

City of Cambridge

Homeless Management Information System (CHMIS)

CHMIS Data Quality Improvement Plan Cambridge, MA Continuum of Care

Purpose

This document describes expectations and procedures for reviewing and monitoring accuracy, completeness and timeliness of HMIS data for projects operating within the Cambridge Continuum of Care. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published a CoC Data Quality Brief in May of 2017, outlining their strategy for ensuring that communities are able to collect complete and accurate data about homelessness for individuals and families, the collection of which is essential to understanding project impacts and overall system performance. This is in conjunction with HUD's release of a Data Quality Framework, a mandatory HMIS report that informs all CoC and ESG project level reports as well as annual submission of System Level Performance Measures. CHMIS Data Quality procedures outlined in this document also ensure accuracy and completeness needed for quarterly local reporting, Point in Time Counts (PIT), and the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR).

Policy

Responsibilities of Partner Agencies: Agencies agree to ensure the accuracy of data entered in the HMIS and will take primary responsibility for entering, verifying and correcting data entry pertaining to the HMIS Data Elements, shown below with standards for completeness. For a complete list, rationale, and guidance on collection of each data element, please refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

The Partner Agency's designated HMIS Administrator will perform routine data quality assurance procedures including, but not limited to, the tasks outlined in this document. Any errors or updates related to client records and bed occupancy will be corrected by the Agency. HMIS Administrators will maintain ongoing communication with members of the CHMIS staff within the Planning and Development office, in alignment with monthly or quarterly deadlines as well as follow-ups when determined corrections are needed.

Data Entry: All client Date of Birth Information will be entered as provided by the client or their parent/guardian, or user will provide the best estimate of birth year using 01/01 for month and day. If a client is currently fleeing domestic violence, the user will follow the guidance found on <http://cambridgecoc.org/hmis/training-guides-and-manuals/> for the protocol to enter de-identified data.

If the Social Security number is not known or not provided, the user shall enter all 0's and choose the SSN data quality response accordingly. If only the last four digits of the SSN are known, the user shall enter five 0s and then the last four digits.

City of Cambridge

Homeless Management Information System (CHMIS)

Emergency Solutions Grantees (ESG) using Clarity HMIS must record services that track providers' referrals to clients for mainstream benefits and other service linkages.

All ESG funded Shelters (using a night-by-night method of tracking) and Street Outreach projects must adhere to a workflow that includes recording of Contacts and dates of Engagements according to the [HUD Data Standards](#).

Eligibility: Users must only use HMIS to enter data on individuals and families that are eligible to receive services under their grant agreement. For example, street outreach projects should not create enrollment records for individuals who have a nighttime residence. Data entered should be compatible with the type of program and clients it is intended to serve.

Timeliness: All Emergency Shelter projects using the night by night data collection method must enter bed stay and contact service data no later than the following business day after the transaction occurred. All Street Outreach projects must enter the contact service data no later than the following business day after the transaction occurred. All other projects, regardless of type, must complete entry/exit data no later than the 5th business day after the actual date that the enrollment or exit occurred. As Clarity HMIS is used to track housing vacancies, data entry must be prioritized to reflect actual coverage and vacancies.

PSH, TH, and RRH Programs

Data Element	Applies to:	% Error Rate Should Not Exceed
Name (3.1)	All clients	5%
SSN (3.2)	All clients	10%
Date of Birth (3.3)	All clients	5%
Race (3.4)	All clients	10%
Ethnicity (3.5)	All clients	5%
Gender (3.6)	All clients	5%
Veteran Status (3.7)	All clients	5%
Disabling Condition (3.8)	All clients	5%
Income Sources (4.2) at entry	Adults & HoH	5%
Income and Sources (4.2) at annual assessment	Adults & HoH	5%
Income Sources (4.2) at exit	Adults & HoH leavers	5%
Living Situation (3.917) series of elements	HoH and other adults in HH	5%
Destination (3.12)	All clients	5%

City of Cambridge

Homeless Management Information System (CHMIS)

Street Outreach* and Emergency Shelter Programs

Data Element	Applies to:	% Error Rate or % Unable to Calculate Should Not Exceed
Name (3.1)	All clients	10%
SSN (3.2)	All clients	n/a
Date of Birth (3.3)	All clients	5%
Race (3.4)	All clients	10%
Ethnicity (3.5)	All clients	5%
Gender (3.6)	All clients	5%
Veteran Status (3.7)	All clients	5%
Disabling Condition (3.8)	All clients	5%
Income Sources (4.2) at entry	Adults & HoH	5%
Income and Sources (4.2) at annual assessment	Adults & HoH	5%
Income Sources (4.2) at exit	Adults & HoH leavers	5%
Living Situation (3.917) series of elements	HoH and other adults in HH	5%
Destination (3.12)	All clients	30%

*Current HUD specifications maintain the universe of clients for Street Outreach project reporting is limited to only client records with an engagement date. The expectation is that all client records with engagement dates will have data quality that can meet the established benchmarks.

Procedure

The Partner Agency HMIS Administrator will perform regular data quality checks on the Partner Agency's programs within HMIS. Any trends of error must be corrected. The HMIS Administrator will send a copy of the HMIS Data Quality Report by the 15th day of the month (or the following business day if the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday) to Laura Vitagliano (lvitagliano@cambridgema.gov) in Planning and Development, Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP). See the schedule below for frequency.

Tasks should be completed by the HMIS Agency Administrator in advance of the 15th of the month in anticipation of time needed for updates and/or corrections.

Task Schedule	All PSH, TH, Prevention and RRH Projects	All Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach Projects
Run the <i>HMIS Data Quality Report</i> for each participating project in your agency	Quarterly	Monthly

City of Cambridge

Homeless Management Information System (CHMIS)

Task Schedule	All PSH, TH, Prevention and RRH Projects	All Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach Projects
Review each HMIS DQ report and verify that missing data does not exceed thresholds	Quarterly	Monthly
If applicable, correct missing data to be \leq or applicable benchmark	Quarterly	Monthly
Run the Housing Census (HSG-101 in Clarity) or Bed Registry -- Shelter View report (in ETO)	N/A	Monthly (night by night shelters only)
Submit final version of HMIS Data Quality report to Laura Vitagliano in Planning and Development (lvitagliano@cambridgema.gov)	Quarterly (due dates are July 15, October 15, January 15, April 15 th)	Monthly (due the 15 th of each month)

It is strongly recommended that Agency HMIS Administrators and/or Program Managers additionally run one or more of the following reports on a regular basis to identify other data quality issues and distribute relevant reports to staff tasked with improving data quality and completeness.

- DQXX-103 - Monthly Staff Report (Clarity users)
- DQXX-102 - Program Data Review (Clarity users)
- Data Quality Scorecard (ETO/homelessdata.com users)
- HUD APR (CoC funded projects)
- HUD ESG CAPER (ESG funded projects)

Data Accuracy: Whenever possible, HMIS users should enter client data directly into HMIS as this greatly reduces the potential for error. If this is not feasible, the HMIS Administrator should ensure that paper forms reflect the most up-to-date HMIS Data Standards for the respective program type. The most up-to-date forms for data collection can be found at <http://cambridgecoc.org/client-forms/>. Under no circumstances should HMIS data be collected through a client's self-completion of an intake form.

Correction Plans: If benchmark is not met when submitting report to DHSP, Agency Administrator will complete a DQ correction plan form and will submit this with report via email. The correction results should be submitted on or before the next due date of the following month or quarter (depending on program type/schedule). If error rates are high respective to Name, DOB, and SSN elements due to clients who are fleeing domestic violence, this should be noted on the form or related to DHSP staff.

City of Cambridge

Homeless Management Information System (CHMIS)

Compliance: If HMIS Site Administrators are not compliant in submitting reports and/or do not follow through on needed corrections, this will be reported to their Grant Manager as a compliance issue.