

IDIS LIVE

...for the Integrated Disbursement and Information System

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Office of Community Planning and Development

LETTERS BEING MAILED ANNOUNCING DEC. CHANGES TO HOW IDIS COLLECTS RACE/ETHNICITY DATA

HUD Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development Roy A. Bernardi is mailing letters to mayors, county executives, and governors whose jurisdictions receive CPD formula grants. They are being advised about HUD's new data collection requirements for race and ethnicity data mandated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

As described in the October *IDIS Live*, IDIS will be modified this December to give grantees the ability to enter racial/ethnicity data about activity beneficiaries into a new Hispanic ethnicity category and ten racial categories.

IDIS currently collects race/ethnicity data on the following screens:

- CDBG Direct Benefit (MA05/MH55) and the CDBG Displacement screen (MC03/MC53)
- ESG Racial/Ethnic Characteristics (ME07/ME57)
- HOPWA Racial/Ethnic Characteristics (MP12/MP62)
- HOME Rental Completion Characteristic Data (MH13/MH63), Single Address Completion Characteristic Data (MH14/MH64), Multi-Address Characteristic Data (MH13/MH63), and Tenant-Based Rental Setup (MH06/MH56)

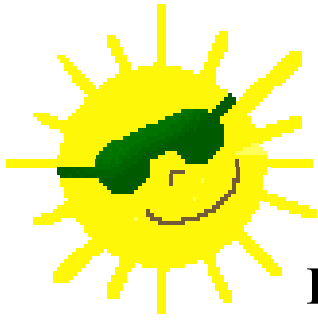
The new screens will be available in IDIS on December 13, 2002 as IDIS Version 7.0.

VERSION 6.9.1 RELEASED OCT. 8 FIXES TWO HOPWA PROBLEMS

Following the release of Version 6.9 on September 27, 2002, the HOPWA Housing Information/Resource ID/Administration screen (CO4MP11) failed to allow a user to enter a dollar amount for Resource ID expenditures. In addition, users sometimes saw an error message after pressing <F8> to save the screen. Effective with Version 6.9.1, users can now enter a dollar amount for Resource ID expenditures. This amount will also appear on the new HOPWA Project Activity Summary report (PR72). Users can now save changes to this screen without any processing errors.

Also, the PR72 report did not list any expenditures for Grantee Sponsor Administration Costs that were listed on the HOPWA Housing Information/Resource ID/Administration screen (CO4MP11). Effective with Version 6.9.1, the report has been modified to provide a separate entry for either Grantee Administration Costs or Grantee Sponsor Administration Costs, whenever the value appears on the CO4MP11 screen.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT...

HOPWA PERFORMANCE SHOWS PROGRAM SUCCEEDS IN MEETING HOUSING NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH HIV/AIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

IDIS Live recently interviewed David Vos, Director of HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing. This month's "In the Spotlight" presents an edited excerpt of that interview, organized by topic.

MEASURING THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR HOPWA ACTIVITIES

The provision of safe, decent and affordable housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families is the heart of the HOPWA program — and a vital base for our clients in accessing other needed care. Our recipients must be able to show what has been accomplished each year in addressing the central housing mission of this Federal program. When the HOPWA program was established in 1992, HUD began our collaboration with the States and localities to create new housing resources and to maintain and enhance existing housing efforts for this special needs population.

In 1994, HUD issued the standard HOPWA performance requirements that have remained essentially the same to today. At that time, all formula grantees were required to prepare and submit to HUD an Annual Progress Report (APR), the same report that is in current use by our competitive grantees. Under the information technology systems that implement the Consolidated Plan process, formula grantees are no longer required to submit a paper APR, though many still find that it is a useful tool that they use with their project sponsors to obtain annual data on the sponsor's accomplishments. Some also submit the APR as an optional report to their communities and to HUD to communicate their annual accomplishments.

Formula grantees now use IDIS to access funds and to provide HUD with the required performance data. Together with the analysis of this performance in the annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), HOPWA recipients are demonstrating a great record of accomplishments using funds to support over 63,000 households in the last program year.

Yet more can be done to improve the quality and use of this data. HUD recognizes that the HOPWA formula program operates differently from the competitive program, and formula recipients have great latitude to design their local programs. In the competitive program, HUD creates standard national criteria and specifies the elements in our application form that are filled out by our applicants. HUD's process is specific and the proposals that are more responsive to the published criteria will be the ones that are selected for a grant award. Those selected are the best at clearly stating what the applicant is going to do, how they are going to do it, and what they are going to accomplish. Under these objectives, HUD makes use of their performance information.

The formula program relies on the local community to do the needs assessment, undertake consultations and planning steps, to issue any local or State request for proposal (RFP), and to select qualified providers. While this would be done through the local grant processes, HUD does not see this preparation. The Department is provided the elements of the community's Consolidated Plan, which serves as the larger vision for the community about carrying out eligible activities within a strategy and through approved projects. Without the annual reports from these projects, this collaboration is incomplete.

All of our Federal programs are required to evidence results under the Governmental Performance and Results Act (GPRA). As we consider how to deploy future Federal resources, it is increasingly important that all of us can prove our record in making good use of current and past resources. We must show that this program is accomplishing its central mission — the establishment of housing support to low-income persons with HIV/AIDS and their families.

To obtain this basic information, our grantees need to focus on how much housing assistance has been provided through the HOPWA formula program during their operating year. All the other information IDIS asks for relates to this central number. If you know how many people you have in housing, then

you know the population of people you need to collect demographic information about. For example, what are the incomes of these families as they come into the housing? What housing situation did they have when they came into the program? In addition, in providing support, providers must document what type of housing and related services have been provided and what costs are associated with these activities. With about 14 percent of HOPWA clients being persons who are homeless at the time that they came into the program, it is also vital that our efforts are integrated with the larger continuum of care efforts.

HOPWA ANNUAL REPORTING

Unlike competitive grants that tend to be one project or one focused activity, formula grants are given to multiple providers and can provide for multiple activities. The idea behind the old paper APR was to identify the sum of what that community accomplished in that program year. Even though it's no longer a required document, the APR serves as a useful tool in formula programs, too. One of the important questions that the APR asks is "Are there barriers or obstacles to your carrying out your activities?" We want grantees to stop and think about this with their sponsors at least once annually.

For example, if a formula grantee was working with ten sponsors, they could use the APR as the format the ten sponsors use to report back to them on what they are accomplishing. Sponsors can then evaluate how they and their sponsors are doing and assess how they are serving the client's needs. Are they able to adjust to changing needs? Are there gaps in the issues? The APR can identify where there may need to be some intervention to help ensure that accurate performance data is collected.

TYPES OF DATA HOPWA COLLECTS

We need to collect three distinct types of data from our grantees: expenditure data, or how much money a grantee has drawn down during a performance year; CAPER data, a summary of the AIDS housing activities in their community; and performance data, a detail of the beneficiaries served by the AIDS housing and supportive services activities.

Because of our financial systems, we have been able throughout the existence of the HOPWA program to tell members of Congress, our budget people, and OMB about the performance of our program from a standpoint of obligating funds and drawing down those funds.

On the expenditure front, this program has a great record. Most cities and states have established AIDS housing programs and operate through a steady stream of activities. They have their contracting systems in place, have trained staff, and have a process for doing annual reporting. We can observe that for the last 36 months the average expenditures of this program have been over \$20 million a month. That means, on average, over \$240 million was expended. That's a record that matches the level of available funding.

For almost 95% of our grantees, we can say that funds are being spent in a timely manner. For the other 5%, some challenges remain, such as delays in accessing the funds to reimburse for costs. These projects are eventually going to come to HUD with the required paperwork — but because they haven't, it looks as if they haven't expended this money. The appearance of any large unexpended balances raises a question about how the program is being managed by the cities and States and overseen by HUD.

Some improvements have been made in our reports. In January of 2000, we created an easier way that a CAPER, the summary of a community's overall Consolidated Plan efforts, could be used. CAPER charts were added to help the recipients report on the housing assistance that is being accomplished, both from direct HOPWA funding and the other funds that support housing costs from other State, local, and private sources. This information was established in the CAPER narrative section in 1998 and the chart helps provide a visible manner to show this important aspect of the area's AIDS housing programs. In the last year, for every HOPWA dollar spent directly on housing, another \$1.37 was funded for housing from

other sources (excluding service costs). 92 formula grantees reported that the \$142.3 million in HOPWA for housing was more than matched with \$195.6 million in other funds used for housing needs by persons with HIV/AIDS.

Over the last year, HUD has collected vital information from the CAPER from all of our grantees that summarizes their housing accomplishments. This report shows that grantees are accomplishing the AIDS housing mission of this program in each of these communities. Annual reports also create an opportunity to look at the AIDS housing that has been accomplished using HOPWA funds in conjunction with other programs. We try to collect information from all funding sources recognizing that HOPWA capital costs, the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of buildings probably are not going to meet all the needs or cover all the costs. Often, all these things are integrated into a project that has multiple funding sources. Understanding how HOPWA works in connection with those other resources is very vital.

Ideally, this summary CAPER information matches up exactly with the annual data on housing and beneficiary information that is entered into IDIS. Sadly, as opposed to drawing down funds, IDIS is being used less successfully to report completely on all the performance data. The challenge here is that that the summary information entered on the CAPER needs to be equated to the detailed housing and beneficiary information entered into IDIS. At a minimum, information needs to be entered into IDIS at the end of that grantee's operating year. HUD is now creating standard IDIS reports and creating due dates for information entered to help grantees improve on this record.

This past September 2002, HUD introduced the HOPWA Project Activity Summary, the new IDIS PR72 Report, HOPWA's first, pre-formatted IDIS report. This should assist grantees in preparing their annual reports. Sorted by project, the report contains both common path and HOPWA path data for each activity within a project. The end of the report includes a summary section that provides totals for all HOPWA activities included on the report. This new tool will allow both HUD and our grantees to check on the accuracy of their data entry and even provide a vision of the annual report itself.

Another benefit of the PR72 report is that HUD will know when you've entered your performance data for that year. It will allow us to aggregate all data for all our grantees as we prepare our annual report to Congress

and others. We can now more easily identify possible deficiencies and work with those grantees or sponsors to collect all the information. We'll do everything we can to help our grantees complete their assignment and meet their requirements. That way we can have national data that is complete, accurate, and valid and that represents the overall performance of the year.

In addition to reporting performance data to Congress, HUD collects and analyzes performance data in a number of other ways. We use this information as we plan our budgets. And we work with HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PDR) and the Inspector General's Office to develop the HOPWA elements of the Department's comprehensive reports that are sent to Congress — the Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) along with other such national profiles of HUD efforts. In addition, each field office uses the information in determining the need for additional on-site monitoring.

USING IDIS EFFECTIVELY

Over time, CPD has enhanced IDIS to make it more user-friendly for HOPWA users. Two years ago, we created HOPWA-specific matrix codes so we could better track project sponsor and grantee activities. Last year, we added a way for grantees to indicate the program year for each activity. This past September, HUD modified the IDIS HOPWA-path options to reflect the actual types of activities done in each community: facility-based housing, facility-based non-housing, scattered-site housing, housing information, resource identification, administration, and supportive services. Grantees now see only those data entry screens in IDIS that are relevant to that type of activity.

About 30% of HOPWA program costs involve the supportive services needed by people in the housing program. It's vital that each grantee and HUD know how this money is spent on the types of supportive services needed and that this information is provided to HUD for an aggregate picture of performance. HUD does want to know the number of clients receiving this assistance. Most providers are giving good information. However, in some cases, reports are inadequate as they state that funds are for mixed services or funds are used for some "other" service — as these may not be eligible services, unless approved by HUD. Reports should be corrected to the types of services specified on the IDIS screen (or APR).

This is an area of data cleanup that needs attention. Be specific. If the provider spends \$10,000 for childcare, \$15,000 for case management and \$20,000 for transportation, it should be reported in this

manner. If that entity is doing something other than the services that are listed on the APR chart or in IDIS, they should have that specifically approved by HUD. If it's not specifically approved by HUD, then it could raise a question about accountability and whether or not it is an eligible activity.

NATIONAL TRAINING 2003

The Office of AIDS Housing maintains a direct dialogue with our grantees and the field staff. We've held highly successful annual national meetings with our formula grantees, with participation reaching 60-70% of all our grantees.

These meetings have helped grantees better manage their programs and train new staff. But, we've also used these meetings as a way for our grantees to tell us their issues. We are currently planning the 2003 meeting to be held here in Washington, DC.

For the first time, we're combining three national meetings in one week of training. People can select their track, the part that holds the most value to them. The meeting kicks off with a one-day national meeting for formula grantees here in Washington, DC on July 15, 2003.

The next two days will encompass the Fifth National AIDS Housing Conference. This will include at least one day focused on AIDS housing needs. This will be a great meeting for our formula grantees to attend, but we'll be welcoming a lot of the project sponsors, non-profit staff, and others who run programs for clients.

Following the AIDS Housing Conference, there will be a two-day meeting on supportive housing for homeless assistance programs. This is the first time we've done a combined meeting like this and I think it might prove to be very useful. The very same challenges that face us in helping someone with AIDS connect to supportive housing is the same challenge that's facing someone who is homeless.

We will have familiar national partners helping us plan the conference. Again, AIDS Housing of Washington will be the partner that helps coordinate the HOPWA effort. The Corporation for Supportive Housing, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and others will be doing their parts to make this really large, national training event a success. Watch for more news coming out shortly about this conference and the hotel sites.

FIELD OFFICE AND HQ SUPPORT

The 44 CPD offices around the country have in-depth experience in grants management. Grantees have to look no further than their state or area CPD office for assistance with their grants and for counseling about the obstacles and barriers affecting their performance. When necessary, field staff may bring in one of our various technical assistance providers to assist in resolving a problem.

At HUD headquarters, we have staff who serve as desk officers to work with the field staff. These folks assist the field staff in addressing grantee issues, particularly concerning regulations. We are also working with our TA providers to create standard training courses that people can take which will enhance their skills, knowledge, and ability to manage their HOPWA programs.

I hope that our grantees always consider whether there is adequate training happening in their own community to manage this program. Part of that training has to be on performance reporting as the collection of accurate, valid and complete information is vital to the life of this program. I expect that some of this training will be on doing the basic things correctly. For example, for clients just coming into the program, is someone documenting their eligibility? Is somebody assessing their needs so they get appropriate support? Is somebody looking at their rent calculations so that it's done correctly? If we, together, can always do these things correctly, then this performance is the key building block to overall accountability.

FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

At HUD, two projects are underway. One is clearing up guidance on short-term rent, mortgage, and utility assistance. You will be receiving guidance shortly on how to meet the limits in the statute on the 21-week period and how a grantee can use alternative ways to calculate those 21 weeks of benefits.

We are also trying to update the HOPWA regulations, which were last comprehensively updated in 1994. We're working to have our regulations clarify the issues that have come up in various communities over these years. Any regulation change will be done in a public process and our grantees will be given the opportunity to formally comment on proposed changes. We will look to you for that advice, as you have undertaken the work of setting up projects and operating them in your community. HUD has some discussions with our formula grantees at our 2002 national meeting. Once we publish any proposed changes, we will actively solicit comments from

grantees and involve them in making the regulations more useful.

As we move forward, one big challenge we face is the changing nature of the HIV epidemic. While AIDS surveillance data is currently used in the statutory formula, most States are now also collecting HIV data that should, over time, be more reflective of the needs associated with this epidemic. HUD is collaborating with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on this changing environment.

The HOPWA formula provides that an additional 25% allocation go to communities that have a greater than average incidence of AIDS. This component has worked over the last decade to provide additional resources to the metropolitan areas that have large concentrations of people living with HIV and AIDS. A number of communities have now experienced some large relative changes in their allocations, both positive and negative, due to the nature of this one factor.

In conclusion, governments at all levels have relied on the good work of our nonprofit partners to carry out the HOPWA program mission — with over 700 now making use of this Federal program. This partnership can be strengthened as we learn to provide better support to our providers to ensure that their programs are always soundly managed and prove to be responsive to the individuals and families who are our HOPWA clients. Performance reporting plays a vital function in successful grants management that goes far beyond just reporting on results. I hope that we can learn from this vast experience, understand how to better evaluate the efforts being made, and that we are encouraged to be active in making the needed adjustments that will benefit our clients to ensure that housing is sustained as a base from which to receive other care and support. Thank you for your dedication to this mission.

HOPWA DATA CLEANUP MOVES FORWARD — GRANTEES ENCOURAGED TO FINALIZE HOPWA DATA CLEANUP EFFORT

The HOPWA Data Cleanup team recently sent correspondence to HOPWA grantees regarding the cleanup. Grantees were advised that they needed to verify their HOPWA baseline activities for report years 2000 and 2001 by October 31, 2002. They also need to finish the cleanup for report year 2000 by that date. Report year 2001 data needs to be cleaned up by the end of November.

The original due date for the HOPWA data cleanup was April 30, 2002. Most of our grantees have told us they are working on their cleanup. Many grantees have completed it. However, we did not receive feedback from all of the grantees.

The correspondence sent to grantees and copied to field office representatives included the following:

- Letter (dated October 22, 2002) to HOPWA Grantees from David Vos, Director, Office of HIV/AIDS Housing, on the HOPWA Data Cleanup
- Grantee Notice on the Changes to the HOPWA Completion Path
- Revised 2002 HOPWA Data Cleanup Instructions
- Program Year Summary of Projects and Activities Reports, as of September 30, 2002

(Baseline summary reports for years 2000 and 2001)

- Report Year HOPWA Data Cleanup Questionable IDIS Activities (Report Years 2000 and 2001)

Please send an e-mail to IDIS_Data_Cleanup@hud.gov if you did not receive the information or if you have questions or concerns. Include in the subject line the grantee name, state, and “HOPWA Data Cleanup.” Information on the cleanup can be found at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/aidshousing/granteeguidance/formula/cleanup/index.cfm>

WATCH FOR NEW HOME SETUP AND COMPLETION FORMS

The HOME program office is currently revising its setup and completion forms, now in HUDCLIPS, so that they reflect the new race and ethnicity changes coming to IDIS this December and use terminology consistent with the IDIS screens. PJs are no longer required to submit these forms to HUD since the information is entered directly into IDIS. For your convenience, once revised, the new forms will be published in Chapter 9 of the IDIS Reference Manual. We are providing the revised forms as a convenience since many PJs and their subrecipients still use the forms internally. Once they are available in the reference manual, the old CMIS HUD forms 40094, 40096, 40097, 40096-M, 40095, 40095-B, 40094-B will no longer be available on HUDCLIPS.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Your IDIS contact is:

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Your data cleanup contact is:

HOPWA/HOME
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202-619-0664
e-mail: Kathryn_Pearson-West@hud.gov

CDBG
Sharon Pegues 202-619-0888
e-mail: Sharon_Pegues@hud.gov

Your Consolidated/C2020 Plan contacts are:

Technical Help
Mark Mitchell 202-401-3797
Help with Electronic Submission of Conplans and Data Disks
(the preferred method of transmission)
Sharon Becton 202-401-3365
Street Address: HUD/CPD
Systems Development and Evaluation Division
451 Seventh St., S.W., Room 7226
Washington, DC 20410

For technical information, contact your field office or the CPD Technical Assistance Unit at 1-800-273-2573 or idis_help@hud.gov.

To have your IDIS ID and password reset, call HUD Security at 202-708-3300, opt. 3 or 202-401-2637.

For Web390 ID and password information, contact your local HUD field office or the TAU at 1-800-273-2573