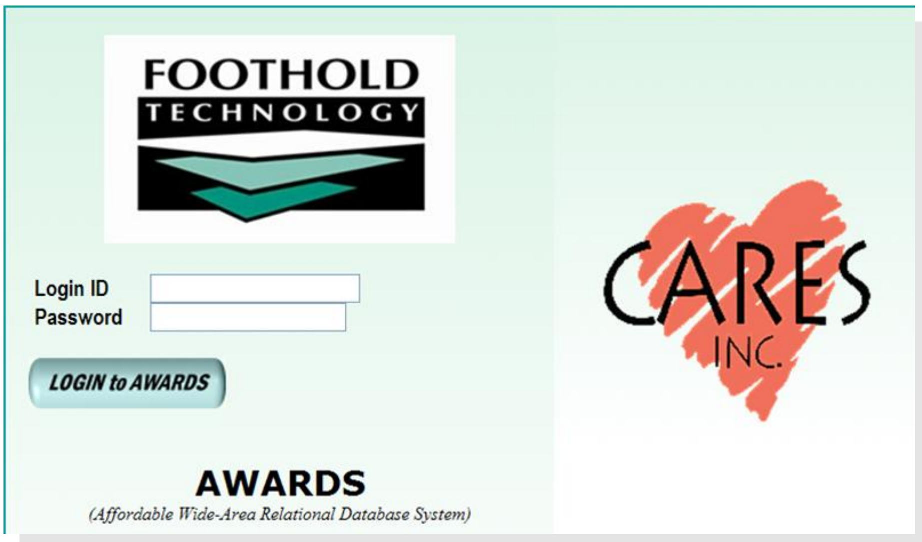
H.M.I.S

Homeless Management Information System



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New User Training Agenda

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Introduction

- What is the HMIS?
- Who uses the HMIS?
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Please note that all materials given out in this training are available as electronic documents via e-mail

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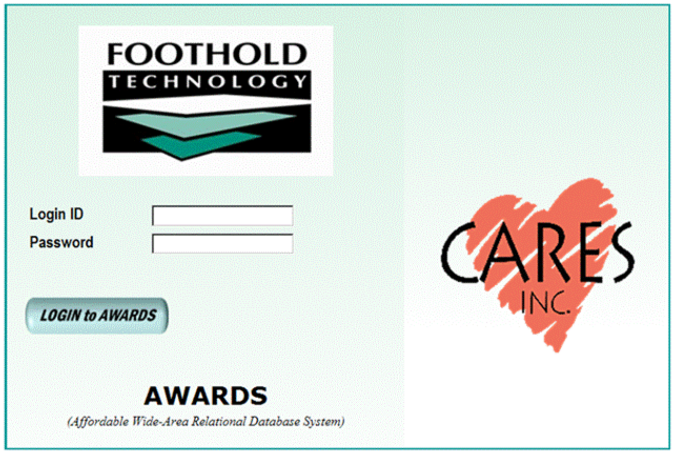
HMIS Log-In information



Access and bookmark the site by going to:

https://cares.footholdtechnology.com

Your username and password:

Your username is your **first initial and last name** unless otherwise noted, *all lowercase, no spaces.*

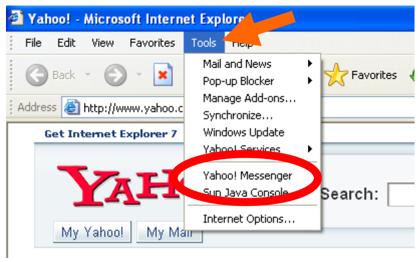
Default Password: *cares1234*

Please change your password immediately to keep it secure and follow standard security precautions at all times. If you have the *Password* button at the bottom of your Opening Menu, you may do it there. If you don't see the Password button, change your password with this path: *System Setup*→ *Login Maintenance* → *Password.*

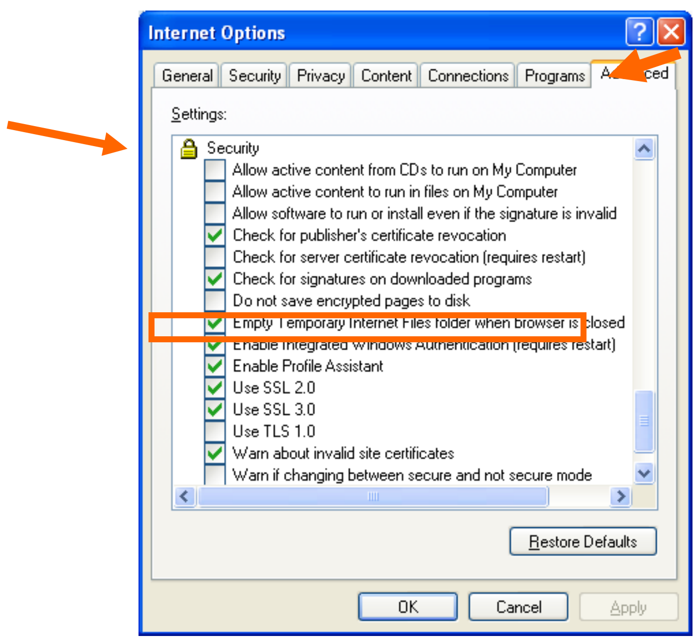
Changing the internet settings for emptying the temporary internet folder each time you close the browser:

1) Open your internet browser

2) In the menu bar, find the “Tools” drop down menu and click on “Internet Options”



3) Once the Internet Options dialog box opens, click on “Advanced” and scroll down to the “security” settings. If it is not already checked off, click on the “Empty Temporary Internet Files folder when browser is closed” button, then hit “OK”.



4) After you’ve clicked “ok” and the box disappears, please restart your computer to complete the process and you’re done!

Creating and Processing a Referral Record

Intake / Admission | Single-Step Intake / Admission

To process consumer intake/admission into a program using the single-step intake form, complete the following steps:

1. From the AWARDS Opening Menu page, click Consumer Lookup. The Consumer Lookup page is displayed.

Each agency refers to its members/consumers in a different way, and the terminology in AWARDS can be adjusted accordingly. As a result, the Consumer Lookup button may be labeled Client Lookup, Member Lookup, Resident Lookup, or something similar. Regardless of how it is labeled, the functionality behind the button is the same as that described in this document.

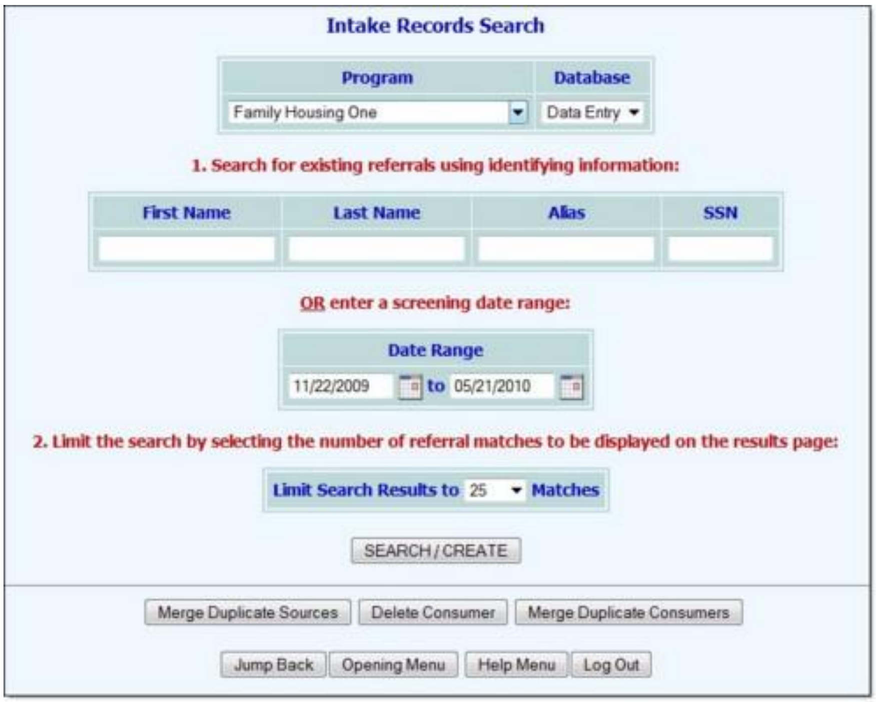
2. In the First Name and Last Name fields, type the first two letters of the consumer's first and last names, respectively.

3. Click the Limit Search Results to drop-down arrow and select the number of matches to be displayed in the lookup results.

4. Click SEARCH. The Consumer Lookup Results page is displayed. This page contains a list of consumers with records in the system for whom all or part of the identifying information entered on the previous page is a match.

5. If there is an existing record for the consumer, take note of how the name, date of birth, and social security number were entered for him or her. This information will need to be entered in the exact same manner when creating the referral, so that a duplicate program record is not created.

6. Click Intake/Admission Menu. The Intake Records Search page is displayed.



7. Click the Program drop-down arrow and select the program associated with the consumer to be admitted.

8. Click the Database drop-down arrow and select "Data Entry."

9. In the First Name, Last Name, and/or Alias fields, type the consumer's name, initials, and/or alias. When using full names or identifiers such as SSNs, be sure to enter that information exactly as it was found in any existing records in step 5, if applicable.

10. Click SEARCH/CREATE. The Referral Search Results page is displayed.

Sample Program
Referral Search Results

Referral Source Type: All Sources
Referrals Screened From 01/01/2000 to 03/10/2009
Name = * *
Sorted by Applicant
Application Status: *all undecided dispositions -all resolved outcomes -*

Screened	Applicant	Status	Updated	Program	Eligibility	Source	Forms Received	Days Open	Admission Date	Discharge Date
?	Create New Application	Screening	?	Sample Program						
03/20/2003	Bull Frog	Accepted-Admission	03/20/2003	Sample Program	Undetermined Eligibility	Self-A.W.A.R.D.S. Demo	03/20/2003	0	03/20/2003	03/01/2009
05/19/2003	Ribbit Green	Accepted-Admission	06/18/2003	Sample Program	Undetermined Eligibility	Self-A.W.A.R.D.S. Demo		No Date for Forms Received	06/18/2003	

Jump Back | Opening Menu | Help Menu | Log Out

This page contains a list of any existing intake records for which the identifying information matches that entered on the Intake Records Search page.

Click the heading of any column in the results table to sort the contents by that variable.

11. Review the search results on this page to determine how to proceed:

→ If the consumer has an existing intake record with an admission date and no discharge date, he or she is currently on the program roster and a new intake/admission should not be processed.

→ If the consumer has an existing intake record with both an admission and discharge date, and he or she is being re-admitted to the program, a new intake/admission must be processed. Continue with step 12.

→ If the consumer does not have an existing intake record, one must be created before intake/admission can be processed. Continue with step 12.

12. From the "Applicant" column, click Create New Application. The Admission Form page is displayed.

13. Complete the admission form by configuring the fields and options on this page as necessary. If, in step 5, an existing record was found for the consumer, be sure to enter the same name, date of birth, and social security number used in that record.

Programs set to submit the HUD APR require more data entry at intake/admission than non-APR programs, so the fields and options on the admission form may be different from program-to-program.

14. At this time, do one of the following:

→ Admit the consumer - Click HOUSING ADMISSION or PROCESS ADMISSION (which label is used for this button is determined by the program type - residential or non-residential, respectively). The consumer's admission form is saved, he or she is admitted to the selected program, and a read-only report version of the admission form is displayed.

→ Reject the consumer - Click Not Accepted Into Program. The consumer's admission form is then saved with the application status of rejected.

To make changes to the intake/admission information at this time, click DATA ENTRY to return to the Admission Form data entry page.

If any data entry errors are found by AWARDS after HOUSING ADMISSION / PROCESS ADMISSION or Not Accepted Into Program is clicked, the admission/rejection process is halted and the errors are listed in red at the top and the page. In the event that an error is received, make any necessary corrections, and click the appropriate button again before proceeding.

****

NOTE: To follow up on the data you just input and properly maintain the record, you need to update the ***contacts log***, on a regular basis (at least monthly, recommended to do so bi-weekly). These statistics are required for the ***HUD APR*** report. You access it that screen by following this route: **Opening Menu → Services → Contact Logs → Consumer name → Continue → (Add a New Session or update a previous one) Continue → (input data) Continue.**

CLONING AND COMPLETING AN INTAKE/ADMISSION

1. From the *AWARDS Opening Menu* page, click **Intake/Admission**. The *Intake Search* page is displayed.

2. Click the **Program** drop-down arrow and select the program associated with the client for whom the intake form is to be created.

3. Enter the client's **First Name**, **Last Name**, and **SSN** in the corresponding fields. Review and ensure that all information entered is accurate. For the cloning to work, the data in these three fields must be entered exactly as noted from the client lookup search results.

4. Click **SEARCH/CREATE**. The *Referral Search Results* page is displayed.

5. Click **Create New Application**. A new intake form is opened and displayed on the *Intake Form* page.

> *Because you are cloning existing data many of the fields/options on the form will already be filled out. Others, which must be configured on a program-by-program basis will be blank. In our database the Special Needs section which would identify specific disability status is not transferred in a cloned intake.*

6. Review all cloned data in the form to verify that it is still current. Make changes to the old data where appropriate, and then configure any blank fields/options as needed.

7. At this time, complete one of the following tasks based on the intake/admission process used by the program:

- **When using single-step intake** - Click **HOUSING ADMISSION** or **PROCESS ADMISSION** to admit the client (which label is used for this button is determined by the program type – residential or non-residential, respectively).

If the client is to be rejected rather than admitted, click **Not Accepted Into Program***. The client's intake form is then saved with a status of rejected.*

Processing a consumer's re-admission to the program

1. Click on Intake/Admission
2. Choose your program
3. Put the consumers initials into the search boxes
4. Change "Limit Search Results To" box to 1000 instead of 25
5. Hit "Search/Create" at the bottom of the page
6. If the consumer has been in the program before, his or her name should appear on the next page. Click the consumer name.
7. Choose "Create New Admission"
8. Put in current intake date and update any pertinent information
9. Hit "Process Admission" at the bottom of the page.

That's it!

HMIS DISCHARGE PROCEDURE:

To discharge a consumer from an agency program, complete the following steps:

1. From the *AWARDS Opening Menu* page, click **Discharge**. The *Discharge Menu* page is displayed.

2. Click the **Program** drop-down arrow and select the program from which the consumer is to be discharged.

3. Click the **Database** drop-down arrow and select "Data Entry."

4. To limit consumer selection by name, click the **A-Z** drop-down arrow and select the consumer's last name initial. An asterisk (*) in this field will include all consumers in the selection process.

5. Click **Process Discharge**. The *Consumer Discharge Roster Selection* page is displayed.

6. Click the **Current Program Roster** radio button.

7. Click **CONTINUE**. The *Program Discharge Consumer Selection* page is displayed.

8. Click the **Consumer** drop-down arrow and select the consumer to be discharged.

9. If the consumer is being discharged from a housing program, click the **New Housing Program** drop-down arrow and select the agency program to which the consumer is being discharged. If the consumer is not moving to another agency program, select "Discharge from Agency Housing."

TIP: This option is not available if the consumer is being discharged from a day program.

10. Click **CONTINUE**. The *Discharge Information* page is displayed.

11. Configure the fields and options on this page as necessary. For more information, see Working with Discharge Record Contents.

12. Click **APPLY**. The discharge information is saved and a read-only report version of the discharge record is displayed on the *Discharge Information* page.

> **TIP:** To make changes to the discharge information at this time, click **DATA ENTRY** to return to the *Discharge Information* data entry page. For more information on updating discharge records, see Updating a Discharge Record.
>
> **TIP:** When a consumer is discharged, his or her service plan is closed out in the program from which the discharge took place, regardless of whether he or she was discharged into another agency program.

The process of discharging a consumer from an agency program is now complete.

*******NOTE**********

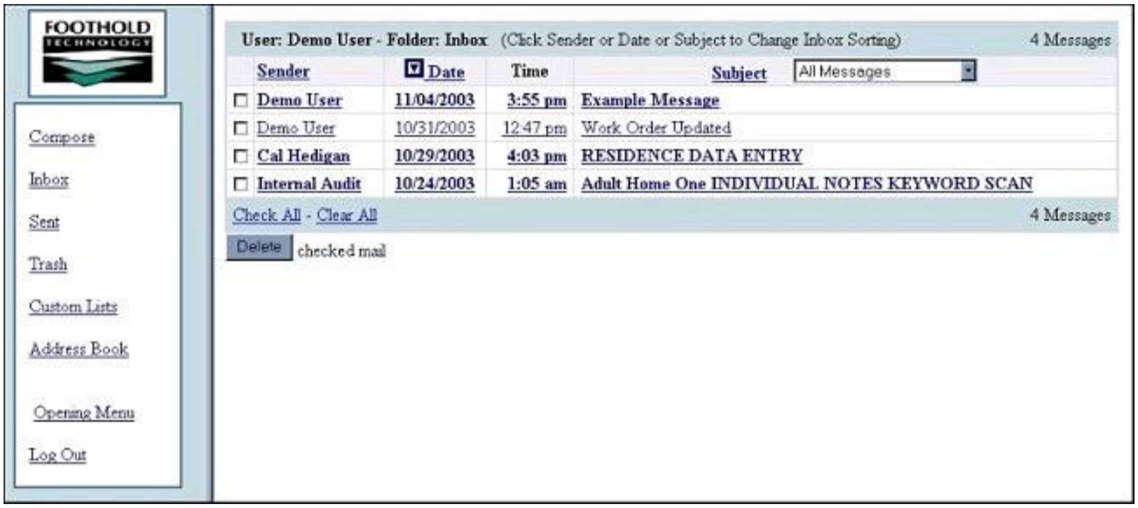
Household members need to be discharged separately. To process a household member's discharge, open the Household button on the consumer's profile page (in Archives if consumer has been discharged) and fill out a 'move out' date. At that point the discharge information will become available.

Messages Module (Secure E-mail and helpdesk)

The AWARDS Messages module is designed to be structured much like Internet e-mail applications using folders and indexes. Understanding this basic structure and layout can be useful when accessing and working with AWARDS messages.

The AWARDS messaging system display is comprised of two window "panes" - navigation and message - as seen here.

Navigation Pane **Message Pane**



Each feature of the messaging system is represented by a link in the navigation pane. Once a feature has been accessed using the corresponding navigation pane link, all messaging activities are carried out in the message pane.

For more information on either the navigation pane or the message pane, click the corresponding link here or scroll down to the appropriate section below:

- Navigation Pane
- Message Pane

Navigation Pane

Each of the AWARDS messaging system features and message folders can be accessed using a link in the navigation pane. These links are as follows:

Compose	This link is used to access the Compose feature, with which users can compose and send messages to other AWARDS users. For more information, see Composing Messages.
Help Desk	This link is used to access a problem reporting form with which users can report problems or questions to the Help Desk. For more information, see Reporting a Problem to the Help Desk.
Inbox	This link is used to access the inbox folder, from which users can open and view messages which they have received from other AWARDS users or as system generated messages. For more information, see Working in the Inbox.
Sent	This link is used to access the sent items folder, from which users can open and view messages which they have already sent to other AWARDS users. Users can also forward and reply to send messages within the sent items folder. For more information, see Working in the Sent Items Folder.
Trash	This link is used to access the trash folder, from which users can open and view deleted messages. Users can also restore ("un-delete") deleted messages from within the trash folder. For more information, see Working in the Trash Folder.
Custom Lists	This link is used to access the custom lists feature with which users can create and maintain lists of user groups to facilitate the selection of multiple like users when composing and sending messages. For more information, see Working with Custom Lists.
Address Book	This link is used to access the internal messaging system address book, from which users can compose messages to selected AWARDS users. For more information, see Working with the Address Book.
Inbox Folders	This link is used to access functionality with which users can create inbox sub-folders for the purposes of storing and organizing messages. For more information, see Working with Inbox Folders.
Opening Menu / Log Out	Like the navigation buttons on other AWARDS pages, these links can be used to access the *AWARDS Opening Menu* page, and to exit the application, respectively.

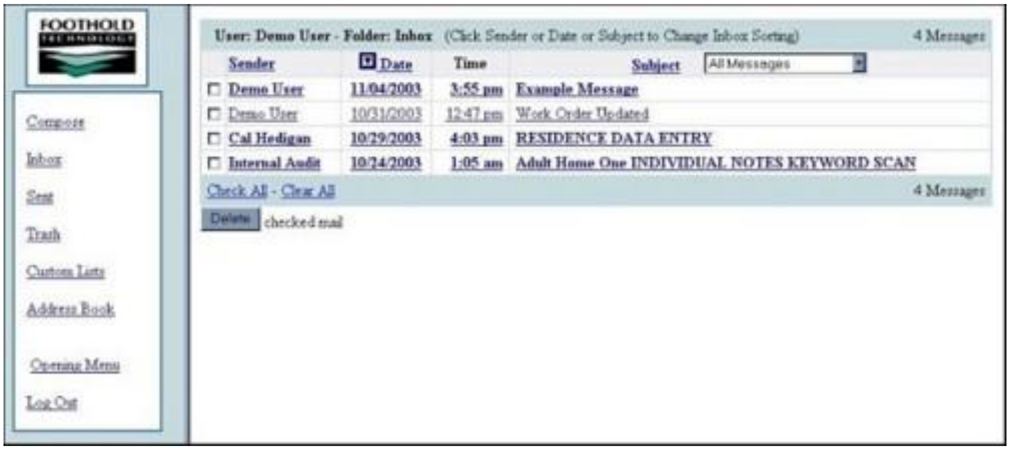
Message Pane

The AWARDS messaging system message pane is where all actions are carried out using the features accessed with navigation pane links. For example, the message pane is where messages are composed, viewed, and deleted, where the address book is viewed, and where custom lists are maintained.

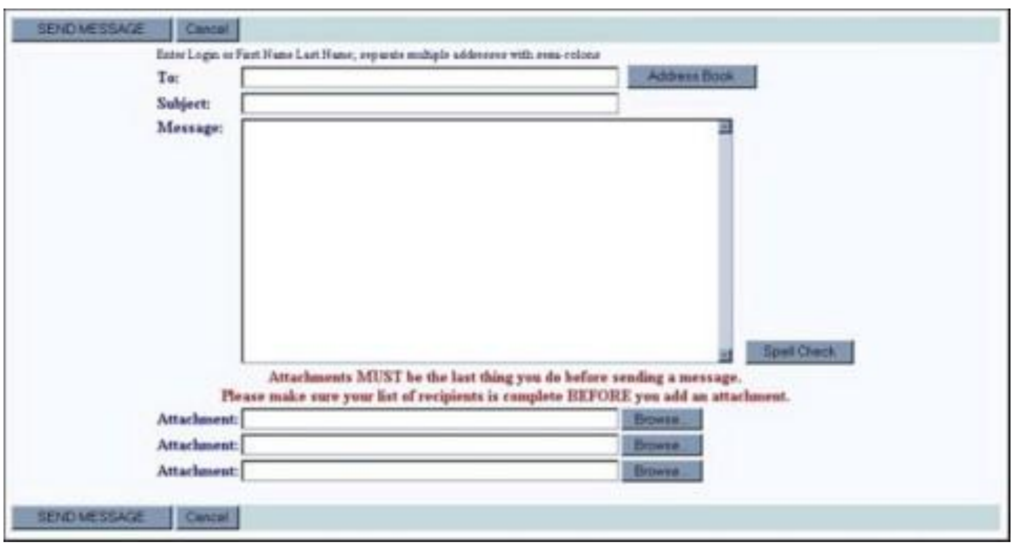
Composing and Sending a Message

To compose and send an internal message to another AWARDS user or group of users using the Messages module Compose feature, complete the following steps:

1. From the *AWARDS Opening Menu* page, click **Messages**. The *Messages* inbox page is displayed.



2. Click **Compose** in the navigation pane. The *Compose Message* page is displayed.



3. Specify the message recipient(s) by doing one of the following:

- **Type the recipient name(s) in the To field –** Type the user ID or first and last names of each AWARDS user to whom this message should be sent. Separate each user ID or name with a semi-colon.

- **Select the recipient name(s) using the Address Book –** Click **Address Book**. The *Address Book* page is displayed. Select individual users or a custom list of users, then click **Done** to return to the *Compose Message* page.

TIP: For more information on working with the address book, see Working with the Address Book.

4. In the **Subject** field, type the subject of the message.

5. In the **Message** text box, type the text of the message.

TIP: If the message text is to include a non-bulleted list of items where each item begins on a separate line, start each of those lines with a space. An asterisk (*) or period (.) placed after the space will create a bulleted list.

6. To attach a file to the message, do one of the following:

   - **Type the file path in the Attachment field –** Type the full file name and path of the file that is to be sent with this message.

   - **Select the file –** Click **Browse**. The *File Upload* dialog box is displayed. Select the file to be sent with this message, then click **Open**.

WARNING! Do not attach a file to the message until after all other message components have been entered or selected, including the message recipients.

Up to three attachments can be added to each message.

TIP: In total, attachments must not exceed 2MB in a single message.

7. Click **SEND MESSAGE**. The message is sent, a copy of the sent message is placed in the sent items folder, and the *Messages* inbox page is re-displayed.

TIP: To access the sent items folder, click the **Sent** link in the navigation pane. For more information, please see Working in the Sent Items Folder.

The process of composing and sending a message is now complete.

Using the Help Desk

The AWARDS Help Desk works in conjunction with the AWARDS Messages module to enable users to report AWARDS-related problems and to ask questions about the application for which solutions or answers could not be located in the Online Help system or training documents.

Submitting a Problem Report or Question to the Help Desk

In the event that a solution/answer was not found for your problem/question during the troubleshooting process, you'll need to submit that problem/question to the local Help Desk staff at your agency/continuum (or to Foothold Technology if you are a member of your agency's/continuum's local Help Desk team) by completing the following steps:

1. Click **Help Menu** from the bottom of any AWARDS page. The *Help Options* menu page is displayed.
2. Click **Help Desk**. A blank problem reporting form is opened in the AWARDS Messages module.


PLEASE PROVIDE THE HELP DESK WITH AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE.
The more information you provide, the quicker we can assist you.

To:	J Palmer; Paule Ross; Testy Greyston; Melissa Sunshower
Subject:*	

Problem/Question Details:

Please type a detailed description of your question or problem, and record information on the AWARDS area you are working with using the options that follow. When reporting a problem, be sure to list any steps taken prior to the problem's occurrence, including any selections made while completing the problematic task and the text of any error messages received. That detail will enable the Help Desk to replicate your experience as closely as possible and will speed up the investigation process.

Description:*	
	Spell Check
AWARDS Module:	
Module Page Title:	

Record/Data Details:

> **TIP:** Reporting forms can also be opened from within the Messages module directly by using the "Helpdesk" link on the left-hand side of the page.
>
> **TIP:** If you are a member of the local Help Desk team and have received a Help Desk item for which assistance is required from Foothold Technology, you can skip steps 1 and 2 and use the "Forward to Helpdesk" button on the original message rather than completing a brand new reporting form.

3. In the **Subject** field, please type a brief description of the problem or question.
4. In the "Problem/Question Details" portion of the form, configure the available fields and options as follows:

   - **Description –** In this text box please type a detailed description of your question or problem. When reporting a problem, be sure to list any steps taken prior to the problem's occurrence, including any selections made while completing the problematic task and the text of any error messages received. That detail will enable to Help Desk to replicate your experience as closely as possible and will speed up the investigation process.

   > **TIP:** When filling out the reporting form, keep in mind that the Help Desk is a totally secure means of requesting assistance which allows you to include detailed information regarding client records without breaching confidentiality.

- **AWARDS Module** – Click this drop-down arrow and select the module regarding which you have a question, or in which you were working when you experienced a problem. This option can be left blank if the question/problem report applies to more than one module.

- **Module Page Title –** If your question/problem is related to a specific page in a module, type the name of that page in this field. (The name is located in the page heading, beneath your name and the current date and time.)

5. If your problem or question is related to specific records or data in AWARDS, please configure the fields and options in the "Record / Data Details" portion of the form as follows:

   - **Data Date(s) –** In this field, type the dates of any relevant records; for example, if you are having a problem with a specific progress note or service plan, enter the note or plan date, respectively.

   - **Consumer Name –** In this field, type the name of the consumer(s) whose records you were working with, or enter "N/A" if the question/problem is not related to individual consumer records.

6. Identify yourself and the steps you took to gather information prior to contacting the Help Desk by configuring the fields and options in the "User Information" portion of the form as follows:

   - **Name/Login ID –** Click this drop-down arrow and select your name. If you are a member of the local Help Desk team and are reporting a problem for another user, please select that user's name rather than your own.

   - **Agency –** Click this drop-down arrow and select the name of the agency you work for and/or are submitting a problem or question for.

   - **Program –** Click this drop-down arrow and select the program you work for and/or are submitting a problem or question for. If you work with more than one program, the program you select here should be the one related to your problem or question. If the problem is happening for more than one program, or if your question is related to multiple programs, choose one of the "All" selections at the bottom of the list.

   - **Were you able to replicate the problem? –** Click this drop-down arrow and make a selection to indicate whether or not you attempted to replicate the user's problem prior to forwarding it to Foothold Technology. If you are forwarding a data change request, choose "N/A" from the selection list.

   > **TIP:** This option is only included on the form for members of the local Help Desk team. If you are a member of that team, it is important that whenever possible you attempt to replicate the problem and include details of your work with the original problem report details.

   - **Were you able to locate information on the problem/question in AWARDS Online Help? –** Click this drop-down arrow and make a selection to indicate whether or not you attempted to find a solution/answer within AWARDS Online Help as part of the troubleshooting process. If you are requesting a data change, choose "N/A" from the selection list.

7. If available, please attach screen shots or files related to your problem or question in the "Attachments" portion of the form.

8. Click **SEND MESSAGE**. If you are an end user, the message is sent to all members of your agency's/continuum's local Help Desk team, and any of those individuals (listed above the Subject field on the reporting form) may review your submission and respond to you. If you are a member of the local Help Desk team, the message is sent to Foothold Technology's Help Desk.

9. Periodically check your AWARDS Messages module inbox for a response to your problem report or question. When a response is received, review it carefully. In the event that the Help Desk was unable to investigate with the amount of information provided, you will be asked to supply additional details.

Otherwise, you will be provided with information about the area of the application you were working with, or with a resolution to any problem you may have been experiencing.

10. If you are a member of the local Help Desk team, use the "Forward to original sender" button on the response to pass it along to the user who originally sent in the Help Desk item (if someone other than yourself).

The process of submitting a problem report or question to the Help Desk is now complete.

AWARDS Online Help

AWARDS Online Help is a searchable information system available to all users. It includes instructions for using the application's various features, as well as definitions of the fields and options located in built-in forms and data entry pages throughout the system.

Below you will find information on the following topics regarding Online Help:

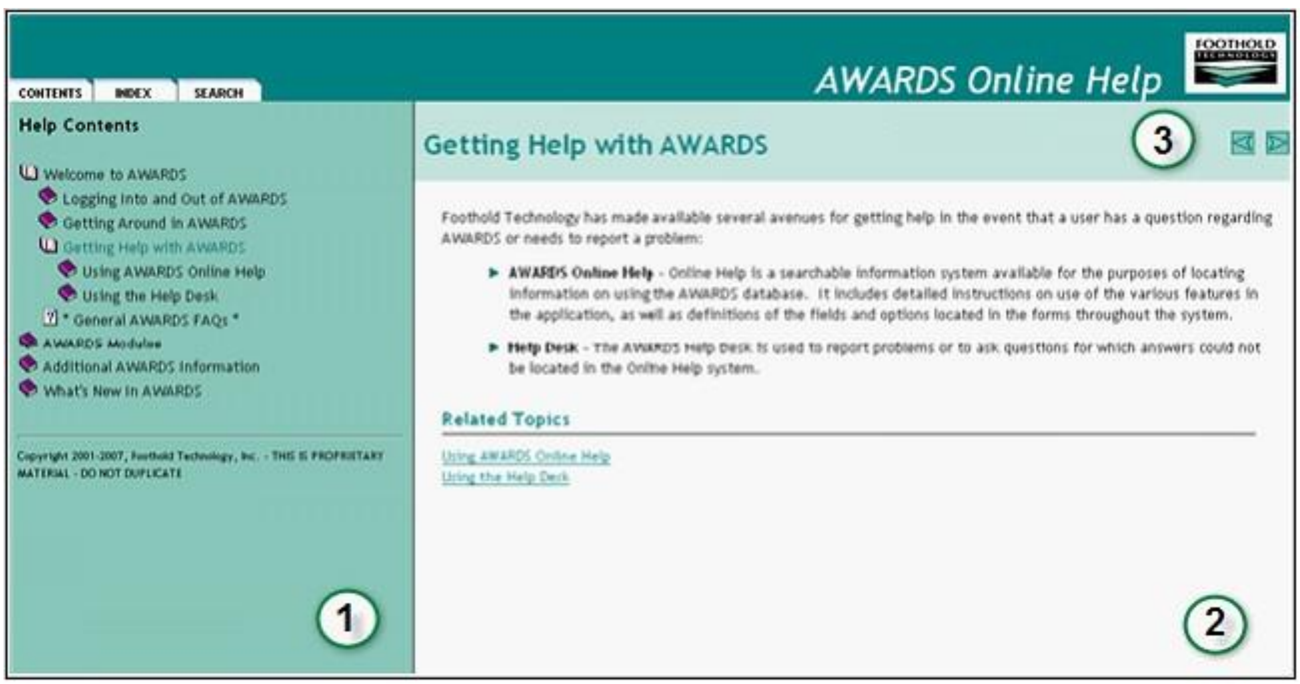
Accessing and Getting Around in Online Help

To access AWARDS Online Help, complete the following steps from within AWARDS:

1. Click **Help Menu** at the bottom of any AWARDS page. The *Help Options* menu page is displayed.
2. Click **AWARDS Online Help**. By default, Online Help automatically opens to a topic related to the part of the AWARDS application in which you are working.

> **TIP:** When accessing the Help system from the *AWARDS Opening Menu* page, it opens to a welcome page rather than to specific content.

Though the content of the Online Help page you first see upon opening the system may vary, all pages have the same basic structure – shown in this diagram and explained below.



Familiarizing yourself with this structure will allow you to move through the Online Help system more quickly and easily.

(1) Navigation Pane

The "navigation" pane on the left-hand side of the Online Help page is used for moving through, and locating information within, the Online Help system. At the top of the navigation pane there are three tabs – CONTENTS, INDEX, and SEARCH – that are used to access the table of contents, Online Help index, and search feature, respectively. The uses of each of these tabs are discussed in greater detail later in this document.

(2) Help Topic Pane

When a Help topic is selected for viewing, the content of that topic is displayed in the "help topic" pane on the right-hand side of the AWARDS Online Help page. If the entire content of the topic is not shown on the page, scroll bars are made available for the purposes of moving to the remaining text.

(3) Topic Title and Navigation Buttons

The title of the Online Help topic currently being viewed is displayed at the top of the help topic pane. To the right of the topic title are left and right arrow navigation buttons. These buttons can be used to move to the preceding or following Online Help topic as determined by the table of contents. The topic title and navigation buttons are both non-scrolling, meaning that they will always be visible even it if is necessary to scroll down through a page of topic content.

Using the Online Help Table of Contents

The table of contents is displayed by default when the Online Help system is opened. It can also be accessed by clicking the CONTENTS tab at the top of the Online Help navigation pane. Within the table of contents topics are grouped into four main sections.

Each of these sections, described in detail below, is expandable and collapsible and contains related topics, subtopics, and information pages. The sections and their subtopics are listed on the table of contents next to an open or closed book icon. Clicking a closed book expands the corresponding portion of the table of contents so that its subtopics and information pages are shown and can in turn be expanded or viewed, respectively. Clicking an open book collapses the corresponding portion of the table of contents so that its subtopics and information pages are hidden from view.

TIP: In addition to providing access to different parts of the table of contents, books may contain help information. If so, that information is displayed in the help topic pane of the Online Help page when the book is clicked.

Beneath each section's subtopics in the table of contents are information pages, all listed next to a question mark icon. Clicking an information page in the table of contents displays (in the help topic pane of the Online Help page) detailed information and/or instructions on the corresponding portion of.

Welcome to AWARDS

This portion of Online Help contains information on accessing AWARDS and navigating through the system. It also contains a "General FAQs" page that contains frequently asked questions related to the application as a whole, and regarding common errors that can occur throughout the system.

AWARDS Modules

This portion of Online Help contains a section for each of the modules available in AWARDS (listed alphabetically). Within each module section there is a list of its features, beneath which is located links to pages with detailed instructions on use of those features. Each module section also contains a frequently asked questions (FAQ) page.

TIP: FAQ pages, which are updated on an ongoing basis, are a powerful tool for troubleshooting and understanding key components of AWARDS' various features. When using the FAQ, keep in mind that the questions they contained are grouped by topic, and within each topic are sorted alphabetically. Clicking on a question displays its answer, and clicking on that question a second time hides the answer. This type of expandable content can also be found elsewhere in AWARDS Online Help. Specifically, wherever there is a , it is an indication that clicking on the underlined text next to that icon will result in the display of additional information.

Getting Help with AWARDS

This portion of Online Help provides instructions on using Online Help, the online Training System, and contacting the Help Desk.

Additional AWARDS Information

This portion of Online Help links the user to the AWARDS Training Information system where you can access PDF versions of the instruction, information, and tip sheets distributed at trainings. Included among these training documents are instruction sheets for any recently deployed new features.

What's New in AWARDS

This portion of Online Help contains a list of new AWARDS features deployed to all databases (referred to as recent enhancements) as well as a list of recently offered optional enhancements.

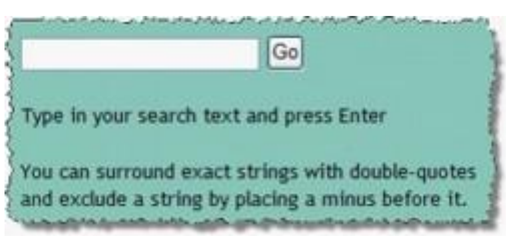
Using the Online Help Index

The index is accessed by clicking the **INDEX** tab at the top of the Online Help navigation pane. It contains an alphabetical list of all topics found in the AWARDS Online Help system. Within the index, click the link for any of the listed topics to view information on that topic.

Searching for Information in Online Help

The search functionality in the Online Help system enables you to enter a topic or keyword for which you would like to locate information. It then provides you with a list of relevant topics based on your search criteria. To conduct a search, complete the following steps:

1. Click the **SEARCH** tab at the top of the Online Help navigation pane. The contents of the search tab are displayed.



2. In the field at the top of the tab, type a keyword (for example, "intake") or task (for example, "processing intake"). For a broader range of results, use more generic terms. For narrower results, use more specific terms and/or surround your keywords with quotes.

3. Press **<ENTER>** on your keyboard or click **Go**. If search results are found they are listed in the help topic pane.

4. Click the link for any of the search results to view the corresponding Help information.

> **TIP:** To return to the search results page from within a Help topic, click your browser's back button. If your browser's back button is not available, right-click on the Help page and select **Back**.

The process of conducting a search is now complete.

Printing Online Help Information

All Online Help topics can be printed using your browser's print function. To print a topic you are currently viewing, complete one of the following sets of steps based on the type of browser you are using:

When *Internet Explorer* is your browser:

1. Right-click your mouse on the portion of the page containing the help text you want to print.
2. From the menu that is displayed, click **Print**. The *Print* dialog box is displayed.
3. Click the **Options** tab.
4. In the "Print Frames" portion of the tab, click the **Only the Selected Frame** radio button.
5. Click **Print**. The selected topic is printed.

When *Firefox* is your browser:

1. Click your mouse on the portion of the page containing the help text you want to print.
2. On the browser's menu bar, click **File**.
3. From the menu that is displayed, click **Print**. The *Print* dialog box is displayed.
4. In the "Print Frames" portion of the dialog box, select **The selected frame**.
5. Click **Print**. The selected topic is printed.

Updating a Contacts Log Record

To update an existing contacts log record, complete the following steps:

1. From the AWARDS Opening Menu page, click Services. The Consumer Services Menu page is displayed.

2. Click the Program drop-down arrow and select the program or program type associated with the consumer for whom a contacts log record is to be updated.

3. Click the Database drop-down arrow and select "Data Entry."

4. To limit consumer selection by name, click the A-Z drop-down arrow and select the consumer's last name initial. An asterisk (*) in this field will include all consumers in the selection process.

5. If the contacts log record to be updated is for a former (discharged) consumer, click the Roster Archives check box.

6. Click Contacts Log. The Contacts Log Data Entry page is displayed.

7. Click the Consumer drop-down arrow and select the consumer for whom the contacts log record is to be updated.

8. Click CONTINUE. The Individual Contacts Log Editing Index page is displayed.

This page contains a list of all existing contacts log records for the selected consumer that have dates which fall within editing window date range shown at the top of the page. Contacts log records in this list for which there are corresponding progress notes are indicated by an asterisk (*).

9. Click the Selected radio button next to the contacts log record to be updated.

TIP: Contacts log records written by other users cannot be selected for updating.

10. Click CONTINUE. The Contacts Log Settings page is displayed.

11. Make changes or additions to the contacts log information on this page as necessary. For more information, please see Working with Contents Log Record Contents.

When entering or updating a corresponding progress note, continue with step 13. When not entering or updating a corresponding progress note, continue with step 12.

12. Click CONTINUE. The contacts log record is saved, and the updated Individual Contacts Log Editing Index page is displayed.

The process of updating a contacts log record is now complete.

13. Click CONTINUE. The Progress Note Composition page is displayed.

14. If necessary, click the Service Type drop-down arrow and select a different service type for the progress note.

15. Click the Crisis? drop-down arrow and select "Routine" or "Crisis" to indicate the nature of the contact on which this note is reporting.

16. In the text box provided, make changes or additions to the progress note text as necessary.

WARNING! If all progress note text is deleted and SAVE NOTE is clicked, the note will be deleted. Deleting the progress note in this way also deletes the associated contacts log record. The note and contacts log record can also be deleted at this time by clicking DELETE.

17. If necessary, click the Sign Off Note check box. When this option is selected, no note overwriting or edits are allowed after the note is saved.

TIP: This option is only available when the business rules "Automatic Sign Off" option is not selected. For more information please see Working with System Business Rules.

18. Click SAVE NOTE. The contacts log record and progress note are saved and the updated Individual Progress Notes Editing Index page is displayed.

The process of updating a contacts log record and progress note is now complete.

TIP: For more information on progress notes, please see Working with Progress Notes.

Capital Region Homeless Management System (HMIS)

Policies & Procedures Manual

Updated 9/2008

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Capital Region HMIS

Policies & Procedures Manual

Introduction

In order to implement and maintain a region-wide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), CARES and the HMIS Advisory Committee have developed the following Policies and Procedures Manual to outline and define the goals and objectives of the Capital Region HMIS. This document delineates the roles and responsibilities of each agency involved in the project. Each participating agency is asked to sign the agreement form on the last page indicating that the agency has reviewed these policies and procedures and will comply with them.

The Capital Region HMIS is comprised of Albany, Columbia, Hamilton, Greene, Jefferson, Lewis, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Washington and Warren counties. The Capital Region represents an area that includes a population of approximately 750,000. More than one hundred agencies operate close to 2,500 shelter, transitional living, and permanent supportive housing beds for people who are homeless in the Capital Region. Under the auspices of CARES, the majority of these agencies are jointly participating in a regional HMIS to support local data collection, service and planning functions, and to fulfill the HMIS directive from HUD. The Capital Region HMIS captures client-level information over time regarding the characteristics and service needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness within participating counties.

Purpose of the CR-HMIS

- To meet HUD's requirement to produce an unduplicated count of homeless
- To develop new means of regional collaboration
- To facilitate continuity of care in homeless services
- To develop programs that are responsive to the needs of homeless individuals and families

In 2001, Congress directed the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement a national data collection system to produce an unduplicated count of persons using homeless services. The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a computerized data collection system used by multiple agencies to capture the number, characteristics and demographic information of persons utilizing these services.

The Capital Region HMIS has a tremendous capacity to strengthen the collaboration among homeless service providers. Utilizing this coordinated system to count and track homeless trends in the Capital Region has allowed providers to collect data using a universal language for the first time. Methods and procedures for recording use of service are standardized, thereby giving all service providers a common denominator for discussions about the quantity and quality of services. Perhaps most important, homeless service providers are working together in a new manner to track those activities and trends that transcend the individual agency.

Goals

- ***Unduplicated count***: The HMIS will provide an unduplicated count of the number of individuals accessing services from homeless service providers in the Capital Region.
- ***Service tracking and trends***: The HMIS will identify demographic and service utilization trends.
- ***Streamlined referral process***: The HMIS will create a comprehensive database of homeless services throughout the twelve county region.
- ***Enhanced service delivery***: Through tracking client service trends, the HMIS will identify service areas in need of enhancement and growth.
- ***Information for policymaking***: Aggregate data will be shared with homeless service advocates, government officials and researchers. This information will better inform our understanding of homelessness and guide public policy and program development.

Participation

All recipients of HUD McKinney-Vento funds are required to participate in the HMIS. This includes recipients of Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds, Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Shelter Plus Care (S+C), Section 8 Mod Rehab for SRO. In addition, persons using the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) services must also be included. HUD also encourages participation of all agencies who serve the homeless population, including those funded by both other federal programs and non-government sources. Participation of organizations that do not receive HUD Continuum of Care funding is voluntary, but strongly encouraged in order to achieve an accurate picture of homeless services in the Capital Region.

Benefits to the Capital Region Continuums of Care

In addition to fulfilling the HUD requirements, participation in the HMIS enables the twelve participating counties to report accurate statistical data to funders and policy makers regarding clients' financial resources, county of origin, and use of services. It ensures that all local providers are using a common intake instrument, thereby providing the most effective and efficient service to clients. In addition, individual agencies benefit from the ability to electronically manage their client records and generate reports in a timely and accurate manner.

Administrative Structure:

There are three major components to the Capital Region Homeless Management System's administrative structure: the Implementation Team, Lead Agency and Advisory Committee.

Lead Agency

The lead agency for the Capital Region HMIS is the Corporation for AIDS Research, Education and Services (CARES Inc.). CARES, Inc. is a not-for-profit agency whose mission is assisting local communities in expanding housing and other resources for homeless persons and/or persons with disabilities. As the lead agency for coordinating the Continuum of Care groups in six Capital Region Counties, CARES was asked by providers to assume responsibility for the HMIS development and implementation. Having led the initial implementation of the HMIS in those counties, CARES continues to act as the System Administrator for the HMIS, providing ongoing training, technical assistance, consulting, database management, reporting and help desk support to the Continuums of Care with the HMIS. CARES also acts as an intermediary between the software vendor and participating agencies, handling the billing and payments for the software and keeping current with the HUD requirements and trends.

Training

CARES offers on-going User training for new Users and for current users who need a refresher on the basics. Training sessions will be provided in 3-hour sessions for which attendees are required to sign up in advance. Users participating in each training session are expected to be computer-literate and to attend the full training session.

Additionally, Advanced User trainings, Program Director and Administrator trainings, regular usergroups and periodic CoC updates will be held regularly to help agencies best use and monitor the HMIS system and accompanying software.

Technical Assistance

All concerns with utilizing the HMIS system should be directed to Allyson Thiessen at CARES. Allyson can be reached by phone at 489-4130 and by e-mail at allysont@caresny.org or through the HMIS (AWARDS) internal messaging and helpdesk modules for confidential e-mail capability. CARES offers assistance to agencies trying to better integrate the use of the HMIS software into existing procedures though telephone conferences and occasional site visits. Assistance in gathering agency or County-wide aggregate information for funding sources and grant writing is also available when a written request is made at least a week in advance.

Community Reporting with the HMIS

Each month the HMIS System Administrator exports a system-wide aggregation of data. This information is utilized to determine which agencies are compliant with the system. It is also used to identify areas that need to be more thoroughly defined for individual agencies. Additional training or technical assistance is made available based on need.

Quarterly and annual reports are generated to share with the entire Capital Region HMIS. These reports include a summary of the number of individuals participating in services in each program for the given time period. These reports do not include names, social security numbers, or any other identifying characteristics of individual clients. Trends in the quarterly and annual reports are examined by the HMIS Advisory Committee and reported to the CoC governing body.

HUD-required reports are generated and distributed after notifying all participating agencies of the request. Under no circumstances is client-level data distributed.

Individual agency data results are not distributed or publicized by agency name without permission from the participating agency. Agency data results are aggregated with other like programs within the county and/or region to identify community trends. In cases where an individual agency is the only service provider within a county, aggregated data is not released with the attached agency name.

Implementation Committee

The role of the Implementation Committee is to establish community goals for the HMIS, and assist the lead agency with investigating, choosing and negotiating a contract with a software vendor. In addition, the Implementation Committee assists in coordinating the implementation of the HMIS community-wide, addressing issues and concerns along with the lead agency to help make the HMIS both functional and beneficial within the community.

Advisory Committee

The role of the Advisory Committee is to facilitate a better working HMIS and to continue to make sure that it meets the needs of the Continuums of Care as well as HUD, an Advisory Committee made up of representatives from each county meets quarterly. It is the role of this committee to bring forward issues of particular concern to their Continuum of Care coordinating body in order to find solutions to problems or issues that come up with the HMIS and to set standards regarding such issues as: consumer privacy and confidentiality, regular reporting schedules, information sharing, software choices, and user/agency monitoring.

Privacy and Security

Baseline privacy standards are required of all programs and must balance the need to protect the confidentiality of client data with the practical realities of homeless service providers. Each agency is requested to review and/or develop a privacy policy specific to individual agency needs that includes HMIS activities as it pertains to confidential client data. A copy of the agency privacy policy must be provided to CARES, Inc., the HMIS System Administrators.

This privacy policy may include, but is not limited to the following activities:

- Post a sign at each intake desk or comparable location that gives a general explanation of the reasons for collecting client information.
- Distribute a written Privacy Notice to clients.
- Post the agency Privacy Notice on the agency's website.
  In addition, each agency is asked to:
- Maintain permanent documentation of all Privacy Notice amendments.
- Ensure that staff members and volunteers at the agency comply with the Privacy Notice.
- Install and maintain a firewall on the user's computer or the agency network.

HMIS Access

The AWARDS software is a web-based software system accessed through the Internet. Each agency user is assigned a log-in name and a password to access the system. Each user is assigned specific permissions to view and work only with those programs and records he or she has been assigned. A user in one program within an agency could be prohibited from viewing or modifying any records in another program area and, because at this time no Continuums of Care are data sharing through the system, no user can access the files of any other agency. All users are reminded to never share their log-in names or passwords with anyone else.

Software Security

Maintaining individual client privacy is among the highest priorities in managing the HMIS. The AWARDS software includes the latest 128-bit encryption process that renders it completely unintelligible to outsiders and intruders (this is the same as online security used by banks). Information sent from individual agency sites cannot be unscrambled. In addition, a highly sophisticated series of user names and passwords protect data from unauthorized viewing and manipulation within individual agencies, ensuring no one has access to information they should not see. Data security is also monitored by the System Administrator through regular reports and activities.

HIPAA Compliance

Compliance with HIPAA regulations is only required for covered entities; community service providers that are also determined to be health care providers. For agencies that meet these criteria, participation in the HMIS requires compliance with HIPAA as defined and arranged within the agency. CARES, as the System Administrator, follows HIPPA precautions with all consumers in all agencies.

Distribution of HMIS Data

CARES Inc. will provide quarterly and yearly reports on the aggregate data collected within the HMIS to the corresponding CoCs as well as the Advisory Committee. This is public information and, upon written request, a copy of the latest and historical reports will be provided to anyone.

Aggregate, County-wide data will be provided to HUD annually through the AHAR report.

Aggregate and individual agency-level data may be provided to users and administration of that agency upon request for data-quality reasons or to meet agency need. Non-users within an agency requesting any aggregate or individual data must have the written consent of the agency Executive-Director.

Individual identifying information, Agency level information or any aggregate data that may potentially point out an individual or single agency will not be distributed in any reporting. Individuals, agencies or governing bodies who wish individual or agency level data will need to go through that agency’s Executive Director for that information to avoid conflict with the CR-HMIS privacy policies.

Responsibilities

Participating agencies and users both have specific responsibilities when using the HMIS to ensure proper functioning of the system, accurate data collection as well as the privacy and security of all consumers. These responsibilities are outlined below.

Participating Agency Responsibilities

CARES will enter into a Business Associates Agreement with agencies that are eligible to participate in the HMIS. The Business Associates Agreement will outline the specific manner in which CARES will utilize the data submitted in the HMIS.

The participating agency is responsible for all activities associated with agency staff access and use of the Foothold Software System (AWARDS). The agency will be held responsible for any misuse of the software system by the designated staff.

It is recommended that each participating agency:

- Establish operating practices to ensure organizational adherence to the HMIS Policies and Procedures.
- Establish a privacy policy to ensure the protection the confidential client data.
- Communicate operating practices including privacy protection and User responsibilities to agency users. Document that each User understands and accepts the User responsibilities.
- Monitor compliance and periodically review control decisions.
- Edit and update agency information, including staff, location, and capacity, as needed.
- Train new staff on the uses of the Foothold software system, including a review of the Capital Region HMIS Policies and Procedures and any agency operating practices and privacy notice.
- Notify all Users in their agency of interruptions in service.
- Detect and respond to violations of the Policies and Procedures or agency procedures.
- Maintain complete and accurate client records.

User Responsibilities

Each User within a participating agency is responsible for maintaining client privacy and protecting each client's protected personal information. Client information shall include, but not be limited to: client's name, address, telephone number, social security number, type of medical care provided, medical condition or diagnosis, veteran status, employment information, and any and all other information relating to the client's programming.

A User ID and Password will be provided to each User within the agency by the System Administrator.

All Users must understand and accept the following responsibilities for utilizing the HMIS:

- The User ID and Password are for User use only and must not be shared with anyone. All Users will take all reasonable means to keep Passwords physically secure.
- All Users will log-off the system before leaving the work area.
- Users must not decline services to a client or potential client if that person refuses to allow entry of information in the HMIS (except if that policy is over-ridden by agency policy or if the information is required to be collected as a condition of receiving services).
- The User has primary responsibility for information entered by the User. Information entered by users is truthful, accurate and complete to the best of the User's knowledge.
- Users will not solicit from or enter information about clients into the HMIS unless the information is required for a legitimate program purpose such as to provide services to the client.
- Any hard copies of personally identifiable (client-level) information printed from the HMIS must be kept in a secure file, and destroyed when no longer needed.
- All Users must immediately notify the Agency Executive Director should a breach in security be recognized or suspected.
- Users may only access the HMIS from a designated terminal, following agency guidelines for electronic access of records. Access to the HMIS from public or unsecured computers and networks is prohibited.

<u>Data Entry</u>

In order for data to be meaningful across program sites, data must be consistently added and updated in the AWARDS system. HUD has identified minimum data standards with which all participating agencies must comply. Information for these minimum data fields must be gathered at each site, and regularly updated throughout the client's stay with the program. All data will be collected at intake and discharge. While agencies are not currently required to maintain real-time data records, it is important that all data be complete and up-to-date within two weeks of client activity.

HMIS Software

After an extensive and objective selection process that was guided by the HMIS Implementation Committee, CARES contracted with Foothold Technology as the software vendor for the Capital Region HMIS. Foothold's software, AWARDS, is a web-based system in which users access the system over the Internet. The AWARDS software includes a comprehensive case management software system that each agency can utilize for managing client records, case notes, and referral information, if desired.

Universal Data Elements

Universal data elements have been established by HUD and must be collected by all agencies serving homeless persons. The universal data elements make it possible to obtain unduplicated estimates of the number of homeless persons accessing services from homeless providers and also provide basic demographic characteristics of people who are homeless, and their patterns of services. Using the universal data standards will also allow measurement of the number and percentage of chronically homeless people who use homeless services. The HMIS software has safeguards built into the intake and discharge so that an intake may not be completed without filling in these data elements; however, due to changes in HUD requirements and upgrades to the software, it may be necessary for some agencies to correct historical data to become compliant with the current HUD technical data standards. Additionally, the Continuum of Care may request that specific, non-required fields be filled out for community planning purposes.

System User Licensure

Each program within an agency will be permitted a specific number of program users to access the HMIS. The participating agency's HMIS System Administrator will have the ability to add these users to the system as needed. Agencies exceeding the permitted number of system users will be charged an additional fee at a rate of $5.00 per user per month. For such fees, CARES will generate a standardized invoice and submit to the participating agency's HMIS system administrator.

Due to the nature of billing from Foothold, CARES can only offer extra users in blocks of ten. Therefore, to add additional users, participating agencies will need to work in cooperation with CARES while a complete block of additional users is added to the entire Capital Region system.

Participating Agency Fee Structure

Use of the AWARDS software system will be available to each participating agency free of charge for the first three years of implementation. Funds will be pursued to continue utilization of the HMIS through HUD, the State of New York, and private funders. All HMIS participants will be made aware of continued funding availability for this program and will given a minimum of six months should individual agencies be required to accept some of the financial responsibility for the program.

Program Customization

The AWARDS software can be modified to meet specific needs of an agency. Customizations that are above and beyond those created for the Capital Region HMIS will be completed at an additional expense to the agency. All private program customizations will be facilitated and contracted through CARES, Inc.

Modifications that could be completed at an additional charge may include, but are not exclusive to: additional number of users, additional training, program customization, additional security to allow transfer of data among specific agencies, and others that are outside those identified by the HMIS Implementation Team.

Data-Sharing

Data-sharing may be used among programs for case management purposes. Data-sharing can be used to streamline the intake process and reduce duplication of benefits. ***However, due to security and confidentiality issues, data will not be automatically shared among agencies.***

Data sharing among collaborating agencies is possible and would lend itself to reduction of duplicate data entry. To establish security among two or more agencies, additional fees will be assessed. In addition, consent agreements and release of information must be completed by the individual client prior to establishing this system.