HMIS Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes June 9, 2004
105 Pleasant Street Conference Room 104C
Meeting convened 2:00 pm

Present: JoAnn Maynard(JM), Pam English(PE), Miles Pendry(MP), Henry Vincent(HV), Bob Sparks (BS), Russ Bloch(RB), Tony Epaphras(TE), Steve Eckberg(SE)

Main focus of meeting was demonstration of ServicePoint v3.02 which is current version – as implemented for NH's ServicePoint Training database. HV handed out and discussed "organization chart" of the way agencies and programs have been entered to form the structure of service providers in the training database.

HV fired up the ServicePoint (SP) training site and demonstrated modules, specific tasks, and general functions of SP. This included 'Adding a New Client', 'Searching for an Existing Client', 'Entering Client Profile', and discussion of various data elements as we saw them on screen.

JM suggests that "Chronic Homeless" should be more than a "YES/NO" question – should be 'calculated' based on response to series of questions that then creates the "YES/NO" response. While this would may be better, it does make for longer data collection – more questions – and SP does provide the HUD definition of this (and all other) questions when you "hover" cursor over and then 'CLICK' on question – a message box appears that gives expanded info about the question.

RB expressed concern about two classes of users – early users could get their needs met easily, 2nd wave users might not get their special requests filled because HV and SE are too busy to accommodate.

RB suggests that case management process in ServicePoint could be a separate training for those agencies that will want it or need it.

HV described the Release-of-Information (ROI) function in SP and how it is used within SP. JM notes that the SP ROI doesn't serve the same purpose that an agency's paper release or consent works. [MORE DETAIL: SP ROI is an "electronic switch" that allows information of a particular client (one who gives permission to share data on a signed paper client consent form from Agency A – where she is doing an intake – with Agency B – where she may be likely to go for some service. Before using the SP ROI, the "conduit" for sharing between Agencies A & B MUST be set up – that is, these agencies should have a written agreement to share data, and SP must be set up to have "OPEN" connection from Agency A to B. Even with SP "OPEN" connection, no client data will go into this connection until the SP ROI is entered for the particular client. ONLY when both conditions are met – "OPEN" connection AND client ROI is turned on – will data actually be shared from Agency A over to Agency B.]

HV described the 'Service Transactions' within the ClientPoint module. The 'Services' provided are specifically identified by AIRS Taxonomy Codes. Whereas it is unlikely intake workers will be familiar with this complex Taxonomy, a 'Service Quicklist' can be built to choose agency specific services that are provided. These services and their codes are entered when the Agency or Service Provider is 'set up' in ServicePoint. Services delivered to clients are tracked and reported in Table 15 of HUD's Annual Progress Report.

HV demonstrated the built-in APR report and the Custom Report feature of SP. Custom Report is more of a data extraction tool than Report creator. Users that have certain privilege level can specify data tables and elements to extract, create a compressed, encoded file and download to PC. Then do further analysis work with the data set.

Discussion of Outreach programs and their data collection process. For Balance of State CoC Outreach programs, paper 'contact' forms are sent to BS who does data entry. For other CoC's data entry is done by TE and summary reports are sent to BS – not actual details/notes on each contact. BS then able to present overall results by combining BoS with reports from other CoCs.

RB wonders if storing the data itself is an act/process that needs permission or statutory evaluation to be sure its okay. Who will 'own' the data, what happens if Homeland Security comes knocking, will we have a policy to share it, make it public, etc?

These legal / statutory issues seem to be very 'foundation' level issues. We really need to address them in order to productively move ahead with the process. SE to contact Heather Schultz of NH Legal Assistance to open discussion of confidentiality and legal issues related to HMIS.

RB suggests a meeting of Emergency Shelter Directors / representatives to present ServicePoint and HMIS generally. Feels this effort would be very worthwhile.

SE wonders if OHHS annual Homeless Conference will happen this year. Could be a good venue for HMIS presentation to broad audience.