[Participant]** I guess a follow-up to that is, has there also been discussions around the lens of racial equity in the definition of chronic homelessness?

**[Fran Ledger]** That I would have to take back to the folks in my SNAPs office. I don't know wouldn't be I would not be able to answer that and feel confident about it. But if you submitted an AAQ. Brian would send that to the right folks.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** It's my favorite thing to tell people to do. [inaudible] I've noticed.

**[Fran Ledger]** So, I'm in the SNAPs office where is the SNAP-ers that's what we call ourselves. Maybe I should have divulged that we take the lead for several things. I'm also the fair housing and equal access lead in the Snaps office along with Brett, my colleague and Sharon Singer is doing coordinated entry lead and we also collaborate around coordinated entry. prioritization. bare housing questions, equal access, rule work, and there's a lot of stuff that's going to be coming out that's around coordinated entry fair housing Yeah, issues that you should be seeing relatively soon. I think.

**[Participant]** Okay. So, going back to the toolkit and thoughts for future, we're struggling so much with data quality, and we do so much technical assistance that we pulled the providers together and said what is it? What more can we do? What they finally said was, it's not you. Oh, really? Yes. So, one thing is if it's a platform issue we can deal with that. But there are some of the data elements. We went through all the data elements with our data committee group and went one by one and said, what do you need for clarification and income? The HUD verification process for income is a nightmare and end

users don't have time to process that. They want to enter the data and get going and get on with their lives. So, you know, some thought about that about making things a little bit more user friendly, especially when it came to toolkits and the language that HUD uses. My superpower, in the CoC, is that I'm the HUD translator and that's what I'm known as is that you translate HUD for us. So, any thoughts about help?

**[Fran Ledger]** I have lots of thoughts. Yeah, I we're absolutely concerned about the language in which things are written and making sure that we're removing jargon from the documents that we're producing and also that we're we've just gone through this incredible process. Meredith was just facilitating a call between our folks on our people with lived expertise and experience team and our federal partners. That team had gone through our data manual which you know that's like 200 and some odd, 272 gigantic, enormous pages and very thoughtfully went through and asked a lot of hard questions of HUD and of the Federal partners about: why are you saying something this way? Why are you defining things that way? Why are you asking this question? Is this appropriate? Those types of things. And now we're going through the process. HUD is looking at that. And now we're going back to the Federal partners and saying, Okay, now, we need to have this conversation together about the data collection that you're doing around this. So, we can clean up some the language in the data manual and revisit why we're collecting some of the stuff that we're collecting, and how we're collecting it. So that is the that is the approach that we're taking not only with the data manual that one is here right. That one is huge. That's our biggie, but with other products that we're producing, too. We want to keep an eye towards the language that we're using when we describe things. How does it connect in with other products that exist?

So, we're not duplicating efforts we're not creating more confusion. Cleaning up the HUD Exchange removing out old things that shouldn't be there anymore. Finding holes. The advanced user group you heard it's because we don't really have any good best practice materials anymore that are recent. The best practice materials that we have date back from 2008 to 2010. I think there's probably some good more recent best practices in the HMIS world. I'm hoping we can find them with your help and get those out there.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** I can't believe that the HUD exchange is not perfect Yep. And I was going to add one thing to it, and then I'll let you add one thing to it. Okay. One of the things that the Hud data work group was focusing on was, we understand that what is very good at communicating to HMIS leads about HMIS things, because we all speak the same language that doesn't always translate to CoC's or different programs that are serving folks. So, part of that data work group was identifying that. That translator skill and helping others develop that translator skill. So, you are for sure not alone there. and Meredith.

**[Meradith Alspaugh]** Something you said about, I think you said documentation or verification or something, and I don't want to get into software specific issues, but they should be able to your users collect the income information as reported and move along like there shouldn't be a documentation piece holding them up, and if you read the manual it says, unless it's required by a funder, you don't have to have that. So, I think that's the another thing collectively that bad habits get passed down. We

get used to certain things. Taking a look at the requirements to make sure we're not doing more than we need to, and making things harder on ourselves, and the people we're helping would be a good use of time.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** So, and I know you've been waiting back there patiently just give me one more moment. There was a question that came in 2 questions that I'll let you answer at the same time. One is, can HUD name a comparable database that exists? And the second I'm just I'm just reading them folks. The second was, does it have to be an existing solution, or can something be built to fit their needs?

**[Fran Ledger]** Okay. Well, I, I think... HUD cannot. We are vendor neutral, agnostic when it comes to vendors, so I will not be saying any vendor names. So, I'll start with that there are a lot of different products out there in the HMIS world, and the comparable database world, and we leave it to local communities and VSPs to determine about whether they're compliant or not with the data standards it, and I know how difficult that is and what position that puts communities in. I know of both from sitting in the seat as a system administrator as a TA provider, and now is a HUD staff person, so I understand it from every angle. So, I can't name, I mean I can but I won't. And then second is so you cannot use HUD funds to build a system, you cannot use HUD funds to build a system. If you wanted to build a system there's nothing stopping anybody from building the system, how it would be extremely costly extremely hard to maintain and is not advisable to build a system from scratch. HUD changes things on a regular basis, and it makes it really difficult to maintain those over time. So absolutely would not advise building a system, but you are not prohibited from building the system. Just can't use HUD money that part you are prohibited from.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** Thank you. You've been waiting patiently.

**[Participant]** We were really excited to see supportive service only and support a service only street outreach projects and the special NOFO, which, as I said, we're a suburban and rural community, so we aren't particularly competitive for the unsheltered NOFO. Is there any discussion about bringing that back and a regular application? Possibly, because when we talk about building out a homeless crisis response system, those are the 2 areas that are really lacking.

**[Fran Ledger]** I can absolutely bring that message back to SNAPS and I'm sure we're quite aware of it. But I can't tell you I don't know, happy to bring that message back.

**[Participant]** So, I just have a comment for the VSPs that are asking all the questions on the comparable database and the funding for that. As HMIS lead, we pay for their system. And so, we pay for both systems, and then what I do is I subtract what HUD pays for the system, and then anything that's left I just divide across the board victim providers and non-victim providers end users, and how many users there are, and then have an HMIS User Fee.

**[Fran Ledger]** Yeah, communities. Yeah, communities fund very, you know, everybody kind of funds and manages their systems in different ways.

**[Participant]** So maybe they need to go back to their HMIS administrator and make a deal.

**[Fran Ledger]** Absolutely one of the things that we the last few NHSDC conferences. We've had a victim service provider CoC oriented session that we've done, and we've very much underscored the importance of the relationship, between the CoC and the victim service provider, and how critical it is that the CoC really work in partnership with victim service provider organizations to make this a success can't be left to the victim service provider organizations to figure this out on their own that's not how it's supposed to supposed to work so we know that there's a huge burden there, and we're trying to figure out how to lessen that burden also. So yeah, we know this is not a great situation and we're trying to. Thank you. We're trying to also improve things

**[Participant]** Hi, I am from a rural CoC and a rural YHDP community, and in a community like that the capacity is very small. I run the CoC, I run HMIS, I run coordinated entry, I run YHDP, and one of the things that I wanted to provide as feedback from coming from one of those smaller communities is I think one of the challenges I have as the lead agency for HMIS did not see the necessity for doing an HMIS expansion grant through YHDP but yeah it works work. We're still trying to operate the system with a minimal capacity. I have a half time HMIS administrator that's functioning right now and then I'm the only other trained HMIS system administrator in our 6 county CoC. And so, one kind of feedback I would like to provide to HUD is trying to figure out how for the rural CoC's real rural YHDP communities. How there can be in that planning phase of YHDP – that message that what is necessary for implementing YHDP on the data side? I feel like we had some data technical assistance but a lot of it was really early on before we knew like what we were really going to need, and I've been very fortunate with my HUD technical assistance through ICF. My community has had extended TA around CQI because they're trying to test out new things with us to use with other communities around 4, 5, and 6 and I think we didn't know what we were going to need and now we're too late in the game to get what we need in like trying to compete for funding. So, we lack the capacity to do the kind of true reporting and data collection that we need so it's just kind of a feedback thing of trying to figure out, especially for the rural communities. How do you get that message across and how do you provide, I think some technical assistance around data at different phases in YHDP more so than just in the planning, and because, like an implementation, I wish we had had more technical assistance around data definitely.

**[Fran Ledger]** That's great feedback, thank you.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** One more question, on the victim service provider front. What do we tell our VSPs who are terrified that they're about to lose their funding because their databases are not currently comparable?

**[Fran Ledger]** You're not going to lose your funding.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** That was a softball for you Fran.

**[Fran Ledger]** There is nobody coming to knock on your door. No, you know we've communicated is that you know there's this period of time that we're giving everybody to work through this, and we're not nobody's losing HUD funding over this period of time. Like you know this. When what happens once in a while is we'll have somebody raise to us a concern that a CoC has gone to a victim service provider organization says you're not compliant to either get compliant, or else and then we're brought in to have a conversation and our conversation always leads with that's not the right approach right now. Right? The right approach is continue to work with that with that victim service provider, because right now we're in a situation where victim service providers by and large are not compliant, and HUD knows that. That's just the that's just the field right now amongst our victim service provider vendors. Keep in mind the HMIS field, the HMIS vendor Field is like 20 years old, right along trajectory of time to get where they are today. The comparable database field is a blip, and we cannot expect that to be in the same place. And so, HUD is not putting that same pressure on the comparable database field. And HUD has been silent for a really long time around victim service providers having to be compliant to the comparable database requirement for years. Until recently we used to give you, we used to say okay, well, you can't submit your CAPER-ARP in the normal way that everybody else does, because your system can't produce that report. Okay, you know, we give a pass, and we give a pass year over year. And now we're saying we're not giving passes anymore. You have to have a plan with your venter about a path forward to get compliant. So, we're actually moving in the direction towards accountability but we're not taking people's funding away for not being compliant.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** Okay, I got one more over here is, why do people who pass away while in our programs result in a negative outcome? They were housed at the time of their passing, and I'm going to hand the microphone to Jesse to answer that one.

**[Jesse Jorstad]** Got your back, friend. So, it would be if there's more information if you want to drop it in the app, I can get into the weeds with you. But my initial reaction is that I'm not sure that that's an accurate statement. So great. We have got consensus in the room. So, the where you can look into that that this top of mind for me is appendix A of the APR specifications. There it tells you, and the SPMs. Yep. There it tells you which outcome, or which destinations are considered positive exits which destinations are counted in the denominator, and then which ones are excluded. If you have more questions about that hit me up on the app. You can even just like dm me on the Whova.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** It's the first time dm on the Whova has been used in a session.

**[Participant]** So just going back to the VSP. question seems like a hot topic. I don't have a question on it more so just a comment. I hear a lot about limited capacity from the HMIS leads. I will say what we've had really great success in, with the limitations placed on the VSP vendors who will remain nameless we've partnered with them as the HMIS lead both on the Ce and the general HMIS side letting them know if they're funded what the specifications and requirements are for both. And we've had great success in that partnership. So yeah, just a recommendation, or thought as far as what we've done to make some pathways.

**[Fran Ledger]** Yeah, I mean that's where we feel like really the opportunity is where we see CoCs actually partner with the VSPs, and the vendors working together and make sure that there's clarity about what the expectation is, and asking for technical assistance because we have of a cadre of technical assistance providers now that are focused on providing technical assistance on this particular situation. Yeah, were aside the whole section, a whole initiative, just towards this effort.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** There was a question about what CoC you're from.

**[Participant]** So, I work out of Albany, New York. But we serve a number of different CoCs within New York State.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** So, if you didn't hear that online Albany, New York, put a number of different CoCs within New York State.

**[Participant]** So, myself and my HMIS administrator are relatively new to this field. I think that's the General through line through this call conference so far for us, is a lot of us are new. One of the things that we've been trying to understand is what are all the Federal grants that we need to be aware of, and actively trying to include in the CoC. Because there's all the obvious ones ESG you know all the obvious ones we know are obvious, but the ones that are less obvious that you know. They say, hey? recommended to be part of the CoC. And we really encourage you to be part of this CoC and here's your CoC. And then we never get contacted from them we don't even we don't even know who they are. So, is there a list of places that we should be, you know, of federal programs we should be connected to, or anything like that?

**[Fran Ledger]** Alright, so are you the HMIS lead, or you are also the CoC lead?

**[Participant]** I am the collaborative applicant. Is there a place that we can start? We've contracted Excision and etcetera. Who all needs to be involved?

**[Fran Ledger]** I'll answer that first. I think you have of course, all those folks that are part of the HMIS System and you can look at the manual and you'll see everybody listed. And there's a federal partner page of all of those there. I think those are the ones you're familiar with. There are some data integration project documents they're on the HUD Exchange. There's not many, but there are some that talk about integration projects that have happened with other partners like Corrections. Like you heard Medicaid so there's those kind of folks, hospital health and hospitals that you can bring into your system. And then I would talk to other communities. Other local CoCs that you may be that are in your state to talk about who they're partnering with, who they've had success within their state in your state I think that can be very helpful. Talk to some of your peers here at the conference. When I was at this conference, I learned a lot from my fellow peers. It was also like therapy right, a room full of people that are finally understood what I did. So, I think that's I would also say that talk to some of the other folks here. Anybody else have nothing else online right now.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** Well, we got a microphone moving around.

**[Participant]** Hi Fran Hi! It's Debbie Fox and from NNEDV. 2-part question. There's a vendor I know we're vendor neutral. I'm getting a lot of calls about a vendor not being able to do the reporting that's required and so the TA response I'm giving is, do you know email a queue and ask for an exemption? So, the 2 parts. Is that correct? And then the second part if there's a large vendor, I think they do both. HMIS and comparable database if they're not able to fulfill the reports like is there something that the TA providers are used HUD are doing? Because this is a of list of what I'm thinking of like people will spend a lot of money for this database, so they don't want to have to switch midstream, and they're very invested in you know, hoping that they'll get it fixed.

**[Fran Ledger]** Yeah, so absolutely submit an AAQ. You can name the vendor in the AAQ. And HUD does work directly with vendors and work through whatever kind of problems are going on. And sometimes it's just sometimes it can be a tiny clarification. There is no vendor that's a 100% perfect a 100% of the time. It can just be a small misunderstanding of the data standards, you know. We've talked about it today. They can be confusing right? Imagine the programming specs that can be very confusing. Imagine it for people developing comparable databases. that have not been in this field for a really long time. if they're not also an HMIS provider vendor. So, you know that's part of what we have is we have a data lab that specifically, and so then we also provide that support to the vendors.

**[Brian Roccapriore]** And to the question about requesting an exemption. Yes, that is the right thing to do. So, I think it was 8 years ago, was the first one-time exemption that was offered out of the AAQ. It was from E-Card? Anybody know what E-Card is I didn't think so? One person. All right, you're with us so that has obviously turned into more than a one time exemption. but what's happening. Now is when those exemptions are requested there is going to be a request for how that provider is going to come into complex. So, it's not this isn't like a gotcha thing it's we understand that that is going to take time. It's going to take effort it's not the you have to do it by tomorrow. You don't have to do it by next week but there has to be a plan for that program to have software that is, in compliance and be able to submit those reports.

**[Fran Ledger]** So, we have about 8 minutes left, and I'm not seeing another hand. So, I want to just take a moment and do a couple thank you's. I want to thank NHSDC. I see there's one. I don't know how many other NHSDC people in the room. Thank you so much for all the hard work at this conference in making this happen. And a possible, and the session we send the head TA providers to, to do, that's wonderful. I want to thank you guys for all the hard work you guys do that are in the room. It's amazing the work that you do and when you get if you're showing up at the system admin calls. I like to do a shout out about this, but it has been a long hall with COVID. We know people are really taxed and tired, and we're not a totally over this right and the world looks very different now in our communities, and we're still struggling. and I want to thank you for taking the time to come here and listen to these sessions. And provide your feedback and your thoughts, and I absolutely go back to the office and share these with my colleagues, and we try to figure out how to do things better. So, I thank you very much for that time any more questions comments?

**[Brian Roccapriore]** We got one more. Fran, why do vampires keep making the same mistakes?

**[Fran Ledger]** I don't know. Why do they keep making mistakes?

**[Brian Roccapriore]** Because they lack self-reflection? Happy Halloween! Everybody.