Uploading Youth Data How to Collect & Upload RHY Data in HMIS Transcript

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John: Hello everyone and welcome to this webinar for runaway and homeless youth grantees, sponsored by Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau, or FYSB. Today's webinar is Uploading Youth Data: How to Collect and Upload RHY Data in HMIS. My name is John McGaw and I work at American Institutes for Research and I'll be moderating today's webinar. And on behalf of FYSB I'd like to thank you all for joining us for this recording.

Before we begin the presentation I'd like to make a couple of logistical announcements. The webinar is pre-recorded so you can view at your leisure, and it is less than hour long, but close to an hour. The webinar recording and the PowerPoint slides will be available on RHYTTAC webpage on the RHY dash HMIS page at the RHYTTAC site. If you have questions about the webinar following your review, you can submit them to FYSB at the email shown here. RHYMIS@acf.hhs.gov. You can also submit questions to the RHYMIS online service desk at the link that will be shown at the end of this recording.

The presenters for this webinar besides myself are Resa Matthew from FYSB; Candace Wiseman-Hacker is the other presenter. She's from Mediware Information Systems. And with that, I'd like to turn it over to our first presenter, Resa Matthew, over to you Resa.

Resa: Thank you so much John, and I'd also like to add my welcome to all of you today related to our RHY data upload webinar. This particular webinar is of great importance to assist each of you on the process for uploading your RHY HMS data collected in your Continuum of Care HMIS. However, I wanted to highlight two important views of your RHY data. First, the collection of RHY data is a legislative requirement of[inaudible 00:02:10] as of the runaway homeless youth act. And second, we at FYSB use the RHY data you submit to include in our biannual report to Congress. I know that collection of data, data entry, and data quality checks are not easy, and so we appreciate the work you do to provide better data on behalf of those ... the youth that you serve and on much needed services that you provide. To date we have not had 100% participation from all of you grantees for various reasons. However, I'm confident that this fall 2017 upload will ... We will meet this goal.

As you will hear today, the dates of the upload coincide with our annual RHY grantee training event in November. And to better support you in the data upload process, we have a workshop and some slots for individualized assistance at our November training. Another development that is underway as it relates to what we're hearing from the field, is that many of you feel that you don't have access to reports with your data from your local HMIS. And, to address this, we are working to launch a dashboard so that you can have access to your data and more information is forthcoming about this.

Finally, I wanted to inform you of some changes in personnel that impact this work. So as many of you may have heard by now that Peter [inaudible 00:03:43] resigned from his position as our RHY HMIS specialist effective September 30th of this year. However, we now have Gloria Watkins who has so bravely and graciously stepped in to assume this role, and though she's not a part of this webinar today, I want to publicly thank her for the work that she is undertaking. And she is also working quickly to get up to speed. I also want to thank the AIR staff under John McGaw's leadership, and to the Mediware Information System staff under Candace Wiseman-Hacker's leadership. And so at this point in time, I will give you an update on our agenda for today's webinar.

So, just to give you come context of what we're gonna present is sharing why we collect data, how we collect data. We're also gonna share with you what data [inaudible 00:04:36] to collect, the expectations we have of you as grantees, how to upload your data, as well as how to read data quality reports. And also how to get some support and technical assistance related to the data upload.

So why do we collect data? We want to know the number of youths that you're serving in your agencies. We also wanna share data at the community level to better assist you as they look to get received services throughout the community, and as you make referrals to your community partners. We also wanna understand the demographics of the various sub populations of the youths that you serve. So for example, how many troubled youths are you serving, how many youths will identify as LGBQ, how many youths who have been trafficked. And I think that's gonna be very important. We also want to document the needs of the youths that you are serving. What are their needs when they come in to your shelter? Are ... Do ... Are they in need of mental health services, substance abuse services, being linked to education, employment, etc.

We also look at collecting outcomes related to our new performance measures at the time that the youths exit the program looking at health, school, and employment. And then we also want to look at some insights about strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the youths that are in your program, and finally reporting data for funding opportunity announcements, for advocacy purposes, and required reports. And we think that you having access to that data is very important for you as you make the case for the youth that you serve, but to also use that information to leverage additional funding.

Now how do we collect data? So the expectation is that you will use your local Continuums of Care homeless management information systems to enter your RHY data. Now if your program stresses more than one Continuum of Care, we would like to know that at the RHYMIS@acf.hhs.gov website. In addition to that, each HMIS package is created by a private vendor, so this would really require you working closely with your HMIS lead to make sure that your needs are being met.

RHY grantees must also pay a licensing fee in order to be able to have access to your local HMIS and to be trained in how to use the system. And so at any time if you feel that this fee is unreasonable, again please use the RHYMIS@acf.hhs.gov email to inform us.

Each HMS product must also meet the federal, meaning the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development data standards specifications. And so data standards 1.2 and your CSV Specs 6.11, which is effective October 1st of 2017. And then finally, the role of your HMIS lead is really to set up your projects, and train you to collect data in HMIS and generate reports. And I think this is very critical for those of you who are new to collecting data and uploading it so, to work closely and in close partnership with your HMIS lead, and we advocate that you do that as soon as possible.

And so with that I'm gonna turn it back over to John from AIR.

John: Great, thank you Resa. Yes at this point I'd like to use a couple slides to look at some particular cases in HMIS project set up. Particularly for BCP's. Now this has been an issue in the past, and we found that by addressing it that it's been helpful to BCP programs. The point we wanna make is that all BCP programs should be setup in HMIS to have two project types; two project setups; one BCP-P, which is prevention, BCP-prevention, and BCPES, or BCP-emergency shelter. Now what are these things? BCP-prevention are those BCP programs that are services only. That is no shelter space. And are helping to prevent homelessness for the youth and young adult. The BCP-emergency shelter are included for any client that has had at least one shelter stay in a BCP program they should be in the BCP-emergency shelter project. The exit date for BCPES, or emergency shelter, should be the last date of stay, and it may go beyond the FYSB funded portion of 21 days, that's okay. But still wanna record that even if it's beyond the 21 days.

Really it's important to pay attention to use both of these projects as a BCP program as appropriate. So keep ...

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Speaker 1: As a BCP as appropriate. So keeping an eye on if it's services only or there's shelter stays to make sure that client's in the correct project setup. If you do not have a prevention project in your setup, please ask you HMIS lead, that entity within your COC that's in charge of HMIS, to set it up for you in your HMIS, to track those services [inaudible 00:10:29] youth. Again in the prevention setup.

Another point that we want to touch base on because it's been an issue for programs refers to street outreach programs. So your SOP programs if you happen to have one of those. And this idea of a contact versus engagement, just to provide a little more clarity. So a contact, which is data element 4.12 is that interaction between a street outreach worker and the individual that's experiencing homelessness. That contact should be recorded every time a youth is encountered by a representative of the grantee. So every interaction on the street. Giving a blanket or information to come to the shelter to access additional services, those are all contacts and should be recorded every time.

The date of engagement is another field, another data element, 4.13, and that's the date when a deliberate client assessment or the beginning of a case plan occurs or begins. When that assessment is done, or begun, it should be recorded and it should be only one time per enrollment for the client. So that date of the deliberate client assessment is the date of engagement.

Now this third bullet, the date of engagement might be on or after the project entry date, but it must be before the project exit date. So when you enter, that can be the same date of engagement or some point period within the stay, but it's got to be before the client exits the project. Or the report end date.

And lastly the date of engagement can be left blank if the worker ... Street outreach worker did not engage the youth. It's okay to leave it blank. So those are a couple of points that have come up in different submission periods and we wanted to point them out here.

For more information on what data is collected in RHY HMIS, you can read the latest HMIS data standards, which as Lisa mentioned, are version 1.2. Those were released as we're updated and released this past summer, and they can be found and downloaded at the link shown here off of the HUD exchange. The latest data standards manual.

Okay. So moving forward, the upload period is fast approaching. As of the recording of this webinar, you may hear this during a submission period, that upload period is November 1st, 2017 through November 22nd. The day before Thanksgiving. So you cannot upload data before that and access RHY point, upload your data and then after that RHY point will be closed. So get ready, it's coming fast. All fiscal year 2017 grantees must participate. You're required to upload your RHY data that's been collected in HMIS. Extract it and upload it. We're going to talk about exactly how to do that here in this webinar.

But I also want to note for new grantees that have just received their awards September 30th, you are not required to upload data on November 1st, 2017. Since you're new grantee you don't have to worry about that now. You do have to start collecting data as you serve clients and you will be required to upload your data in the spring of 2018. So that'll be six months away.

The reporting period that data is being collected and uploaded for in this submission period, should cover all activity between October 1st 2016 and September 30th 2017. So that entire period, any client, any activity in that period should be entered into HMIS and that's the data that's uploaded in the submission period.

Okay. Let's look at grantee responsibilities. What are your responsibilities in the RHY HMIS system. So as of right now ... Now, basically everything coming due at the same time, but first you should make sure you've entered all data for the youth that you've served, as I mentioned on the last slide between the date range October 1st 2016 and

September 30th 2017. Make sure those data are in HMIS as completely and thoroughly as possible.

Secondly you want to make sure your HMIS lead within your continuous care has properly set up your RHY project in HMIS. And as we mentioned that should include the BCP prevention and the BCP emergency shelter distinction. So they should appear as two project types. Even if you don't always think of them as two, in the HMIS project setup they should be designated as two separate project types. So that's very important, and make sure you're on the same page with your HMIS lead on that.

Thirdly, you want to make sure, again, via your HMIS lead, that your HMIS is updated to the new data standards, version 1.2, that came out this summer. That is required of all HMIS vendors and software systems. And lastly, now you should be watching for guidance that's available, training like this recorded webinar, and any notices that come out from RHYTTAC the Runaway [inaudible 00:16:39] and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center. And from AIR who are the technical assistance providers for RHY HMIS.

Speaking of RHYTTAC, the RHY HMIS page on the RHYTTAC website has been updated. This is a brief look at what that new page looks like. Just a reminder, there are some new instructional video shorts that are available there. There's five new video shorts that will ... In about two to three minutes in length ... Up to five minutes some of them, will walk you through how to do certain functionalities in getting your data uploaded in differentiating between different technical assistance, the online service desk, emailing, technical assistance, and materials that are available on this RHYTTAC webpage, which includes webinars, tip sheets, PowerPoint slides, frequently asked questions, the data quality user manual, the RHY point user manual. Those are all on this website.

Grantee responsibilities, moving forward through the submission period, through November, include the following. Once your data is fully in and has been checked and is complete and accurate as possible, then it's your responsibility to generate a .csv, 6.11 report, these are the latest specification for the data file that's created and uploaded for your data. That report, it will be created by your HMIS in the form of a .zip file, which will include a bundle of .csv files inside. And they should all be hashed for the Runaway and Homeless Youth in HMIS. That means the client first name, middle initial, last name and social security fields go through a hashing algorithm so those fields are deidentified. That should be automatically done by your HMIS.

So you'll generate that. Upload file. Or report. You'll submit that data file into RHY point and that web URL is rhymis.net. We're going to look specifically step by step how to do that in a moment. And that data should be uploaded sometimes starting November 1st and definitely by November 22nd. That's the submission window in which you're responsible to upload your data.

And we recommend that you submit early. As early as possible in that window. Some things may go wrong, there are these new structural standards for the file that is uploaded that your HMIS vendors created. If there's any problem there, we want to catch it early. If there's any problem with your data, you would have the chance to fix any data problems and upload it again before the end of the submission period on November 22nd. So the earlier the better.

Once you submit your data, you'll receive a data quality report. You'll automatically.

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John: You'll receive a Data Quality Report. You automatically receive an email with a PDF of your Data Quality Report, showing you what required fields have been uploaded and how complete your data is. You'll get a score for it and you can review it.

If you choose to update your data in your HMIS, you can do that then, and if there's still time, you can upload your data again, or you can just, once your data has been submitted once, review and update it and fix any problems for the next submission period six months down the road. If you have time, we encourage you to make it as high quality data as possible and resubmit it, but that's up to you. It's not required.

So, you make those changes as needed, file again, increasing your data quality score that you will be recorded for. The goal, the threshold that we're all shooting for, is a data quality score of 75%, so as much of your required field ... You should have at least 75%. Ideally, we want to get as close to 100% as possible, and that's what we're all shooting for.

Lastly, we encourage you, and it's really your responsibility to submit any questions, any thoughts you have to either that email, if it's a policy question around the RHY program, but if it's about uploading your data, technical problems, really those questions or issues should be submitted through the RHY-HMIS Online Service Desk. We use a tool called JIRA. At the end of this recorded webinar we'll have the address for where you can link to submit any issues there.

Now, with that, we're going to look at step-by-step how to upload your data, and I'm going to hand it over to Candace. Candace?

Candace: Thank you, John. Between now and the submission period, you will receive your login and password information for the RHYPoint website. This is a URL. You'll have access to that website. Once you receive that, you'll go to rhymis.net and you'll enter in the password and username that's provided via email. We will be using the same password and email that were sent out to you for the spring submission. So, if you did request changes, those changes will still be in place. If you have since had further changes, you will be able to request user password changes through the help desk, as John indicated on the previous slide.

Once you get to the RHYPoint site, you'll be able to log in on this screen. From here, once you enter your password and username, you'll be prompted to enter a new password. It will actually let you know that the password that you received was temporary. You will create a new password that has both characters and numbers so that it is secure, and you'll be able to use that password over and over during the submission period.

Once you've entered your new password, you will receive the software license agreement. This is the agreement that indicates that you won't use the data within for any purposes other than the submission process. Once you click Accept, it'll take you on to the next screen so that you can easily upload your grant.

The RHYPoint Dashboard, the home page, is pretty simplistic. In the top right-hand corner, you'll see your name. It'll show you as an import user. On the left-hand side, it'll give you the drop-downs for the home page, where to do your imports, and where to log out, so a pretty simple process.

In order to import your file, you will select a grant key drop-down next to the grant name. Again, these will be the same as for the spring submission. You should see separate drop-downs for each of your RHY projects. So, if you have a street outreach project, you would have SOP. If you have transitional living program, which would also include the Maternity Grant Home, you would see the TLP, and you would select the appropriate grant that you're trying to upload. The year numbers that are indicated at the end of the grantee name are the end year of the operating grant that you're trying to do the upload for.

You'll select the appropriate drop-down and click on Upload File, which will then give you the opportunity to upload that file into RHYPoint. You will get an indicator that the file is uploading, and it does take several to a number of minutes, depending on the size of the file and the number of other people that are currently uploading to the RHYPoint site.

Upon completion, you will receive a success notice that will tell you that your upload has been successful and give you the count for the appropriate CSV files, as you can see on this example here. This exact screen image will be emailed to you for reference. The email and the popups that you get during the upload process are identical. So, if you get a separate email, that's just part of the entire upload process, and it's a confirmation email in case there are issues or anything that you would like to save for documentation purposes. You do not need to worry about writing down or trying to grab a screen capture of what you see on the upload screen.

After the upload is complete, you'll see under Successfully Uploaded Files the number and name of the file that you have uploaded. If you upload more than one file, you'll see a number of those listed here. Once you move past the completed upload, you will see that there are both uploaded files and completed imports.

So, what you are doing in this process is uploading the file, and then it will take the server a considerable amount of time to process all of those files and actually import them into the RHY site. Once they move into the import site, the lower field which says, "Recently Completed Imports," that means that the file has been receive into RHYPoint. Upon completion of that upload, you will receive the Data Quality Report, which we'll discuss in just a few moments.

As you can see, after the file complete the import, you're able to see the ones that are completed. So, if you upload multiple files, you can check back if you would like. Otherwise, simply receiving the Data Quality Report in the morning is your indicator that the RHYPoint has received the file previously.

You may receive a structural error during your file upload. This is particularly important to know, as John mentioned that we have moved from an older version of the CSV to a newer version, and some of these errors will prevent upload into RHYPoint. So, it's important to understand what you're seeing and to know who to go to in the event that you should see one of these errors.

For example, after you do your upload, rather than getting a Successful Upload popup, you will get a popup that indicates that there has been an error. This error we'll read here, and you will receive the identical email, just as you would for a successful import. That email will tell you that there are errors in your submission.

One of the common errors that we have previously seen is improperly hashed client data. Some systems require you to choose a particular setting to receive hash data. Other systems are set up to do this already. So, this is one example of an error you might receive.

If you have the improperly hashed client data error, it is more than likely an error in how you generated your download, as opposed to the software itself. However, if you believe that you have generated the download correctly, then you should contact your HMIS lead for more information about how to proceed. Then, if necessary, your HMIS lead will contact the vendor. Grantees should not contact the vendor directly. They should always contact the HMIS lead or the entity who trained you during your HMIS data entry learning process.

Another common error is to let you know that there are critical errors or missing values in certain fields. The error message will always tell you whether the submission is accepted or rejected into the repository if you read the error message itself. In this case it will tell you that the errors must be correct before the submission can be accepted into the repository. The same occurred with the previous example, which was for non-hashed data.

Other times you may receive an error message that will tell you that the data has been accepted. However, it's just a notification that there may be some errors in the information. The easiest way to handle these errors if you're unable, again, to decipher what they mean, is to forward them directly to your HMIS lead and seek assistance in that regard.

This is an example of an upload error which has non-critical errors. If you'll notice, the bottom section tells you that there are invalid or missing values-

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Candace W.: ... tells you that there are invalid or missing values in certain CSC files. However, there is a successful submission, so you may or may not need to make changes, but the data has been accepted into [RHYPoint 00:30:14].

In terms of the data quality report, after you've had a successful import into RHYPoint, the following morning you will receive a data quality report that will give you information about your file. If you don't receive that data quality report within 48 hours of upload, you can contact us through the [RHYMIS 00:30:43] service desk. And the data quality report is returned directly to the person that uploads the data. You can also add additional people to the receive copies of that report as well, if more than one person needs to receive a copy. That can be accomplished by sending an email to the help desk as well.

Just some scores from our last upload, we did see some information. The destination at exit had very high completion field, 83%. Gender and residence prior, race and ethnicity are all fields that had very high data completion rates. This means that of all of the grantees across the country who completed a successful import, those values were completed by the majority of users and submitted to the RHYPoint database.

There were also some fields with very low data completion. These fields do not necessarily appear on the data quality report itself, but please remember that even though the data quality report has only a limited number of items, that grantees are responsible for all of the data elements that are required by the RHY program, even if they're not accounted for on the data quality report itself. Things like domestic violence, social security number, employment status, and sexual and labor exploitation had very low return rates in terms of data completion. These are areas that you, as grantees, will want to focus on as you do clean-up for this particular upload and as you think about what you'll be doing in terms of data entry for the spring submission for the next fiscal year.

As [John 00:32:29] mentioned before, we do have a required universal data elements threshold of 75%. This chart helps you to see the various questions that are required, as well as which project types are required to answer those questions, when they should be answered, and the type of client that the value should be answered for. So in some cases you'll notice for destination, that it does need to be answered for all heads of households and adults, and relationship to head of household for all clients. So you're able to see where those values are missing.

We do have, as well, a required program specific data element, [PSDE 00:33:16] 75% threshold. These questions do require, again, values at entry, update, exit, and they're required for various project types. So in some cases you may see something like all but SOP, so that would be all but street outreach. It would be for all heads of household and youth. Remember, please, that these questions are based on the standards that have been in place for the previous fiscal year. So there will be changes for the current data entry time. This is for the period from 10/1/2016 to 9/30/2017.

This is a sample of one of the data quality reports. On the front page of the data quality report, you will see the name of the provider, the project type code, the federal partner funding source, the grant identifier, and the grant's start and end date. For your RHY projects, it's especially important to note the federal partner funding source and the grant identifier, and to keep in mind that your upload should only contain four program type codes, project type codes. We should only see transitional housing, street outreach, emergency shelter, and homelessness prevention.

If you attempt an upload with anything but one of those four types, that project type code field will display in red to indicate that no clients are uploaded for that particular project type. We also check for these internally, so you may get an email from AIR or from [FSB 00:34:51] indicating that you have tried to upload the incorrect project type. If you upload the incorrect project type, you will receive a data quality report, again, with that code in red, and it will show that there are not clients uploaded for that particular project. So you'll receive a data quality report with no clients listed at all. A client count of zero. That's an indicator to you, as the grantee, that there is something incorrect in your project set up and that you should return to your [HMIS 00:35:23] lead for assistance in getting your project set up correctly, and then do another export and then import of data into RHYPoint.

A second sample screenshot is the summary page itself. For each of the elements that are required, you'll see, again, the clients that are included, a percentage, and an indicator. The indicators are marked with a green plus sign, if you receive 75% or higher, and a red minus sign, if you receive less than 75% in any particular field. The overall percentage score at the top right is the score that is reported to FSB at the end of the year, and the summary of the upload process. That's the score that is officially assigned to each of your upload projects.

I do want to note as well, in terms of street outreach, just a reminder that street outreach clients are only included in data quality if there is a date of engagement for that particular client. So if you have street outreached to 100 clients and you have only 10 dates of engagement recorded appropriately for the given time frame, only 10 of those clients will appear in the data quality report, but all 100 will be received into the repository for upload.

Now I'll turn it back over to John.

John: Great. Thank you, [Candace 00:37:03], for that walk through. That concludes this recorded webinar. I do want to remind you again about support options that are available if you have questions particular to this webinar, or policy questions, or about the RHY rule as it affects your data collection, or specific program questions. You can submit those to this email address, RHYMIS@acs.hhs.gov. That will go to FSB staff who can answer your questions best. But any question, really, the ones I just mentioned and anything technical, anything related to RHY HMIS, you can also send it to the RHYMIS service desk at rhymisservicedesk.net. Keep in mind, that's not only the [TA 00:37:58] providers, but the TA team answering those questions and getting back to you in a timely way. But we're also coordinated with FSB leadership and FSB staff around any issues where we need to bring in them. We're working with HUD HMIS technical assistance providers. We're working with National Safe Place. It's a triage that gets us to a wealth of information to make sure we answer your questions in a timely way. So please do utilize those resources.

With that, I'd like to thank you all for listening to this. I'd like to thank you for your efforts in collecting data to better understand and improve services for homeless youth and young adults and the work you do. I'd like to thank our presenters today, [Resa Matthew 00:38:48] and Candace [Wiseman-Hacker 00:38:50], for your presentation today. And the staff here at AIR who helped put on this webinar and record it and make it available. With that, that concludes this recorded webinar. Thank you again, and we'll talk to you soon.

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