The following HMIS implementation plan will be submitted for review by the CoC Steering Committee meeting on October 9.

HMIS Implementation Plan Summary

- I. Implementation strategy.
- II. Implementation team.
- III. Schedule.

The parts of implementation planning are now discussed in more detail.

I. Implementation Strategy

- **Statement of work and change-management process.** Making decisions about what work needs to be accomplished, and how to request, review, and approve changes during the implementation are two important areas to determine early in the process.
    - **statement of work: implement a new HMIS throughout the Columbus CoC**
    - the implementation will be directed by the HMIS Implementation Team
    - the HMIS implementation team will decide on and assist with:
        - necessary system customizations (application and reporting)
        - system configuration
        - workflow processes
        - data import or migration
        - user training
        - deployment

- **Set a target date and budget for deployment.** While these figures will most likely change during the implementation process, it's useful to have guidelines:
    - new HMIS to be fully implemented by **June 30, 2008**
    - implementation budget not to exceed $125,000

- **Identify the risk factors.** Some risk factors that we will encounter are the dependencies on essential personnel and the outside vendor, deployment timing, and users' resistance to change.
  Contingency plan:
    - set contractual requirements with due dates
    - implementation team to be broad enough to deal with availability of at least 2/3 of the team for scheduled planning and implementation meetings
    - schedule additional training if necessary

- **Identify the goals.** The HMIS upgrade project seeks to identify and install an HMIS which is sufficiently robust to meet the current and future data collection, information sharing, and reporting needs of CSB and its partner agencies. The primary considerations are:
    - Compliance with HUD standards

- Upgrade/replacement of existing software and system hardware
- Desire for an intuitive user interface which prohibits inadvertent creation of duplicate client records
- Better meet the needs of CSB, partner agencies, funders, and the community for accurate and timely reports on homelessness
- Improved monitoring of system and program outcomes, including ability to analyze trends
- Ability to support a new, Central Intake and Assessment Center for Adult Emergency Shelter and Permanent Supportive Housing (expected recommendation from the Rebuilding Lives Updated Strategy)

- **Responsibility.** The responsibility of the successful implementation of the new system lays with the entire implementation team, however the D&E team of CSB will have a leading role in the process and will make all the necessary efforts to keep the project on schedule and within the budget. The CSB HMIS Administrator will be the Project Manager in charge with the general implementation process. The CSB Director of Data and Evaluation will be responsible for tracking costs, communicating with all parties involved (CoC, RLFC, CAC, etc), keeping the project on schedule, development of policies, clarifications of legal issues and potential risk factors.
  Each participating agency will be asked to confirm participation in the new system, accept related costs and fully support the implementation process and team.

II. Implementation Team

The responsibility for a successful HMIS implementation is shared by the entire Columbus CoC and specifically by the HMIS Implementation Team along with the HMIS vendor. The responsibilities of the implementation team are to:

- Follow the approved implementation plan
- Identify new workflow processes
- Identify necessary system customizations (application and reporting)
- Define system configuration
- Approve data import and migration plan
- Identify who will perform the various implementation steps
- Follow the approved implementation schedule and make recommendations as necessary
- Participate and help with user training
- Participate and help with system deployment
- Define a progress-reporting plan

The implementation team will include people with a comprehensive knowledge of the day-to-day operations of the HMIS. Each agency will be asked to designate at least one participant in the Implementation Team. All the HMIS Administrators will be invited to participate, along with the HMIS Workgroup members and CAC members. The CSB D&E Team will be an integral part of the implementation team. To avoid task and time-responsibility conflicts, it is important that members of the implementation team understand that the HMIS implementation is a priority, given that the deployment is to a large number of users. Team members and

their managers must understand and accept the commitment required. It is anticipated that the team will meet approximately twice/month during the October-December 2007 time frame. It is also expected that we will need to communicate with the team outside the meetings through email and possibly conference calls.

The following sub-teams will be established as part of the implementation effort:

- **CSB D&E Team**
  Provide the leadership necessary for success, as well as guide decisions about the way the HMIS is deployed. They will become experts of the system configuration and maintenance requirements and be the link between the vendor and the implementation team. Reporting, system privacy and security settings and quality analyses will be handled by CSB as well.
- **Implementation project manager**
  The project manager is the person who directs the work and makes things happen. This person must understand the details of the installation and configuration, the schedule, other team members and their contributions, and work with the outside vendor as necessary. The CSB HMIS Administrator will be the assigned project manager.
- **Configuration Team**
  The configuration team will be responsible for determining the set-up for the new HMIS (configuration) – define names for agencies, programs, additional information that needs to be tracked. Needed customizations will be determined by this team as well. The data import or migration process will be part of this team's responsibility.
- **Workflow Team**
  Sub-groups to be established for the adult emergency shelter system, family shelter system and permanent supportive housing to discuss the current workflow and adjustments that need to be made to increase productivity and ease of work. The prevention, outreach and direct housing programs will be addressed as well, possibly by another sub-group. This team will also lead the training and deployment of the new system.

III. Schedule

The implementation team will follow the approved implementation schedule and propose necessary changes. The schedule lists the steps involved in implementing and deploying the HMIS and the time schedule. Concurrently, contract negotiations will take place with the selected vendor, to be finalized by the end of October, 2007.

	Steps	Schedule
1.	Form HMIS Implementation Team and have 1st meeting	October 2007
2.	Define system configuration	October 2007
3.	Configure new HMIS	November 2007
	1. Bowman - run internal test upgrade to establish upgrade timeline	
	2. Define specifications for data merging, data cleansing, data archiving, and provider restructure.	
4.	Decide on necessary customizations	December 2007
	1. Analyze the current and desired processes	- January 2008

2. Determine customization requirements and specifications
3. Approve and freeze customization specifications
4. Develop
5. Review
6. Test the system
7. Get pilot group to use the system
8. Finalize

5. Partner Agency and Community briefing on new HMIS — January 2008
6. Training — February 2008
   1. Schedule administrator training
   2. Schedule user training
7. Development of collateral materials — March 2008
   1. Policies and Procedures — - April 2008
   2. HMIS Administrator Guides
   3. HMIS Agency Contracts
   4. PR&C Standards
   5. User Agreements
   6. Other HMIS related documentation (training curricula, training materials, forms, etc)
8. Deployment — March 2008
   1. Perform the first (test) import of legacy data — - June 2008
   2. Validate legacy data after installation
   3. User Training (all end-users) – specialized training by program type (June)
   4. Advanced Reporting (ART) training
   5. Perform the final import of legacy data (estimate more than 1 day of HMIS down-time)
   6. Deploy HMIS to all agencies
9. Post-deployment — July 2008
   1. Hold a post-implementation audit or review (after about 3 months) — – December 2008
   2. Implement scan-card intake for high-volume shelters (July – October so it will not conflict with overflow timeframe, otherwise delay for next year)
   3. Post-deployment customizations (need based report development and system customizations)
   4. Post-deployment training as needed

1. Form HMIS Implementation Team

A call to form the HMIS implementation team will be sent out after the HMIS Selection Committee makes its decision on the new HMIS vendor. First meeting will be scheduled in early October to discuss in detail the implementation plan and start the process. Each agency Executive Director will have to designate at least one participant in the implementation team.

2. Define System Configuration

The HMIS Implementation team's configuration sub-team will have to consider the following steps in deciding the configuration of the new system:

- Analyze Current configuration
  - name of agencies
  - name of programs
  - current data collected and specific data fields
  - security and privacy related settings
- Determine future configuration
  - name of agencies
  - name of programs
  - data collected and specific data fields (HUD compliant and CSB required)
  - new data elements that CSB and agencies would like to collect in the future
  - requirements related to the RLUS recommendations
  - order of fields in different screens/possible removal or relocation of some existing fields
  - need for new custom fields
  - necessary consolidation of existing fields
  - HUD compliant data pick tables
  - new security and privacy related settings

See attached pick list/drop down list summary.

3. Configure new HMIS

The HMIS vendor will configure the new system based on the specifications determined by the HMIS implementation team. The CSB team will verify the configuration and ask for adjustments as necessary.

4. Decide on necessary customizations

1. Analyze current and desired processes

The best way to analyze our current processes is to ask the HMIS Administrators for their input and ways to improve what we currently have. A successful implementation is ultimately dependent on its usability and the willingness of users to use it, so it's critical to engage these experts early in the process.
The tasks are:

- Find out what processes are in place for the different systems we have in place (how client records are created and updated, exited and used for case management, data used for planning and evaluation of the programs).
- Find out what users think about the processes in place. Is it effective, is it time-consuming, and are there processes that can be streamlined or dropped altogether?
- Find out what expectations users have of the new HMIS. What are the reservations and questions?
- Examine the processes in place and suggest improvements to streamlines workflow.
- Learn the features of the HMIS that can address the suggested changes.
- Determine what reports are necessary as part of our current process.
- Determine the components and features of the HMIS that will be implemented and deployed first and when additional components and features will be added later.

- Incorporate the processes into HMIS. Determine if the processes can be recreated as they currently are or if changes must be made to incorporate the application, suggested changes and use its new functionality.

2. Determining Customization Requirements and Specifications

- Identify necessary application customizations

- Determine necessary customizations to the application.
- Determine necessary customizations to the existing reports or necessity for development of new reports
- Incorporate the new processes into HMIS. Determine if the processes can be recreated as they currently are or if changes must be made to incorporate them in the application, implication of the suggested changes and applicability of the system's new functionality.

- Identifying necessary reporting requirements and customizations

From the analysis of the processes, the current reporting requirements should have been identified and listed. Using this list we will map out current requirements to the reporting capabilities of the HMIS. For the necessary reporting customizations we will need to identify:

- customizations to the existing reports
- new reports needed to be creates
- time frame for changes/development
- cost of customization/new report creation

3. Approve and freeze customization specifications

The HMIS implementation team will approve the customization specifications and CSB will forward to the HMIS vendor for implementation. CSB team will test the customizations and ask for adjustments as necessary.

4 - 6. Develop, Review and Test the system

This phase includes the following activities:

- Testing the implementation per the specifications
- Testing the HMIS (customizations) in a controlled environment
  - the implementation team will be asked to review the HMIS customizations using the new system
  - no actual client data will be used for this step
- Importing or migrating data
  - clean-up current HMIS data based on the time-ranges for the data migration (CSB's responsibility) – establish clean-up scripts and level of detail
  - agree on the extent of the data import or migration (HMIS implementation team)
    - data elements
    - time range
    - see attached list of data elements proposed for migration (comprehensive list of all HUD

required data elements plus a number of current custom fields that we locally require).
  - import/migrate data (this might be the vendor's or CSB's responsibility)
  - test the migrated/imported data (the implementation team)
- Customizing the reporting features
  - customize existing reporting based on determined need (vendor and/or CSB's responsibility)
  - develop new reports as determined by the implementation team (vendor)
- Testing the customized reporting
  - the implementation team and primarily the CSB team will review the customized reporting
  - vendor will be asked to make necessary adjustments

7. Get pilot group to use the system

Prior to CoC-wide deployment, we will identify a group of users (HMIS Administrators) who can use and evaluate the HMIS in a controlled setting. This group should perform the common activities that their jobs require, such as creating client records, reviewing data, and creating reports. CSB will observe their actions and ask for follow-up to find out what difficulties may exist and address those during additional training, as necessary.

8. Finalize

HMIS vendor will be asked to make final adjustments to the system and adjustments will be verified by the CSB team.

5. Partner Agency and Community briefing on new HMIS

CSB will continuously inform stakeholders in the HMIS upgrade process on the status of the new HMIS implementation. A special briefing will be held to present the new HMIS once the necessary customizations are finalized and describe the system features and improvements.

6. Identifying Training and Ongoing Support Requirements

One of the keys to a successful implementation—that is, to ensure that everyone can use the system properly — is to provide training and support for all users. Administrators should be trained to manage the system, and users should be trained in common usage.

CSB proposes the following approach and schedule for the hands-on training:

- Administrators training February 1-8
- Users training February 11-29

The above training will be the responsibility of the new HMIS vendor. All HMIS Administrators and Implementation Team members will have to participate in this training and will receive a certificate of completion once the training is done.

7. Development of collateral materials

- Development of appropriate policies and procedures
  - current HMIS policies and procedures will be revised by CSB to appropriately reflect the functionality and features of the new HMIS
  - the implementation team will review and give feedback
- Development of new HMIS Administrator Guide/Manual
- Development of new HMIS contracts
- Development of new/revised PR&C Standards
- Development of new/revised HMIS User Agreements
- Development of other HMIS related documentation

8. Deployment

The HMIS implementation team will give a final test to the system and validate the legacy data after installation.
We will make sure that all users have been set up with accounts and passwords. A mandatory user training will be scheduled for all HMIS users, possible on multiple days to accommodate all users. Certificates of completion will be given out to those attendees that CSB has the confidence that they have the ability and necessary knowledge to use the new HMIS.

Additional, CSB organized training using a team-taught approach with partner agency HMIS Administrators will be implemented periodically for all users.

Advanced Reporting Tool (ART) training will be scheduled at this time as well to be attended by all HMIS Administrators. This training will be on-site, for 2 consecutive days.

CSB will deploy the HMIS concurrently to all agencies. No access to the previous HMIS will be allowed after the "go-live" date. CSB will retain access to the previous HMIS for a limited period of time (2 months) and will be able to respond to agency requests or potential problems.

9. Post-Deployment

Although users may be given training and help to get accustomed to the new HMIS, if they do not use the product, the organization will not realize its return on investment. A successful implementation plan includes post-deployment follow-up to determine if the workforce is using the HMIS and their level of comfort with it. Deploying a new system may involve significant change in processes and daily tasks for members of the organizations. A successful deployment ensures that issues and areas of resistance related to this change are identified and addressed through training, coaching, and other change-management practices.
The following list identifies some of the operational changes associated with transitioning to a new HMIS:

- **Initial deployment period will affect productivity in the beginning.** Learning a new way to

accomplish daily tasks is time-consuming and might be frustrating. This could result in an initial reduction in productivity.

- **Users must see HMIS as a tool to help them.** If they instead perceive it as an obligation and only a tool for efficiency analysis and resist using it, the data the system generates will be inaccurate.

Agency leadership must be on hand to set an example and support the implementation, both by talking about it and using it.
HMIS Administrators will be fully involved in the post-deployment follow-up to ensure a successful implementation of the new HMIS.

The post-deployment stage will be followed by a continuous improvement process to fully exploit the capabilities of the new system. It is CSB's intention to implement a scan-card intake for the emergency shelter population to improve and automate the process.

A continuous training curricula will be developed as well to address all levels of HMIS users – we will implement a topic focused, web-based training schedule that will allow agencies to participate in training from their own offices and thus increase efficiency.

The post-deployment phase will also include additional customizations that were missed during the previous stages and custom report development to meet the needs of the CoC.