

## HUD Statement on the Congressional Mandate Regarding Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS)

Since 1995, the U.S. government has spent more than one billion dollars per year on services for homeless people. However, the government has no accurate statistics on the unduplicated number of people served with this funding or the number of people who need help, but can't get it.

Congress has agreed to continue funding homeless programs, but only if communities take specific actions to fill the information gap. Congress has ordered the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to make sure that each community has implemented a system to:

- Provide an unduplicated count of people who are homeless;
- Quantify use of homeless services; and
- Measure the effectiveness of their local homelessness assistance systems.

Specifically, HUD now requires communities to implement a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) that:

- Is designed to compile client data;
- Can generate an unduplicated count;
- Calculates shelter turnover rates;
- Develops client demographic profiles;
- Documents service use patterns; and
- Details program outcomes over time.

Here in Buffalo and Erie County, the Homeless Alliance of WNY has taken the lead in developing an HMIS known as the Buffalo Area Services Network (BAS-Net).



A Program of the  
Homeless Alliance of Western New York

## BUFFALO AREA SERVICES NETWORK (BAS-NET)

*Making Connections*

*for the Buffalo and*

*Erie County*

*Homeless Community*

For more information about BAS-Net:

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**BAS-Net**  
BUFFALO AREA SERVICES NETWORK

## What is BAS-Net?



(BAS-Net) is an Internet-based Homeless Management Information System which allows authorized homeless housing and service provider personnel to keep client records as part of a community-wide database.

In compliance with confidentiality and security requirements, BAS-Net is designed to help providers collect timely and accurate data about the persons they serve. With permission, client information can be shared with other providers to improve care coordination.



Information gathered via BAS-Net can also be used by advocates, funding sources, and policy-makers to better respond to client needs and gaps in the local homeless continuum of care.



BAS-Net utilizes the ServicePoint Client Information System developed by Bowman Internet Systems which offers standardized tools, assists in the creation of individualized service plans, and records use of housing and services.

## Benefits of BAS-Net

### *For Clients:*

- Offers an opportunity to conduct intakes and life histories only once;
- Illustrates that service providers consider the client's time valuable and ensures consumer dignity; and
- Makes it possible to coordinate multiple services and streamline referrals to reduce consumer waiting time.

### *For Service Providers:*

- Provides real-time information about available services while decreasing duplicative client intakes;
- Generates data reports for local use and to meet state and federal funding requirements; and
- Facilitates the coordination of services internally and externally with other agencies and programs.

### *For the Community:*

- Helps to define and understand the extent of homelessness throughout Buffalo and Erie County;
- Allows for better evaluation of the effectiveness of specific interventions, programs, and services; and
- Offers advocates and local, state, and federal legislators data and information about the local homeless population.

## How Does BAS-Net Work?

There are four important components of BAS-Net: Client Intake; Information and Referral; Case Management; and Service Tracking.



**Client Intake** is the process in which an agency collects information on clients who are entering or returning to a housing or service provider.

Once a homeless person provides basic information, **Information and Referral** makes it possible to provide one or more direct service linkages based on client-identified needs and agency assessment.



### **Case Management**

enables facilities to provide support to their clients throughout their use of services. Case managers may engage in continued assessment, work to help clients access benefits, or help clients achieve personal goals.

Finally, **Service Tracking** allows the agency to ascertain whether a client has received the services they needed and ensures that these services were



beneficial. It also gives agencies the ability to plan programming, conduct follow-up on the delivery of services, and to determine where gaps exist.