

CT HMIS Steering Committee Meeting
Friday, September 13, 2024 – 10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Attendees

Attendance	Member	Voting	6/9/2023	9/8/2023	11/3/2023	4/12/2024	6/14/2024	9/13/2024
Co-Chair	Mollie Machado			X	X		X	X
Co-Chair	Lauren Sheehan			X		X	X	X
Central	Jessica Caraballo	Main	X	X	X	X		
Central	Anthony Guerra	Alternate	X	X	X	X	X	
FFC	Neelam Joseph	Main	X	X		X		X
FFC	Maria Satterwhite-Porpora	Alternate			X		X	X
GHART	Amanda Gordon	Main	X	X	X	X	X	
GHART	Anastacia Woolcock	Alternate	X	X	X	X	X	X
GNH	Meredith Clay	Main	X		X	X		
GNH	Jeff Pierre	Alternate					X	
GNH	Leigh Shields-Church	Alternate						
GNH	Don Smith	Alternate				X	X	
MMW	Stacy Hooker	Main			X		X	X
MMW	Stephanie Corbin	Alternate						
Northeast	Beau Anderson	Alternate		X		X	X	X
Northeast	Brenda Coutu	Main						
Northeast	Avery Lenhart	Main						
Northwest	Diane Albini	Main	X	X	X			X
Northwest	Nancy Cannavo	Main	X		X			
Northwest	Adam Lyton	Alternate						
Northwest	Bri Pierscinski	Alternate						
Southeast	Phil Brose	Main						
Southeast	Trisha Dani	Main						X

Agency	Name		6/9/2023	9/8/2023	11/3/2023	4/12/2024	6/14/2024	9/13/2024
CCEH	Sarah Fox							X
CCEH	Haley Gross de Jiminez							X
Nutmeg Consulting	Jim Bombaci		X	X	X	X	X	X
Nutmeg Consulting	James Buckley		X					
Nutmeg Consulting	Tina Cormier		X	X	X		X	X

Nutmeg Consulting	Rose Kelly		X	X	X	X	X	X
DMHAS	Lisa Callahan					X		X
New Reach	Melanie Gonzalez							
Liberty	Don Vincent		X	X		X		X
The Gathering Place	Megan Ward							

Welcome and Check-in

Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve: Stacy Hooker; Seconded: Don Vincent
- All in favor, no abstentions

Update on Data Strategic Planning and Governance Board

Haley Gross de Jimenez

- Interim Data Strategy Board has completed drafting a charter that will go to both CoCs next week
 - CoCs are expected to vote on the charter
 - Board is made up of 12 representatives from Providers, CANs, both CoCs, State funding partners as voting members
 - Lead Agency and System Administrator will attend as non-voting members

Update on the DOH Commissioner's HMIS System Recommendation Project Key Updates

Lauren Sheehan

- Interviews Completed:
 - Interview stage is complete with 30 individual interviews conducted and 400 non-duplicated findings identified from the interviews.
- Model Sourcing:
 - The team has pivoted to exploring HMIS models nationwide through discussions with other HMIS lead agencies and analyses of various HMIS vendors.
- User Interviews:
 - Jim raised concerns about whether interviewees were regular HMIS users and noted that it would be good to be given a list of individuals interviewed to ensure they reflect daily HMIS users for more accurate feedback.
 - There is uncertainty if the team is evaluating HMIS usage activity (daily, monthly, etc.) when collecting data.
- RFP Release Status:
 - The dual-function HMIS Lead and System Admin RFP is still scheduled for release on 1/1/2025.
 - Provided Dan and Billy confirmation that the contract renewal date is expected to be 7/1/2025.
 - The scope for the RFP must be finalized by the end of October to meet deadlines and account for holiday delays.
 - Clarified with Billy and Dan that there is a single RFP for the Lead Agency and Systems Administrator, and they have committed to complete findings in time for the RFP.
- Recommendations:
 - Based on Lauren's conversation with the team, they do not plan to recommend abolishing current practices (e.g., Smart Sheets).
 - The recommendations are expected to focus on evaluating current processes and exploring other vendor options without proposing extreme changes.

DOH Evaluation Team is Asking for Additional HMIS Access

Tina Cormier

- Request for BNL and APR Reporting Access
 - The external team currently has view-only access to the Case Worthy training environment but lack familiarity with the system.
 - Their team should work with Beau to evaluate and run reports ensuring proper use of the system.
- Request for Backend Database Access to Run Queries and Evaluate System Performance
 - Given their unfamiliarity with the system, there's a risk of incorrect queries that could affect all users.
 - Recommendation: Deny the request due to these risks but offer them system performance metrics from existing tools as an alternative.
- Request for Sandbox Support Environment Access
 - It was noted that they already have access through their training accounts but had not realized it initially.
- Request for Full Access to Smart Sheets
 - Smart Sheets are not managed by the HMIS system administrators and are not part of the HMIS Case Worthy environment.
 - Recommendation: They meet with the owners of Smart Sheets for a screen-sharing session to understand how and why they are used.
 - Recommendations were supported by the Committee chairs and members
 - Tina will relay the group's recommendations back to the external team.
 - Lauren will coordinate Smart Sheets demonstration.
 - Beau will assist with reporting demonstrations.

Roles Shifting to Nutmeg

Tina Cormier

- The HMIS contract has been renewed for the fiscal year, facilitating a transition in roles previously filled by CCEH.
 - Some roles were eliminated at CCEH, prompting discussions with strategic partners on how to backfill these positions to ensure continuity of services.
- Project Coordinator Role:
 - The project coordinator role, previously held by Rose Kelly at CCEH, has been transferred to Nutmeg.
 - Rose Kelly is now a full-time employee at Nutmeg and will continue managing duties fulfilled at CCEH. ex: Steering Committee meetings, and other administrative tasks.
- Data Analyst Role:
 - Data analyst responsibilities at CCEH have been eliminated and are now fully transitioned to Nutmeg for processing data requests but with reduced capacity.
- Nutmeg will take on a more involved strategic leadership role, managing areas that CCEH previously handled.
 - Nutmeg will provide more resources for strategic initiatives, such as the BNL check-in meetings, to ensure cohesive project management and improve communication.
 - Nutmeg will continue handling technical aspects and will now assist with the strategic shift to maintain project management and communication.
 - More information and communication about these transitions will be provided as new processes are implemented.

Role Shift: CCADV Enrollments and Support Process

Rose Kelly

- CCADV enrollment entries were prioritized during the transition with no gaps in the existing process.

- The project coordinator retrieves CCADV enrollment data from shared Google Doc and enters the enrollments into HMIS on behalf of CCADV.
 - An information page has been set up for CCADV on CTHMIS with details about their program and relevant user guides.
- A support form is available on CTHMIS to process requests through a ticket system.
 - The new system has already processed three edits submitted by CCADV.
 - As part of the workflow, the data analyst role checks the BNL daily for CCADV enrollments to ensure proper reporting.

Role Shift: MOU Request Process

Rose Kelly

- MOUs are required for any agency seeking access to HMIS.
 - A new webpage was created on CTHMIS to provide information on the MOU process, including security measures and policies.
 - Agencies must fill out a simple access request form to start the process.
 - The form helps determine if the agency is part of a Continuum of Care (COC) or if it's a new agency requiring Steering Committee approval.
- MOU Approval Process
 - If the agency is mandated to report, the chairs are notified before the MOU is filled out.
 - If access is required, an access questionnaire is completed and presented to the Steering Committee for approval.
 - The project coordinator reviews and approves the MOU, which is then sent to CCEH for the final signature.
 - After the MOU is executed, agencies attend training and are then given access to HMIS.
- Annual Recertification Process
 - Agencies must annually recertify compliance with MOU requirements through a checklist.
 - A new MOU cycle will begin in June 2025, running from 2025 to 2028, with the next annual recertification in 2026.

Role Shift: Data Request Process

Rose Kelly

- A new data request form and information page is available on CTHMIS to simplify the data request process.
 - Explanation of data use
 - Collection and management details
 - Steps for submitting a data request
 - PII Requests: Require a data sharing agreement and approval by the Steering Committee.
 - Due to the role shift, resources for data requests and analysis are reduced compared to the previous staffing at CCEH.
- COC-Related Requests are prioritized under the funded role.
 - Non-COC Requests may be subject to a pay-for-service model.
 - Examples include P-20 Win and Yale.
 - Grandfathered requests not yet completed will be honored without fees.
- There should be no assumption of cost.
 - Some reports may already exist or may be found through other means.
 - Encouragement to submit requests even if there is uncertainty about cost or availability.
 - Continue to monitor and refine the data request process as needed.

Users are Requesting Access to HMIS While Outside the Country

Tina Cormier

- Current security protocols, which are outdated, do not explicitly address this scenario.
 - Geofencing rules are in place to prevent access from outside the US due to cybersecurity concerns.
- Recommendation
 - Access Denial
 - The recommendation is to deny access for users trying to connect from outside the country to prevent potential cyber threats.
 - Recommendation:
 - Users requiring access from abroad should set up a VPN tunnel through their agency's secure network.
 - This ensures access is done through a secure, controlled network rather than an international one.
 - Recommendations were supported by the Committee Chairs and members.
 - This policy will be formalized and communicated as the standard procedure for handling such requests.

DMHAS Dashboard

Jim Bombaci

- Thanks were extended to DMHAS for pivotal contributions in developing new dashboards and functionalities within HMIS.
 - The new dashboards created for DMHAS programs have a broad system-wide impact, benefiting virtually all program types.
- Dashboard Overview
 - Emergency Shelter Night by Night
 - Displays the number of clients with at least one bed night check-in in the past 30 days.
 - Filters are available by COC, CAN, program type, and program name to drill down specific data.
 - Street Outreach
 - Displays individuals with a current living situation assessment indicating homelessness in the past 90 days.
 - Entry/Exit Shelters
 - Tracks enrollments in hotel and motel settings without bed night check-ins over the past six months.
- Month-over-Month Trends
 - Shows total numbers of adults and children in homeless situations each month, considering bed night check-ins, current living situation assessments, and entry/exit shelter situations.
 - Data is de-duplicated to prevent multiple counts for the same individual.
- Exit Destinations Dashboard
 - Provides an overview of where clients exit after leaving emergency shelters or street outreach programs with data and graphs for easier interpretation.
- Data Quality and Usage
 - Allows users to check data quality by drilling down into specific programs and clients.
 - Aims to track the success rate of transitioning individuals from homelessness to permanent housing and monitoring returns to homelessness.
- Date Field Request
 - The data is refreshed in regular intervals and date filtering is not available.
 - Users can submit a helpdesk ticket if they need data for a specific date parameter.
- Data Refresh and Troubleshooting
 - Emphasis on the discrepancy between data refresh dates and real-time data updates.

- A specific support form for new HMIS dashboards will be created to capture issues separately from regular support tickets.

New Business

Jim Bombaci – Tina Cormier

- Office Hours
 - The new office hours initiative was successfully launched with positive feedback from users who attended.
 - Reports are generated after each office hour session to trend common issues and address gaps through training.
 - The office hours were successful in identifying specific issues and submitting support tickets
 - The direct interaction has been invigorating for users and Nutmeg support staff and generates helpful discussions.
- Office hours information and links are sent out in the weekly communication and a link will be added to the training section of CTHMIS.
 - Office hours information will be added to the data request page to encourage users to seek out sources of data that may be available to them.
 - Beau plans to join future office hours to gain insights and contribute to discussions.
- Rental Data Analysis
 - Jim Bombaci highlighted ongoing work to analyze rental increases and their impact on affordable housing projects.
 - Preliminary findings show a significant rise in rents, prompting discussions on potential legislative actions.
- Incentives for Landlords
 - Consideration of creative strategies, such as depreciation recapture, to entice landlords to maintain lower rent rates for supportive housing projects.
- Rent-related issues
 - Jim and Haley have been working together to analyze data and information that could benefit media outlets.
 - They are focusing on security deposits and landlord incentives as key areas of interest.
 - In New Haven, tenants often do not reclaim security deposits, and landlords are required to provide an itemized explanation for withholding them.
 - Under Connecticut state law, landlords must return security deposits within 30 days of lease termination or face a penalty. The deposits must also be held in interest-bearing accounts (current rate 4.5%), with interest going to the tenant.