



# Understanding the Interconnectedness of HMIS Data

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**Abt Associates, Inc.**



# Welcome and Introductions

## Who's in the room?

- HMIS System Administrator
- HMIS Vendor
- HMIS User
- CoC leadership or member

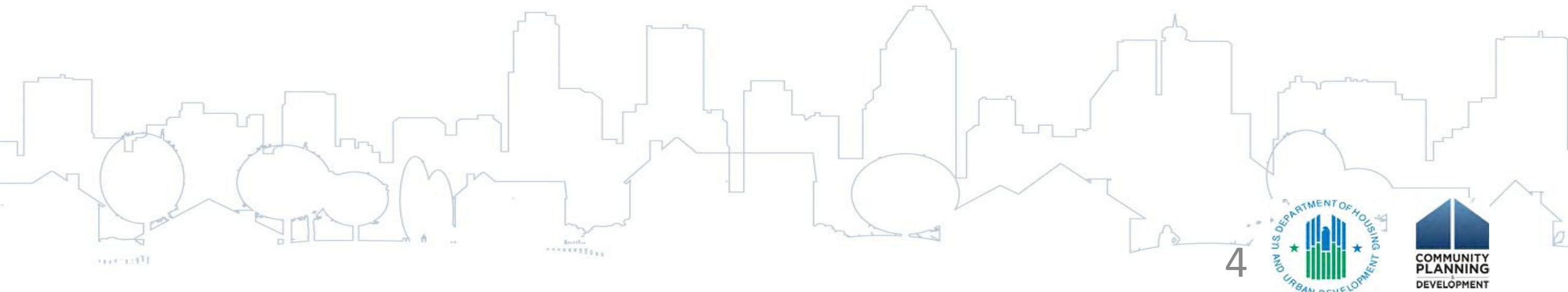
## How long have you been working with HMIS?

- Less than a year
- One to 5 years
- More than 5 years

# Learning Objectives

- Identify the data collection and reporting requirements for HMIS
- Understand how various data elements are used in reporting from HMIS
- Appreciate the benefits and potential uses of HMIS across various stakeholder groups

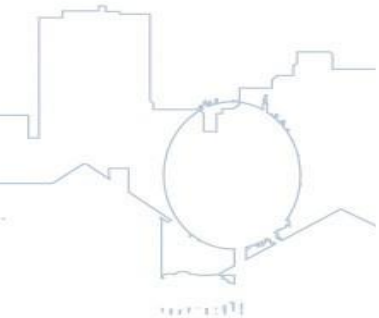
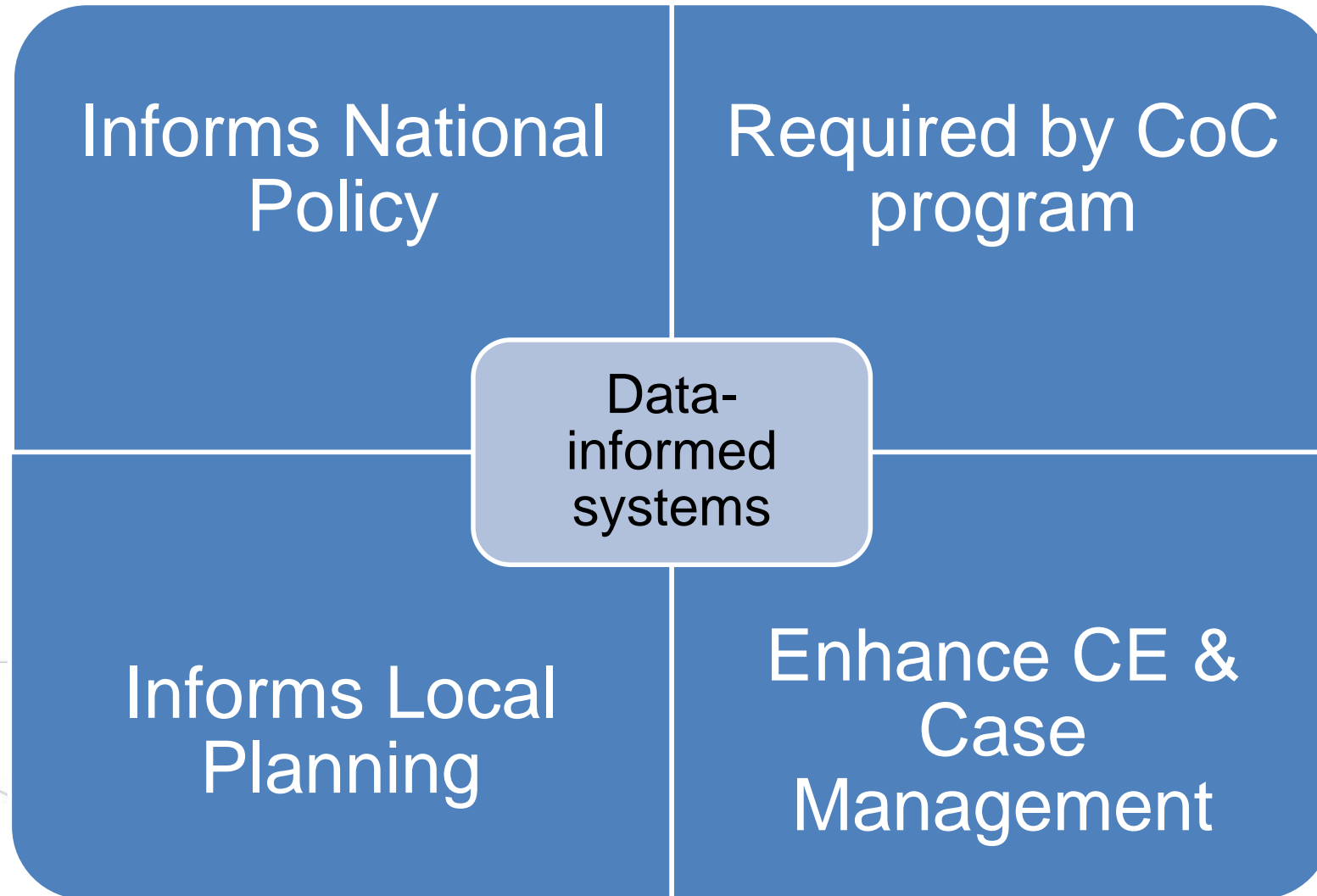
# Overview of HMIS



# What is HMIS?

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a *locally administered*, electronic data collection system that stores longitudinal person-level information about persons who access the homeless service system

# Why is HMIS Important?



# The History of HMIS: Early Days

Late 80's to early 90's: Grassroots efforts to better understand homelessness

- Early 90's: Several communities developed local data collection systems (e.g. St. Louis, Kansas City)
- 1995: by HUD, HHS, and Dr. Dennis Culhane (UPenn)- the first national software prototype (ANCHoR) was deployed
- 1996: National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (Burt)
- 1999: First attempt to generate national estimates of homelessness from local administrative data (Culhane)

Communities banded together to look for new software products through a joint RFP published by National Human Services Data Consortium (NHSDC)



# The History of HMIS: 2001 Congressional Directive

Congress directed HUD on the need for data and analysis on the extent and nature of homelessness and the effectiveness of the McKinney-Vento Act Programs including:

- Developing unduplicated counts of clients served at the local level
- Analyzing patterns of use of people entering and exiting the homeless assistance system
- Evaluating the effectiveness of these systems

HMIS became an eligible activity under 2001 SuperNOFA





# The History of HMIS: CoC Interim Rule

*CoC program recipients must participate in HMIS.*

*CoC must participate in Consolidated Planning process.*

HUD provided the framework for establishing and operating a local Continuum of Care with three major duties:

1. Operate the CoC
2. Designate and operate the HMIS for the CoC
3. Plan for the CoC



# Federal Partner Participation

## HUD:

- Continuum of Care Program (CoC)
- Emergency Solutions Grant Program (ESG)
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)

## Veterans Affairs programs:

- Grant and Per Diem (GPD)
- HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- Veterans Homeless Prevention Demonstration (VHPD)

## Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)
- Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY)

# Data Strategy

A strategic vision for how communities use data to end homelessness.

Provides a clear, uniform vision and set of three strategies and related characteristics

Developed over the course of several months of work with HUD SNAPS and its Data Workgroup

Not intended to be achieved instantly; strategies provide goals that extend over the next 3-5 years

# Data Strategy: Goals

1. Communities use their data to optimize systems of care through making ongoing system performance improvements and determining optimal resource allocation.
2. Communities operate data systems that allow for accurate, comprehensive and timely data collection, usage and reporting.
3. Federal government coordinates to receive and use data to make informed decisions in coordination with other data sets, across and within agencies.

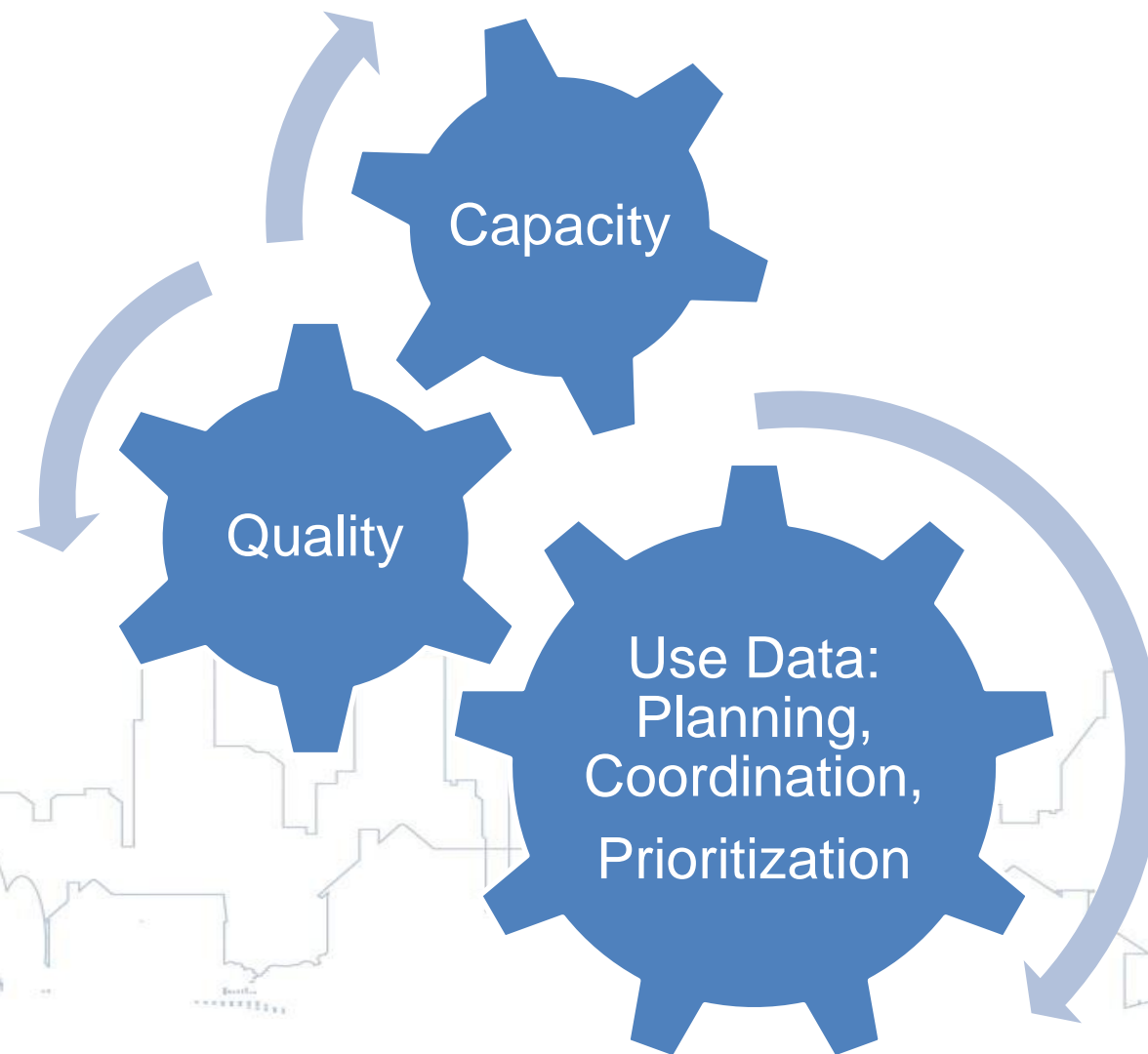
# Data Strategy

**Strategy 1:** Improve the capacity of people setting up, operating, and benefitting from data systems

**Strategy 2:** Data systems collect accurate, comprehensive and timely data

**Strategy 3:** Continuums and stakeholders use data to improve efforts to end homelessness

# Data Strategy



# Data Strategy

**Strategy 1:** Improve the capacity of people setting up, operating, and benefitting from data systems

- Expert HMIS Leads and System Administrators
- CoCs have data driven leaders

# Data Strategy

**Strategy 2:** Data systems collect accurate, comprehensive and timely data

- Bed Coverage across Continuum (funded and unfunded)
- Quality data = Timely, Accurate, Comprehensive

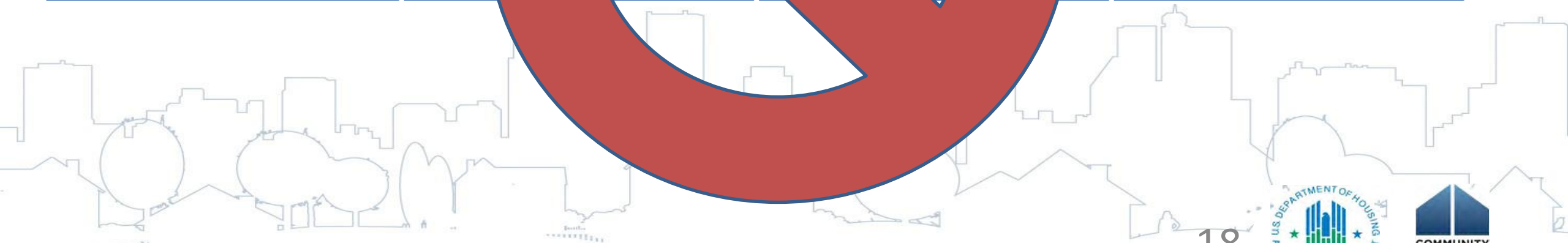


# Data Strategy

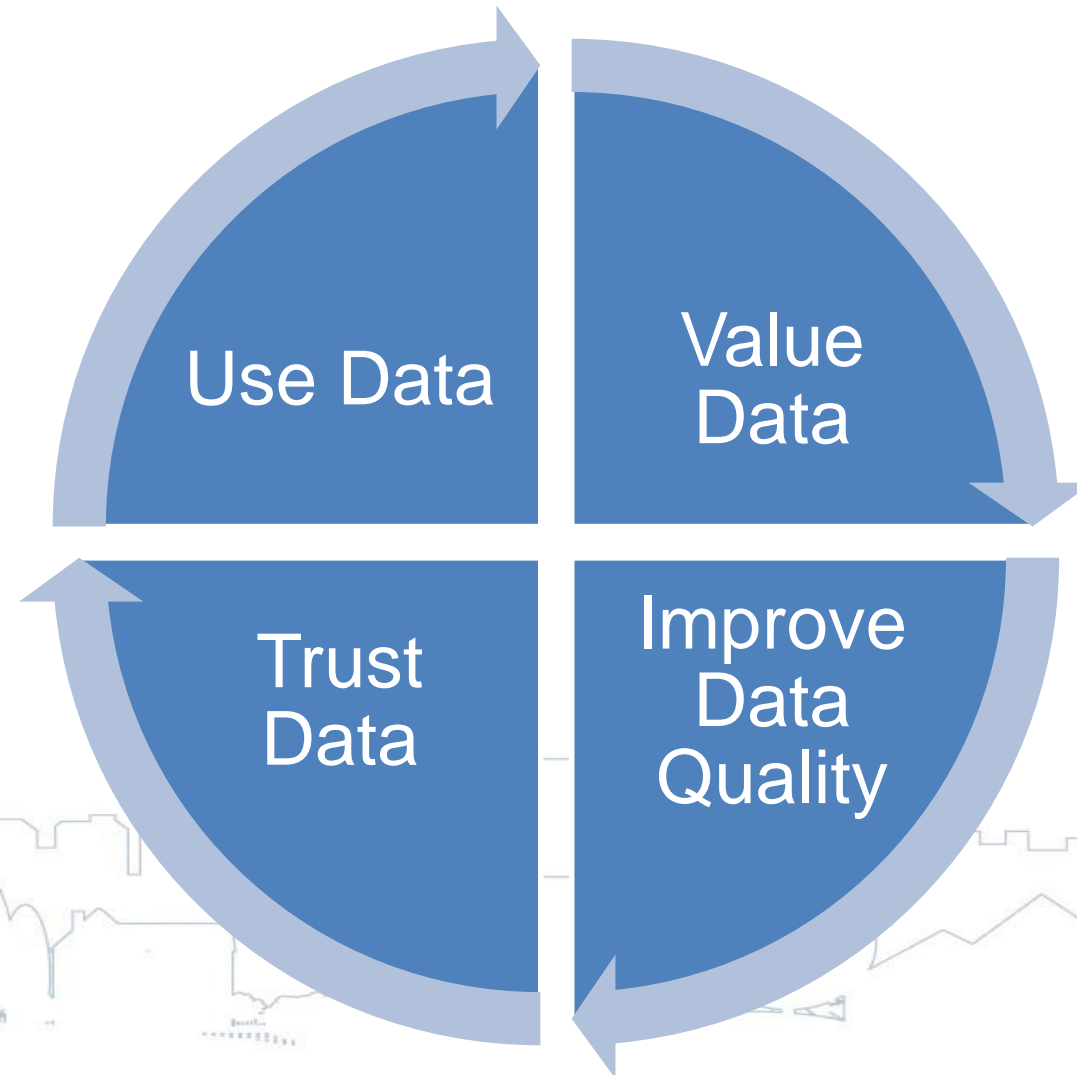
**Strategy 3:** Continuums and stakeholders use data to improve efforts to end homelessness

- CoC uses data for system planning
- CoC uses data for coordination of care
- CoC uses data to prioritize existing resources for clients with highest need

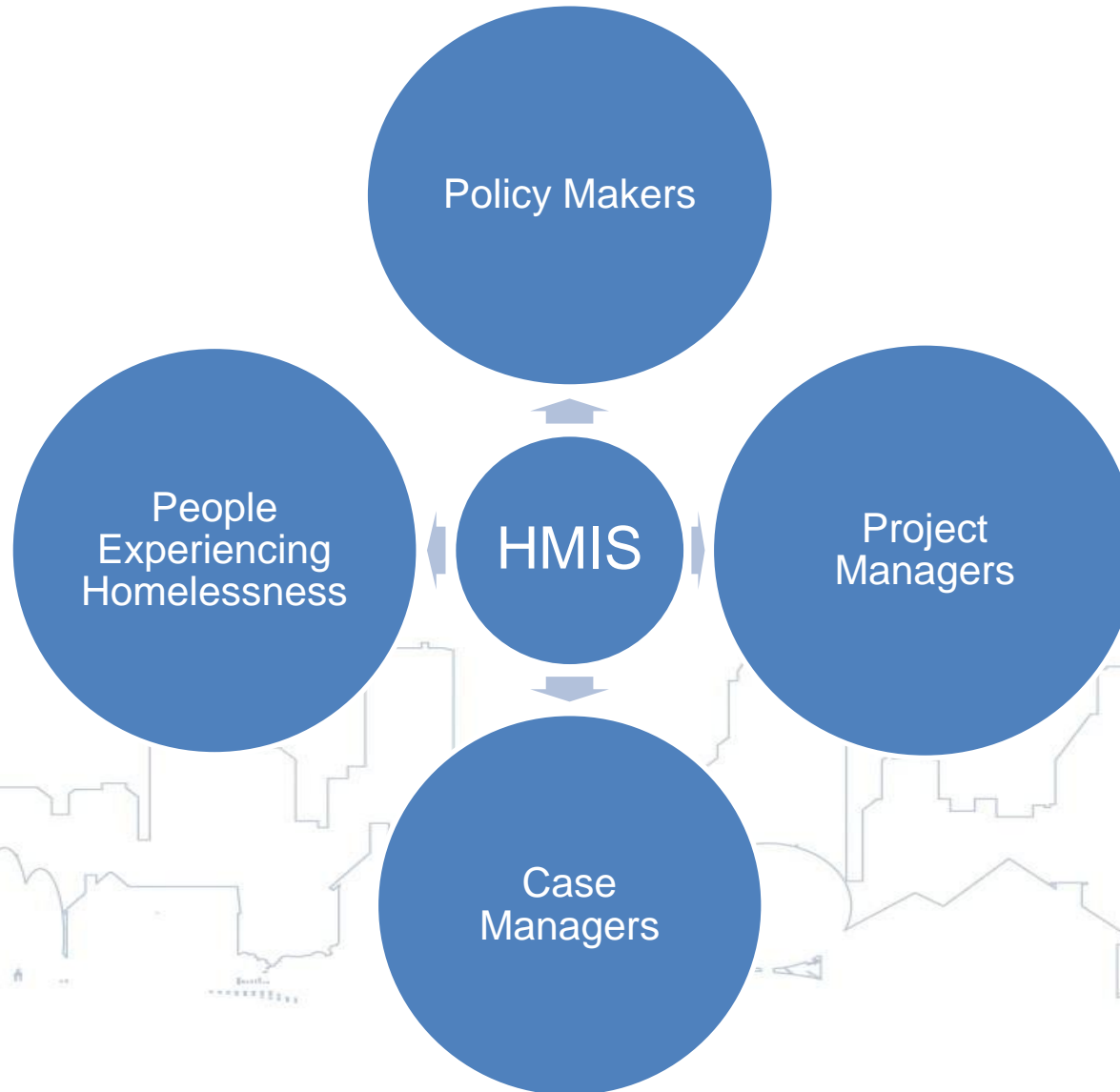
# Data Strategy



# Data Strategy



# Benefits of HMIS: Who's asking?



# Benefits for Homeless System, Public Policymakers, and Advocates

Policy Makers

- Identifying service gaps
- Calculating unduplicated counts of clients served
- Understanding the extent and nature of homelessness
- Informing systems design and policy decisions
- Measuring the performance of the community system to prevent and end homelessness

# Benefits for Agency Directors and Project Managers

- Measuring client outcomes
- Analyzing performance of projects
- Coordinating services internally among agency projects and externally with other providers
- Preparing financial and programmatic reports for funders, boards, and other stakeholders



# Benefits Case Managers, Intake Workers, & other Direct Service Staff

Case  
Managers

- Knowing waitlist or enrollment status
- Viewing client history, assessment scores, involvement with other providers
- Storing and sharing documents securely, such as eligibility verification, ID's, leases

# Benefits for People Experiencing Homelessness

- Benefit eligibility
- Streamlined referrals
- Coordinated case management
- A decrease in duplicative intakes and assessments

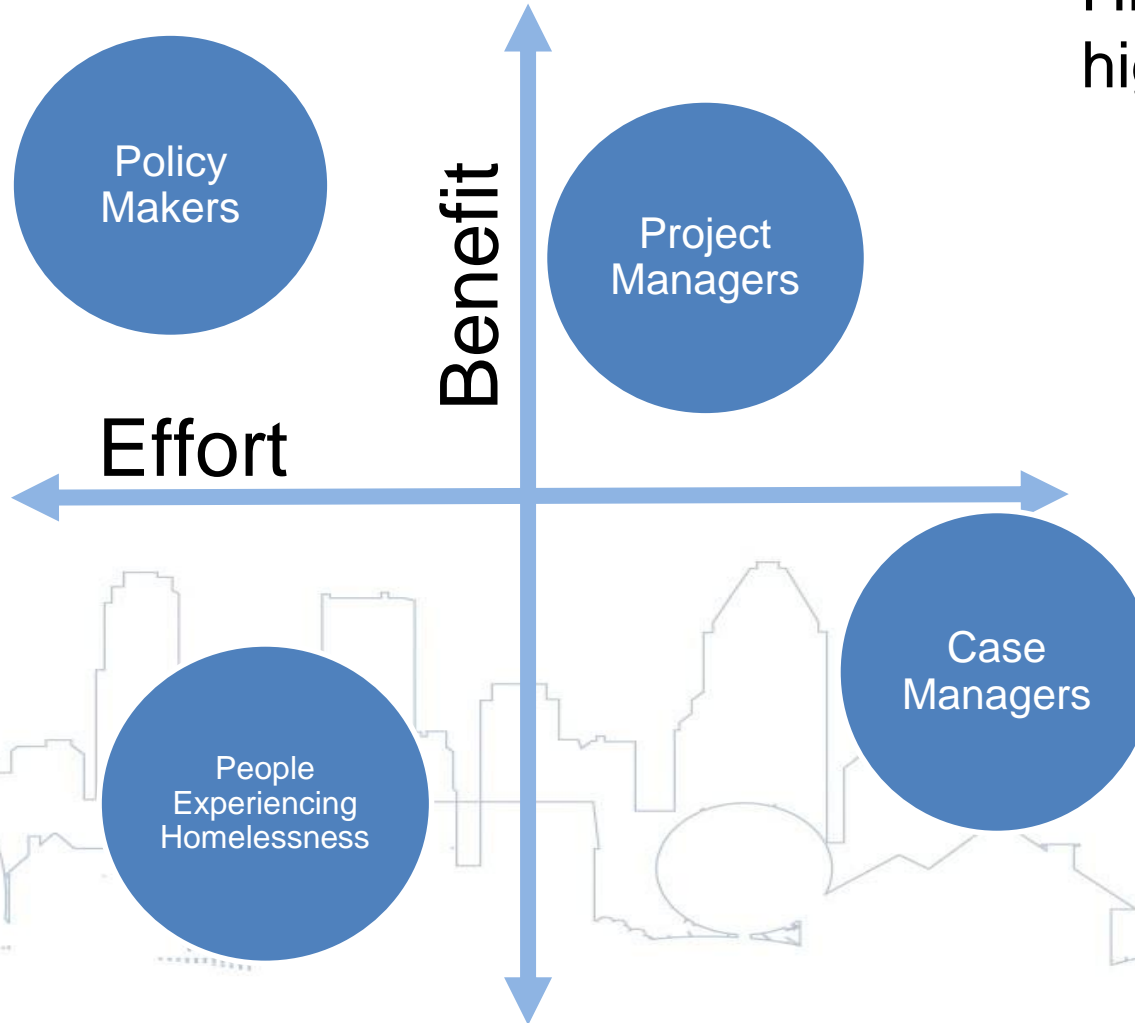
People  
Experiencing  
Homelessness



# Benefits vs. Effort

Low effort/  
high benefit

High effort/  
high benefit



Low effort/  
low benefit

High effort/  
low benefit

# Purpose of Governance

## HMIS governance:

Defines the relationship between the HMIS implementation and the CoC

Formalizes roles and responsibilities

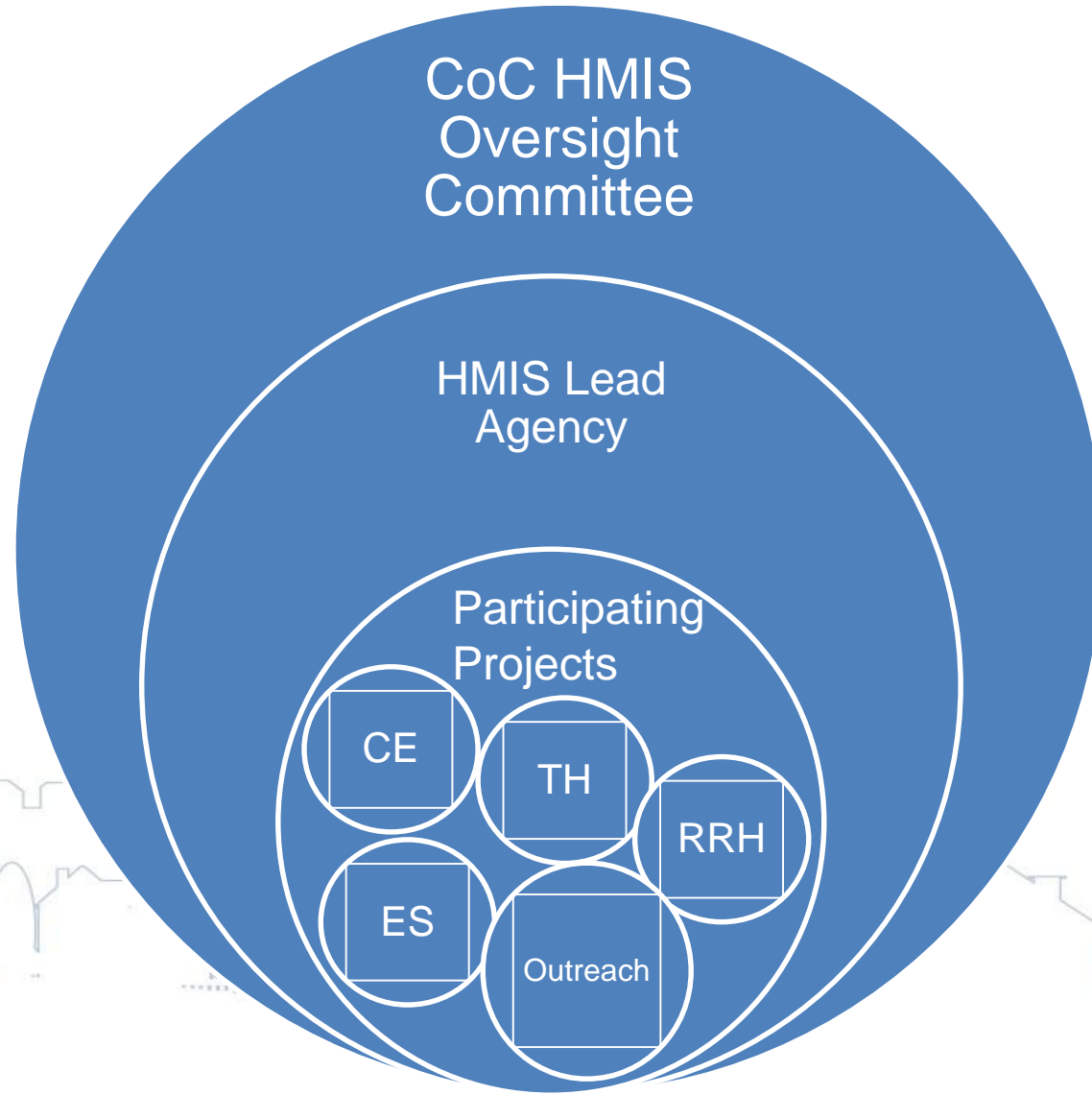
Formalizes leadership and oversight expectations

Provides structure for decision-making

**This means formal, written agreements!**



# HMIS Roles and Responsibilities



# CoC Role

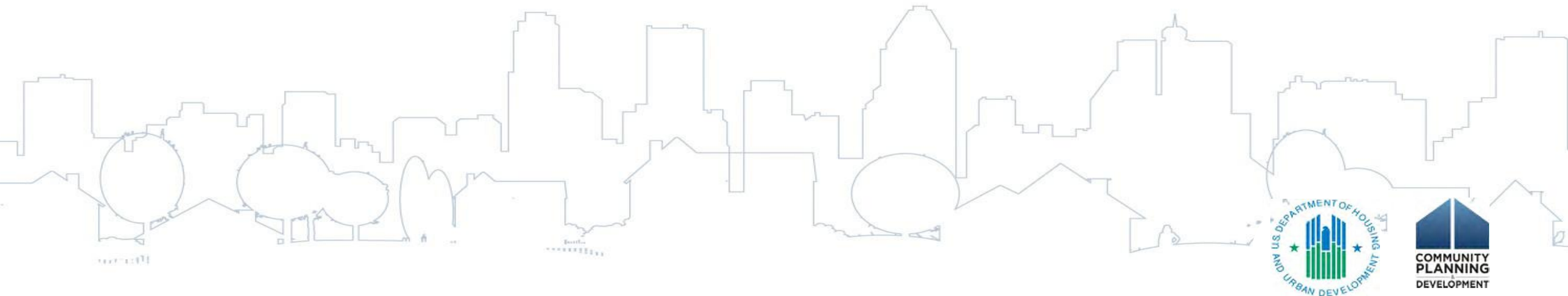
HMIS Oversight

HMIS Standards Compliance

Designate the HMIS Software

Designate the HMIS Lead Agency

Execute HMIS Governance Agreement



# CoC Role

The CoC must:

1. Designate a single Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the geographic area;
2. Designate an eligible applicant to manage the Continuum's HMIS, which will be known as the HMIS Lead;
3. Review, revise, and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS.
4. Ensure consistent participation of recipients and subrecipients in the HMIS; and
5. Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD.



# HMIS Lead Agency Role

Administer the day-to-day operational functions of operating the HMIS

Develop local HMIS policies and procedures

Execute HMIS participation and end user agreements

Monitor compliance with applicable HMIS standards

Administer vendor agreements/contracts

Develop and Implement Local HMIS Policies and Procedures



# Participating Project's Role

## Data Collection & Entry

## Compliance & Monitoring

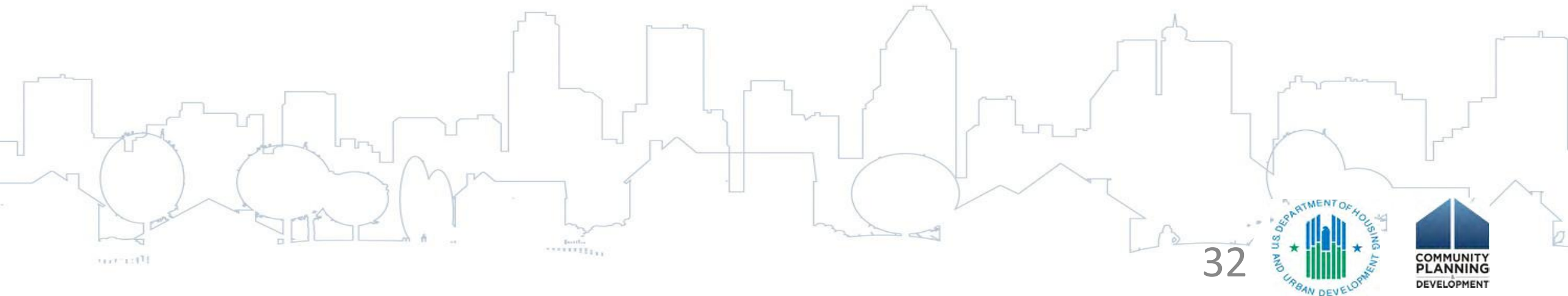
- Data Quality: timeliness, completeness, and accuracy
- Privacy and Security
- HMIS Policy and Procedure

## CoC Participation

- Provide quality data for community planning
- Participate in Point In Time and Housing Inventory Processes
- Participate in CoC meetings and workgroups
- Coordinate with other service providers



# HMIS Data Collection Expectations





# HMIS Data Collection



# Guidance on HMIS Data Collection

- HMIS Data Standards Manual serves as the primary guidance document for data collection expectations
- Each Federal Partner also has a unique HMIS Manual, that details the nuances of any data collection expectations for their programs, and describes any data elements that are specific to just their program
- **The Federal Partners will update the HMIS Data Standards Manual in 2019; changes will go into effect on October 1, 2019**

# Federal Partner and Project Type Considerations



# Types of Data Elements in HMIS

Project Descriptor  
Data Elements

Universal Data  
Elements (UDEs)

Common Program  
Specific Data  
Elements (PSDEs)

Program Specific  
Data Elements  
(PSDEs)

Additional, Local  
Data Elements (as  
required)

# Project Descriptor Data Elements

Organization Identifiers

Project Identifiers

CoC Code

Project Type

Method for tracking  
Emergency  
Shelter Utilization

Federal Partner  
Funding Source

Bed and Unit  
Inventory  
Information

Additional Project  
Information

# Universal Data Elements: Collected Once

Name

Social  
Security  
Number

Date of Birth

Race

Ethnicity

Gender

Veteran  
Status

# Universal Data Elements: Collected Each Project Stay

Disabling  
Condition

Project Start  
Date

Project Exit  
Date

Destination

Relationship  
to Head of  
Household

Client  
Location

Housing  
Move-In  
Date

Living  
Situation

# Program Specific Data Elements: Common

Income and Sources

Non-Cash Benefits

Health Insurance

Disability Elements (5)

Domestic Violence

Contact

Date of Engagement

Bed-Night Date

Housing Assessment Disposition



# Additional Data Collection Work

Federal Partner Manuals and the Data Dictionary outline additional data elements that are required for each partner

Include things like information on funder specific services that aren't available to other program types

You may also choose to locally adopt data elements that are unique to your community; just be aware that these will not show up in reporting unless you develop the reports yourself, and they may lead to data entry confusion

# Partner Activity: Data Element Walk Through

Select a data element:

- 3.10 & 3.11 Project Start & Exit Dates
- 3.12 Destination
- 3.20 Housing Move-In Date
- 3.917 Living Situation

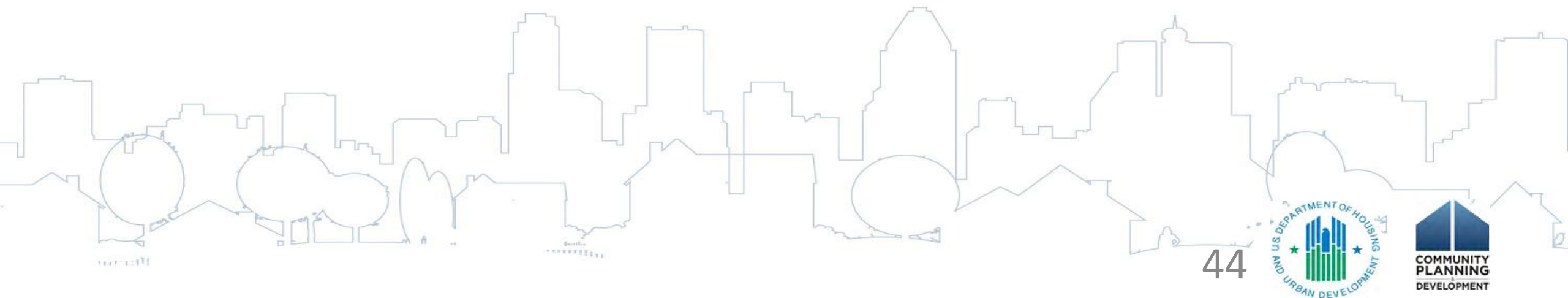
Go through the worksheet.

- What do you know?
- More importantly, how can you learn more?

# Partner Activity: Data Element Walk Through

<b>Example: Date of Birth</b>	<b>I know...</b>	<b>I can learn more...</b>
<b>When and how is it collected?</b>	At intake	HMIS Data Standards Manual
<b>What are the response options?</b>	Date field	HMIS Data Standards Data Dictionary
<b>Which project types does it apply to?</b>	All	HMIS Data Standards Data Dictionary
<b>How does it feed into federal reports?</b>	LSA – determines household type (AO, AC, or CO)	CoC Program Manual LSA Full Table Shells
<b>What can you learn about your homeless system or projects?</b>	How many transition age youth are in my shelter system	Stella
<b>What are the impacts of missing data?</b>	Broad impact – reporting and program eligibility	CE Evaluation APR

# HMIS Reporting



# Data In, Data Out

- The UDEs will be the building blocks for client records, and allow you to do very basic reporting across all participating projects
- The PSDEs are leveraged for annual reporting at the project level, and give more detailed insights into clients than just the UDEs
- If you're collecting data, make sure that it's being used in a report!

# Types of Reporting

- System-level reporting
  - System Performance Measures
  - Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA)
  - Stella
- Project-level reporting
  - Annual reports (APR, CAPER, PATH, SSVF and RHY uploads)
- Data Quality Framework Report

# Meet Stella

## System Performance Overview



Description text for this section/visualization goes here for the [date] reporting period.

 **2,622**  
HOUSEHOLDS

 **3,257**  
PEOPLE

**53** 

### Days Homeless

An average number of days homeless


[VIEW DETAILS](#)

**26%** 

### Permanent Exits

Number of households with permanent system exits

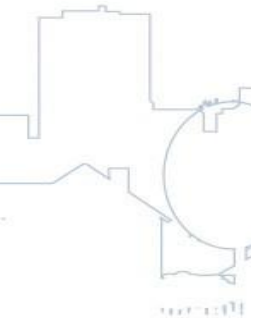
[VIEW DETAILS](#)

**32%** 

### Returns

Rate of return to the system within 6 months

[VIEW DETAILS](#)



# Reviewing Your Data

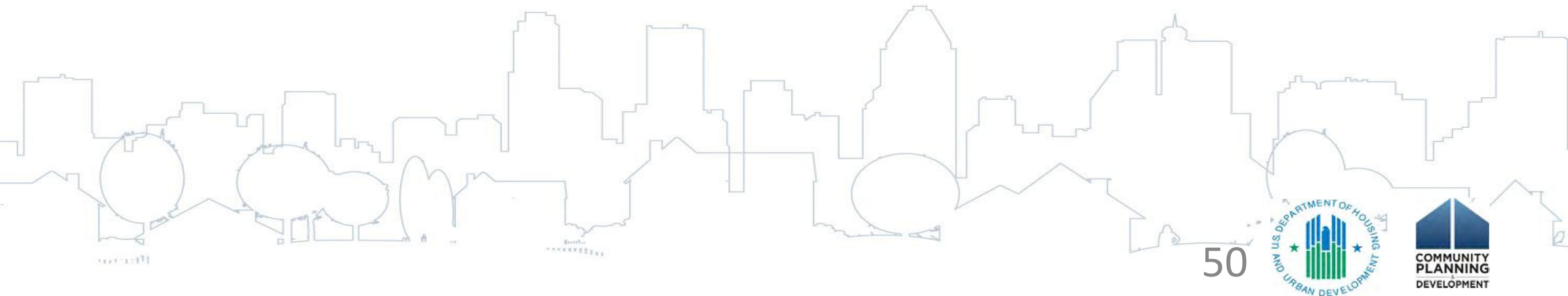
- Don't do it alone! Share reports across providers and with CoC leadership
- Program staff will often be your best sources of help in determining if there are inaccuracies with data
- Don't wait until a report is due! Share data often and openly
- Ensure that the ability to generate reports isn't isolated to one or two people in your community



# Data Quality

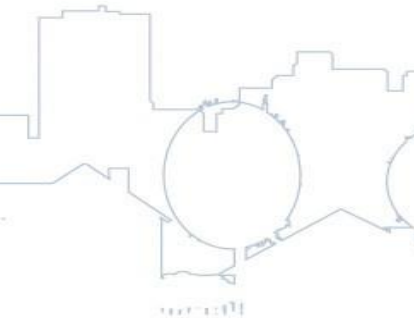
- Ensure that you have a Data Quality Management Program in place, which sets clear community wide standards for: timeliness, completeness, accuracy and consistency
- Share data at CoC meetings; let people know how their project stacks up against their peers
- Think of ways to provide support and training to your users to avoid data quality issues

# Wrap Up



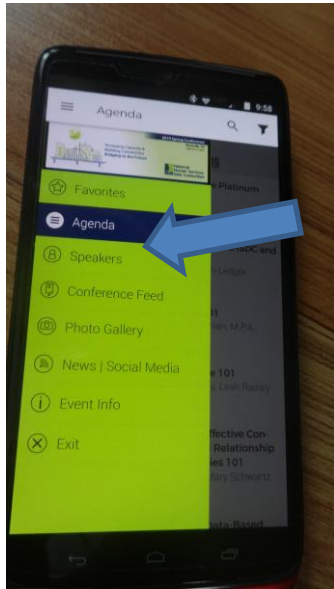
# What Next?

- Identify some ways that you can leverage what you learned here
  - Update local trainings and/or documentation on HMIS
  - Think of ways that you can strengthen relationships between the CoC leadership and HMIS team
- Review the SNAPS Data Strategy and make a plan for setting and achieving local goals that are in alignment with it
- Go to more sessions at NHSDC!
  - Several sessions this week take a deeper dive into these topics
  - Look ahead to the next NHSDC conference AND to the 2020 HUD Data Academy

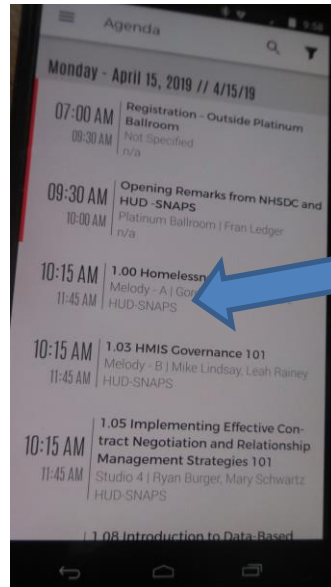


# Evaluate This Session on Your Conference App! (It takes 5 minutes to complete)

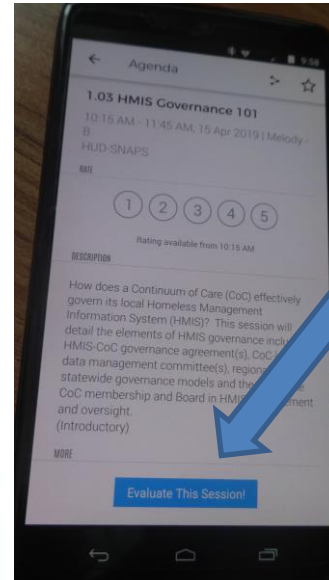
1) Select “Agenda” from the navigation menu.



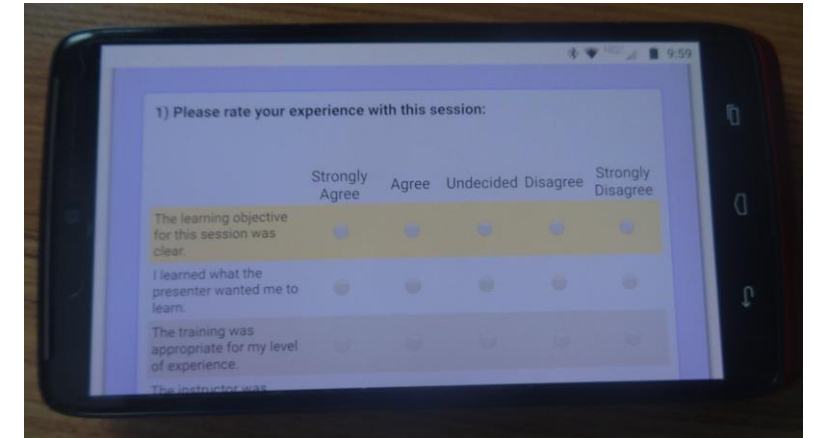
2) Select the name of the session.



3) Select the blue “Evaluate This Session”.



4) Complete the Evaluation and Select “Finish”.



**TIP:**

**Turn your phone horizontally to see rating options.**

53



# HUD Certificate-of-Completion

**Reminder:** HUD is offering a Certificate-of-Completion for completing at least 4 sessions within either track:

- 1) HMIS Fundamentals Track
- 2) System Planning with Data Track

**To earn credit for completion of this session,** please complete the evaluation on the conference app and include contact details when prompted

# HUD Certificate-of-Completion

## HMIS Fundamentals Track

- HMIS Governance 101
- HMIS Lead Monitoring
- HMIS Project Monitoring
- Implementing Effective Contract Negotiation and Relationship Management Strategies 101
- HMIS Project Set Up 101
- HMIS Project Set Up 201
- **Understanding the Interconnectedness of HMIS Data**
- Achieving a Quality and Stable HMIS Staffing Pattern
- HMIS Project Management and Annual Calendar of Expectations

## System Planning with Data Track

- Orientation to the Stella Performance Module
- System Modeling 101
- System Performance Improvement: Part 1 – Analyzing Performance
- System Performance Improvement: Part 2 – Developing Strategies
- Overview of System Performance Measures and Reports
- Using Data in Funding Decisions
- System Performance by Subpopulation and Geography