

HMIS Data Elements: Trauma-Informed Data Collection

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Why are we talking about this now?

- On October 1st, HUD's updated 2024 Data Standards go into effect
 - Changes to the enrollment/intake questions in Clarity/HMIS**
 - ICA is hosting a mandatory training on September 26th
 - It will be recorded and must be viewed by the end of the year
- The Madison / Dane County CoC is also adding three new questions on October 1st
- The importance of Data Collection
 - What the data is used for (ie - funding to our community, etc.)
 - Why we should avoid skipping questions or putting “data not collected”
- The importance of Trauma Informed data collection

** Note on jargon: Clarity ≠ HMIS ≠ Coordinated Entry

Most relevant changes in HUD's 2024 Data Standards

- Translation Assistance Needed?
 - If yes, what language
- Race / Ethnicity combined into one multi-select picklist
- Updates to the gender options (woman, man, etc)
- Client refused -> Client prefers not to respond
- Sexual Orientation question added to PSH
- Other minor changes you may notice
 - Exit destination picklist, Survivor of DV, PSH Wellness questions, etc

Much greater detail will be provided in the ICA training

Dane specific changes not covered in the required ICA training

Sexual orientation (heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, questions/unsure, etc)

- HUD is adding this to PSH, it is already required for YHDP and RHY

And...

- In Madison / Dane County we are adding it to all project types
- It will be asked to all adults or heads of household
- It will be placed at the very end of the Clarity enrollment screen

Because...

- There is national evidence that certain populations experience differential outcomes but we want to see what is happening locally

Dane specific changes not covered in ICA training

Doubled-up / Self-pay questions

Question 1 : In the last 12 months, have you had to temporarily live with someone else for any number of days to avoid spending a night on the street, in a car, or at a shelter?

Question 2: In the last 12 months, have you had to self-pay at a hotel/motel for any number of days to avoid spending a night on the street, in a car, or at a shelter?

- Standard yes/no pick list selections
- Will be asked by Street Outreach and Emergency Shelter projects
- All adults and/or heads of household (for RHY)
- Will be placed after the Prior Living Situation questions

Because...

- We have limited data about this population and hope these responses will increase our understanding and support more robust services

Why learn Trauma-Informed Data Collection?

- We recognize that many people may have a history of trauma. Trauma can impact how participants respond to questions and engage with service providers.
- Trauma-informed data collection honors the humanity and experiences of those we serve.
- It promotes a safe and supportive environment for participants.

Survey Methodology - What is it?

Survey methodology is the research of research - what are the best practices to obtain the most accurate, complete, and unbiased data?

If a participant does express discomfort with a question...

1. De-personalize the question - “I’m sorry, I have to ask everyone the same question.”
2. Empathize with their discomfort - “I know this question is uncomfortable...”
3. Read the response options - “I’m able to put x, y, or z. Which option would you like me to put?”
4. Be flexible and offer choices - Remember that we can return to a question another time, perhaps after building rapport with the participant - “You can answer this question now, or if you prefer, we can come back to it later.”

Social Desirability Bias

Social desirability bias is a type of response bias that occurs when survey respondents provide answers according to society's expectations, rather than their own beliefs or experiences.

Trauma-Informed Data Collection

- Setting
- Ask permission
- Be transparent
- Be human
- Active listening
- Find your own style
- Don't make assumptions about how folx may feel about something
- Body language
- Express gratitude

Tips & Tricks from The Lived Experience Council

How to help participants feel comfortable during the intake process:

- **Trauma-Informed Design**
- **Informed Consent**
- **Choice and Control**
- **Establish Safety and Trust**
- **Interview should be offered to be completed alone**
- **Data collection should be trauma informed and collected ethically**
- **Evaluate if the questions are truly needed for services**
- **Empowering without speeding through questions**
- **Speak slowly, make eye contact**
- **Conclusion**

Questions?

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Sources

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