

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Vision and Goals - Summary

This statement was developed through a brainstorming process at an open meeting, convened by Minnesota Housing Finance Agency in April of 2002. It was later adopted by the Governing Council (formerly the Implementation Group) as the guiding vision of Minnesota's HMIS.

Overall goal:

Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System will...

Provide standardized and timely information to improve access to housing and services, and strengthen our efforts to end homelessness.

I. From the perspective of those experiencing homelessness:

Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System will...

Improve access to shelter, housing, and services

- Help us find and access shelter and housing—quickly and accurately
- Help us identify other services for which we are eligible
- Protect the privacy of our personal data, and strip away personally-identifying information as soon as possible
- Improve the accessibility to housing and services for those who do not speak English and those who have disabilities
- Get the job done with the minimum number of questions
- Eliminate the need for us to repeatedly give the same information to service providers
- Enhance the effectiveness of our working relationships with case workers and others who may be accessing the system
- Include protections against using the system's data to deny service, or to abuse civil rights
- Provide us with a printout of our personal data upon request
- Gather data that demonstrates our needs to others—hopefully resulting in improved housing and services

II. Service Provider Perspective:

Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System will...

Provide an affordable, user-friendly tool to accurately track client service usage

- Be user friendly, and include adequate training and available help for users

- Easily provide accurate agency-level data, including client demographics, needs, and trends over time
- Cost little
- Be useful for us even if we do not have computers or much technical capacity
- Cover our reporting requirements
- Protect our clients' confidentiality—and us from liability

III. Continuum of Care Perspective :

Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System will...

Strengthen continuum of care planning by providing improved data on demands, migration, capacity, and gaps

- Provide accurate regional data on demands, migration, capacity, and gaps
- Easily summarize data for the continuum of care
- Include as many providers as possible
- Be affordable and adequately staffed

IV. State Agency Perspective :

Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System will...

Help coordinate statewide data collection to improve policy making

- Interface with (or replace) state data systems
- Produce state and federal reports
- Improve service delivery to clients
- Provide improved, standardized, and timely statewide data for planning
- Provide a good return on the investment
- Help identify gaps in mainstream resources and the barriers that those experiencing homelessness face when trying to access these resources