

Developing a Data Monitoring Tool to Measure System Health

Maureen Brewer, City of Boise

Alissa Parrish, ICA

Mike Lindsay, ICF



**Increasing Capacity &
Building Connections:
Bridging to the Future**



Introduction

- Who are we?
- Why here and why now?
- What do we want to explain?

Why did you choose this session to attend?



National Perspective

- Moving from a program based perspective to a systems approach
- Utilizing HMIS as a valuable planning and strategic tool and not simply a requirement
- Dashboard vs. System Monitoring/Evaluation Tool
- Importance of strong partnerships and relationships
- CoC Board and stakeholder buy-in and involvement



How did we get here?

- We wanted to understand our system
- We wanted to use data to make informed decisions
- Growing interest (and skepticism) in the community
- Formula for the perfect storm



How did the conversation start?

- CoC and HMIS Lead talked about what the CoC wanted
- HMIS Lead started to review the data in HMIS
- Together, set out to map our system
- Didn't know what we didn't know
- Wanted to see if what we thought we knew was held up by data (or not)



What did we care about?

- System capacity
 - How many people access the system?*
 - How many access for the first time?
 - How many are placed using a prioritized resource?
 - How many referrals are we making in a given timeframe?

*Least important to us right now



What did we care about?

- Speed
 - How fast are we housing people?
 - If we prioritized them, why did it take so long?
- Returns
 - How many come back?
 - Especially among those that we prioritized for a resource



What were our results?

- BCAC Monitoring Tool (HUGE, includes a ton of information)
- OPH Monitoring Tool (Specific to Coordinated Entry, again HUGE)
- 60-day views of OPH (“snapshots”)
- 2018 System Timeline
- 2018 “Fact Sheet”

More, lots of different pieces



Mind shift

- HMIS Leads are used to thinking at different levels
 - Project level
 - Organization level
 - System level



But this was more than that

- Working with the CoC to develop a suite of tools that monitors the homeless services system on an ongoing basis required a different type of systemwide perspective
 - How do the pieces interact with each other
 - Based on our specific system, what is most important to monitor
 - What do we care about
 - What don't we care about
 - How can we report on the pieces we care about and then visualize it



Why did this happen?

- Two stakeholders (CoC & HMIS Lead) were interested and invested and wanted to see this happen
- The working relationship is iterative, interactive, trusting, and strong
 - Allows the dynamic back and forth
 - No hurt feelings
 - Can talk it out
 - Can ask “why” and then think through it



Lessons Learned

- Just start. Name the limitations and move on. And then keep going.
- Iterative, ongoing process
 - Multiple outputs and works in progress
 - Hash and re-hash. Put it down. Does it still make sense?
 - Ask questions. Then ask them again. Then say it one more time.
- Feedback loop
 - Sketch a thing and then bring in select others to test the thing
 - Test it, identify challenges or issues, and then zero in on some things



More Lessons Learned

- Focus on the inflow and outflow not on the # of assessments
 - Most people we have “assessed” to date are not going to get a prioritized resource
 - Fall out is neutral for the time being – who came back?
 - What kind of opportunity do we have?
- Look at the numbers to see trends, not absolutes
- Know your audience
 - This is for us, not the public



System Monitoring Tools

Wanna see?
Let's look at a couple



Conclusion



Thanks!

Maureen Brewer
Boise City / Ada County
CoC Program Manager

mbrewer@cityofboise.org

Alissa Parrish
ICA
HMIS Program Manager

[alissa.parrish@icalliances
.org](mailto:alissa.parrish@icalliances.org)

Mike Lindsay
ICF
Senior Manager

michael.lindsay@icf.com