Ohio Human Services Data Warehouse

Statewide Data Consolidation | Reporting | Creating Linkages

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Photo courtesy of Access, Inc. of Akron, Ohio

THE DATA WAREHOUSE

⊙ WHAT IS A DATA WAREHOUSE?

Data warehousing is the consolidation of multiple data sources into one centralized database to report both a regional and statewide picture of poverty without disrupting the day-to-day operations of contributing systems.

The vision of the Ohio Human Services Data Warehouse (OHSDW) is to strengthen collaborative efforts to develop a statewide comprehensive strategy, alleviate the interrelated issues of poverty through the analysis of cross-system data related to homelessness and at-risk populations.

Beginning with a collaboration of all homeless Continuums of Care (CoC) and their respective Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS), OHSDW will provide a single integrated source of information to respond to state and local needs on issues related to poverty. Additionally, this collaborative needs to expand to cross-system data sources necessary to develop a holistic picture of homelessness in Ohio furnishing reliable, comprehensive data to inform state, regional, and local plans and improve coordination, policy making and resource allocation.

⊙ STATE AGENCY PARTICIPATION

The Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA), OHFA and the OHSDW Steering Committee will work with other state agencies to develop a data use protocol to match individual level data with HMIS information. Participating state agencies will seek sustainable funding sources to provide for ongoing management of the data warehouse.

Benefits of Participation

- Identify cross-system use of services, analyze trends, identify mobility patterns, and assess the impact of investments in housing and human services to inform funding and policy decisions on the state and local levels
- Facilitate the identification of system gaps and opportunities for cross-system collaboration
- Use data to educate the public, elected officials, and other policy makers on the cross-system issues that affect the stability of households and communities
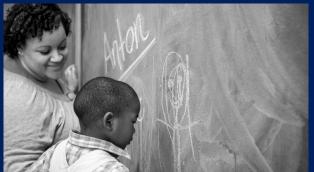
⊙ PLANNING

OHSDW is a multi-year project involving coordination and collaboration among participating Ohio CoCs and state agencies. The planning and implementation processes to develop a data warehouse are described below.

- Foster collaborative partnerships
- Identify partner roles
- Develop governance and guiding principals
- Define project vision and goals, including a timeline for bringing other state agencies on board
- Develop policies and procedures
- Determine programmatic and technical requirements
- Define universal data elements
- Design export procedures (data preparation and transmission)
- Develop warehouse platform, server structure, and establish security protocols

⊙ IMPLEMENTATION

⊙ CONTINUUM OF CARE PARTICIPATION

Participation in the data warehouse is completely voluntary. Each Ohio CoC is invited to participate on the Ohio Data Warehouse Steering Committee to oversee the planning and implementation of the data warehouse.

Participating CoCs will export their HMIS data to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency's (OHFA) Office of Affordable Housing Research, in CSV or XML format. The data elements to be exported will be similar to what CoCs have already sent to HUD. The data warehouse will not change any data collection activities by the CoC. Day-to-day operations of HMIS will not be disrupted and all current systems for data reporting and technical assistance for HMIS operation will remain unchanged.

Photo courtesy of Access, Inc. of Akron, Ohio

⊙ OHIO HUMAN SERVICES DATA WAREHOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE

An OHSDW Steering Committee has been established to oversee the planning and implementation of the data warehouse. Members of the committee will represent all participating CoCs, state agencies and other relevant stakeholders. For example, the steering committee will guide the development of:

- Participation protocols
- Data use and privacy agreements
- Frequency of data upload
- Type of data included in the warehouse
- Analyses and reporting protocols

⊙ FUNDING

ODSA and OHFA are collaborating with each CoC as well as other state agencies and stakeholders on the development of the OHSDW. Funding was received through a $200,000 grant from ODSA and $100,000 in matching funds approved by the OHFA Board.

⊙ PROTECTING CLIENT DATA

Maintaining the privacy and security of the client data obtained in the OHSDW is the highest priority during the development and implementation of this project. OHSDW will observe all HMIS, HIPAA, and local, state and federal privacy and security policies. Additionally, a steering committee including local CoCs, HMIS administrators and agencies will be created to establish privacy and security policies to guide the implementation of the data warehouse. OHSDW will be physically housed at OHFA. The database platform will include the following security features in addition to adherence to all local, state and federal security policies:

- Secure Socket Layer (SSL–128 bit) encryption during data transmission
- Database firewall
- Backup server

STATEWIDE DATA CONSOLIDATION

Strengthen collaborative efforts by merging information from multiple state agencies and local homeless service providers to develop a more comprehensive strategy toward ending homelessness, based on the full myriad of factors contributing to the issue, including accessibility to health care, housing and behavioral health services.

REPORTING

Greater consistency in reporting, comprehensive analysis of statewide trends, and assistance to identify housing and service gaps.

CREATING LINKAGES

The data warehouse will serve multiple purposes including, but not limited to, obtaining unduplicated regional counts of homeless persons; identifying the prevalence of chronic homelessness; understanding client movement across continuum boundaries; and developing a statewide picture of poverty.

CONTACT US

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