

**HMIS Information and Discussion Session Meeting Minutes**  
**Region 1**  
**June 7, 2011 – 8:30 AM**  
**Community Counseling Center**  
**402 South Silver Springs Road, Cape Girardeau, MO**

**Attendees:**

Nickie (Coleman) Thornton, East Missouri Action Agency (EMAA)  
Becky Whitmore, Society of St. Vincent De Paul, (SVDP)  
Chris Kent, Disability Resource Association (DRA)  
Regina Moore, Family Counseling Center (FCC)  
Natalie Sandoval, Community Caring Council  
Jamie Ludwig, Community Caring Council  
Kim Kelly, COMTREA  
Sandy Wilson, Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW)  
Krystal Searcy, Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW)  
Liz Gebhart, Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW)

**HMIS Staffing Changes:** Sandy Wilson stated that Bob Sobule is leaving the HMIS Project effective June 30, 2011 and Krystal Searcy will take his place as the HMIS HPRP Project Coordinator. Liz Gebhart has filled the HMIS Project Coordinator Position for Regions 1, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Sandy referred attendees to the contact information handout sheet for the staffing changes.

**HMIS User/Agency Survey:** Sandy Wilson reported that the MASW staff reviewed the results of the HMIS User/Agency surveys that were completed during the March regional housing team meetings. Users were able to complete a paper form of the survey at the meeting, or they had the option of completing the survey online through SurveyMonkey. Sandy gave a thank you to all those who participated, as over 80 surveys were completed. Sandy explained that two main comments emerged from the results. The first comment was that we (HMIS) might not be engaging our users more effectively. None of the attendees felt there was a problem, so Sandy Wilson mentioned that we would be more careful in using acronyms in conversations and that providing the acronym list would also help. Sandy said the second comment that stood out from the user surveys was that ROSIE is not very user-friendly. She asked people to talk about their experiences with ROSIE, what attendees did and didn't like about the database.

Becky Whitmore said it would be nice if you could get to the financial piece of a profile without having to go through the intake form when there's nothing to update or edit. It was frustrating to keep starting from the beginning when you only need to update one thing on the financial profile. Becky also said that at times the system isn't quick enough and she isn't always able to use tabs on some of the forms. Sandy Wilson said that she was able to use the tabs in her system, so it is an issue she would look into to see if there are some places where the system might be slowing down.

Another issue brought up was that a person in the database who is seeking assistance from another agency might not be closed out by the other agency. This slows the process of being able to update information in the database. Sandy Wilson asked if it would be helpful to create a policy or procedure for what to do when that situation happens. She also said that if people are running into problems with that, they should contact the HMIS Project Coordinator Liz Gebhart to work with agencies to make sure they're closing their files in a timely manner.

**Agency Procedure Manual:** Sandy Wilson reported that the Agency Procedure Manual was submitted to Steering Committee for approval on June 3. The manual includes background on the HMIS Project, common

housing acronyms and current policies and procedures utilized by the HMIS Project. With the creation of this manual, several forms have been updated and/or changed. Some of the forms were included in their packets and are effective starting today. The manual will be available on the website to be printed by the end of business on June 13. Since all the information from the manual couldn't be covered during this meeting, webinars will be set up in July to go over the manual in more detail. Notifications of these webinars will be sent out next week. Please be sure to register.

The following documents were included in the packet and discussed that the meeting:

- Agency Partner Agreement: Each agency's Executive Director or other authorized official will need to submit an updated, signed Agency Partner Agreement.
- User Policy and Responsibilities: This form has been changed from the User Policy Responsibility Statement, and Code of Ethics from to the User Policy and Responsibilities form. Current HMIS Users do NOT have to sign a new User Policy form. Any new HMIS User identified with your agency will need to utilize this new version.
- Consumer Notice: We had a Consumer Notice based on various funding requirements and projects. There is not just one form and is not specific to any funding stream. You can post this where people can see and take down any older versions of this that you may have.
- Notice of Client Rights: This replaces the Client Consent-Release of Information and Client Revocation form. Every client you enter into HMIS must now be informed of, understand and sign the Notice of Client Rights form and NOT the Client Consent-Release of Information form. Additionally, the Client Revocation form is now gone. By signing this form, the client understand that any information s/he shares with an agency participating in HMIS is kept confidential and that only those authorized to input data into HMIS can view their personally identifying information.
- HMIS Technology Equipment Reuse and Disposal: This form replaces the HMIS Computer Reuse and Disposal form to encompass all technology equipment, such as fax machines and prints that contain a hard drive. Your agency will need to adopt this new policy and your agency director or other authorized official will need to sign the form and mail it back to the HMIS office. Keep a copy for your files.

Sandy Wilson reminded the attendees that four webinars will be held in July to go over the manual in more detail. The Agency Procedure Manual will be available on the HMIS website by end of business on June 13 so agencies will be able to print off copies for all HMIS Users within their organization. There was also a reminder to sign the updated forms in blue ink and return them to the HMIS office. Liz Gebhart will be following up to ensure all forms are turned in.

**Target Population Trainings:** Sandy Wilson stated that agencies whose HMIS Users are required to either attend or self-certify the target populations trainings on domestic violence and have yet to do so are Community Caring Council and COMTREA. Agencies who are required to attend or self-certify for the targeted population training on mental health and have yet to do so are also Community Caring Council and COMTREA. Agencies are given six weeks from the time the first live training takes place to complete these. After this time period, any HMIS User who is required to attend or self-certify and has not is notified. If these attempts fail, the Steering Committee has approved that the HMIS Project can lock that specific HMIS User out of the ROSIE database until such time they have completed these target population trainings.

There was a reminder that these are all required trainings for any HMIS User who works for a Supportive Housing Program (SHP) or Shelter Plus Care (S+C) funded agency. Sandy Wilson said that while these are only required for certain agencies, others are also encouraged to partake in the trainings for their useful information. The next live Target Population Trainings on Developmental Disabilities will be June 20 at 10 a.m. and June 28 at 1 p.m. The training will be recorded on June 29 and posted to the HMIS website sometime that week. Notification has been sent out regarding this target population training. Additional

target population trainings will take place on substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and Chronic Health Conditions and Other Physical Disabilities. Sandy also reminded participants that there is a self-certification option. If users have already received comparable training through other sources, or if the staff member does not do client intake and/or data entry and only pulls reports, they can submit a self-certification letter stating that they do not need to attend. A sample letter is available on the HMIS website.

**HPRP:** Sandy Wilson reminded attendees that Bob Sobule will be leaving on June 30 and Krystal Searcy will be taking over his position. Sandy said there was an error in the 2009-2010 HPRP APR concerning the housing status of clients at program exit. She thanked those who worked to fix those errors and stressed that agencies should always remember to update the housing status at program exit. If a person's housing status has changed since the intake, then it needs to be updated. There was also an issue with a large number of clients who have "other" or "Don't know" as the exit destination. Sandy asked if this was something the agencies noticed. Attendees did report that often they can't follow up with clients or that they got kicked out of the program and they can no longer find the people to see what their current housing status is. Since these agencies serve a transient population, often times the housing status is unknown.

Sandy also stated that Krystal and Bob are working on developing a self-monitoring plan for HPRP. MASW has been working with MISI to develop self-monitoring plan webinars to explain the reports used in the self monitoring plans. While most agencies know what to click to run a report, Sandy said we want to show agencies how to read reports and know what to look for. This will help agencies better identify and correct any errors.

Becky Whitmore also said that there was an issue with that because their files had already been turned into St. Louis. Their program is now closed down, so there's a question about who will need to go back in to fix data errors should there be any. Sandy Wilson said that she would contact the executive director there to figure out how to proceed. Sandy also reminded all agencies that if they are thinking about closing down HPRP, they must talk with DSS and also the HMIS team. All the data will remain open at the HMIS level until the state says it can be closed down.

**Best Practices Highlight:** Sandy explained that one of the goals during these information and discussion sessions is to highlight at least one agency in the Balance of State on a best practice that they are utilizing. For this meeting we wanted to show Ozark Family Resource Agency's Cultural Competency Policy. Sandy asked if any other agencies have something like this or if it's something they feel their agency could adopt. Most said there were discussions about cultural competency but no one was aware of their agency having a policy in place. Sandy mentioned that she found a language posted in a hospital that had a range of languages saying, "If this is your language, please point here." She is trying to track down a smaller version and then will make it available to all agencies who want it. In wrapping up the discussion, Sandy asked agencies to send an email to the HMIS Project Coordinator if they feel their organization has a best practice that could be highlighted at future meetings.

**HMIS Resource Sheet:** Sandy mentioned that we would be providing resource sheets for the HMIS portion of the regional housing meetings as well. The Cultural Competency Policy link will take agencies to the one discussed in the best practices. The resource sheet also has information about the self-monitoring plan webinars. MASW will work with MISI to develop and hold funding-specific webinars to show HMIS users how to run reports, read them, identify errors and fix those errors. The webinars won't be required, and the dates and times are TBA. Sandy also discussed the 2004 HMIS Data and Technical Standards. This focuses on the data elements and standards that guide HMIS data collection, not just the technology. If you run into any questions, please contact us at the HMIS office and we can assist in making sense of the document. Finally, the resource sheet provides two links for further resources for agencies. Sandy mentioned that Tech Soup is especially helpful in purchasing software and sometimes hardware at a greatly reduced cost.