Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Data

HMIS Beyond Data Collection

Updated 10/16
Learning Goals

• Learn Privacy and Security Requirements
• Understand the extent of HMIS usage throughout the VA system
• Understand the role of your CoC and the importance of CoC coordination
• Learn how data is collected and reported when serving multiple HMIS implementations
• Learn how to use data to improve your program and benefit your participants
Goals of HMIS

• Produce an unduplicated count of homeless persons for each Continuum of Care
• Understand the extent and nature of homelessness locally, regionally, and nationally
• Understand patterns of service use
• Measure project effectiveness
VA Participation in HMIS

• The utility of HMIS data at the local level depends on participation by all projects that serve people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness, regardless of funding source.

• VA is committed to grantee participation in HMIS to support community-based service planning and coordination for Veterans who are homeless and at risk of homelessness.

• VAMC staff can access HMIS through direct-entry or read-only access, as stated in national guidance.
HMIS participation with other VA programs

• The VA released guidance in 2015 to all VA-funded homeless assistance providers regarding their access to HMIS for VA staff

• HUD-VASH and GPD projects - encouraged to contribute data to HMIS, but currently not required.

• Program specific guidance on HMIS participation of Grant and Per Diem Programs, VA Community Contract Beds, HUD-VASH and SSVF
SSVF Data in Context

National SSVF Program

Local Continuum of Care

Your SSVF Project

Client
Working with multiple HMIS Implementations

If your project operates within the jurisdictions of multiple HMIS implementations; your project has two options:

1. Enter client data into each CoC’s HMIS implementation where the client resides, OR

2. Select a single HMIS for purposes of data collection and reporting and provide an export of client-level data to each HMIS implementation*

*See VA Data Guide for more information.
Security & Privacy Standards

- What data needs to be protected?
- How should it be protected?
- Who do the standards apply to?
- Where is the full list of privacy and security standards located?

HUD 2004 Data & Technical Standards

- Communities are expected to continue to use the 2004 Notice to implement their HMIS.
- HUD is in the process of finalizing draft notices on HMIS Governance, HMIS Privacy & Security and HMIS Data Quality and Functionality that will be released later this year for public comment.
Security & Privacy: Minimum Standards

• Comply with other federal, state, and local confidentiality law
• Comply with limits to data collection (relevant, appropriate, lawful, specified in privacy notice)
• Have written privacy policy, which must be posted it on your web site
• Post sign at intake or comparable location with general reasons for collection and reference to privacy policy
• May infer consent for uses in the posted sign and written privacy policy*

*See VA Data Guide for sample notification (consent) form
SSVF Data Security Policy

It is the responsibility of the grantee to take precautions to protect client information for all persons served; this applies to both hard copies and electronic data.

- Protect computers with identifying information with a username and password
- Don’t share or write down passwords
- Log out or lock computer when away from desk
- Do not e-mail exported files
Additional Security Measures for Sensitive Data

If there is reason to believe that the abuser of a victim of domestic violence has access to HMIS data, the grantee can:

• Contact their regional coordinator, who will help to develop a plan to enter data without compromising the participant’s safety.

• It may be appropriate to delay data entry until after the participant has been discharged.

• If your HMIS tracks addresses and employers, opt out of these elements for these participants.
Grantee Roles and Responsibilities:

The SSVF Grantee is responsible for all activity associated with agency staff and use of the HMIS.

- CoC Participation
- HMIS Participation and Governance Compliance
- Privacy and Security Compliance
- HMIS Policy and Procedure Compliance
- Data Quality Compliance
- Community Planning/Use of Data

Continuum of Care (CoC)

- What is it?
- How does it function in the community?
- How does SSVF fit in?
- Why is CoC collaboration and coordination so important?
CoC Coordination

- Coordinated Entry
- Coordinate Referrals
- Master/By-Name Lists of Homeless Veterans
- Homeless Point-in-Time Count
- Housing Inventory Count
- Annual Homeless Assessment Report
Make Data Work for You!

Data can be used for more than submitting reports for funders. Using SSVF Monthly Grantee Reports and local HMIS reports, your project can use HMIS to:

- Measure program outcomes
- Obtain and track follow-up information
- Target specific populations
- Determine appropriate staffing levels
- Determine appropriate level of services needed
Other Resources

• VA Data Guide
  http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/program_requirements/hmis_and_data

• 2014 HMIS Data Standards Manual v 5.1 *(for CoC’s, HMIS Lead Agencies, HMIS System Administrators and users)* & Data Dictionary v 5.1 *(for HMIS Vendors and System Administrators)* – most recent version

• HUD Exchange  https://www.hudexchange.info/