HIFIS

Homeless Individuals and Families Information System

Implementation Guide

Version 2.0

Infrastructure Canada

Canada

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Change Log

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1.0	2018	-	• Document released.
2.0	2023	4.0.60	• Updated information on the Data Provision Agreement • Accessibility improvements • Updated glossary • No major content additions

Contents

Glossary

Term	Definition
Admissions	The process of admitting an individual or family that is homeless or at-risk of homelessness into a service provider.
At-risk of Homelessness	At-risk of homelessness refers to a housing situation that is precarious. For example, the housing may not meet public health and safety standards or the tenant may have received an eviction notice from the landlord. Imminent risk of homelessness refers to a housing situation that will end in the near future (for example, within two weeks) where the household does not have the immediate prospect, means or ability of acquiring a subsequent residence.
Bed Selection	A graphical display of a shelter's rooms and beds.
Bulletin	A message that can be read by users who are logged in to HIFIS.
Case Management	A comprehensive and strategic form of service provision, either short- or long-term, whereby a case worker assesses the needs of individuals and families and, as appropriate, arranges, coordinates and advocates for a range of programs and services designed to meet their needs and preferences. Workers can specialize in various forms of case management, such as service navigation (e.g., helping people to apply for various benefits, get on wait lists and get ready for an offer through Coordinated Access) or housing support (sometimes referred to as housing-based case management).
Chronic Homelessness	Refers to persistent or long-term homelessness where people experience: • Homelessness for at least 180 days at some point over the course

	of a year (not necessarily consecutive days); and/or, • Recurrent episodes of homelessness over three years that total at least 18 months.
Client	A person who has accessed or is currently accessing services in a system of care.
Client Consent Form	An agreement between the client and the organizations that use HIFIS that grant the authorization to collect, retain, and share the client's data for purposes outlined in the client consent form.
Client State	A way of identifying clients in HIFIS by their current level of engagement with the homeless-serving system. At any point in time, clients are either active, inactive, archived or deceased.
Active Client State	Refers to clients that have service interactions (documented in HIFIS) within the timeframe set by the HIFIS Inactivity Threshold.
Archived Client State	Refers to clients that have been inactive for an extended length of time, as defined by the community's data retention policy. In HIFIS, archived clients are not included in the Unique Identifier List. They are visible in the Archived search function on the Client List and their data would be included in all applicable historical reports (e.g., shelter occupancy reports).
Deceased Client State	Refers to clients that have died. In HIFIS, deceased clients are not included in the Unique Identifier List. They are visible in the Deceased search function on the Client List and their data would be included in all applicable historical reports (e.g., shelter occupancy reports).
Inactive Client State	Refers to clients that have service interactions (documented in HIFIS) outside the timeframe set by the HIFIS Inactivity Threshold.
Cluster	A functionality that allows client data from specific HIFIS Service Providers to be isolated. HIFIS Service Providers can

	only view data within their designated cluster.
Community Advisory Board (CAB)	Community Entities are supported by advisory boards responsible for recommending projects for funding. Advisory boards generally include a wide range of stakeholders (e.g., representing the municipality, provincial, or territorial governments as well as not-for-profit organizations and for-profit enterprises). CABs under the Designated Communities and Territorial Homelessness streams are responsible approving the Community Plan and the Community Homelessness Report developed by the Community Entity.
Community Data Sharing Agreement (CDSA)	An agreement between the organizations that use HIFIS and the HIFIS Lead that governs data sharing within a community. Typically, these agreements outline: • What information will be shared and why; • Expectations related to data entry and data quality; • Privacy and security, and, • Data management practices.
Contributing Factors	Life events that have played a role in leading the client to requiring assistance from a service provider.
Coordinated Access	A way for communities to bring consistency to the process by which people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness access housing and related services within a geographic area. Coordinated Access streamlines how people get connected to housing and related services at the community level, creating greater efficiencies and shortening the path from homelessness to housing. As an integrated, systems-based approach to service delivery, Coordinated Access helps local organizations and service providers work together to achieve common goals.

	Strong systems include a Housing First approach, streamlined service delivery across different types of service providers, and real-time data. A standardized workflow for Coordinated Access includes access points to service, a shared triage and assessment process, and a shared vacancy matching and referral process with prioritization.
Custom Tables	HIFIS module that can generate customized records for HIFIS Service Providers whose needs exceed the defaults of the application.
Data Provision Agreement (DPA)	An agreement between the Government of Canada and the HMIS/HIFIS Lead that outlines roles and responsibilities, as well as the collection of certain non-directly identifiable export fields.
Family Head	Where individuals are part of a family, the Family Head is the person who has been identified as the lead for the family as a whole (e.g., the primary parent or guardian responsible for dependents).
HIFIS Administrator	A role responsible for administrative functions within HIFIS (e.g., configuration, data integrity, backups, and release management).
Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)	Developed by the Government of Canada, HIFIS is a Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) designed to support the day-to-day operational activities of Canadian service providers in the homeless-serving sector. As a comprehensive data collection and case management system, HIFIS enables participating service providers within the same community to access, collect, and share local real-time homelessness data and ensure that individuals and families are prioritized and referred to appropriate services at the correct time.
HIFIS Host	The organization that manages the server(s) on which HIFIS is installed and where client information is stored.

HIFIS Lead	The organization or dedicated staff role that is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of HIFIS.
HIFIS Program	A “label” or “tag” applied to client transactions in the database, so they can be grouped by a specific category for the purpose of reporting.
HIFIS Service Provider	Configuration of an organized and logical “set of services” available to people in a homeless-serving system. Transactions in HIFIS are based on the HIFIS Service Provider in which users are logged into. Client information is shared within and between HIFIS Service Providers based on user rights. User rights are granted to HIFIS users based on the role they play in their organization (i.e., HIFIS Service Provider) and the role that this organization plays in the Coordinated Access system.
Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)	Software that collects client-level data and manages service provider information over time within a homeless-serving system.
Housing Continuum	Refers to the full range of housing options available in a community, from shelter to temporary and permanent housing options.
Housing First	Providing people experiencing homelessness with immediate access to permanent housing and appropriate levels of support to stay housed, particularly for those with deeper levels of need or longer periods of housing instability. Housing First interventions consider stable, affordable housing as a prerequisite to overall health and well-being.
Housing Status	Classifies people by their Housing Type. At any point in time, clients can have a Housing Status of Homeless, Housed, Public Institution, Transitional, or Unknown.

Homeless	This Housing Status indicates that a client has an active shelter stay or an active Housing History record with a Housing Type that is categorized as Homeless.
Housed	This Housing Status indicates that a client has a Housing History record with a Housing Type that is categorized as Housed.
Public Institution	This Housing Status indicates that a client has a Housing History record with a Housing Type that is categorized as Public Institution. This Housing Status can be configured to roll up to either Homeless or Housed. Days spent with this Housing Status do not count toward the federal calculation of chronic homelessness.
Transitional	This Housing Status indicates that a client has a Housing History record with a Housing Type that is categorized as Transitional. This Housing Status can be configured to roll up to either Homeless or Housed. Days spent with this Housing Status do not count toward the federal calculation of chronic homelessness.
Unknown	A Housing Status of Unknown indicates that the client does not have an active Housing History record or shelter stay.
Homeless-serving system	All of the service providers within a geographic boundary that help people with their housing challenges. These providers are part of the same service delivery network. With a Coordinated Access workflow in place, the system shifts from an informal network of providers to a more structured service delivery approach.
Life Events	Life Events are defined as discrete experiences that disrupt an individual's usual activities causing a substantial change and readjustment.
Local HIFIS Help Desk	A service for HIFIS users established by a community that helps resolve technical issues, leads service requests, manages incidents, supports new releases, and addresses issues with data quality.

Look-up Tables	A functionality that allows HIFIS users to add, edit or remove values that appear in drop-down menus.
Modules	Key components of HIFIS organized by functions or similar types of service transactions (e.g., Case Management, Housing Placement, Directory of Services, or Food Bank).
Person(s) with Lived Experience or expertise	People that have direct experience with homelessness, either currently or in the past.
Privacy Impact Assessment	The process used to determine how business processes and software configuration could affect the privacy of a client. The purpose of conducting a Privacy Impact Assessment is to ensure that privacy issues are identified and mitigated or resolved. Typically, assessments are completed during the planning phase of implementation, before deployment.
Rights Templates	Functionality that allows a HIFIS Administrator to apply the same user rights to multiple HIFIS users that need access to the same modules/data fields to do their jobs.
Service Provider	An entity with staff that directly interact with clients. There are different kinds of service providers, each with different resources (or programming) to offer. Service providers in a homeless-serving system include street outreach, shelters, housing support and supportive housing, for example.
Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT)	A suite of assessment tools developed by OrgCode Consulting. The triage tool is called the VI-SPDAT. Triage results can be confirmed or updated through a full SPDAT assessment. These tools are integrated in HIFIS.
HIFIS Super User	A specialized HIFIS user role that supports the HIFIS Administrator.
Transitional Housing	Temporary, time-limited housing with support (case management) that is appropriate for the target population

	group (e.g., youth or newcomers) and more intensive than emergency shelter. For example, programming could focus on developing the necessary skills to be able to live more independently. Stays are also typically longer than shelter, with guidelines that range from three months to three years.
Unique Identifier List	A list of every person in a community that is currently experiencing homelessness. A Unique Identifier List is generated from a person-specific dataset for homelessness. Each person is included only once, after they have given consent for their information to be collected and shared with others. People are not included if they are housed, if they have not been in contact with the homeless-serving system for some time (often 90 days) or if they pass away.
User Rights	A HIFIS feature that supports the safeguarding of client information by ensuring HIFIS users can only access the modules and client information necessary to do their job. Rights specify if a user can see, edit, list and/or delete data in the modules/data fields they can access. Rights are granted based on a number of factors, including the role they play in their organization and the role that organization plays in the Coordinated Access workflow.
Domestic Violence Shelter	Temporary accommodation or housing with support for individuals and/or families fleeing domestic abuse or the threat of violence.
Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT)	An assessment tool developed by the Downtown Emergency Service Centre in Seattle. The tool is integrated in HIFIS.

The HIFIS Toolkit

Over the last two decades, the ways to measure the extent of homelessness have significantly evolved in Canada. The dedication of service providers and municipal and provincial governments to collect and share data through the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and Point-in-Time counts is at the centre of this success. When used jointly, these data collection efforts provide a comprehensive local and national picture of homelessness. For the first time in history, Canadians have quality data that supports policy and program development, as well as strategic planning in the homelessness sector.

As Canada is moving forward with the National Housing Strategy and Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, collecting, managing and sharing data becomes more important than ever to advance the collective understanding of homelessness and to support decision-making. In particular, Reaching Home emphasizes coordinated access and introduces a data-driven, client-centered approach to serve individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In this context, the Government of Canada is committed to continuously enhance HIFIS in order to support communities in their data collection and efforts to eliminate homelessness. Recognizing that HIFIS modernization is driven by the homelessness sector's needs, a National HIFIS working group was created in 2018 to leverage the expertise of communities and experts and help guide HIFIS enhancements.

HIFIS is designed to support coordinated access by allowing multiple service providers from the same community to access real-time homelessness data through a community-wide system available via web-enabled devices, such as laptops, smartphones and tablets. HIFIS also allows communities to document the number, characteristics, and needs of homeless individuals and families, as well as the number of people receiving services.

To meet Reaching Home requirements and implement coordinated access systems, communities have to adapt their business model, which encompasses developing and adopting new governance frameworks and data management strategies. Doing so requires planning, committing resources and training to promote data literacy and instill a data-driven culture.

To assist communities in this transformation, INFC has developed a HIFIS Toolkit composed of four guides. These guides cover the following topics:

1. **Implementation** – Provides guidance from planning to the deployment and maintenance of HIFIS.
2. **Installation** – Describes the technical requirements, architecture and installation procedures.

3. **Configuration** – Explains the configuration procedures to align with a community's business needs.
4. **User** – Gives a description of each function and how to use it.

Communities using HIFIS become part of a pan-Canadian movement that is building a data-driven culture to advance the understanding of homelessness in Canada. By working together, we can support the most vulnerable Canadians in providing access to safe, stable and affordable housing and reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by 2027–2028.

About the HIFIS Implementation Guide

Engaging service providers on implementing a Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) and on data management is a significant undertaking. Strategies and project planning are essential aspects of any successful implementation. It also requires the collaboration of service providers, front-line users and clients to leverage a multidisciplinary team and create change. The HIFIS Implementation Guide is intended to support those who will have to turn strategies and plans into actions regarding the deployment and maintenance of HIFIS.

This guide provides general information to get started on: 1) the governance structure and its considerations, 2) implementation planning, 3) the deployment strategy, 4) the delivery of client support services and 5) the approach to system maintenance. The guide also includes templates to support some implementation activities.

The Implementation Planning section, which provides insights regarding HIFIS configuration, can be used with the Configuration Guide. It explains the benefits and common challenges of configuration and how some approaches can be simplified and streamlined to support the community's activities and reporting.

Implementation of an HMIS is not a linear process; its scope and sophistication will vary according to the coordinated access approach, and the size and the structure of the community. Therefore, the HIFIS Implementation Guide should be used as a reference document according to the community characteristics.

For more information to support the implementation and management of HIFIS, you can visit the Homelessness Learning Hub.

To stay connected and get the latest updates on HIFIS, please confirm your interest by sending your consent at support@hifis.ca.

For any questions or enquiries, you can contact the HIFIS Clients Support Centre at **1-866-324-2375** or support@hifis.ca.

Governance and General Considerations

This section covers the following topics:

- Governance
- Privacy and Legal Compliance
- Communication and Change Management Strategy

Governance

The term “governance” identifies the structure(s) established to provide better stakeholder coordination and distribution of roles and responsibilities in order to make decisions and take coordinated action.

In the context of HIFIS implementation, the governance structure will help with decision making and with coordinating HIFIS deployment and operationalization strategies to ensure that it is aligned with the business objectives of each service provider and the housing and homelessness system overall, and that it encourages local efforts to achieve desired community-level outcomes.

The governance structure will also ensure accountability and transparency in planning and prioritizing efforts; and will provide a frame of reference for managing each phase of the implementation of HIFIS, as well as its operationalization and continuous improvement. Generally, the governance structure helps to maximize the long-term viability of the information management system and related activities.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to establishing a governance structure, because such an approach must consider the context, the number and type of service providers, and existing governance structures.

Identifying Governance Stakeholders

Best practices show that representing all partners in the HIFIS governance structure will help instill confidence for HIFIS implementation.

Relevant organizations and community representatives who are able to provide necessary perspectives or expertise for HIFIS implementation must participate in its governance. Specifically, communities may wish to consider including strategic and business representatives for each type of service provider (e.g. shelter, outreach, supportive housing, and prevention and diversion) to ensure that decision-making, including the configuration of HIFIS, aligns with the roles and responsibilities of each service provider. Governance participants will change over time, as certain roles may be essential for implementation and others for system maintenance.

The selection of partners may not be clear in the beginning; however, it is recommended to start with one main group and to expand when other needs arise. Governance structure participants include the following:

1. **Service providers**: Can confirm whether the HIFIS objectives, business model and requirements correspond to their organization's needs. The representatives could be managers or front-line workers who know the operations, policies and protocols of their organization and understand the role of their organization within the housing and homelessness response system.
2. **Indigenous service providers**: Can help ensure that HIFIS configuration is responsive to the needs of Indigenous people.
3. **Individuals who have experienced homelessness**: Can help to shape HIFIS implementation by raising client needs and concerns, especially on the way information should be collected (e.g., data entry protocols), and how clients can be supported to navigate the system using a client-centred approach.
4. **Subject matter experts**: Can provide specific knowledge to support decision-making, especially regarding information technology, HIFIS, legal and privacy issues, change management, Coordinated Access or the housing and homelessness response system.
5. **Municipal representatives or other government representatives**: Provide information on the reporting requirements and priorities in order to guide configuration.

Establishing the Governance Structure

As specified in the Reaching Home Coordinated Access Guide, the governance structure established for Coordinated Access and HIFIS should address the following items:

- Support change management and build political will;
- Set up and implementation of Coordinated Access and HIFIS;
- Ongoing management and accountability (e.g., meeting minimum federal requirements);
- Day-to-day operational oversight and responsibilities; and

- Ongoing continuous improvements.

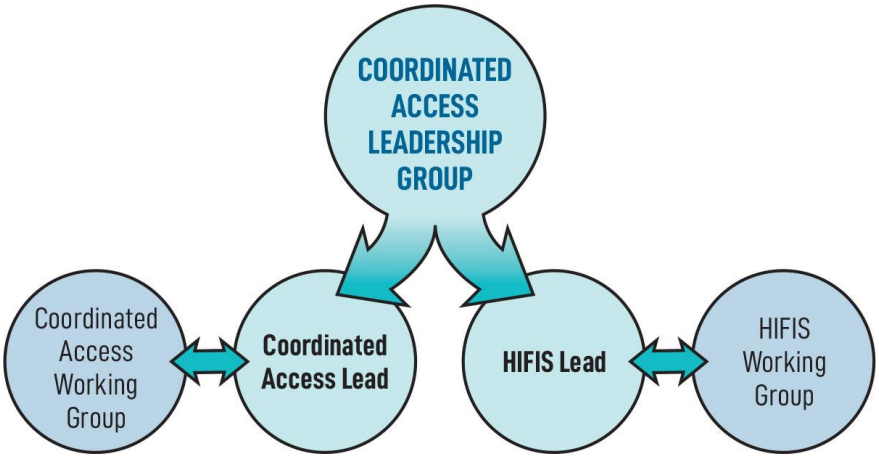

Figure 1: Example of the Coordinated-Access governance structure

The Reaching Home directives require that communities establish a governance structure that will supervise decisions related to HIFIS implementation, maintenance and data management.

Practical information on how HIFIS Leads can support the governance of HIFIS can be found in the How HIFIS Leads Support Governance resource.

A. Coordinated Access Leadership Group

The responsibilities of the Coordinated Access Leadership Group with regard to HIFIS include:

- Monitoring the planning (e.g. confirm the scope of HIFIS, endorse the communication and change management strategy, identify the HIFIS Host), implementation (e.g., endorse the configuration and deployment strategy, ensure that training and technical supports are available) and continuous improvements (e.g. ensure that quality controls are in place)
- Approve policies and protocols

Even though some communities may prefer having a specific leadership group for HIFIS implementation, others may choose to take advantage of the Coordinated Access Leadership Group to support the existing community planning process (as illustrated above).

Terms of reference

Clear terms of reference for the Coordinated Access Leadership Group will formalize the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. These terms of reference provide information about the Group's structure, roles and responsibilities, objectives and composition, as well as the frequency of its meetings and its decision-making method (See Appendix A – Sample Terms of Reference).

Data life cycle
Under HIFIS, the Leadership Group can also monitor the data management life cycle and support the collection, analysis and sharing of high-quality data.

The Leadership Group must pay particular attention to:

- Operational and strategic reporting needs and identifying the data that should be collected;
- Policies and protocols to standardize data entry;
- HIFIS user data collection training; and
- Data quality problems and solutions.

B. HIFIS Lead/Project Manager
The HIFIS Lead, often a Community Entity, assigns staff to support HIFIS implementation. The HIFIS Lead has several responsibilities covered throughout this guide. These include the following:

- Help define the scope and vision of HIFIS implementation (See Appendix B – HIFIS Vision Planning) to be confirmed by the Leadership Group.
- Develop business requirements and HIFIS configuration.
- Develop policies and protocols (e.g. privacy and consent, data entry, data sharing and user rights, security and audit logs).
- Develop a working privacy framework, a Data Sharing Agreement and consent forms.
- Develop and implement an HIFIS communications strategy.
- Identify the HIFIS Host site (e.g. where HIFIS will be installed and where client information will be stored) and the technical infrastructure.
- Develop training for the user.
- Launch HIFIS and set up a local support centre.
- Perform maintenance activities regularly (e.g. quality assurance reports and evaluations).
- Analyze data in order to support continuous improvement, in partnership with Coordinated Access and HIFIS working groups.

A HIFIS Lead, or Project Manager, may be appointed to implement HIFIS in order to meet the project objectives within the established time frame and budget. Project management responsibilities include managing scheduling, resources and deliverables; and liaising with the Leadership Group to provide status reports on progress, challenges, risks and schedule updates (See Appendix C – Sample Project Status Report).

Scope and business requirements
The HIFIS Lead/Project Manager is responsible for defining the scope of HIFIS, among other things (while the leadership group confirms it). It must also bring together experts

from the service provider and combine their needs in order to develop the necessary organizational requirements to direct HIFIS configuration.

The following questions can help define the scope of HIFIS implementation:

- What are the geographic boundaries of the “system”?
- What is the scope of the service “system” that agreed to share the same HIFIS database?

For example:

- Which of these services helps people to stay housed (preventing homelessness) or to avoid a shelter stay (shelter diversion)?
- Which of these services follows prevention and diversion such as shelter stays?
- Which of these services are offered only through Coordinated Access (where referrals to specific housing resources are managed centrally), such as rapid rehousing, supportive housing and/or case management supports that help people to stay housed?
- What other services will be available to clients as part of the shared service planning documented in HIFIS, such as outreach or other housing help services?
- Is there dedicated staffing to support Coordinated Access?

The business requirements should include the service providers’ specific needs, the needs of Coordinated Access, as well as other needs, especially the strategic direction established by the CAB and other stakeholders. The functional requirements used to configure HIFIS cover the following items:

- Requirements for the business processes of each service provider, based on the services and programs offered;
- Service providers and their roles related to Coordinated Access, and the role of the Coordinated Access Lead and their reporting needs. For example, this will help determine the module and data each service provider must have to carry out its operations. Similarly, the role and duties of the Coordinated Access Lead (e.g. monitor housing resource vacancies, identify clients experiencing homelessness who have been waiting for a long time to receive housing or support offers);
- Populations served (e.g. demographic data) and personal information collected;
- Privacy and security requirements; and
- Data and reporting needs.

The section on Business Requirements provides more information about business requirements.

C. HIFIS Working Group

The governance structure can also involve one or several working groups to:

- Advise the Coordinated Access Leadership Group;
- Support the HIFIS Lead/Project Manager in their duties; and
- Develop policies and protocols: policy and protocol development will help in planning, implementing and maintaining HIFIS and high-quality data. These should cover the data life cycle.

Ongoing governance structure

Following HIFIS implementation, the governance structure should remain active and continue to provide direction on improvements (e.g. review policies and protocols, monitor data quality issues). The composition of the Leadership Group and working groups must be reviewed regularly, as new skills may become relevant as HIFIS reaches maturity (See the section on Sustainability).

Resource Planning

The following resources should be retained for HIFIS implementation:

- Legal counsel (e.g. Data Sharing Agreements, consent forms, understanding legal requirements)
- Project management, including a Project Manager or a Business Analyst to implement HIFIS, set schedules, engage service providers and develop policies and protocols (See the section on Establishing the Governance Structure)
- Communications or Change Management Specialist (See the section on Developing a Communications and Change Management Strategy)
- IT resources (See the section on Implementation Planning)
- Report Development Specialist (Crystal Reports)
- Resources for training services (See the section on HIFIS Training)
- Help Desk resources (See the section on Local Help Desk Planning)

Privacy and Legal Compliance

Identifying and addressing issues that can affect HIFIS implementation will influence planning strategies. Although communities could identify other issues, this section focuses on privacy and legal compliance, which are central to the implementation of HIFIS.

Since Coordinated Access systems rely on the sharing of information between service providers, communities must establish proper privacy and legal standards and data collection, audit processes and arbitration procedures.

In a Coordinated Access system, service providers must collect personal information from individuals and families in order to help clients access the level of service that meets their needs. While these individuals remain the owners of their personal information, service providers and the HIFIS Lead are responsible for protecting this

information, and clients must be informed about why, how, and by whom information is collected, used, shared, stored, and destroyed.

HIFIS is designed to safeguard personal information using a role-based access control or role-based security model. It allows the customization of user access rights to ensure that users can only use functions and see the information that is necessary to do their job.

Tip: Service providers' HIFIS access should be limited to their functions in the Coordinated Access system. HIFIS users' access rights should be limited to the information they need to perform their duties.

Communities must also plan how clients' personal information is managed and protected. A privacy expert should oversee work in this area, to help ensure that decision-making, processes and procedures align with the appropriate legislation. There are five types of privacy and legal documents that support HIFIS implementation:

1. Data Provision Agreement between the HIFIS/HMIS Lead and INFC

The HIFIS Lead must sign a Data Provision Agreement (DPA) before installing HIFIS. The DPA allows for the sharing of certain non-identifiable client export data with the Government of Canada. The DPA is an agreement that outlines the terms and conditions related to:

- the roles and responsibilities of the HIFIS Lead and INFC; and,
- the licence that INFC will grant to the HIFIS Lead, which extends to service providers and their third-party organizations, in return for the export of information from the HIFIS Lead Organization subject to the agreement.

2. Community Data Sharing Agreement

The HIFIS Lead has to enter into a Data Sharing Agreement (or a similar agreement) with service providers for the extended use of HIFIS and for obtaining the authority to share clients' information. A Community Data Sharing Agreement outlines the objective of data sharing, including a description of these data, the roles and responsibilities of both parties, and the privacy and security protocols that should be in place. The HIFIS Lead has the responsibility to develop a Data Sharing Agreement in accordance with the applicable legislation and agreements.

3. Client Consent Form

To use and disclose a client's information, service providers are required to obtain consent from a client, which is normally done via a consent form. Clients can also provide verbal consent, which is captured in HIFIS under Client Information > Consent.

The consent form should provide information on the personal information being collected and the purpose for which it is being collected and used. It should inform

individuals that their personal information can be shared with local service providers, and that certain non-identifiable information will be shared with the Government of Canada for the purposes of analysis, research and to support policy and program development.

The governance body should decide what client information should be shared between service providers. This decision should be guided by what HIFIS can and cannot do, and implemented through policies and protocols, and HIFIS configuration.

Consent forms should be reviewed on a regular basis to support the Coordinated Access system, and meet applicable legislation.

Tip: Job aids or scripts can support workers with explaining the consent form to clients in a consistent and comprehensive manner. Developed in collaboration with people with lived experience, these scripts will respond to the needs of the client.

4. Confidentiality and User Agreement signed by HIFIS users

A Confidentiality and User Agreement (CUA) is a legal contract with a HIFIS user agreeing on the terms and conditions for using HIFIS and the protocols for protecting associated clients' privacy. In order to have access to HIFIS, a user could be required to sign a CUA that outlines his or her responsibilities towards clients' information.

Tip: The governance body should identify where accountability for the CUA lies. Some communities find it is more practical to delegate responsibility for applying these agreements to the service providers (employer).

5. Privacy assessment

In addition to the aforementioned agreements, the HIFIS Lead may wish to conduct a privacy assessment that considers the potential risks and implications of collecting, managing and sharing client data.

A privacy assessment is a common practice conducted by an organization that determines how a program or service could potentially affect the privacy of an individual. In conducting a Privacy Assessment, risks and appropriate response measures are identified in accordance to local, provincial and federal legislation in a transparent manner, increasing accountability and readiness.

The following are important steps when considering a Privacy Assessment:

- Identifying all personal information related to a program or service and looking at how it will be used;
- Identifying where personal data is collected, managed, and shared;
- Mapping who collects, manages, and shares the data;

- Identifying clear roles and responsibilities regarding the staff involved in the management of the data;
- Identifying privacy risks and the level of those risks; and
- Finding ways to eliminate or reduce privacy risks to an acceptable level.

Communication and Change Management Strategies

Implementation of HIFIS impacts how services are provided to clients due to new processes, protocols and tools. Effective communication eases this transition by articulating why the change is needed, how it will improve services and business delivery, status of the project and training opportunities.

TIP: Communities should implement a change management strategy.

A change management strategy could help service providers mitigate the risks associated with change, encourage the adoption of new practices and direct support to the people or teams that need it the most.

Such a strategy would require the appropriate communications and training, and the establishment of feedback loops/activities that allow service providers' employees to ask questions and share concerns. A change management strategy tailored to the context of each service provider is to be developed with the designated champions and appropriate resources of each organization.

A communication strategy helps communication to be efficient and effective by identifying who needs to be reached, how and when, as well as the objective of the communication. It may also include meeting opportunities to allow service providers, including their employees, to share their concerns and feedback, and respond to their questions. The HIFIS communication strategy could be part of the broader strategy for the implementation of Coordinated Access systems. A communication strategy includes:

Defining the purpose: The communication strategy depends on what an organization is trying to accomplish with the messaging. Topics to communicate could include:

- Implementation status, such as updates, schedule, feedback or question and answer sessions;
- Communications, such as decisions, surveys, events, new HIFIS functionality and reports, and program news;
- System Notifications, such as planned releases, outages, bugs, fixes and tips.

Identifying the audiences: Targeted messaging, which requires the identification of your audience, helps maximize impact. Audiences can be broken down in different ways, including by roles and responsibilities, type of services offered, etc. HIFIS

audiences in your community's housing and homelessness response system could include HIFIS Users, governance structure entities or any other stakeholders affected by the implementation of HIFIS directly or indirectly.

Selecting the communication channels: Determine channels according to the audience. Communication channels can include:

- Meetings/conferences/town halls: Use existing events in your community with tailored communications materials.
- Email: Disseminating information and calls for action (e.g., training). The sequence and timing of an email campaign should be planned.
- Website: Using a webpage to provide information on HIFIS project status and resources, including users' guides, reference guides, training materials and frequently asked questions (FAQs).
- Newsletter: Publishing an electronic or paper newsletter on a regular basis throughout the implementation and beyond.
- HIFIS Bulletins: Sending reminders to read the latest newsletter or visit the HIFIS website. HIFIS Bulletins are also useful to advise of system outages, new releases and new reports.

Implementation Planning

This section provides information on discussion items and decisions that need to be made before deploying HIFIS:

- HIFIS Host
- Legacy System Data Conversion
- Business Requirements
- Data Sharing and Configuration
- System Administration
- Reporting

HIFIS Host

The Host is where HIFIS is installed and where the client's information is stored. The governance body must determine who will host HIFIS.

HIFIS can be hosted within an organization or via a third party. Experts consult and guide decisions from the governance body to determine if an organization has the technical capacity to host HIFIS or if an external server is required.

Scalability

Assessing the scope of HIFIS is necessary to determine a host and the capacity of a server (see the section on Establishing the Governance Structure) Baseline metrics identify the scale of HIFIS implementation to support the housing and homelessness response system's current and ongoing needs, such as:

- The total number of service providers, users and concurrent users, the latter being among the most critical factors for performance;
- The peak activity times;
- The number of transactions per hour, day, week and month;
- The number of client files to transfer from the legacy system;
- The number of new client files created per year; and
- The number of new service providers and users to be added in subsequent years.

To have the proper system in place, communities should consider the accumulation of data over time, especially for those storing photos, images and other documents in HIFIS. Large quantities of data on the database server may have an impact on HIFIS performance.

Technical Requirements

HIFIS minimum technical requirements for the application, the server and the database are detailed in the HIFIS Installation Guide and have information on the following:

- Software requirements;
- Hardware requirements;
- Hard disk space requirements;
- Required server roles; and
- Required server features.

While planning for minimum technical requirements, the following information should also be sought:

- Speed of the internet connection;
- Dedicated Internet Protocol (IP) address;
- Web domain;
- Secure Socket Layer (SSL) certificate;
- Development of a disaster recovery process; and
- Implementation of a system back-up solution.

Legacy System Data Conversion

The Governance body will determine whether client files from the community's legacy system(s) will be migrated into HIFIS. While this decision should be based on the business value of converting data, the complexity, cost and privacy requirements could be taken into account:

- Number and types of legacy systems in the community;
- Number of client files and fields to be transferred for each legacy system for each; and
- Personal information sharing protocols, based on the legal framework in force. For example, if data sharing consents have a lifespan, is it legal to share data collected before the client's consent has been re-obtained?

Data conversion from a legacy system requires consultation with technical, legal and data experts to ensure it is streamlined and accurate. (See Appendix D – Planning the Steps for Converting Data into HIFIS for guidance regarding fields).

Conversion Approaches

There are different approaches to deal with historical data from legacy systems:

No conversion (start net-new)

- Client files are created in HIFIS for new clients only.

- Existing issues or duplication of client's files are not introduced into the new system.
- Historical client files remain in the legacy system(s) and become inaccessible or read-only.

Partial conversion

- Only the data of clients who have used the services in the last few months are converted into HIFIS.
- Only part of the client's file is converted, as provided for in the legal framework. It is possible to consider converting demographic data, for example, in order to ensure business process flow at the launch of HIFIS.
- This offers a smaller set of client files to convert in comparison to converting all client files, minimizing the amount of errors and duplications
- Inactive client files remain in the legacy systems and become inaccessible and unsupported.

Another possibility is to convert all client files. This approach, however, involves challenges, including the potential significant time investment.

Communities undertaking data conversion should establish procedures to merge duplicated profiles and clean data. For example, the service provider that has worked closely with a participant with a duplicate record could be assigned the responsibility to verify the data and merge the profiles.

Business Requirements

HIFIS is highly configurable. The system-level decisions that communities make about Coordinated Access—the specific services that are coordinated, the tools used in triage and assessment, which populations are prioritized, and how service providers share information about common clients—drives HIFIS configuration. Configuration decisions must be well informed as they have a direct impact on HIFIS usability and usefulness.

This section explains the type of information needed to support configuration decision-making, as well as the configuration process and considerations.

Defining Business Requirements

The business requirements for individual service providers and for the Coordinated Access system as a whole will guide the configuration of HIFIS. Before starting the configuration, the governance body should gather information, including:

- Scope of HIFIS (see the section on Establishing the Governance Structure).
- Could/should these different kinds of services be "grouped" as distinct service providers in HIFIS? (See the section on Configuration Planning).

- What are the specific staff roles in each service provider? What information does each role need to do their job? What other staff roles exist in the system? (e.g., Coordinated Access Lead)
- What client information is helpful for shared service planning when workers are supporting the same client?
- What is the impact of **not** being able to access information in a shared database and how might this inform expectations for timely data entry?
- Who will benefit from the client information gathered in HIFIS and in what format (e.g., reports) will it be most helpful for the different audiences (e.g., clients, front-line workers, supervisors/managers, service providers, funders)?

This information will support configuration decisions:

- Service providers to identify who is providing service to clients (i.e., roles);
- Translation of the end-user workflow in HIFIS, gap analysis, development of workarounds and process re-engineering;
- Use of HIFIS modules, fields and drop-downs to classify service transactions;
- Depending on the roles of each service provider, the access rights templates that are applied to an employee (restricting their access to HIFIS modules, fields and drop-downs to an as-needed basis);
- Identifies gaps between business practices and standard HIFIS modules (e.g., customizing fields and drop-downs or adding new tables or surveys);
- What protocols should be developed to operationalize HIFIS workflows (e.g., guidelines around timing for data entry).

Walkthrough process

The HIFIS Lead or Project Manager, along with service provider representatives, could perform a system walkthrough to explore HIFIS functionalities. During this process, participants use HIFIS as end-users would, exploring modules and functionalities, and documenting their experience against the organizational model.

One possible approach would be to have service provider representatives looking at HIFIS from the perspective of each service type (e.g., shelter, street outreach, supportive housing) and other representatives focusing on the housing and homelessness response system-level perspective. The participants would document the relevant modules, fields that should be made mandatory, drop-down menus, etc., for each service provider type.

Subsequently, the team could consider looking at the relevant drop-down menus, fields and modules and validate that the information collected will respond to the operational and strategic needs (e.g., to do their job, produce necessary reports) of the clients, HIFIS users, managers and the Coordinated Access lead.

The sections below provide more information on how these decisions can be made.

Tip: Many of the modules are configurable. See the HIFIS Configuration Guide to learn more.

Data Sharing and Configuration

Data Sharing in HIFIS

The configuration of the Service Providers, User Rights, and Clusters settings enables HIFIS to share data or restrict data to ensure that HIFIS users can access information needed to properly serve clients.

Service provider settings: Establishes the data access privileges of a service provider (e.g., viewing of certain population groups such as gender and age) and establishes whether this information is shared with other service providers of the same or different type.

User Rights and Rights Templates: Determine the user's access rights and privileges. User Rights can be as restrictive or as open as needed for their role. A HIFIS user can have restricted access that only allows seeing, editing, listing, or deleting transactions that pertain directly to their responsibilities, or a HIFIS user can have a more open access that allows a user to see modules and modify transactions across multiple service providers.

Cluster settings: Restricts the sharing of information to a group of local service providers, while using the same HIFIS licence of other service providers that do not have access to the information stored on the cluster.

What data is shared between service providers?

When accessing a client's file, there are two main sections in HIFIS – Client Information and Client Management.

Client Information: Facts about a person including demographic information, housing history, contact information, etc. HIFIS shares **all data** in Client Information (for users with the right to see it) unless the data is marked as not shareable (e.g., for Health Information, when adding a health record, a user can mark an item as "shareable" and "editable").

Client Management: Information about services that have been provided to the client. This data is only viewable if the user is given rights to see this information. Without the proper user rights, users will be able to see that a transaction exists, but not be able to access details of the transaction (other than what is displayed in the list view). Additionally, Client Management information can be hidden from all other Service Providers by the Service Provider that entered it (see the section on Service Provider Settings in the HIFIS Configuration Guide).

Configuration Planning

Configuring HIFIS is based on the needs and objectives of the housing and homelessness response system.

Distinguishing between Service Providers and Programs in HIFIS

What is a service provider in HIFIS?

In HIFIS, the term “service provider” has a broad meaning and could be seen as any organization, physical location, or program in a community’s housing and homelessness service system.

The configuration of service providers is the very foundation of the collaboration mechanism of HIFIS and has a significant impact on the daily operations of HIFIS users and administrators. It is crucial to reflect on the structuring of organizations in HIFIS and on the various programs and services that they offer to clients.

A HIFIS service provider can:

- Record transactions with clients;
    - Services, such as case management, assessments, receipt of goods or services, participation in group activities, etc.
    - Stays in a shelter
    - Participation in the Coordinated Access process
    - Housing placements and housing loss prevention
    - Other
- Establish user rights templates based on specific staff roles;
- Create rooms and beds (e.g., shelter or transitional beds);
- Share data with other service providers;
- Customize the use of HIFIS by:
    - Restricting what types of clients users can see (e.g., only males, females, youth or children)
    - Establishing mandatory data fields
    - Customizing look-up values
- Generate reports based on a service provider, multiple service providers or a client; and
- Act as the HIFIS Administrator to manage and configure the system.

If there are concerns around visibility of information, service providers can be created in separate clusters to keep their data separate and restrict access to users. For more information on clusters, see the HIFIS Configuration Guide.

Tiers of HIFIS service providers

In HIFIS, it is possible to create primary, secondary, and tertiary service providers. By creating a HIFIS service provider that is secondary to another, the mandatory fields

configured in the primary service provider can be copied to the secondary service provider. This can reduce administrative effort when creating service providers.

Tip: It is recommended to configure the look-up table values in the primary service provider before creating the secondary service provider. Once the secondary service provider has been created, these values can no longer be copied from the primary service provider and it will be necessary to configure all of the tables in the secondary service provider. This can require considerable effort.

Although the secondary service provider inherits mandatory fields, it is possible to modify them after the secondary Service Provider has been created. It is also possible for the primary service provider to force the mandatory fields for one or more secondary (but not tertiary) service providers. The secondary service provider cannot reverse or override this setting.

Managing Rooms and Beds

Rooms and beds are managed within each HIFIS service provider.

Rooms and beds cannot be deleted once created, so care should be taken when deciding how many are needed. Rooms and beds can be made inactive and thus hidden from view when they are not needed. Beds cannot be moved from one room to another.

Communities should gather specific information on each service provider in your housing and homelessness system before the configure their service providers, rooms, and beds. See Appendix E – Sample Service Provider Survey for examples of questions for gathering general information and a survey template for technical assessment and Rooms and Beds.

What is a program in HIFIS?

A program is a label or tag created by the community to group client transactions by category. Each service offered to clients by the organization (e.g., Admission, Case Management, Housing Placement steps, provision of Goods and Services) may be attached to one or more HIFIS programs.

HIFIS Programs cannot be used to determine user access to information.

A HIFIS program allows for

- tracking of funded program activities (e.g., stay in a shelter, housing program with support services, youth program)
- tracking of payments made to clients towards program activities (e.g., goods and services)
- tracking of performance indicators (e.g., reporting on service delivery aimed at various population groups)

A HIFIS program may be

- exclusive to a service provider
- shared by a number of service providers, such as regional programs, or programs offered at several service points
- attributed to one or more modules

Tip: To obtain a quality report based on HIFIS programs, users must attach transactions to the appropriate HIFIS program.

As this is a manual process, communities' protocols, procedures and training will play a key role in ensuring that HIFIS users select the right HIFIS program(s) for the right transaction.

By default, the Program field is optional in the various modules. It is possible to make it mandatory (see the section on Determining Mandatory Fields) depending on the module. For example, upon a client's admission to a shelter, a program is associated with the client's admission, then a bed is assigned to the client. This allows for more flexible management of the service provider's beds, as the beds are not exclusive to a program.

Comparing Service Providers and Programs in HIFIS

Establishing service providers and programs in HIFIS will determine how the system is organized, how users access information, and how transactions are recorded. Decisions in this area impact administrative functions (e.g., at what level can mandatory fields and look-up tables be defined), usability (e.g., log-ins) and functionalities (e.g., HIFIS users' information access rights, data entry).

Once a service provider is created it cannot be deleted or merged with another. It can be disabled and its data hidden if it is no longer in use. These reasons make it crucial that communities consider all the benefits and risks of creating service providers before doing so.

Some things to think about when creating and configuring service providers in HIFIS:

- What level of collaboration is needed between service providers?
- Is there any information that needs to be hidden?
- What set up best supports the operational needs of the organizations in your community?
- What set up best supports the functions of Coordinated Access? (e.g., Intake, Assessment, Prioritization, Referral)

Communities may set up service providers in HIFIS to represent different things:

- A specific community organization

- A physical location, regardless of what organization runs it
- A program, regardless of what organization runs it, or where the program takes place

When deciding how to set up service providers, the following benefits and risks of each option should be considered.

Method	Benefits	Risks
Service providers as organizations	• Organizational data is stored under one service provider	• Proper use of the HIFIS Program feature would be necessary to categorize services • Users with rights to certain services will see all service level data regardless of location of service delivery or program
Service providers as physical locations	• Service level data is segregated based on location that delivered the service • Service level data from certain locations can be hidden from others if needed • Users can be restricted from seeing data from certain locations if needed	• Staff who work at multiple locations will have to log in to multiple service providers to do their job • Organizational data may be stored across multiple service providers if they operate multiple locations, adding a layer of complexity for reporting • Increases number of service providers in the system, which may complicate user rights
Service providers as programs	• Service level data is segregated based on programs • Service level data from certain programs can be hidden from others if needed	• Staff who work in multiple programs or deliver multiple services will have to log in to multiple service providers to do their job • Organizational data will be stored across multiple service providers, adding a layer of complexity for reporting • Increases number of service providers in the system, which may complicate user rights

Use Cases

Scenario 1 – A community fragments its model into a high number of HIFIS service providers. Among other things, the community chooses to establish its funding programs X and Y as HIFIS service providers (i.e., X and Y are configured as HIFIS service providers). This ensures that transactions under X and Y are automatically compiled in the right place, rather than relying on users making a manual selection at the time of data entry (i.e., if X and Y had been configured as HIFIS programs).

Impact: Every time they need to enter transactions or see information in X and Y for a client, users have to log in to X, then log out, and then log in to Y, then log out. This can become time-consuming for users, who may have to log on and log off multiple times throughout the day, even for a single client.

Scenario 2 – A community uses minimal HIFIS service providers and a large number of HIFIS programs. This allows HIFIS users to work with the same client by labelling transactions for a specific program or project, without the need to log on and off multiple times. With this approach, however, the community loses the ability to restrict information between HIFIS users.

For example, if an organization works with many types of clients—men, women and youth—and all shelter beds are under the same service provider, any user with the right to see shelter beds and book in clients will be able to see all the clients staying in shelter beds. Given that the organization is working with many types of clients—men, women and youth—it may wish to create HIFIS service providers for each population so users cannot access information for clients with whom they do not work.

Impact: Data-sharing policies and procedures are required to ensure that users are only accessing the information they need to do their jobs.

How is data reported?

Decisions made by communities and service providers on how to better support individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness must be based on data. As an important source of data, HIFIS can support the prioritization of clients, strategic decision-making, and the identification of trends and community planning.

In order to optimize the use of HIFIS as a tool for supporting decision-making and support its configuration, communities should evaluate and prioritize business and strategic needs and identify data that should be collected.

In HIFIS, data reporting can be done at numerous levels, including at the community (aggregation of HIFIS service providers' information), HIFIS service providers (or collection of service providers), transaction, HIFIS program, and client levels. HIFIS reports can be designed to give the option to select which service providers to include in a HIFIS report.

HIFIS uses Crystal Reports as its reporting tool. A number of standard reports come pre-installed in HIFIS; however, communities that have additional reporting requirements should develop their own customized Crystal Reports. Other reporting software can also be used at the community's expense.

Determining Mandatory Fields

Making fields mandatory helps improve data completeness and, by extension, the quality of reports.

Making too many fields mandatory, however, can have a detrimental effect on clients if they are not convinced that it improves services, and can increase strain on users collecting this information. In order to avoid this, the community could establish criteria to make a field mandatory and document the business value or justification for the mandatory fields.

Mandatory data fields are marked with a red star. HIFIS users' input into HIFIS cannot be saved until the mandatory fields are filled.

Tip: The Data Provision Agreement (DPA) between the HIFIS Lead Organization and INFC identifies the fields that are mandatory to report to the Government of Canada. The fields are mandatory only if using the modules where these fields exist.

Drop-Down Menus and Look-up Table Values

Drop-down menus show the pre-determined entries that appear to users who enter information in specific fields. They increase navigation efficiency and increase reporting accuracy by allowing HIFIS users to select information from a finite set of options, rather than typing in a free text field, which is prone to errors and difficult to analyze.

Entries for most drop-down menus can be edited (added, removed, retitled) within the Look-up Table menu. A walkthrough should be conducted to review the default values of each drop-down list to ensure they are relevant to your community and service provider(s). In most cases, there may be missing ones that need to be added, or ones that do not apply that need to be deactivated. A careful selection of the values will ensure that HIFIS users have access to the most accurate and relevant options when assisting clients.

Inclusion of Places in the Directory of Services

The Directory of Services module is used to capture the location and contact information for places of importance in the community. Once configured, these places become available in various HIFIS modules and can be used to record locations that a client has or will be visiting, or the location at which a service was received (e.g., pharmacy for when HIFIS users are adding a client's medication records, a school for education records or another service provider the clients have accessed or from which they have been referred).

When aggregated, this information can be used to track the volume of interactions with partners from across the community, including the origin/destination of clients' inflow/outflow and the different partners from which clients receive services. This can be used to support decision-making for strategic partnerships, the Coordinated Access system or community planning.

As communities implement Coordinated Access systems, it is expected that the places in the directory of services will expand, reflecting the involvement of an increasing number of community partners.

Housing Continuum

Setting up a housing continuum consists of identifying categories in this continuum (e.g. emergency shelter, supportive housing) and linking them to housing types. The housing continuum categories are used in the Housing Type drop-down menu that can be found in several modules (e.g. Housing History).

Configuring the housing continuum allows communities to track and report on clients' pathways through homelessness and supports the monitoring of intervention outcomes. The housing continuum can also be used to calculate inflows, outflows and chronic homelessness.

All HIFIS releases Version 4.0.59.1 and later include a housing continuum called "Reaching Home". This continuum reflects the housing definitions of the Reaching Home program. The Unique Identifier List and the Coordinated Access functions of HIFIS reference the Reaching Home Continuum.

For more information, see the HIFIS Configuration Guide.

Custom Fields and Tables

Following the configuration of the mandatory fields, the look-up tables, the places and the housing continuum, a community or service provider may discover that HIFIS does not capture all information required as per the business requirements.

HIFIS allows for the creation of custom fields and tables that are not included in the default setting.

User Rights Configuration and Templates

User Rights

HIFIS allows for the creation of highly customizable user rights. User rights are configured either individually per HIFIS user or through User Rights Templates.

User Rights Templates can reflect the various types of HIFIS users based on the role they play in the system. These templates protect client information by determining what module and information a HIFIS user can see/access, as well as the actions the user can execute (customize, edit, delete, etc.). They also streamline interaction with HIFIS, as users will only see the modules and fields they need to do their work, thus reducing

the amount of information on the screen. Once created, these user rights templates can be applied to one or several HIFIS users.

In order to determine how many different templates are necessary and how to customize them, communities should identify and group the types of users they have (e.g., shelter worker, shelter supervisor, outreach worker, site administrator). A survey can be used to identify employee tasks and functions, and from that, the HIFIS modules and fields they need can be set up.

Case: A large service provider with a shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, shelter diversion, a drop-in centre, homelessness prevention programs, street outreach and housing first programs requires a large number of HIFIS Front Desk Modules, including Admissions, Housing Placements, Group Activities and Housing Loss Prevention.

HIFIS users need access only to the modules relevant to them. The Rights Template should be configured so that, for instance, the homelessness prevention staff have access to Housing Loss Prevention, but not shelter staff.

Adding user profiles
HIFIS User Profiles must be created before individuals can use HIFIS. During this process, users are linked to:

- **HIFIS service provider(s)**: as indicated earlier in this section, a HIFIS user making transactions to multiple HIFIS service providers will have to log in to each one separately.
- **HIFIS rights template(s)**: HIFIS users that have access to multiple HIFIS service providers can have different rights for each of them. This would be the case if an employee is working for more than one service provider within the system or is responsible for providing more than one type of service (e.g., prevention and diversion, shelter).
- **Role(s)**: HIFIS Roles (e.g., Staff, Caseworker, Lawyer, Landlord) govern where in HIFIS the user's name appears in drop-down menus. For example, a Caseworker (Role)'s profile name would be available in the Case Management, Housing Placement and Assessment modules in the Caseworker field.

System Administration

The governance body should identify HIFIS administrator(s) that would be responsible for its day-to-day management, including:

- Managing and creating user accounts;
- Resetting passwords;
- Managing and creating HIFIS service providers; and

- Adding/making changes to:
  - Rights templates;
  - Fields and tables;
  - Housing continuum;
  - Mandatory fields;
  - Look-up table values;
  - Clusters; and
  - Changes to HIFIS programs.

There are several approaches for the delegation of administrative responsibilities:

Centralized – HIFIS Lead as the Single Administrator

One group performs administrative tasks for all the service providers and its staff.

- **Advantage:** All users, service providers and configurations are managed consistently.
- **Impact**: Requires dedicated resources, especially when supporting a large number of HIFIS users and service providers. Can create a “one-size-fits-all” approach making HIFIS configuration less tailored to service providers’ specific needs.

Isolated Delegation – Each HIFIS Service Provider as an Administrator

Each service provider manages its own users and its own environment, including mandatory fields, look-up tables and rights templates.

- **Advantage:** The service provider has control over its own configuration and can tailor it to its specific needs.
- **Impact:** Configurations between service providers may become fragmented. This could have maintenance, reporting and general use implications that deviate from the original set-up and impact data integrity.

Hybrid Delegation – Shared Administration

Maintaining a central administrator for core administrative functions (e.g., configuration and set-up) and delegating certain administrative functions to the service providers, such as creating user profiles and rights templates.

Decisions and the rationale during the configuration should be documented. These could become useful for HIFIS training, but also to support future configuration changes.

See the HIFIS Configuration Guide for information on administrative tasks.

Deploying HIFIS

This section covers activities to deploy HIFIS:

- Path to Production Tasks
- Deployment Strategies
- HIFIS Training

Note: See the sections on Path to Production Tasks and Deployment Strategies for general information on the activities and considerations leading to the deployment of HIFIS. Your community can follow its own business protocols, if applicable.

Path to Production Tasks

The following activities should be completed before moving forward with HIFIS deployment:

- Testing and production environments are available;
- HIFIS is hosted, installed, configured and tested, including user rights templates;
- The local help desk is ready;
- If applicable, data conversion from legacy system(s) is completed for the service providers involved;
- A contingency plan (procedures) is put in place in case there are issues preventing the deployment of HIFIS within the scheduled timelines.

HIFIS Testing and Validation

HIFIS should be tested for regulatory, technical, business and user requirements. Incidents and non-conformities should be documented in a log, managed by the HIFIS Lead or Project Manager.

Test results should be reviewed by the HIFIS Lead and stakeholders responsible for implementation to identify issues that should be remediated before deployment. Once HIFIS has been tested and approved, the HIFIS Lead (or appropriate technical expert) creates the HIFIS “release candidate.”

Stress testing could also be conducted to ensure that the environment can process the expected number of transactions at any one time.

For more information on testing, HIFIS Leads can refer to How HIFIS Leads Perform Testing available on the Homelessness Learning Hub. It outlines testing best practices and example scenarios.

HIFIS Readiness

Ensure that the host site, service providers and user accounts are ready before deploying HIFIS (See Appendix G – Deployment Readiness Checklists).

Deployment Strategies

The governance body should select a deployment strategy based on characteristics of the community, such as capacity, training requirements, and organizational needs. There are three main deployment strategies to consider:

1. Piloting HIFIS;
2. Deploying in a single phase; and
3. Deploying in multiple phases.

Piloting HIFIS

Piloting HIFIS with selected service provider(s) gives the opportunity to identify issues that should be corrected prior to deployment across the community. While often considered for large-scale implementations, piloting HIFIS offers the ability to:

- test HIFIS and receive feedback from front-line users;
- validate that front-line users have been adequately trained;
- validate deployment steps;
- adjust help desk processes and related documentation;
- identify communication strategy gaps; and
- evaluate user readiness.

Issues that arise during the pilot should be addressed before deploying HIFIS more widely the community.

Deploying HIFIS in a single phase (“Big Bang”)

HIFIS is deployed in one single phase, while the legacy systems are removed when HIFIS is deployed.

Advantages:

- Shorter HIFIS rollout (usually within days rather than months);
- Users adopt HIFIS simultaneously; and,
- A number of programs and services are considered in the deployment, which makes it possible to put in place an inclusive model adapted to a large number of contexts.

Challenges:

- Can require a lot of resources deployed simultaneously; and,
- Issues encountered affect the entire community.

Deployment of HIFIS in Phases

HIFIS is deployed in phases over time, and users are on-boarded in waves. The phased approach can be done several ways, including by organization or service provider type.

Advantages:

- Ability to deliver training and provide support in phases;
- Issues/lessons learned identified in one phase can be addressed in/applied to the next phases;
- IT team workload is spread over a longer period.

Challenges:

- HIFIS is implemented over a longer period.

HIFIS Training

Training users on HIFIS will help them in their use of the system in the context of their daily activities.

This section covers the key elements of a training plan, and provides examples of methods to consider for delivering training.

The HIFIS Lead plays a significant role in HIFIS training. They could be responsible for developing the training plan and materials, and can deliver training sessions. In larger communities, delivery and other related responsibilities could also be delegated to a training coordinator or instructor.

A training plan provides

- training objectives;
- target audience(s);
- training approaches, duration and methods of delivery; and,
- feedback and evaluation mechanism for the training and trainer.

Training Objectives

Establishing objectives will ensure the training meets users' needs: frontline, help desk, managers and super-users. Objectives should target training on policies and procedures on such topics as data standards, roles and responsibilities, business requirements and module use.

Training is an opportunity to build users' data literacy by providing information on the value of collecting specific information and by sharing instructions on data entry protocols and procedures. Doing so will help prevent data entry errors that can have a significant impact on data quality, reporting and decision-making.

Target Audiences

Identifying different audiences helps to develop training tailored to the participants' roles and needs. One way to identify the audiences is by listing HIFIS users in their role and the use of HIFIS. The table below provides examples of audience types, with details on their expected use of HIFIS and training needs:

Audience	Role/Utilization of HIFIS	Training Needs/Outcomes
Shelter Workers	• Use the system to intake and assess clients • Use the following functions in HIFIS: client management, admissions, goods and services	• Have practical knowledge of HIFIS modules, functions and features to perform their role • Understand processes and procedures as they relate to the use of HIFIS • Understand privacy/security policies and protocols and how they apply to HIFIS access and use
Outreach Workers	• Use the system to serve outreach clients: client management, case management, housing, referrals, subsidies	• Have practical knowledge of and can support users on all HIFIS modules, functions and features • Understand processes and procedures as they relate to the use of HIFIS • Understand privacy/security policies and protocols and how they apply to HIFIS access and use
Organization Administrators/Help Desk	• Respond to end users' questions, including on how to use specific modules, functionalities and features • Manage configuration and set-up, user access, reporting and other administrative functions of HIFIS	• Have practical knowledge of and ability to support users on all HIFIS modules, functions and features • Understand HIFIS's administrative and configuration functions • Understand the service provider's processes and procedures as they relate to the use of HIFIS • Understand the privacy/security policies and protocols and how they apply to HIFIS access and use • Have system knowledge to triage and manage incidents, service requests and requests for information from the user community
Other: Executives, Managers, Stakeholders - Receive educational training	• Non-system personnel who require system knowledge for decision making, policy and leadership purposes	• Understand how HIFIS has been implemented and how it is being used in the community • Understand how to access program level reports • Understand the business value of HIFIS

Training Approaches and Methods of Delivery

Communities may take different approaches to training depending on the size and scope of their implementation and the resources available to them.

Training approaches may include one, or a combination, of the below:

- Train trainers, who will then deliver one-on-one (or small group) training to new users;
- Use instructor-led training that is delivered in person or by webinar;
- Use self-paced computer-based learning that users can access when and as often as they require.

To help communities train HIFIS users and develop training materials, tools and materials will be made available:

For HIFIS users:

- HIFIS Demo: Provides a hands-on experience and explore HIFIS capabilities.
- The Homelessness Learning Hub, which features resources on HIFIS and Reaching Home, such as tools, webinars and templates.

Communities may develop their own training and tools that target their needs and specific content. Many communities are willing to share their training tools with other communities implementing HIFIS 4. Look on the Homelessness Learning Hub for shared resources.

When deciding on delivery methods, consider the size and complexity of the implementation, the resources available and the types of users to be trained.

- Online training
    - Is easily scalable, flexible and accessible whenever the users need to learn.
    - Can be expensive and time-consuming to create and update; does not allow for asking direct questions.
- Classroom training
    - Provides in-person interaction with participants, supports train-the-trainer approach, classroom setting.
    - Requires available training resources to deliver, create curriculum and coordinate training sessions; a training environment; and computer terminals for each participant.

Both online and classroom training can be complemented by training exercises to reinforce learning. Evaluation surveys to help identify any learning gaps or improvement opportunities should be part of any training plans.

Client Support Services

This section covers the steps to set up a client support service and the roles of INFC:

- Local Help Desk Planning
- INFC support

Service providers and users require support related to the day-to-day use of HIFIS. The HIFIS Lead (or Project Manager) must put in place the user support processes, people and tools to respond to incidents, users making service requests or configuration changes. This service support is intended to provide a single point of contact to meet users' needs.

The HIFIS Lead would integrate local help desk services for HIFIS as part of the operational support model.

Local Help Desk Planning

This section covers the elements to consider when building and maintaining a help desk, including roles and responsibilities, service standards and procedures.

Areas of Support

Incident management

An incident can be defined as an unplanned event that causes interruption or degradation of service. Incident management is the process of limiting disruptions caused by an event, followed by a return to business as usual. This process includes escalating incidents with software vendors for some of the components HIFIS requires (e.g. Microsoft's Windows Server and SQL Server as well as SAP's Crystal Reports) and with INFC for HIFIS itself. The main types of incidents are:

- Minor incident: fault resulting in the system producing an incorrect or unexpected result or behaving in unintended ways;
- Major incident: System is down or users are not able to log in to the system during organizations' work hours.

Service requests

Service requests are usually for information, advice, a standard change or access. The main types of service requests are:

- Data Fixes: request to change/edit data (e.g., merging client record);
- Enhancement: collect requests to add new functionality or change existing functionality;
- Configuration: collect requests for a change to system configuration (e.g., add a new value to a drop-down menu);

- Account Requests: set up/modify a user account, password resets; and
- Information Requests: information about how the system works or the procedure for how to do something in the system.

Advance support
The help desk could be responsible for centralizing and managing specific HIFIS configurations that support the end users: service provider information (settings, rooms and beds), application settings, user set-up, and places and housing units.

Management of enhancement requests
The help desk serves as the single point of contact between the organization and INFC to escalate change requests for HIFIS, ensuring standardized methods and procedures for efficiently handling, communicating and coordinating the approval of changes the organization would like seen in HIFIS.

Release management
During releases of new versions, maintenance releases and patches, the help desk can play a role by coordinating releases, handling communications with end users, and testing and piloting releases.

Roles and Responsibilities

For HIFIS Leads without formal IT service management capabilities, the scope of activities that a help desk performs can be broad. Roles and responsibilities must be formalized to ensure everything is completed, accountabilities are clear and expectations are set with clients. A help desk must have the following roles:

- **HIFIS Business Owner**: Responsible for the overall operation of the help desk and to ensure the right tools, processes and documentation are in place.
- **Support Manager**: Manages day-to-day operations by prioritizing activities, managing service level agreements and collecting, managing and reporting on support desk statistics.
- **Tier 1 Support Analyst**: Front-line help desk worker who interacts directly with end-users requesting support. They resolve tickets within the scope of their activities (e.g., account management, password resets, minor data fixes, and answering procedural questions).The Tier 1 Support Analyst can also be responsible for training end-users, creating training documentation, conducting privacy and security audits, and HIFIS configuration maintenance.
- **Tier 2 Support Analyst**: Escalation point for the Tier 1 Support Analyst. The Tier 2 Support Analyst resolves more complex incidents that require further investigation, including working with the network provider, software vendors, INFC and the application-hosting provider. The Tier 2 Support Analyst can also be involved in problem and change management processes.

Additional responsibilities for the help desk staff can include training of end users, and creating and maintaining procedures and training documentation.

Service Standards

Service standards are commitments to a measurable level of performance that users can expect under normal circumstances. Service standards are integral to client service as they help manage user expectations, while contributing to service improvements and setting performance targets. When developing service standard levels, resource availability, the HIFIS service availability and expected level of requests should be considered.

The length of time it will take to resolve an incident or respond to a request is a key service standard to establish and communicate to users. The time to resolution can be based upon the complexity of the request.

Below are some examples of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for some issue types:

Issue Type: Account Request

- Resolve within 24 hours
- 95% Target SLA

Issue Type: Informational/Procedural

- Resolve within 24 hours
- 95% Target SLA

Issue Type: Data Fix (Merges)

- Resolve within 5 days
- 95% Target SLA

Issue Type: Bug, Enhancement, Configuration

- Best Effort

Prioritizing requests

To help meet service standards and better support users, service requests and incidents should be sorted, logged and prioritized.

The priority of a request can be determined by its impact on users, the business and its urgency. *Impact* is the measure of the extent of potential damage the incident may cause, while *urgency* is how quickly a resolution is required.

- **Low priority:** Does not interrupt users or the business and can be worked around. Service to users can be maintained.
- **Medium priority:** Affects a few employees and interrupts work to some degree. Service to users may be slightly affected or inconvenienced.

- **High priority or critical:** Affects a large number of users, interrupts business and affects service delivery.

Here is a typical impact and urgency matrix to determine priority of incidents and service requests:

		Priority		
		High – System Wide	Medium – Localized	Low – User
Urgency	High	Critical	High	Medium
	Medium	High	Medium	Low
	Low	Medium	Low	Planning

Help-Desk Processes

To maximize service quality, processes and procedures should be developed for how the help desk will receive, investigate and resolve requests that are submitted. Processes and procedures help streamline how requests and incidents are handled, help ensure that responses to similar requests are consistent and allow for more effective training when onboarding new helpdesk personnel.

While distinct processes and procedures could be developed for different types of requests (e.g., application incidents and defects, procedural requests or "how-tos…," configuration changes and service requests), general steps from reception or identification of issue to resolution would include:

1. Reception/Identification
2. Recording, classification, and prioritization
3. Investigation and diagnosis
4. Resolution/recovery
5. Communication and incident closure

Scale and hours of service

The hours of service will help determine the resources required for the help desk. To inform this decision, the HIFIS Lead could consult with the service providers on their business needs.

For example, a local help desk could provide support during normal business hours Monday to Friday and implement on-call service or institute contingency planning for any incidents received after-hours, on weekends or holidays.

Methods of communication

To ensure that users can access timely support, the help desk can use several methods of communication, including:

- Dedicated email – "Mail To" link can be placed in footer of HIFIS application and all HIFIS communications products.

- Dedicated phone with the ability to route number for after-hours support.
- Website – Provides self-server support for "how-to" questions.

Help Desk toolset
Tools to track, manage and monitor incidents and service requests help improve processes, reduce costs and prevent incidents from happening in the future. These include:

- Ticketing system: collects and organizes users' requests and manages them in one location.
    - For small communities, this can be as simple as creating a spreadsheet to track incidents received:
- Unique incident ID
- Issue type
- Status
- Date received
- Issue description
- Assigned to
- Action steps
- Reported by
- Reported via (email, phone)
- Resolution
- Date closed
    - For large communities, a professional tracking system may be necessary. Many commercial options exist.
- Knowledge Base: a self-service library of information that helps users find solutions on their own. While knowledge bases can take many forms, from documents structured in folders on a shared network to complex stand-alone software, the solution must make information easy to find, help standardization of responses and provide general how-to information.

The procedures and processes developed during the implementation process can be the start of a knowledge base.

INFC Support

As the provider of HIFIS, INFC has resources available to support organizations implementing and operating it. Support provided to organizations is third tier (Level 3) in nature and complementary to the help desk function. Incidents and service requests escalated to INFC normally require engineering or application specialist level intervention.

INFC's HIFIS Client Support Centre

INFC provides support services through its Client Support Centre. Lead Client organizations supporting their communities' HIFIS implementation (normally the help desk) work with INFC's HIFIS Client Support Centre for matters relating to:

- the technical set-up or update of HIFIS, as well as its hosting and IT technical infrastructure;
- HIFIS application configurations and customizations;
- application enhancements and changes; and
- bug and defect remediation.

The HIFIS Client Support Centre (Support Desk) can be contacted at:

- Phone: 1-866-324-2375
- Email: support@hifis.ca

Other Resources

INFC has resources to support HIFIS implementation at all stages:

HIFIS Demo Site – Can be used by communities for training.

Homelessness Learning Hub – Public online resource where HIFIS resources (documents, links, videos, etc.) developed by communities can be shared, and questions asked and answered.

HIFIS Newsletter – Published by INFC quarterly, the HIFIS Newsletter provides subscribers with information on updates and news on HIFIS.

Reaching Home Newsletter – Published by INFC monthly, the newsletter provides subscribers with information on Reaching Home-related happenings in the sector.

HIFIS Toolkit – A series of guides providing communities supports in the implementation and operation of HIFIS.

Sustainability

This section covers activities that will help ensure the sustainability of HIFIS:

- Post-HIFIS Implementation Review
- Review of Governance Participants
- Review of Help Desk and Procedures/Protocols
- Ongoing Training

Post-HIFIS Implementation Review

Once HIFIS has been deployed, the HIFIS lead should conduct a review. This review could be done following a period of adjustment, where some issues and technical challenges that did not emerge during testing have been addressed.

The objective of the review is to determine whether HIFIS fully meets the community's business objectives and whether newly identified business requirements should be considered and to identify implementation lessons learned.

Appendix H – Post-Implementation Review contains suggested activities that can be part of the review.

Review of Governance Participants

The implementation of HIFIS is a long-term commitment, as the system will become the community's data management system of record for homelessness services. Once implemented and used across the community, the Coordinated Access Leadership Group/HIFIS Working Group should continue to meet regularly to monitor issues, improve policies and procedures, provide directions on future plans and ensure that an adequate level of resources is still committed to HIFIS.

As indicated in the section on Governance and General Considerations, certain roles in the Coordinated Access Leadership Group/HIFIS Working Group that were critical during the implementation may not be as relevant during the sustainability phase. For this reason, their membership and terms of reference could be revisited.

The Coordinated Access Leadership Group will therefore have to determine who becomes responsible for certain ongoing responsibilities (e.g., reviewing training material, suggesting HIFIS enhancements) or issues (e.g., data quality)

Review of Help Desk and Procedures/Protocols

Support Centre

Incidents and service requests received by the local help desk must be reviewed and analyzed on an ongoing basis to uncover common issues. This information could be used to prioritize HIFIS enhancements or configuration changes; develop communications products; or update training materials, user guides and reference guides.

Review of Protocols/Procedures

Data protocols

Given the importance of data to inform decision-making, systematic procedures for evaluating data quality should be developed, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Monitoring users' compliance with data entry protocols and procedures (e.g., via reports highlighting the occurrence of data entry errors);
- Reviewing and fixing records; and
- Implementing corrective strategies (e.g., investing in training for users to build data literacy).

TIP: Organizations with outreach services: After HIFIS had been deployed, a community noticed that many of the client records were incomplete, even if users had received training on mandatory fields. This resulted in situations where the client file contained insufficient information for effective client management. The service provider found that employees working on the streets were taking handwritten notes that did not translate well into HIFIS.

The service provider decided to create a paper template form with mandatory fields for every HIFIS module, which made it easier for employees to collect the right information, in the right format.

Privacy and legal procedures and documents

Privacy documents and procedures must be reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect the most recent changes in the community's Coordinated Access systems or address any concerns from stakeholders or clients.

Ongoing Training

Given the high employee turnover experienced by certain service providers, training material must be kept up to date to provide new employees with current training. In addition, periodic releases of HIFIS enhancements will require the development of new training.

Appendices

Content in the Appendices is for illustrative and sample purposes only.

Appendix A – Sample Terms of Reference

(For illustrative purposes only)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The HIFIS Working Group will direct the HIFIS project to conclusion through governance-related deliberation and decision-making.

Responsibilities

Through collaboration, the committee will:

- Serve as the decision-making authority on project issues, risk mitigation and scope;
- Act as the approving body for project deliverables;
- Advise and provide strategic project and program oversight and direction;
- Provide effective, timely, and consistent communications to the project team and stakeholders;
- Ensure alignment with government, community and funding organizations and initiatives;
- Serve as the primary advocate for the project.

Chair

- The HIFIS Working Group meetings will be chaired by the HIFIS Lead.

Membership of the HIFIS Governance

- HIFIS Lead or Project Manager
- Coordinated Access Lead
- Director, Service Provider ‘A’
- Director, Service Provider ‘B’
- Community/Governmental Representatives
- End User Representatives (Shelter/Outreach Managers)
- Funding Representatives
- HIFIS Business Analyst

Reporting Structure

Escalations and communications to executives will leverage the existing reporting structure:

- Community Entity Representative

- Vice President, Homeless Services
- Executive Director, Service Provider 'A'
- Executive Director, Service Provider 'B'

Reporting out of the working group to the project will be conducted through the sub-working groups for each of the project work streams.

Reporting to the stakeholder community will follow the protocols set forth in the Communications Plan.

Decision-Making Process

- Decisions will be made by consensus and recorded in the HIFIS Working Group minutes that each member has acknowledged agreement to that decision.
- In order to reach consensus, a quorum is required. For the purposes of the working group, a quorum requires a minimum of four members where service provider, funders and community members are represented.
- If the working group cannot reach consensus on a decision, it will be escalated to the executives identified in the 'Reporting Structure' section above.
- Should a decision be required prior to the next scheduled meeting, an out-of-band meeting will be set up. If a meeting cannot be coordinated, an email requesting decision support will be sent out to the committee members.
- HIFIS Working Group members shall not provide votes by proxy.

Approval of Deliverables

Project deliverables will be sent via email to committee members when they are ready to enter the review and approval process. As a guide, committee members will have five business days to review and provide feedback or approval on project deliverables.

Confidentiality

All confidential information that comes into the possession of the committee members is for the sole purpose of enabling the committee to seek solutions to issues requiring strategic counsel. Committee members will not share any confidential information; use confidential information only as required to enable the member to perform his or her duties on the committee and not use the confidential information for any other purpose.

Frequency of Meetings

- The HIFIS Working Group will meet on the first Tuesday of each month. As required, additional meetings may be held at the call of the Chair. A teleconference will be set up for members that cannot attend in person.
- Meeting minutes will be distributed to the members within two weeks after a meeting.
- The agenda and presentation will be distributed a minimum of 3 business days prior to a scheduled meeting.

Evaluation

The terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

Appendix B – HIFIS Vision Planning

Task

Craft a project statement for HIFIS that would meet the needs of your community. The project statement should respond to the following questions.

1. Why are we doing this?
2. What are the anticipated outcomes of the HIFIS system?
3. What are the objectives for HIFIS?
4. What are the anticipated benefits of implementing HIFIS for:
    - Homeless individuals?
    - HIFIS Users/Staff?
    - Service providers and Sector?
5. What do we want to be able to accomplish at the local level?
6. What do we want to accomplish at other levels (regional, provincial)?

Appendix C – Sample Project Status Report

Status Summary

Provides a dashboard project summary of major activities and tasks.

Project Name				Project Manager		Period Ending	
HIFIS Implementation							
Status							
Overall Status	Financials	Scope	Schedule	Issues	Risks	Bus. Resources	Proj. Resources
Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Green
Executive Summary							
Highlights of major project activities							
Status Summary							
Achieved This Period							
Activities and tasks that have been complete during the reporting period							
Planned Next Period							
Activities and tasks that are planned for next reporting period							
Notes							

Milestones

A project milestone is a task that shows an achievement in a project. The milestones should represent a clear sequence of events that incrementally build up until the project is complete.

Milestones					
% Complete	Deliverable	Owner	Target Date	Actual Date	Status
100%	HIFIS Business Requirements	Project Manager	May 1	May 20	Complete
75%	HIFIS User and Service Provider Survey	Business Manager	June 15		In Progress
50%	HIFIS Configuration	IT Lead	July 1		In Progress
50%	HIFIS Privacy Assessment	Privacy Officer	June 15		In Progress
50%	HIFIS Training Plan and Strategy	Project Manager	May 30		In Progress
50%	HIFIS Training Curriculum and Presentation	Training Lead	August 30		In Progress
50%	HIFIS Communication Plan Development	Project Manager	July 1		In Progress
25%	HIFIS Test and Training Environment Set-up	IT Lead	July 1		In Progress
0%	HIFIS Deployment Strategy	Project Manager	August 1		Not Started

0%	HIFIS End User Training	Training Lead	Sept 25		Not Started
0%	HIFIS Go-Live	Project Manager	October 1		Not Started

Risk Register

The risk register records unplanned events or conditions that may affect at least one project objective if they materialize. Identifying, assessing and mitigating the risks will help to minimize the impact on the project.

Risk Register							
#	Risk Description	Risk Response	Date Logged	Priority	Impact	Owner	Status
1				High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Open Closed
2							
3							
4							
5							

Issues Log

Issues are risks that have been realized. The issue log records the steps to resolve the issues.

Issue Log							
#	Issue Description	Issue Response	Date Logged	Priority	Impact	Owner	Status
1				High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Open Closed
2							
3							
4							
5							

Action Items

An action item is a specific task that is to be completed, usually by a single individual or a small team or group. Action items typically arise from meetings and should always be clearly documented.

Action Items							
#	Action Description	Action Steps	Date Logged	Priority	Impact	Owner	Status
1				High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Open Closed
2							
3							
4							

5							

Planned Absences

Identifying when project resources will be away will help with project planning.

Planned Absences		
Resource	Dates of Planned Absences	Notes
Project Manager	Vacation: August 1 – August 15	
Training Lead	Conference: June 1 – June 3	
Report Developer	Vacation: October 3 – October 9	

Distribution List

Identifies to whom the project status report should be distributed.

Status Report Distribution List		
Name	Organization	Email

Appendix D – Planning Steps for Converting Data into HIFIS

The business value of converting legacy system data efforts and the legal feasibility (consents) should be taken in the decision to take this road. The rationale or benefits should be documented.

1. Fields from client files to be converted: Identify all data fields that need to be converted into HIFIS. A rationale for each field could also be developed to ensure that there is business value in doing a conversion.
2. Corresponding fields in HIFIS: For each legacy system data field that will be converted, identify the best suited field in HIFIS. Creating a table similar to the one below can help accomplish this task.

Field by field mapping helps to plan for the technical aspects of the conversion. Some issues may be uncovered during this process. For example, there may be a field in the legacy system that does not map to one in HIFIS or two fields in the legacy system may have to join into one field in HIFIS.

Legacy Entities	HIFIS Entities	Notes
Shelter Stays	Client Stays	Note any unique characteristics, instructions or business rules between the two systems
Demographics Profile	Vitals – Client Details	
Site	Service Provider	
Housing	Housing History	
Client Case History	Case Plan – Sessions	
Worker	Case Worker	

3. Post-migration data field conversion clean-up activities: Once conversion is completed, data clean up may be necessary. It is advisable to document clean-up activities that the service providers will need to take. You are encouraged to contact the INFC HIFIS Client Support Centre to discuss best practices and options for the data conversion.

Appendix E – Sample Service Provider Survey

Information collected below will be used when configuring the service provider in HIFIS.

General Information

Fill out for each service provider location in the implementation.

Service Provider Information	
Service Provider Name	
Service Provider Type	
Genders Served	
Funding Program(s)	
Target Clientele	
Telephone	
Fax Number	
Email Address	
Website	
Address	
City	
Province/Territory	
Postal Code	

Service Provider Questionnaire

The questions below are designed to obtain a better understanding of the overall technical and structural capabilities currently available within the organization. The objective is to understand what is to be done to help the organization engage in an HIFIS implementation.

Technical Assessment Questionnaire	
How many service providers will use HIFIS?	
Type of organization or service	e.g., Emergency Shelter, Transition House, Outreach Services
Approximately how many clients does your organization serve per month?	
List the funding programs that your organization operates	
Total number of computers at each service provider?	
Type of internet access?	
What is the age of the computing equipment at your organization?	
Does your organization have access to the internet for electronic mail?	
Does your organization have access to the internet for data transfer?	
Does your organization have access to a network to connect computers within your same building?	
Does your organization have access to a network to connect computers across	

multiple service providers within your organization?	
How often is client data entered into the system?	
How many individuals in your organization will be using HIFIS?	
Do the individuals in your organization have a unique email address (not shared)?	
List the types of staff positions (roles) in your organization.	e.g., Case worker, shelter worker, administrators, health worker, counsellors, intake worker, other (please specify)
Does your organization plan to migrate a legacy system into HIFIS? If yes, what system and database package is currently installed?	

Room and Bed Survey (Shelters Only)

List the number of funded beds in the shelter by funder:

Funder	Number of Beds
Funder 'A'	20
Funder 'B'	10
Funder 'C'	5

List the number of rooms and beds by type:

Room Number/Name	Bed Number/Name	Bed Type	Overflow Bed?
Room A	Bed #1	e.g., Bunk, cot, mat, single, etc.	No
Room A	Bed #2		No
Room A	Bed #3		No
Room B	Bed #1		No
Room B	Bed #2		No
Room B	Bed #3		No
Room C	Bed #1		Yes
Room C	Bed #2		Yes
Room C	Bed #3		Yes

Appendix F – Sample User Survey

List all the organization's personnel who will use HIFIS. Gathering this information will help with user set-up (roles and account creation) and the planning of training (numbers to be trained by role and skill level).

First Name	Last Name	Position/Role	Email	Service Provider Name	Other Work Locations	Computer Skills
John	Doe	Shelter Worker	jdoe@shelter.ca	Main Shelter		Example, Expert, Intermediate, Beginner
Jane	Smith	Case Worker	jsmith@shelter.ca	Main Shelter	Crosstown Outreach	
Dave	Smith	Administrator	dsmith@shelter.ca	Main Shelter	Crosstown Outreach, Uptown Shelter	

Appendix G - Deployment Readiness Checklists

User Accounts Readiness

HIFIS user accounts should be set up in advance of the deployment to ensure they can start using the system as soon as it becomes available. Typically, users will have to take training and sign the necessary paperwork to receive their HIFIS login credentials. Once this is complete, HIFIS administrators can create their accounts and assign roles and rights under the appropriate service provider.

Checklist:

- Collect and document required user information for account creation;
- Create user accounts in the production version;
- Verify user emails;
- Develop communications to distribute user names and passwords;
- Develop communications to end users for deployment and go-live instructions; and
- Determine if staff work at multiple service providers using HIFIS.

Service Provider Readiness

Ensure that service providers and their staff are ready for the deployment.

Checklist:

- Confirm network connection is sufficient to process HIFIS transactions;
- Confirm service provider has the appropriate technical requirements;
- Confirm service provider has the appropriate workstations to support the right number of users;
- Confirm that the appropriate/updated version of a browser is installed on all workstations using HIFIS;
- Confirm production HIFIS URL is installed on all workstations; and
- Confirm users have been trained.

HIFIS Leads who conduct a service provider survey will have information on their community's IT infrastructure.

HIFIS Lead Organization Readiness

The HIFIS Host should complete the steps to be ready for the release of HIFIS into production.

Checklist:

- Perform dry-run deployment in a test environment.
    - Deploy release candidate, test the release, evaluate results and decide whether to move to production.
- Confirm project resources to support and execute the HIFIS deployment into production;
- Prepare go live communications and instructions to service providers.

- Create a short interval schedule that details all the steps and resources the deployment requires:
    - Exact timing of each step
    - Resource responsibility
    - Contact information
    - Communications to be sent during the deployment
    - Roll back procedure
    - Post-deployment verification and test
    - Deployment completed communication

Appendix H – Post-Implementation Review

Gap Analysis

- Review the project business requirements to evaluate how closely the project results match the original objectives;
- Review the project deliverables to ensure they can provide guidance to support the program or whether supplementary work needs to be done; and
- If gaps exist, develop a plan to remediate them.

Evaluate Project Goals

- Is HIFIS functioning as expected?
- Are users adequately trained and supported?
- Are the necessary controls and systems in place, and are they working properly?
    - Data quality reviews
    - Privacy auditing
    - Review of help desk tickets to identify training needs and HIFIS enhancements
- What day-to-day activities are needed to support the implementation's ongoing success?
- Was the project on time and on budget? If no, what were the causes?

Service Providers Satisfaction

- Were the end users' needs met?
- Is the project sponsor satisfied?
- What are the effects on the client or end user because of the HIFIS implementation?
- If key individuals are not satisfied, how can this be addressed?

Continuous Improvement

- Have expected objectives been achieved? If not, what is needed to achieve them?
- Are there opportunities for further training and coaching that will improve the use and data in HIFIS?
- Are there any additional uses of HIFIS that would benefit clients, users and service providers?

Lessons Learned

- What went well, success stories and lessons learned?
- What went wrong, why did these things go wrong, and how could these problems be avoided next time?

The project review will identify areas of improvement, successes and a road map for the future of HIFIS within a community.