

# HMIS Technology Strategic Sourcing Analysis

## Multnomah County Provider Workshop

31 October 2023

Engagement #: E000653 | Version 1



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# Gartner conducted a workshop to learn about the experience of homeless services organizations using the HMIS.

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is used by Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties to collect and report information about individuals experiencing homelessness in the Tri-County area.

During the October 2023 Multnomah County JOHS virtual provider conference, Gartner conducted a one-hour workshop with over 20 representatives of local service provider organizations and public agencies to learn about their experience using the Tri-County HMIS.

The session was held over Zoom and utilized Miro, a collaborative virtual whiteboarding tool, to collect participant perspectives.

The **objective** of the session was to **discuss and capture information** about the following:

- How do you use the HMIS today?
- What is working well with the current HMIS?
- What are your pain points with the current HMIS?
- What are the biggest challenges or gaps in the technology and data you currently have available?
- How can technology and data better support and enable your work?
- How can the HMIS be more valuable to you?
- What is your wish list for how to improve the Homeless Service Delivery System?
- What outcomes would you expect with more effective technology and data?

Multnomah County has engaged with Gartner Consulting to conduct a **strategic technology analysis of the HMIS**.

Gartner is interviewing key staff, stakeholders, and subject matter experts to **gather critical input** to develop the following:

- A **summary of the current state** of the HMIS, looking at strategy, people, process, technology, and data
- A **future state vision** for how stakeholders will leverage the HMIS and how it fits in the larger regional homelessness response system
- **Business capabilities** required to enable the HMIS vision and where the county currently stands relative to those capabilities
- A scan of the current market for HMIS solutions and how they compare to the HMIS vision

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# How do you use the HMIS today?

Checking to make sure service transactions are being done

I am brand-new and just here to absorb

getting people on coordinated access list

Compliance only

We use HMIS to collect all of our client data, case notes, and reporting.

To support providers and users with admin

OJF: reporting ES programs, HUD Programs, STRA & MSI programs, & PSH programs.

We use HMIS for all our data entry and reporting for the majority of our programs. All case management notes are maintained outside of HMIS

To support JOHS staff projects

Enter information for a new client during intake

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# What is **working well** with the **current HMIS**?

N/A

Able to see what other services the participant is accessing

Drop down selections for data instead of fill in the blanks ←

The workflow process for shelter intakes is smooth.

We are able to keep track of our clients and services .

\*Bits\* of a community information system (CIS), but more needed - want: case load capacities, budgetary capacities

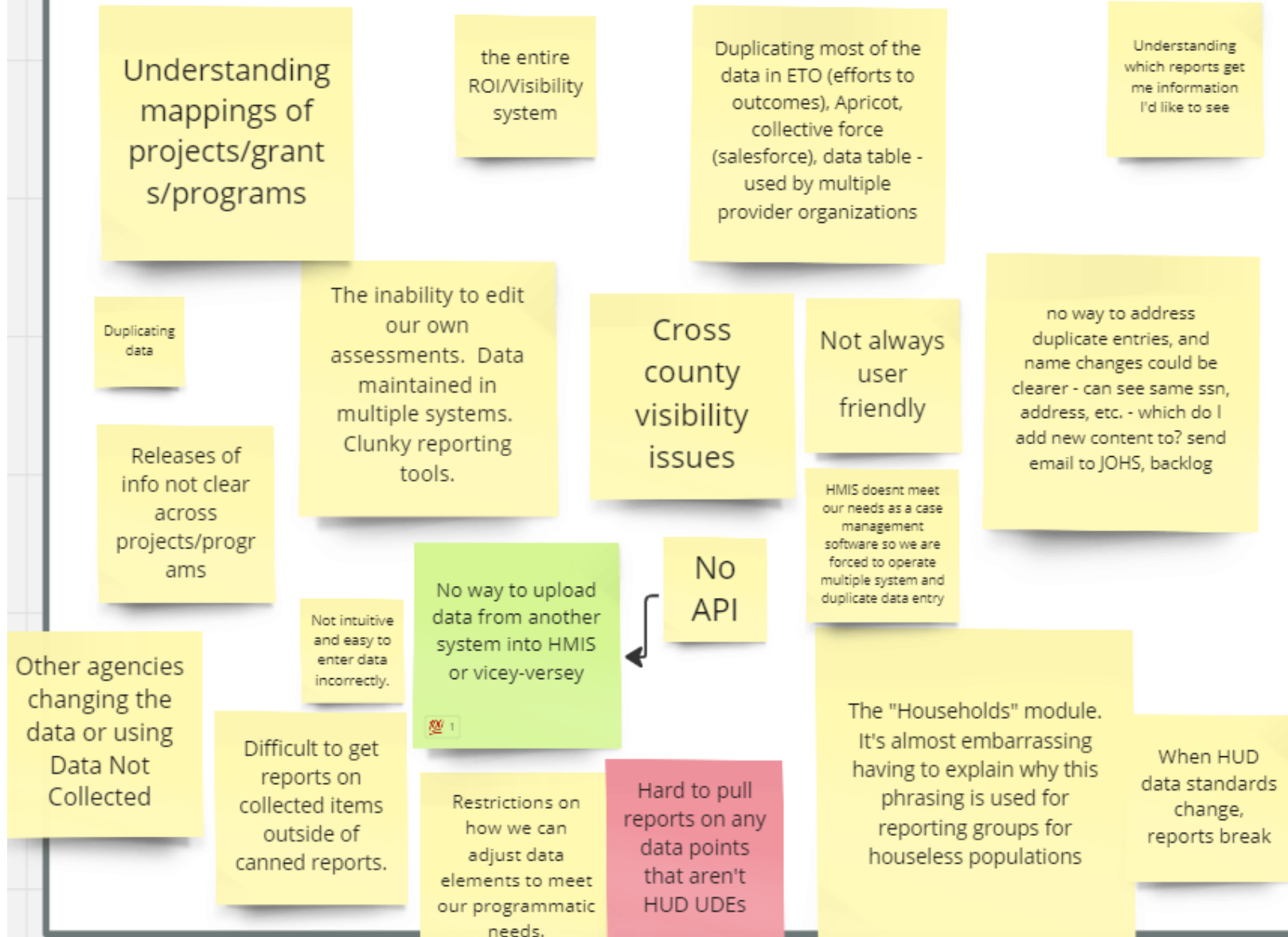
Duplicate check right away :)

[Two empty yellow sticky notes]

Stable system: has been in use since over 15 years?

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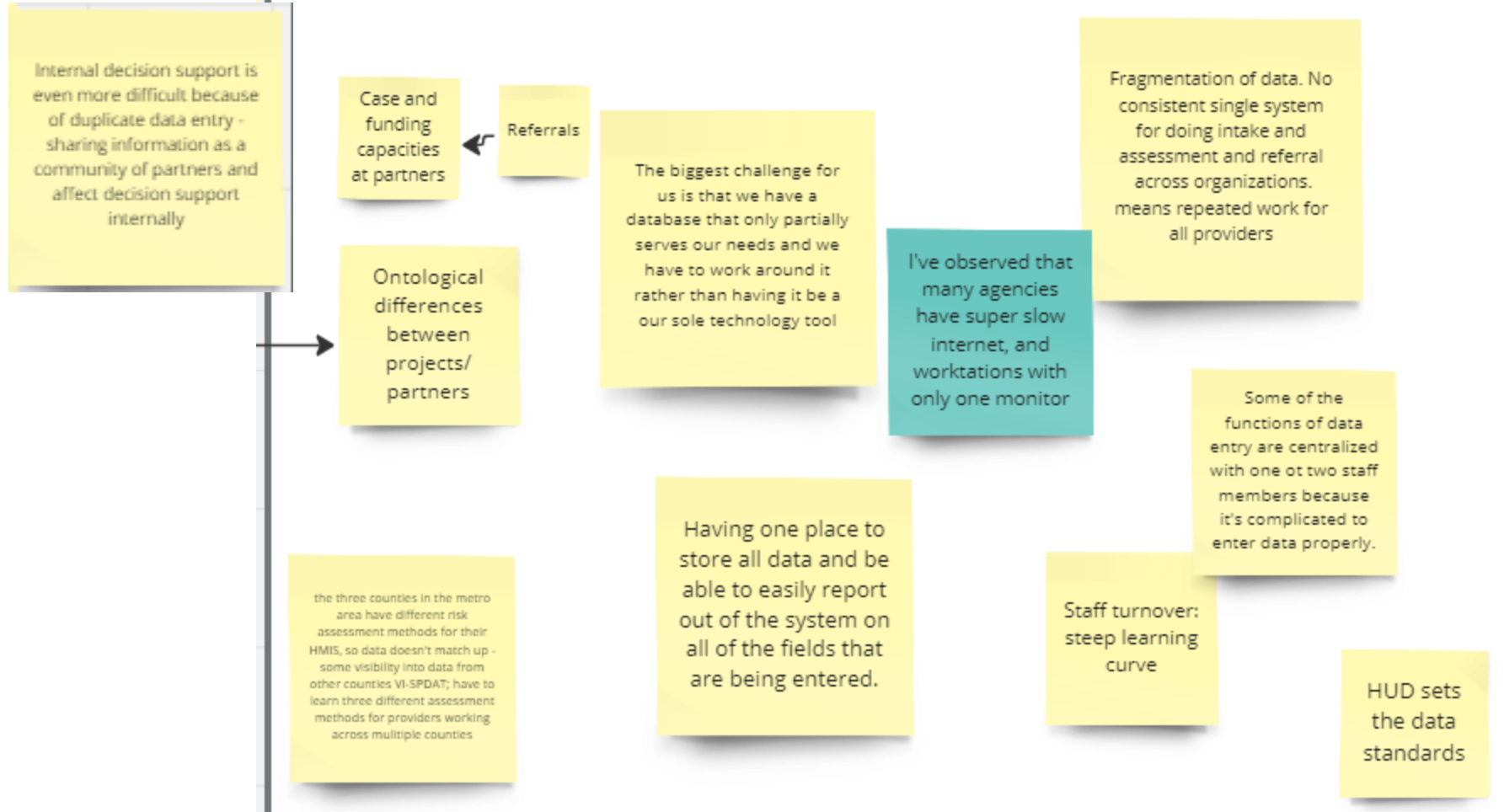
# What are your **pain points** with the **current HMIS**?



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# What are the biggest **challenges or gaps** in the **technology and data** you currently have available?

Does anyone keep notes elsewhere, and then just add the basics to the system as you need to?



## How can **technology and data** better support and enable your work?





## How can the **HMIS** be more **valuable** to you?

OJF will always have an external database: the agency has multiple teams using various databases, so ETO is where energy, resident services, employment, community services for justice, LearnLinks all report. It is the singular system. HMIS will never serve as that.

Have standardized data for community reports but also ability to tailor parts of the system to specific program needs so providers don't need to keep data in multiple places.

Put all this data in, but don't get any data out - need real time data, one system so not repeatedly signing up

right now its data into the hmis system but no anonymized data out to support planning identifying gaps and writing grants

Have information that is easy to access, easy to enter (data in) and easy to pull and understand results (data out)

# What is your **wish list** for how to improve the Homeless Service Delivery System?

Ontological unification between partners / projects: response options differ, hard to define streamlined options, end up with internal methods/systems and external systems/methods. Paperwork as well as technology.

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Simplified Data Entry with flagging for errors AS THEY ARE ENTERED.

Assessment Page for systems reporting and assessment pages developed for individual programs.

When doing a new project entry and updating HUD verifications, have an END button that autofills with the day before the new answer.

TA as part of our contracts

Supporting partners to develop SOPs

Easy and useful reports.

Integrate the PITC

Best Practice Sharing among agencies.

Streamline intake and assessment to reduce user time spent seeking services

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OixXFb-t2u14pKsL5R2aCKg70F4s7-e4ge1JC\\_yvKQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OixXFb-t2u14pKsL5R2aCKg70F4s7-e4ge1JC_yvKQ/edit)

A way to create quick entries for people asking for services without collecting all of the required HMIS fields up front.

A reporting tool that makes sense and is also user friendly. It shouldn't take hours to figure out what field you need to include in order to get the answers you're looking for.

American Evaluation Association - program evaluators came together to work on issues, affected some changes at federal level - trying to also be culturally responsive and aware of culturally specific definitions, etc. Balance between unification and allowing for differentiation to be possible.

Standardized information that makes logical sense. "Households" as Reporting Groups instead since that's what they are. "Place not meant for habitation" is not how a participant will ever phrase their answer. Having information hidden until it's scrolled over even though it's necessary. (The Check in Button from the Shelter Reservation List)

Removing "Data Not Collected" as an option. We train this as the "I didn't ask" aka I didn't do my job, and while there are worse places to announce you didn't do your job, a federal reporting database probably isn't a great place.

## What **outcomes** would you expect with **more effective technology and data**?

Reports would accurately reflect services.

Removal of the negative feelings our front line staff have about technology

Not having to look for and budget a new case management software

Dashboards that our org can use for decisions, instead of only compliance; supporting learning agencies

Staff would know who to contact to coordinate services with if the client was receiving services at multiple places.

One point of online access for those seeking services so users don't have to do multiple intake and assessment for each agency they are seeking housing or shelter or services

Learning organizations vs. Responsive organizations

access to realtime data where we can evaluate for where numbers seeking and not getting services and resources - for grant writing and for planning and focus

Easy ability to look at specific resources provided to clients and report on them (for example, how many people got food box referrals?)

## Questions / Comments?

Can we leverage our collective resources to build our own solution \*horizontally\* instead of just supporting unresponsive, profit-driven solution providers who will never support our local goals? Let's replace ETO/ServicePoint/SalesForce with a solution commissioned by our collective.

Providers can use the PPR report within HMIS to get *some* valuable data reporting on their programs.



We do have coordinated access here in Multnomah County  
<https://johs.us/coordinated-access/coordinated-access-2/>

# Contacts

## Client

Sim Ogle  
Deputy Chief Information Officer  
Multnomah County IT  
Phone: (503) 988-1265  
Email: sim.ogle@multco.us

## Client

Dan Cole  
IT Portfolio Manager  
Multnomah County IT  
Phone: (971) 678-0879  
Email: daniel.l.cole@multco.us

## Client

Maegan McHenry  
IT Project Manager  
Multnomah County IT  
Phone: (503) 467-9722  
Email: maegan.mchenry@multco.us

## Gartner

Chris Ragan  
Senior Managing Partner  
State and Local Government  
Gartner Consulting  
Phone: (916) 420-1860  
Email: Chris.Ragan@gartner.com

## Gartner

Wadie Rophael  
Expert Partner  
Gartner Consulting  
Phone: (916) 792-5689  
Email: Wadie.Rophael@gartner.com

## Gartner

Min Chong  
Associate Director  
State and Local Government  
Gartner Consulting  
Phone: (651) 497-1130  
Email: Min.Chong@gartner.com

## Gartner

David Lynch  
Consultant  
Gartner Consulting  
Phone: (815) 978-6887  
Email: David.Lynch@gartner.com