FOOTHOLD TECHNOLOGY

Using AWARDS HMIS to track and end Chronic Homelessness

Keys for the Homeless Conference 2016

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Session Description

Learn about the new changes HUD has made to the definition of Chronic Homelessness and the affect that these changes will have on the clients you serve. See how the AWARDS HMIS database calculates Chronic Homelessness and what reports rely on this information. Learn about the upcoming Coordinated Entry System projects and how those projects can help your community work collaboratively to end Chronic Homelessness. This session will also include a sneak preview of upcoming HMIS Data Standards changes.

About Chronic Homelessness

- Why do people become homeless?
- Why do some people stay homeless?

- HUD has placed a special emphasis on "Chronic Homelessness". These are people who not only have experienced homelessness for a long time, but also have disabilities which make it hard for them to retain housing.
- HUD projects and models: PSH, HUD-VASH, Housing First
- CH Final Rule published December 4, 2015. Effective January 15, 2016. Available on HUDExchange.info

CH Defined

- A Chronically Homeless individual is someone with a disability who has been homeless at least 12 months out of the past three years.

Three parts of the definition:

- They must be homeless now
- They must have experienced "Long-Term Homelessness"
- They must have a Disabling Condition

CH and HMIS Data Elements

- They must be homeless now
  - Either "HMIS Project Type" of the project the client is being admitted to = "Emergency Shelter," "Street Outreach," or "Safe Haven."
  - Or "Client entering from the streets, ES or SH" = "Yes"
- They must have experienced "Long-Term Homelessness"
  - Either "Approximate Date Started" is more than 1 year prior to their "Admission Date"
  - Or "Number of times homeless" = "4 or more" AND "Total number of months homeless on Streets, ES, or SH" = "12" or "more than 12"
- They must have a Disabling Condition
  - "Disabling Condition" = "Yes"

CH in AWARDS

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Living Situation

*Type of Residence: Place not meant for habitation

*Length of Stay in Previous Place: One week or more, but less than one month

*Approximate date homelessness started: 6/1/2016

*(Regardless of where they stayed last night) Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today: Four or more times

*Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES, or SH in the past three years: More than 12 months

Chronically Homeless (Auto-Calculated): Yes

*Substance Abuse: Alcohol abuse

*(If client has a substance abuse problem) Expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and substantially impairs ability to live independently: Yes

*Documentation of the disability and severity on file?: No

*(If client has a substance abuse problem) Currently receiving services or treatment for this condition: No

*Disabling Condition: Yes

Living Situation Changes

- The old "Extent of Homelessness" section has been replaced by the new "Living Situation" section.
- This is Data Element 3.917 in the HMIS Data Standards.
- Emergency Shelters, Street Outreach, and Safe Haven projects are asked all questions. Everyone entering those projects is considered homeless.
- All other Project Types (including SSO, TH, PSH, and CES) are asked "Type of Residence" first to see if the client is homeless or not, and then they're asked related questions.
- The 7 Day Rule and the 90 Day Rule

CH Families

- The "Any Adult" rule. If any adult in the family is CH, everyone in the family is CH.

- Snapshot of family at the time of admission.
  - Scenario one: Sally and Sean enter on July 1st. They are not CH. Joe joins the family on July 3rd and he is CH. The rest of the family is NOT considered CH because Joe wasn't present at the time of **their** admission.
  - Scenario two: Joe enters on July 1st and he is CH. Sally and Sean join his family on July 20th and they are not CH by themselves. However, they are all considered CH because Joe was present at the time of **their** admission.

Aging into Chronicity

- The Point-In-Time Report (PIT) introduced the concept of aging into chronicity.

- Someone who was not CH at project entry, but NOW is CH because they've been homeless for 12 consecutive months.

- Based on "Approximate Date Started".
  - Is the "Approximate Date Started" more than 12 months in the past?
  - Do they meet the other criteria about disabling condition?

- Use the PIT Report in the Fiscal Menu to report out on this.

CH on Reports

- Point In Time Report
- ESG CAPER
- New 2017 CoC APR
- Future 2017 AHAR

- All HMIS ReportBuilders

Where it's NOT found

- CSV Exports (CH is calculated upon import)
- System Performance Measures
- Current AHAR
- Old (current) APR
- HMIS Grantee APR

CH Data Quality

- HMIS ReportBuilder in the Profile Menu has a saved report format called "Foothold Data Quality Report - Chronically Homeless v4"
- Things to look for:
  - Clients who are not CH but should be.
  - Clients with missing/incorrect Disabling Condition.
  - Number of Times & Number of Months that are close.
  - CH family members who join at different times.

- Case Managers should make CH assessment part of their workflow. Documentation is needed for PSH.

CH Documentation

- CoC-Funded PSH projects require documentation of CH.
- Written documentation by a third party.
  - HMIS can be used to show homeless episodes.
  - Letters from service providers not on HMIS.
  - Letter of disability from medical professional.
- There is a checklist on HUDExchange.info. Google "Chronic Homeless documentation."
- There is an optional "Homeless Verification" module within the Entitlements section, and documents can also be scanned into the Client File Cabinet on the Face Sheet.

Previously CH

- The definition of Chronic Homelessness has changed many times over the year. For example, the "12 months" accumulation requirement is new.
- HUD is aware that clients who were previously considered CH may no longer show up as CH in HMIS under the newest definition.
- This is okay as long as you make a note about it on reports where CH is mentioned. This is more important if your project is required to serve a certain % of CH persons.

Coordinated Entry and CH

- "HUD's primary goals for coordinated entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present." – HUD's Coordinated Entry Policy Brief
- Goals of CES
  - Prioritizing the most vulnerable (including CH)
  - Streamline resources
  - "Housing First" approach
- The CES Policy Brief is online now. The CES Guidebook is not yet released as of October 2016.

Creating a By-Name List

- Having a By-Name List helps communities know who needs assistance.
  - "Experience has shown us that a community cannot gather the necessary information to house its homeless neighbors solely by counting them anonymously once a year." – Community Solutions
- Should you use the HMIS ReportBuilder or Waiting Lists?

Waiting Lists and CH

- "Waiting Lists" allow projects to add people to a common waiting list, with built-in prioritization, that allow projects to take people off of the waiting list as space becomes available.
- Define your scope. What are the "Source projects" and what are the "Destination projects".
- Do you want Requirements? Only for CH people?
- Do you want built-in Prioritization/Sorting?
- Establish a Review Board and processes for using the Waiting Lists.

Resources

- HUDExchance.info – All the official HUD resources are here.
- EndHomelessness.org has many resources including an overview on CH
- USICH.gov has case studies on CES and CH
- CmtySolutions.org Zero:2016 campaign
- AWARDS Online Help –
  - Definition of CH is in the HMIS RB FAQ.
  - Waiting List Configuration instructions under System Setup, along with a Training Film.
  - 2016 Data Standards Training Film.

Questions?

Any last questions?

If questions come up after you leave feel free to contact me.

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Note: Remember not to send client names or details through email.