

This document highlights the most prominent changes reflected in the 2014 Data Standards. It was created to provide an overview for Cambridge HMIS users who enter client level data. More detailed information can be found in the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#) on HUD's website.

KEY CHANGES

Programs vs. Projects – Since other federal partners now participate in HMIS, it was necessary to adjust the terminology from *Programs* to *Projects*. Federal funding sources, e.g. HUD CoC, VA SSVF, HHS PATH, etc. are referred to as **programs**, and agencies that provide services and/or housing within CoCs (or other federal funding sources) operate **projects** that serve a particular population. Project staff enter client and **program specific** (CoC, ESG, etc.) data elements into HMIS.

Project Descriptors – These are not new, but since so many data elements are contingent on the federal funding source and the type of project, correct information in project descriptor records is essential in order to populate the required questions for particular project types. These records are completed by the HMIS lead or the HMIS Site Administrator at your agency. New project types include Homeless Prevention, Rapid Re-housing, Coordinated Assessment, and Day Shelter.

CoC Codes – Projects can be associated with more than one continuum to facilitate HMIS participation for projects that operate in multiple CoCs.

Method of Calculating Income Sources and Non-Cash Benefits – Previously, projects were required to identify all sources of income and non-cash benefits received during the past 30 days, regardless of whether the client was still receiving income from a particular source on the date the information was collected; this has changed. **Projects are now required to record only sources of income and non-cash benefits that are current as of the information date.**

DATA ELEMENT CHANGES

Name Data Quality Field* – This element allows for responses for full name, street or code name (sometimes used as a placeholder for street outreach workers).

Data Entry location in ETO: Demographics (participant info)

Relationship to Head of Household* – With response choices:

- Self (head of household)
- Head of household's child
- Head of household's spouse or partner
- Head of household's other relation member (other relation to head of household)
- Other: non-relation member

Historically, Cambridge HMIS used a custom demographic element entitled: “Single Individual or Part of Family Household.” This element has been removed.

Data Entry Location in ETO: HUD Assessment (Entry)

Subjects: All clients

Veteran Status – Change from previous standards to now be collected at a client’s first project entry (their first record created in the HMIS site), rather than with each enrollment within an intake assessment. As this answer is likely to be static, this point of data entry will save time.

Data Entry Location in ETO: Demographics (participant info)

Subjects: All adults

Gender – Change of answer choice from *Transgendered* corrected to *Transgender*

Data Entry Location in ETO: Demographics (participant info)

Subjects: All clients

Client Location/Continuum Code* – This identifies the CoC in which the client is served. The information is populated on the first page of the client’s entry assessment. If your project serves more than one CoC, you’ll see two choices on the assessment screen (A-4) and will need to type in the correct code. Most projects will only have one code listed, however the user will still need to type the code in the answer field in A-5.

If you have more than one CoC code to choose from when completing a client assessment and are not clear on how to answer, please ask your HMIS Agency Administrator or Marianne Colangelo for guidance.

Data Entry Location in ETO: HUD Assessment (Entry)

Subjects: Head of Household

Prior Residence Elements – “What was the client’s residence prior to project entry?” identifies **where the client slept the night before** you began serving them as a participant in your project. “Length of stay in previous place” identifies how long they stayed there.

Some of the wording of these elements has also changed:

- Length of stay in previous place was formerly *Length of stay at prior residence*
- Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, *bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside*)
- There are more hospital/institutional answer choices

Zip Code and Address Data Quality – Formerly listed as “zip code of last permanent address where client lived for at least 90 days” and zip code quality. Note: You want to obtain their zip code *before they became homeless*.

Data Entry Location in ETO: HUD Assessment (Entry)

Subjects: Head of Household (previously required for all adults)

Length of Time on Street, in an Emergency Shelter, or Safe Haven* – This is comprised of 4-5 new questions, and is a replacement for the single yes/no Chronically Homeless question in order to better track and calculate persons' episodes of homelessness. HMIS will determine chronic homeless status based on answers to these and the disability questions within the Health Information section of the assessment.

1. Has the client been continuously homeless for at least one year?
2. How many times has the client been homeless in the past three years?
 - If answer is *4 or more*, indicate number of months the client has been homeless in the past three years.
3. Total number of months continuously homeless immediately prior to project entry
4. Is there documentation in the client's file or in the HMIS?

Note: Any single day or part of a month spent homeless should be counted as one month.

Data Entry Location in ETO: HUD Assessment (Entry)

Subjects: All adults

Is the Client Covered by Health Insurance?* – Health Insurance has its own section in the 2014 assessment. If the answer is "yes," there are many response choices in order to determine a client's status and coverage type, including answer choices that were previously part of the 2010 assessment's non-cash benefit sources section (Medicaid, Medicare, etc.).

Data Entry Location in ETO: HUD Assessment (Entry/Update/Annual/Exit – whenever there is new information)

Subjects: All clients

Destination (Where did the client go upon exit?) – Now a Universal Data Element.

This element has some new response choices, including more specific subsidy choices and most notably: "No exit interview completed."

Data Entry Location in ETO: HUD Assessment (Exit)

Subjects: All adults

OTHER CHANGES

Status Documented*

Some new and already existing questions now have a sub question regarding whether or not there is documentation to support the answer given. For example: "*Is there documentation of the client's disability and severity on file?*" is now a follow-up to the disability questions asked in the HUD Assessment (Entry/Update/Annual/Exit).

Note: At the time of writing, the ETO HMIS also includes additional elements on how a client's disability was confirmed and whether or not the client has a serious mental illness. HUD's data collection templates for CoC programs posted to their website (and published 12/14) do not contain these questions, and it is not clear if these are part of the program specific elements required for CoC or ESG funded programs. More guidance will follow.

Data Not Collected*

This has been added in some elements as a response in addition to the already existing “client doesn’t know” and “client refused to answer.” Having this additional answer choice allows front end users to supply a more accurate answer when they simply did not have the information to answer a specific question at the time of entering data into HMIS. ***Data not collected responses will be reported as missing/null data.***

*Denotes a new data element or response choice