

**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.

- 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.

- 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.