

Mission: To provide quality, timely, accurate, essential information to improve service delivery for people who are experiencing homelessness.

National Conferences Presentations

The Maricopa HMIS Project has been accorded national recognition as evidenced by the fact that five individuals were invited to make presentations at two national conferences. The Maricopa HMIS Project committed to sharing our achievements and success with other communities throughout the country.

At the National AIRS Conference in Tucson, Arizona on June 8, 2005, Robert Duvall, the Maricopa HMIS Project Director, and Trevor Atwood, the Project Director for the Pima County HMIS Project, gave a presentation titled "Measuring Success: Program Evaluation and Collaboration thru HMIS". The presentation focused on the Arizona Evaluation Project and the methodology for evaluating the success of homeless programs in assisting homeless clients to improve self-sufficiency and residential stability.

The National HMIS Conference was held September 13th-14th in St. Louis, Missouri. Five hundred participants from the various HMIS projects, Continuums of Care, government officials, and HMIS software vendors attended the conference. The Maricopa County HMIS Project was pleased that four people from our continuum, all actively involved in the HMIS project, presented at the conference.

Charlene Flaherty, from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), was instrumental in making the HUD Data Standards and the Arizona Self Sufficiency Matrix a requirement in the current DES contracts with agencies. She presented information on the Arizona Evaluation Project at the conference. The Arizona Evaluation Project uses HMIS as its primary vehicle for collecting and analyzing data to measure program outcomes.



Michael Marcheschi, Chief Administrative Officer from CASS, participated in a panel discussing high volume shelters with other agencies. With CASS being the largest shelter in Maricopa County, Michael shared his first hand experience in using HMIS to

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improve client intake procedures in a high volume shelter. He answered questions and discussed how CASS found ways to operate an efficient high volume shelter using HMIS.



Alison Reuter, from Phoenix Shanti Group, was on a panel discussing the unique challenges of collecting data from special populations like HIV/AIDS, mental illness, and substance abuse while protecting client confidentiality. Phoenix Shanti Group was one of the first agencies exclusively serving HIV/AIDS clients to actively participate in HMIS.

Justin Graham, System Administrator for the Maricopa HMIS Project Team, participated in a panel discussing tools and gadgets for HMIS participation. Justin discussed the implementation and use of ID cards at the various agencies. CASS, our largest shelter, was the first to implement ID cards in our Continuum of Care. Their experiences and lessons learned along with those of other agencies were presented at the conference.



It is because of the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in the Maricopa HMIS Project that we received national exposure for the fine work being accomplished within our community.

Agencies Implementing HMIS

Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation • Arizona Housing Inc.
Catholic Social Service • Central Arizona Shelter Services
Chicanos por la Causa Inc • Chrysalis Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence • City of Phoenix Human Services Dept • Community Bridges
Community Care Emergency Shelter • Day Resource Center
Ebony House, Inc • HomeBase Youth Services, Inc • Homeward Bound
House of Refuge East • House of Refuge - Sunnyslope
Labor's Community Service Agency • Mesa Community Action Network
META Services, Inc • Native American Connections, Inc
NOVA Safe Haven • One Step Closer • Phoenix Rescue Mission
Phoenix Shanti Group • PREHAB of Arizona • Salvation Army Phoenix
Save the Family Foundation of Arizona • Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Southwest Behavioral Health • Southwest Leadership Foundation
Spirit of God Ministries • Streets of Joy • The Respite Shelter
Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development • UMON New Day Centers
US Vets • Women In New Recovery (WINR)
YWCA of Maricopa County - Willetta Center

Maricopa HMIS Project Website has Changed

Have you ever wanted to learn more about the Maricopa HMIS Project? Have you ever wanted to see who are the participating agencies and/or funders? All of this information and more is available at the Maricopa HMIS Project website at <http://www.cir.org/hmis/>

The HMIS Project website has gone through some changes over the past few months. The meetings and agendas from both the User Group and Advisory Board are available on the website sorted chronologically. There is a calendar of events which includes upcoming meetings, trainings, and the upcoming fall HMIS and National Human Services Data Consortium (NHSDC) conferences.

The documents section is broken out now into separate sections. Available to the public is a list of publicly available documents and forms related to HMIS. In the secure section, available to HMIS participants, are documents and forms being used by agencies to implement HMIS along with other information like training agendas, help files, surveys, etc.

The links section has been updated to include links from our sponsors and other places like HHS, HIPAA, HUD Clips, etc. which provide more information about HMIS and related information. The news section contains old newsletters and spotlights on various agencies.

The Maricopa HMIS Project website is a valuable tool for agencies, other interested stakeholders, and general public and will be expanded in the future to contain attachments from User Group meetings and a translated Spanish version of the website. Currently the website can be translated into various languages using the AltaVista Babelfish tool available on the website. So the next time you'd like to learn more about HMIS please visit our website at <http://www.cir.org/hmis/>

System Enhancements

In order to better serve the homeless population, enhancements to the delivery of program services continually occur. The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), one of the tools that may help with the delivery of services, is no different in this respect. The software developer of the Maricopa HMIS Project, Bowman Systems, recently released a few system enhancements for their HMIS software, ServicePoint. Now on ServicePoint, there are required fields, an Advanced Reporting Tool and an eligibility module.

The required fields were the first of these enhancements. They are extremely useful in the project team's effort to provide the best quality data possible. They work by not allowing a user to move onto the next screen and save any information until all the fields required by the Department Housing and Urban Development are answered. This ensures that each agency is providing complete and insightful information about the clients they serve. This in turn provides quality data to the entire Continuum of Care which can provide even better services to the homeless population served within the Continuum.

Another system enhancement occurred with the release of the new Advanced Reporting Tool (ART). ART, as it's referred to, improves upon the previous reporting tool in ServicePoint, in several areas. One of the improvements occurs with the creation of the reports. Users of the tool can now drag and drop field labels into a window to create reports, a more user friendly interface. Charts and graphs can also be created from any report in two simple steps. Reports can be designed by the members of the project team and run by users at the provider agency at a later time. Finally, reports can run on an automatic schedule and be sent to ServicePoint users by email once they are completed. All of these features are available to at least one user per agency, free of charge, thanks to the Maricopa HMIS Project and its funding partners. Agencies with 15 or more users are also eligible to receive a second license free of charge that will allow them to develop their own custom reports.

Last but not the least of the system enhancements, is that of the "eligibility module". This feature allows case managers to determine client's eligibility for any number of programs by simply using information that may already be entered about the particular client. Once the information is entered, a thorough search is conducted

(System enhancements, cont.)

and the results display all programs for which the client is eligible. Currently, this feature is only available for clients in households being served, but Bowman Systems is hard at work modifying the so that it will also work for single clients.

All in all, these featured enhancements should make the Maricopa HMIS Project that much more useful for all those using it as a tool to combat the issue of homelessness.



Thought from the Project Director:

Homeless Deaths this Summer

The tragic heat related deaths of 30 homeless and elderly people that occurred on the streets of Phoenix this summer have increased public awareness of the homeless problem in our community to a level that we have not seen since 1984. Public officials, church groups and service providers joined together to provide a variety of emergency solutions to the danger of triple digit heat on our most vulnerable citizens. Community Information & Referral volunteered to assist the Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) coordinate and provide information about emergency services offered by the numerous organizations that stepped forward to assist in this crisis to anyone needing services.

The HMIS project is working on systemic changes that will improve the use of the bed availability and bed reservation tools in ServicePoint so that by next summer the CONTACTS Shelter Hotline staff and HMIS users can rely on up to the minute bed availability in ServicePoint to refer homeless people to available empty beds elsewhere within the community. The project team will be working with provider agency staffs and community leaders to track the number of clients that are denied services in order to document the need for additional beds with Maricopa County.

Hopefully the combined efforts of all of us working together can prevent a similar tragedy from happening in our community again.



Phoenix Rescue Mission

Since HMIS' inception in Maricopa County in 2003, Phoenix Rescue Mission has been on the cutting edge of HMIS use. They were the first faith based agency to utilize the many tools found on ServicePoint. In

addition, recently they were part of the first pilot project to begin sharing HMIS data with other agencies that use HMIS.

During this time, Phoenix Rescue Mission has seen remarkable growth in all its various programs. According to Bob Reed, the Manager of Shelter Services, this has not been a coincidence. HMIS has been an integral part of the process. Bob said, HMIS' main role in this growth has been by allowing for smooth communication between their various programs. This in turn, has resulted in more efficient delivery of services to the clients and allowed for expansion of those programs.

The program that has used it most extensively is their Addiction and Recovery program, but it doesn't stop there. Counselors at the agency have now been trained to use HMIS and the case managers who work with the client's in the Shelter also have begun to utilize HMIS.

The Phoenix Rescue Mission also finds use with ShelterPoint and keeps real time bedlists for their shelter. To facilitate this process at their Shelter and Addiction and Recovery programs, new color coded photo identification cards have been issued. That's not the only use of the identification cards either they are also used to make the client dining room hours run smoothly. Eventually, they will also be used to track group attendance and more.

The future is bright for the Phoenix Rescue Mission and HMIS is a part of that future. The plan is to integrate the whole direct care staff into the system. Work is already being done to set up reports through HMIS that will allow their entire programs to measure the results from the clients, based on the information put into the system.

All in all everyone at the organization has had a pleasant experience with HMIS and values the benefits it has produced and will continue to produce for them and their clients.



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The Community Information & Referral, Inc. (CIR), founded in 1964 and incorporated as a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization in 1979, serves as a vital link between the people who need help and community social service organizations. CIR services include a free, 24 hour, confidential telephone Helpline; a computerized database of over 2,000 agencies including government and private nonprofit organizations, self-help support groups, civic clubs, and professional associations. CIR also publishes the Directories of Human Services & Self-Help Support Groups, and is a co-founder of AzTeC (Arizona Telecommunication Community) Computing, a Free-Net providing free, text-based internet access. CIR focuses mainly on the ten central and northern counties of Arizona (Apache, Coconino, Gila, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Yavapai, and Yuma); however, some of its special programs (Flu/ Pneumonia Immunizations, Income Tax Assistance, and various holiday activity calendars) cover the entire state. As a founding member of the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (AIRS), an international professional organization with over 900 members throughout the United States and Canada, CIR takes the lead in providing information to those in need.

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HMIS Project Recognized by HUD

(PHOENIX, September 2005) The US Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the Maricopa HMIS Project an award for Innovative Use of Advanced Technologies at the second annual HUD National HMIS Conference held in St. Louis, Mi on September 13-14, 2005. The award was given for incorporating Photo ID and scan card technology into the HMIS project at Central Arizona Shelter Services, Phoenix Rescue Mission and Streets of Joy. The award was presented to Robert Duvall, Project Director of the Maricopa HMIS Project by Pamela H. Patenaude, Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development at HUD.

Sponsors

The creation and implementation of the Maricopa HMIS could not have become a reality without the support of our funding partners: The Lodestar Foundation, The Arizona Department of Housing, The Arizona Community Foundation, The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, The Valley of the Sun United Way, the Maricopa Association of Governments/AZ, and the Department of Economic Security. Local funds were utilized for both the planning and implementation phases of project.

