Data Evaluation Committee

6/5/20

Noemi, Owen, Cynthia, Keleigh, Brooke, Michele

**Release of Information**

We are nearly finished with our updated release of information and currently are trying to determine details about when/if the release expires

Owen: can we make it custom by participant? This would be preferable but Phil mentioned the HHS grants said this can't be done in a legal manner. Projects have various funding sources and requirements- can this be more a shorter time period project by project?

Yes, projects must meet the minimum privacy and security requirements set by HUD and the CoC but are free to implement more secure standards and make changes to the length of time on their releases

Keleigh- We can have an authorization without a time frame for funded projects and they can apply different expectations/requirements as needed by that project

We must hold funded projects accountable which we could look at in site monitoring annually but don’t have the capacity to check every client file to make sure all releases are up to date.

Other agencies may want to put a time frame for an expiration, but we can not

Owen: If there is a way to have it be legally compatible with all funders it would be very beneficial. Youth would rather work on other stuff than signing more paperwork, but we may get conflicting directors from funders, even federal funders. What should we do in that case?

If there are different requirements it is best practice to follow the strictest requirements but if statements/requirements from different funders are in direct opposition with HUD/CoC policies please let us know and we can try and find a way to work through that together.

Current release says they can withdraw authorization at any time but won't affect anything that's been entered/used already and this will be on our new one as well.

Cynthia: If you are good with omitting any limit in the main release, other programs may want to include "generally" or "usually" to provide some wiggle room if they do want to include expirations, "generally we expect to expire every x years” etc which may allow for flexibility.

Our plan is to change the release to say "This authorization is good until withdrawn" and then allow projects to refine more securely, but Michele will double check about the “until withdrawn” language because it may be too vague. Brad may have comments on this.

Additionally, Keleigh mentions that housing authorities are looking for a release of information for the CoC and the plan is for Brooke and Keleigh to utilize the current CoC release, and adjust it based on housing authority needs

**New HMIS Implementation**

DHCD informed us they were going to procure a new HMIS implementation and will not be hosting other MA CoCs in their new system. We need to be out of the statewide DHCD HMIS by December of 2021 but HUD has recently released a statement asking CoCs to hold off on procuring a new HMIS until after the pandemic ends and it is possible that DHCD will be asked to wait. This is still very up in the air- DHCD is working with technical assistance providers from HUD and the Three County CoC is as well and those TAs are working together to try and brainstorm around this.

Since it is so unknown, we are continuing as planned and preparing to enter our own procurement process. A working group is being put together to create a request for proposals to solicit bids from HMIS vendors and the CoC is planning to meet with other MA CoCs who are leaving the DHCD system to consider forming another state partnership in a new HMIS.

Please reach out to Michele if you are interested in participating in the new HMIS working group

**Data Dashboards**

There are three data dashboards recently purchased which we reviewed during the meeting. Community Performance, community analysis, and Community Snapshot. We also have the option to change their names to something we think might better describe them.

There is a consensus that for 8 years these numbers seem quite low. Michele is going to test them again with smaller datasets and with more complete datasets from the Green River Warehouse

Cynthia- is insurance low because it is only being collected at entry and people obtain insurance through the course of the program?

Owen- Maybe, if end users went to do an annual update they may have forgotten someone obtained insurance over the course of the year and submitted without changing. Youth at the start will sometimes have health insurance through parents and lose that which might affect numbers in the opposite direction

If you look through all insurance options it's an overwhelming list- is the report capable of telling the difference between types? Michele will check if that distinction is being calculated there or in the APR

Since this is a very long date range, it is also possible that there are newer elements which weren’t collected for most years and so now look like low collection rates over 8 years.

Noemi- there are lots of different widgets, can we think higher up about which audiences are interested in which data? If this is for shoring up support for funded programs, for trying to use in local legislature, is this for community members to conduct oversight, etc? This is a great point as we think about the need to frame our data so it isn’t misinterpreted.

You can direct people to certain rows/areas - are there interest points/section labels that could link to a particular section of the analysis? Michele will test how linking to specific labels could work.

Noemi asks could this data be used to locate someone? The concern is valid that somebody’s abuser could look project by project at domestic violence victims and drill down by race, ethnicity, gender, age, etc to try and locate a specific person. It is unclear how feasible this would be in practice, but as something possible in theory we will ask NELCWIT to review if they believe it could put someone in danger. We are also looking for other people/organizations who may be able to speak to this if anyone has recommendations. Owen also suggested that we could try to post them without DV data which may be possible. Michele will consult with Gaither on the possibilities around this- it seems unlikely this is the first time it has come up.

Cynthia brings up that projects should be able to see this first and report back on how accurate their data looks – completely agreed. Once we have refined the data uploaded and decided how to handle the potential danger of including domestic violence data we will share with projects for review.

Noemi- the data shows massive disproportionate homelessness rates for people of color and under collection of demographic data for queer people. These can be important highlights for how homelessness service is happening in our communities

Cynthia- Is there an opportunity to create a separate profile in order to pull out segments?

Do you have the opportunity with funding and work to make a sub-set available and post it to the website? Smaller ones might be a way to provide context. Who else is he doing these with? How do they make it available or not?

Michele is going to reach out to Gaither about some of these possibilities to determine feasibility and cost and will look at examples from other CoCs to share with the committee.

Owen- a wonderful resource but it’s good to have some time to have discussions on accessibility, we want to maintain validity of our data but maybe we can refine some of these things before releasing to public

As D/S transitions EOHHS data from google form to GR warehouse, if we're able to pull non-EOHHS reports from here, it might save a lot of time – hope this is the case! :)

**Racial Equity Training**

The Western Mass Network to End Homelessness is holding a racial equity in housing/homelessness training and the first session was yesterday, 6/4/20. Those who missed yesterday’s session are still able to join the next two if they would like. If interested, please let Michele, Keleigh, or Brooke know and we can share the invitation and recording when it is ready.

**Next Meeting**

Our next meeting was scheduled for July 3rd but Noemi pointed out this is a holiday at CAPV (and likely other organizations)- when will our next meeting be? July 10th, 9am – 10:30am

Michele will follow up to send out notes, links to the data dashboards, and date of the next meeting