COVID-19 and Data Collection Resources for Your Community

April 21, 2020
Housekeeping & Announcements

• All attendees are on mute. The Zoom Chat function has been disabled. Please enter your questions in the Zoom Q&A box.


• Join the Ending Homelessness Forum - https://forum.endhomelessness.org/login
Welcome to the COVID-19 Data Collection Webinar

• On the Call Today:
  • Joy Moses, National Alliance to End Homelessness
  • Fran Ledger, US Department of Housing and Urban Development
  • Dan Treglia, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania’s School of Social Policy and Practice
  • Matt Simmonds, Simtech Solutions
Agenda

• Why COVID-19 Data Collection is important
• Federal Waivers and Data Sharing
• Data Collection and Usage
• Using Mobile Data Collection Tools
Why Collecting Data on COVID-19 Is Important

• Public health planning for both sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness
• Preparing for public and private funding opportunities
• Understanding racial disparities and advancing race equity goals
• Research—preparing for a possible next wave of COVID-19 or similar crisis, informing best practices on how to quickly house people
HUD Update

• CARES Act funding includes $4 billion for the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program

• Certain regulatory waivers are available for the Continuum of Care (CoC) and ESG Programs

• Upcoming Office Hours:
  • 4/24 (2:30-4pm EDT) – Regular Weekly Q&A
Mega Waiver & HMIS

ESG Program

*HMIS Lead Activities*

**Requirement:** the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 24 CFR 576.107(a)(2) authorizes the use of ESG funds for managing and operating the HMIS (e.g., hosting and maintaining HMIS software or data, upgrading, customizing, and enhancing the HMIS), only where the ESG recipient is the HMIS Lead, as designated by the CoC.

**Waiver:** The condition that the recipient must be the HMIS Lead to pay costs under is waived to the extent necessary to allow any recipient to use ESG funds to pay costs of upgrading or enhancing its local HMIS to incorporate data on ESG Program participants and ESG activities related to COVID-19.

**Potential HMIS Impact:** Additional enhancements or upgrades added by various recipients.
Prioritize Your COVID-19 Response

• SNAPS understands your #1 priority right now is responding to COVID-19

• HUD will take into account the need for COVID response when considering performance metrics, subrecipient monitoring, governance, and future HUD monitoring and CoC Competitions;

• CoCs are encouraged to be as flexible as possible when thinking through their local competition metrics.
Balancing Priorities During a Crisis Response

• National Data Collection Efforts
  • ESG-CV and other federal CARES Act funding
• Local Data Collection Efforts
  • Including FEMA funded Non-Congregate Shelter
• Data Sharing Considerations
Data Sharing (disclosure) guidance

• HMIS Security & Privacy Standards have primary provisions to support data disclosure:
  • Disclosures required by law
  • Disclosures to avert a serious threat to health or safety if
    • The CHO, in good faith, believes the use or disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of an individual or the public; AND
    • The use or disclosure is made to a person reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat, including the target of the threat.
Data Sharing Limitations

• If Public Health Agency does not seek or require participant PPI, then PPI should not be disclosed.

• If it is sufficient to give adequate notice to a Health Care Provider without disclosing PPI of one or more participants, then it would be appropriate not to disclose PPI.

• Do not send a list of all infected participants to a provider if only one person is being referred.
Privacy Notice Updates

• If you find your Privacy Notice isn’t up-to-date, you may update it at any time.
• Any changes made to Privacy Notices can be retroactive.
• Privacy Notices can be more restrictive, but not less restrictive, than HUD Privacy Standards.
• The ability to change a privacy notice is not unlimited.
• The notice must still meet all the requirements of the HMIS Privacy and Security Standards.
Resources for CoCs and Homeless Assistance Providers on the HUD Exchange

• Infectious Disease Prevention & Response page on HUD Exchange
• COVID-19 HMIS Resources
• Submit a question on the HUD Exchange Ask-A-Question (AAQ) Portal
• Additional resources being developed on:
  • Making strategic investments with CARES Act ESG funding
  • Coordinated Entry in the context of COVID-19 response

Check back regularly for new posts!
Homelessness & COVID-19
Data Collection & Usage

Dan Treglia, PhD
School of Social Policy & Practice
University of Pennsylvania

April 21, 2020
Understanding Data Collection across the U.S.

- Surveying of People Experiencing Homelessness: Symptoms and more
- Where is Everyone? Isolation Sites & HMIS
- Managing gaps in data exchanges between health & homelessness systems
- Community Responses
Surveying: COVID-19 Symptoms

COVID-19 Shelter Client Triage Screening Tool

Date of Interview

1. Do you have a fever? Yes ___ No ___
2. Do you have a cough? Yes ___ No ___
3. Are you experiencing shortness of breath? Yes ___ No ___
4. Are you over 55 years of age? Yes ___ No ___

If client answers YES to Question 1-3, they should be masked and isolate.

If client answers yes to Questions 1-4, they should be transported to the hospital for testing.

5. Do you have diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, lung disease or any immunosuppressant illnesses? Yes ___ No ___

If client answers YES to 1-3 and has a YES for 5, they should be transported to the hospital for testing.
Surveying: COVID-19 Service Needs

- Current sleeping conditions
- New (COVID-19 Related) Resource Gaps
- Access to hygiene supplies

COVID19: Homeless Needs Form

Note to survey administrator: You do not need to ask the questions word-for-word, just let people talk and probe when necessary. If the person has been asked these questions before by someone else, please stop and refresh.

Source: Human.nyc
### Surveying: Understanding Encampment Conditions

- **Conditions of the Encampment**
- **Social Distancing**
- **Need for Additional Facilities & Resources**

#### ENCAPMENT INFORMATION

1. Approximately how many people live in this encampment? ____
2. How many sleep structures are in the encampment? ____
3. Provide an estimate of the number of individuals living in the encampment by age group:
   - Under 5____, 5-12____, 13-17____, 18____, 18-24____, 25-34____, 35-44____, 45-64____, 65+____
4. Have residents been informed of COVID-19? □ Yes □ No
5. Is there information about COVID posted at the encampment? □ Yes □ No
6. Is anyone at the encampment experiencing symptoms of Coronavirus? □ Yes □ No
7. Are sleeping structures safely separated from one another? □ Yes □ No
8. Is there a current process to separate people that are sick from the rest of the camp? □ Yes □ No
9. Is there a current process to clean communal spaces? □ Yes □ No
10. Are there sanitation supplies available to residents (bleach, wipes, sanitizer, etc)? □ Yes □ No
11. Does this encampment receive regular outreach and engagement? □ Yes □ No
   
   **11A. (If Yes) From which agency?**

12. Does this encampment receive regular outreach from medical providers and harm reduction supplies? □ Yes □ No
   
   **12A. (If Yes) From which provider?**

13. Is there a place to safely dispose of sharps or other bio-medical paraphernalia? □ Yes □ No

14. What resources are needed to help residents shelter in place? (Check all that apply)
   - □ Food
   - □ Water
   - □ Shower
   - □ Toilet
   - □ Wash Station
   - □ Phone Charging
   - □ Trash Disposal
   - □ Toiletries
   - □ Pet Supplies
   - □ Cleaning Supplies
   - □ Laundry
   - □ Face Masks
   - □ Hand Sanitizer
   - □ Other ______

15. NOTES: ________

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[Logo: National Alliance to End Homelessness]
A Role for Mobile Tech

• Surveys could be distributed through SMS

• Surveys could be administered through outreach handheld devices
  • When integrated with other systems, could allow for direct triage and entry into HMIS

https://www.csh.org/resources/covid-19-resident-self-advocacy-form/
Collecting Data in HMIS

- Data collection tools being provided by HMIS leads
- The extent to which fields are being populated is unclear
- Some level of discomfort given question types
HMIS Data Collection -> Situational Awareness

- How are Pos. Cases & Use of Isolation Sites Changing on a Daily/Weekly Basis?

- Useful tools to put changes in front of policymakers and organizational executives

Source: Wellsky
Where Is Everyone?: Systemic Disconnects

• Isolation Sites May Not Be Connected to HMIS

• Complete separation between HMIS & isolation beds

• Separation based on whether an individual entered through homeless services
Homelessness & Healthcare Data Exchanges

• Understanding COVID-19 spread

• Coordinating services and medication

• CSH Resident Self-Advocacy

https://www.csh.org/resources/covid-19-resident-self-advocacy-form/
Community Responses

• Low Understanding of How Communities are Responding to this Crisis

• Reports are Local & Anecdotal

• Forthcoming Survey From NAEH: Be Prepared
Documenting the Strain on Your Organization

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)’s Budget & Expenses Tracker

- Track and manage resources that (a) document COVID-19’s impact and (b) may be used for reimbursement

https://www.csh.org/resources/covid-19-budget-expense-tracker/
Planning additional response: Estimating capacity need

- Can toggle:
  - Infection rates
  - Unsheltered undercount
  - % High Risk for COVID-19 complications
  - Annual turnover
- Will provide capacity needs by COVID-19 and risk status

https://tomhbyrne.shinyapps.io/covid19_homeless_dashboard/
Contact Info

dtreglia@upenn.edu
Mobile Tech for Outreach & Point in Time Counts

By Name Lists managed through a coordinated “Housing Hub” in Gulfport, MS.

Mobile apps deliver better data on homelessness

560 County Employees Volunteer for Point-In-Time Count

GCN – Mobile Apps Deliver Better Data on Homelessness
Regional
Command Center

• Real-Time Data Collection
• Custom Surveys
• Conditional Logic
• Geo-Spatial Reporting
• Region Management
• Count Team Management
• Volunteer Registration
• Volunteer Quotas
• HUD-Compliant Reports

Source: PointInTime.info
GPS-Enabled PIT Data Supports Shelter-in-Place

• The Counting Us mobile app was used by over 2100 volunteers to conduct surveys and gather observation tallies throughout San Diego county on 1/27/2020.

• The GPS coordinates of these surveys were provided to the County to support the placement of 66 handwashing stations in areas of high concentration.

Source: County News Center, March 9, 2020
Using GIS and Geo-Spatial Reporting to Curb Outbreaks

Capture Date, Time, and Location

“Patient Zero” Reporting to identify people who were in the same place at the same time

Follow up and monitor

Quarantine and treat as needed
The Triage Process

• Requires housing/shelter options to separate people as needed

• Requires screening mechanism(s) to support the decision of who to send where
Identify the Vulnerable / High Risk Populations

- Filters within prioritized “By Name Lists” within HMIS, a data warehouse, and/or a regional command center that receives data from the PIT counts can be used to identify highly vulnerable populations.

![Basic Filters](image-url)

<table>
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<th>Response Type:</th>
<th>Individual or Household:</th>
<th>Veteran:</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Age Range: 62 and over</td>
<td>Race:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey:</td>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>Disability: Chronic Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Health and Wellness Screening

Survey questions were informed by the following:

- Interim Guidance for People Experiencing Homelessness from the CDC,
- COVID-19 HMIS Setup and Data Sharing Practices from HUD,
- COVID-19 Client Triage Tool from Atlanta, GA
- Healthcare professionals focused on caring for people experiencing homelessness
- Feedback surveys

Surveys can be field tested by downloading the Counting Us app, registering an account, and entering in the setup key of “StayHealthy”.

The tech is being offered, for FREE, for six months to regions who could benefit from a screening tool. Only ask in return is that the data be made available for research purposes so that we can improve our collective understanding of COVID-19 amongst the homeless population.
Health & Wellness Screening

- Health and Wellness Assessment
- Health and Wellness Assessment (Brief Version)
CDC Guidance on Encampments

Prevention measures

Encampments:

- Unless individual housing units are available, do not clear encampments during community spread of COVID-19. Clearing encampments can cause people to disperse throughout the community and break connections with service providers. This increases the potential for infectious disease spread.

- Encourage people staying in encampments to set up their tents/sleeping quarters with at least 12 feet x 12 feet of space per individual.

- Ensure nearby restroom facilities have functional water taps, are stocked with hand hygiene materials (soap, drying materials) and bath tissue, and remain open to people experiencing homelessness 24 hours per day.

- If toilets or handwashing facilities are not available nearby, provide access to portable latrines with handwashing facilities for encampments of more than 10 people.

Source: Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) among People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
Encampment Screening Tool

The Encampment Screening Tool helps ensure that basic human needs are being met for those who are sheltering in place.

This survey was shaped by:

- The CDC guidance;
- This survey instrument from King County;
- HUD guidance on Protecting the Health and Well-being of People in Encampments During an Infectious Disease Outbreak.

ENCAMPMENT INFORMATION

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   □ Phone Charging  □ Trash Disposal  □ Toiletries  □ Pet Supplies  □ Cleaning Supplies
   □ Laundry  □ Face Masks  □ Hand Sanitizer  □ Other: __________

15. NOTES:
• Regions and Teams can be established to help divide and conquer
COVID-19 Specific Refinements

Custom Filters for New Questions

• Supports the triage approach by filtering the list of active clients to identify those with symptoms, by COVID test results, by those who want to shelter in place, etc.

• Can be refined based on local circumstances. For example, if thermometers are not available then don’t ask for a temp. Instead ask if the person is believed to have a fever.
COVID-19 Specific Enhancements

- Customizable tags can be applied to each incoming survey record to help manage the process.
- Surveys can then be filtered by these tags.
- Surveys can be archived once referral is made to shelter or hotel project set up in HMIS.
Amazon Glue is used to identify duplicate surveys. This enables multiple Health & Wellness checks to be conducted for the same person over time, and to link these surveys together to create a longitudinal picture.
More Details & Contact Info

More Details
Sample surveys and details on the approach can be found at http://pointintime.info/covid-19/

Regions interested in using the tech can email helpdesk@SimtechSolutions.com

Contact Info
Matt Simmonds
Matt@SimtechSolutions.com
Thank You For Attending the Webinar


• Join the Ending Homelessness Forum - https://forum.endhomelessness.org/login