

DATA POINTS

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Thank You!!

The HMIS Team would like to take a moment to recognize the hard work that you have done. In the third quarter of 2016, you have enrolled over **2,891 individuals** into programs throughout the Spokane Area. We can't truly quantify the impact that you have made on those lives, but know that your work is appreciated.

Program Spotlight: Volunteers Of America: Marilee Apartments

Volunteers of America opened the Marilee Apartments this past summer in conjunction with Catholic Charities Buder Haven. This beautiful facility is named after former president and CEO Marilee Roloff. The Marilee has 50 permanent housing units, both studio and one bedroom floor plans. There is also a common area for tenants to relax and enjoy.

The Marilee follows the Housing First model. This model primarily consists of getting individuals housed first, before addressing any barriers that they might be facing. A social worker is on-site to assist with needed services. Being on-site allows the social worker to develop a stronger rapport with the residents. There has already been an estimated savings of \$5,200 per month in the community. When the residents who were previously accessing emergency services of a fairly regular basis are stably housed their needs can be met through the Marilee Apartments.

Of course both the buildings have rules for behavior. The residents need to keep up their apartments and can't be disruptive to neighbors. Tenants must qualify based on their history of homelessness and other factors like the presence of physical or mental health conditions. They can be required to pay 30% of their gross income in rent. There isn't a limit on how long they can be there. After a year at either facility, tenants qualify for a low-income housing voucher, if they wanted to move elsewhere.

Volunteers Of America: Marilee Apartments, continued

Construction of the Marilee Apartments and Buder Haven was designed to be more durable and focuses on safety as well as economy. The units combine form and function perfectly. Durable counter tops and timed stovetop elements in each unit's kitchen will limit wear and tear and help prevent unnecessary accidents. The bathrooms have stand up showers and in floor drains to avoid flooding. There are specific units to accommodate physical challenges as well, with lower appliances and counter tops.

Volunteers of America like the rest of the CoC has worked tirelessly to assist the homeless in our community. The Marilee has become a physical representation of that journey. It represents, not only the definition of charity, but

a charity of spirit. Giving a home to those who need it, and doing it with respect and care. The residents aren't only finding a place to call home, but hope.

Both the Marilee and Buder Haven are in need of donations. The staff at each facility put together a welcome package for each new resident. They try to provide an array of necessities that will make the resident's transition into the facility smoother. Often the new tenants are coming from situations where they didn't have any pots, dishes or cooking utensils for the kitchen. Towels, bedding and blankets are needed as well. If you or someone you know would like to donate, please contact either Volunteers of America or Catholic Charities directly.



HMIS Fall Series

The new line up of trainings for the HMIS Fall Series is now posted on the HMIS website. Once again we are offering a wide variety of trainings to reaffirm your basic skills or take you to the next level. This is a great opportunity to learn how to expand your knowledge base and the reporting capabilities of HIMS. Check out the remainder of HMIS Fall Series and get registered.

We are looking for your feedback as well. What have you thought of the training opportunities so far? Are there any topics that you would like to see that we haven't offered yet? Has the schedule been accessible enough, would different days or times work better? Do you like the webinars, or do you like in person better? Is there a certain topic that works better as an online training as opposed to in-person? Send us an e-mail at hmis@spokanecity.org and give us your thoughts. The trainings are meant to give you the best HMIS experience possible. We are here to help.



NEW! Data Standard Version 5.1

There were some changes to your local HMIS beginning on October 1st! The changes weren't too expansive, so you may not have even noticed. These changes are the result of changes to the HMIS Data Standards initiated by HUD and our other federal partners. The changes are for both the universal data standards as well as some program specific. **The vast majority of the data standard changes pertain to the RHY, PATH, and SSVF, programs.** You are encourage to follow the link to the HMIS website, where a copy of the most current HMIS Data Standards can be obtained. **The month of October will be a transition month to the new standards.** The HMIS Team looks forward to working with each and every one of you as we move to implement the new standards.

You will also find a list of the changes released by HUD on the HMIS website. Review it and note any that may impact your agency or its programs. For those agencies that rely on paper data

collection forms will need to ensure that the forms reflect the changes. The HMIS Team is happy to assist with reviewing paper data collection forms to ensure that they're compliant. As a reminder, no data collection form can be used without approval by the HMIS Program. Those wishing to have their forms reviewed should submit a support request in ClientTrack and attach the pertinent documentation. You will also find data collection forms that are already approved by the HMIS Program on the website. You are free to take those and use them as is or if you need to modify them and once those changes are approved they can be implemented at your agency.

As always we appreciate your patience with this process and your feedback. Many of you have entered support tickets related to the new data standards that have affected many users. With your help we are able to correct mistakes before they become reporting problems.

Annual Homeless Assessment Report

-AHAR-

It is that time of year, the Annual Homeless Assessment Report is due to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) is a report to the U.S. Congress on the extent and nature of homelessness in the United States. It provides counts of people experiencing homelessness and describes their demographic characteristics and service use patterns. The AHAR is based on local data from Point-in-Time (PIT) counts, Housing Inventory Counts (HIC), and Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS).

You may have seen the e-mail or heard from the HMIS Team directly on your participation in the AHAR. Programs will need to verify their data is accurate and complete. Then once that is confirmed by the HMIS Team, we will provide the aggregate data to HUD. There can be a little back and forth, but ultimately the goal is to get the best data quality possible. Our performance on the AHAR has a direct impact on the dollars and level of assistance we can receive when the NOFA comes around.

As always, the HMIS Team appreciates all your hard work. The AHAR is an excellent example of why you collect the data from your clients. Through your diligence in reporting we can show HUD that the Spokane community is making a positive and comprehensive impact on our homeless population.

If you are interested in learning more about the AHAR visit the HMIS website at <https://my.spokanecity.org/chhs/hmis/reports> for a link to the HUD website.

Function Focus: Anonymous Clients

Client safety and security are a priority for the HMIS Team. To that end we want to review the process for making an anonymous (de-identified) client request. All that is needed to de-identify a client record is a support ticket submitted in ClientTrack (HMIS). The request should state that the client in question wishes to have their identifiable information removed. While a reason for the de-identification is helpful, it is **not** required.

The agency placing the de-identification request is required to maintain the ability to track the identity of the record in HMIS. The same data requirements that apply to identified records also apply to de-identified ones as well. That means you're still responsible for whatever data and service tracking stipulated by the funder and project type. One method frequently used is to create a simple Excel spreadsheet that links the Client ID value with the client's name.

The following fields are currently removed with a standard de-identification request:

- Name (Anonymous, Anonymous is used in place of the actual name)
- DOB (an approximate is used in place of the actual value)
- SSN #
- Case Name (for any enrollments)
- Family Name
- Case Notes (we will remove the client's name from any case notes)
- Addresses and Address History



It is incumbent upon the party making the de-identification request to identify other data that needs to be removed or altered to protect a client's identity. HUD has stipulated that certain data elements (e.g. name, SSN, DOB) can clearly be used to identify an individual; however, it is possible that a client could be identified by a combination of data elements evaluated together. It is difficult to define every possible combination of data points that could identify a client, which is why we ask for case worker input.

We don't de-identify singular family members. If one family member is de-identified than all family members are de-identified. If the perpetrator needs to be removed from the family, which should be clearly indicated on the request too. We can also 're-identify' records. This is starting to happen more frequently and is handled the same way as the de-identification request; that is, the agency will submit a support ticket in ClientTrack (HMIS) to re-identify the record. You will need to provide the identifying information that you have on file, if the HMIS Team didn't do the de-identification.

The HMIS Team **prioritizes** de-identification requests, as we recognize the highly sensitive nature of the data and the rights of those that we collect it from. We welcome any questions, concerns, or recommendations that you might have regarding how we can improve system security and the security of the clients who share their stories with us.