CARES COLLABORATIVE HMIS NEWSLETTER

CARES of NY, Inc. will be closed for business on MOnday October 12th.

The CRHMIS Team will also be out of the office on Monday October 12th. Our team will be monitoring the Helpdesk throughout the day, but response times will take longer than usual.

Updates

ESG - CV Funding Updates

The first Quarterly Report for ESG - CV funding is due on 10/30. The CCHMIS team is responsible for producing and uploading the required CSV files from AWARDS directly to SAGE. The CCHMIS team has been working with the recipients of these grants; either the cities or OTDA who are responsible for completing the remainder of the report on getting the projects set up correctly in AWARDS. Existing Emergency Shelters and Street Outreach projects do not need to have a new Shelter or Outreach project set up in AWARDS, as the ESG - CV funds can be used for those existing project types. Homelessness Prevention, and Rapid Rehousing projects funded with ESG - CV will have new projects set up in AWARDS. As soon as these projects are created I will be reaching out to the agency administrators to grant staff access to the new project(s).

Coordinated Entry Updates

Now that all of our CoC's are ere entering Coordinated Entry data in AWARDS it seems like the perfect time to formally introduce

you all to the brand new Coordinated Entry Department!

The CE Team consists of Denise Brodt, CE Director and Rachel Bradt, CE Systems Data Analyst who are taking the lead working with the CoC's for whom CARES of NY, Inc is the Collaborative Applicant. Both Denise and Rachel are experts in the CE process and requirements of the program both in the AWARDS HMIS Database and out.

For consistency purposes we are updating our Helpdesk Ticket Submission policy to include entering the name of the project for which you need assistance (example: NY-503 Albany CE, FCCHC CoC program) in the subject line of the HelpDesk ticket. I know this seems redundant as you are required to select the project name later on in the ticket submission process, however entering the project name in the subject line allows for the CCHMIS team to address, assist, and resolve issues more efficiently. This updated policy will be reflected in our updated Policies and Procedures manual effective 11/1/2020.

Uploading Agencies

Thank you all so much for your willingness to work with Cathy on identifying and resolving errors within your home AWARDS database that were preventing successful uploads to the CCHMIS AWARDS Database. Overall data quality (complete and reflective of the community) has increased because of this. Woooo Hoooo! Uploading agencies that are receiving ESG-CV and/or CARES Act HOPWA funding I will be reaching out to ensure these projects are set up in both databases and match correctly to ensure successful uploads.

HUD Updates

The Homelessness Data Exchange (HDX) 2.0 will open for LSA submissions the week of October 19, 2020.

The 2019 and 2020 LSA data collection process will begin with the Upload and Submission Phase on October 19. Continuums of Care (CoCs) should plan to make at least one upload attempt per reporting cycle (2019 and 2020) by **October 30**. This will enable communities to:

- Acclimate to the updated HDX 2.0 interface
- Ensure the proper staff have permissions in the HDX 2.0
- Allow for communities to receive support from their vendors or LSA support staff via the AAQ in the event there are errors preventing uploads

RHY Updates

Well, we did it! RHY Grantees who had grants with an end date of 9/30, all successfully (eventually) uploaded their required data. Thank you so much for your patience while we worked with our

vendor to resolve the CSV error. You are all ROCKSTARS!
For RHY Grantees whose grants have an end date of 10/1 or later.... You're up next!

From RHYTTAC:

All approved users should have received an automated email from the RHY-HMIS with a link that redirects to the site with your username already populated in order for you to reset your password. When resetting your password: please use your **username** (*not your email address*). **For two-factor authentication, if you do not receive the validation code via email, please first check your spam folder.**

<u>**Reporting Period**</u>
<u>October 26th – November 16th, 2020: RHY grantees data upload period</u>

<u>Uploaded RHY data should cover activity from October 01, 2019 through September 30, 2020 (1 year).</u>

VA/SSVF Updates
A message from the HUD Exchange

Increasing HMIS Participation and Update on HUD-VASH Data Sharing

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is essential for communities to understand how the homeless response system is working and where strategic changes should be made to better serve people experiencing homelessness, including veterans. HUD and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are excited to announce that in November 2020, HUD will be providing a tool to each Continuum of Care (CoC) to support direct uploads of VA's HOMES-HMIS HUD-VASH Universal Data Elements Report.

Next Steps to Access the VA HUD-VASH Data Export
In December 2019, [HUD announced a partnership with VA](#) to provide HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) data, exported from the VA's Homeless Operations Management and Evaluation System (HOMES), to CoCs by late Spring 2020. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has commanded both agencies' full attention over the course of 2020. VA has a report available which contains HUD-VASH data elements for an HMIS import and a mechanism in place for secure email transmission. HUD has developed a tool for CoCs, which will transform this report into a format that meets HMIS technical specifications to enable direct upload into HMIS. This tool will be available the **first week of November**.
In the meantime, VA can share the HUD-VASH report with CoCs

for direct entry by CoCs or for CoCs to utilize with existing import processes to add the information to HMIS. There are a few steps that must be taken for this data to be input into HMIS.

1. *CoC establishes a single point of contact for VA Medical Centers (VAMCs).* To access the data, each CoC will need to coordinate with their HMIS Lead to identify a point of contact for each VAMC. For some CoCs, this may mean reaching out to multiple VAMCs. Using a single point of contact for each VAMC will reduce confusion in the process.

2. *VAMC sends a HUD-VASH export to the point of contact.* Each VAMC will send a CSV file containing the HUD-VASH data elements for the HMIS import. VA does not collect information by CoC, so HMIS leads will need to work with their VA homeless program lead to determine what data should be included in your HMIS. This may involve coordination with neighboring CoCs as well to ensure you are not both entering the same HUD-VASH data in your HMIS. HUD and VA will provide additional guidance to address commonly asked questions about the process. Once the data is transferred by VA, it is the CoC's responsibility to import the data into HMIS.

3. *HMIS Lead must analyze their technical capacity to import the data.* Some CoCs have been working with their VAMC already and may be able to immediately import the data into HMIS, but most HMIS Leads will require some way to convert the data into a useable import file. HUD has developed an Excel-based tool that converts the HOMES report into useable import files, and this tool will be publicly available to CoCs the first week of November 2020. While HUD is confident that the tool will support most imports, some HMIS software products still may not allow the report to be imported. In these instances, HUD TA will help troubleshoot, but there may be some CoCs that will have to manually enter the data or pursue a different avenue to include the data in HMIS.

HUD recognizes that this exciting announcement also comes with more work for CoCs and HMIS Leads, but the data also provides an answer to a long-standing issue of HMIS bed coverage that will improve and expedite access to homeless program services. CoCs continue to serve people experiencing homelessness while COVID-19 continues to threaten this vulnerable population, and HMIS Leads have several reporting requirements they will be fulfilling in October. Acknowledging these demands on CoC and HMIS Lead time, HUD recommends that HMIS Leads focus on incorporating this data **no later than the 2021 Housing Inventory Count (HIC)**, and that HMIS Leads focus on this effort in the final months of 2020 to identify and resolve any potential issues by **January 2021**.

HMIS Participation
While there are some programs that are not funded by HUD and

not required by their funder to participate in HMIS (e.g., HUD-VASH, gospel rescue missions), it is critical for communities to strive to get complete bed coverage to execute critical system planning to end homelessness. Today's announcement helps CoCs fill a critical gap – all CoCs will have access to HUD-VASH data. If CoCs import this data into HMIS, that will count as full HMIS participation for the HUD-VASH inventory.

HUD anticipates continuing to include bed coverage as a competitive element in its CoC Program Competition. To assist in gaining participation from other partners that are not required to participate in HMIS, HUD recommends reviewing the resources below. Please note that victim service providers must use a comparable database and cannot use HMIS.
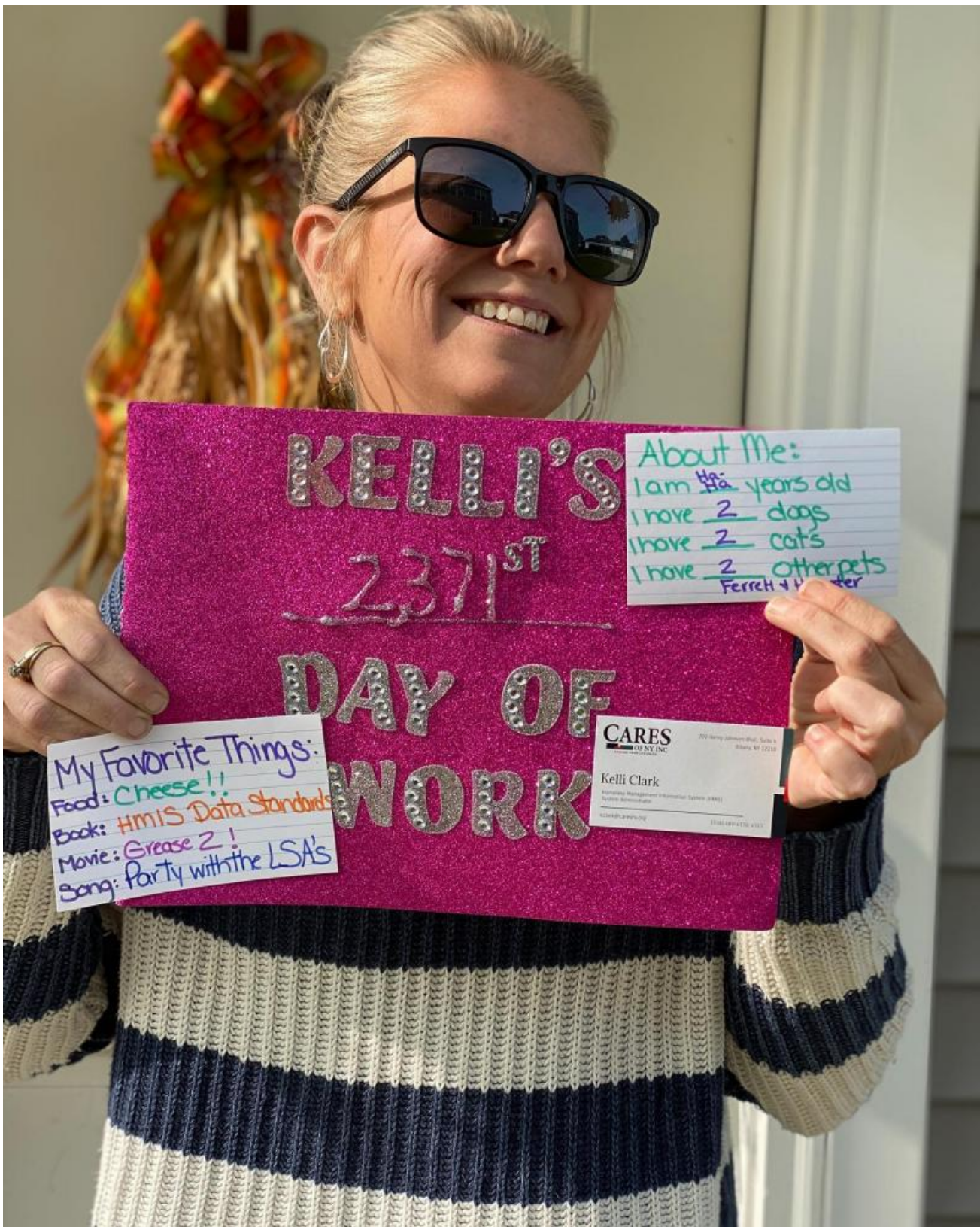
HMIS Resources on HMIS Participation
- [Data Quality 201: Bed Coverage and Strategies to Improve It](#)
- [Best Practices: Sharing Information to End Veteran Homelessness](#)
- [SNAPS In Focus: Partnerships Between CoCs and Faith Based Organizations](#)

For other resources on HMIS visit the [HMIS resource](#)page. For HMIS guidance specific to COVID-19 please refer to the "Data Management" section of the [Disease Risks and Homelessness](#) page.

I don't know about you guys, but back in the beginning of September I spent almost a whole week seeing the varying "Back to School" pictures from my friends flooding my social media. This year I didn't have any littles starting a new school year, and I was feeling a little left out. So, what did I do????
Enjoy this picture of my2,371st day working at CARES of NY, Inc.

CARES
OF NY, INC
ENDING HOMELESSNESS

Follow Us

CARES Inc
200 Henry Johnson Blvd
Suite 4
Albany, NY 12210
United States