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Want to contribute to our next BAS-Net Bulletin? Got an idea for an article?

Contact BAS-Net Staff at 853-1101.

BAS-Net Bulletin

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New Unnamed Client Feature Now Available!

Bowman Internet Systems has developed a client entry option that allows the input of client information without saving the client's name into the database for use for clients experiencing domestic violence or special concerns.

Authorization of the use of the Unnamed Client Feature is restricted to persons with Agency Administrator (or Executive Director) level access in the BAS-Net system and must only be used for clients who are unwilling to disclose their personally identifying information (i.e., name) to the Homeless Alliance of WNY.

To use the Unnamed Client Feature, Administrators must contact the BAS-Net System Administrator to have their System Preferences modified.

Once changes have been made, the Administrator will be able to modify specific user profiles to enable the "Manage Unnamed Clients" feature by checking the appropriate box on the Admin - Users screen.

Providers should be aware that once the Administrator enables the "Manage Unnamed Clients" feature, the user will be unable to search for Named Clients until it is feature is disabled and the user's profile is returned to its original state.

When enabled, the first and last name of the client does not appear in the profile. Instead, "Unnamed" appears in the first name field and the client number appears in the last name field.

Data entered for Date of Birth, Gender, and Race are retained within the system for the purposes of aggregate reporting. All other features and assessments are available.

Without the client's Unnamed Client id number, users will not be able to search for or locate a client previously entered into the system. Providers should include the assigned code in the client record to ensure that they will be able to access the file.

Note: It is not possible to share the records of unnamed clients with BAS-Net participating agencies.

Please do not ever use the Anonymous feature in BAS-Net!

Adding Questions and Assessments on BAS-Net!

The BAS-Net staff has started to add new questions, responses, and assessments to BAS-Net. These include the Parent-Specific and Functional Assessment forms as well as some program-specific tools.

Some users have expressed concern about the indicators currently available in BAS-Net. If you would like a question, response, or assessment added, be sure to contact the BAS-Net staff.

You'll be asked to provide written documentation of the changes you would like made. You may also complete the recently improved Trouble Ticket form on the HAWNY website - BAS-Net page.



BAS-Net Progress...

Congratulations to the Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care for meeting all HUD-identified benchmarks for Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Implementation!

Since August 2005:

- ◆ One hundred thirty-one people have been trained on the BAS-Net System;
- ◆ One hundred and six people are currently using the system;
- ◆ Forty-eight programs in thirty organizations have begun data entry; and
- ◆ Seventy-nine percent of shelter beds, eighty-two percent of transitional housing beds; and ninety-four percent of permanent supportive housing beds are currently on the system.

Next Steps will include:

- ◆ Working to Improve Data Quality
- ◆ Follow-up Training and User Assistance
- ◆ Move to HMIS-Based Performance Measurement



Check out the Revised Standard Operating Procedures Manual now available on BAS-Net page!

Thank You to the
Members of the BAS-Net
Advisory Committee:

Don Dauman
Joan Dutchess Friedson
Louisa Frazier-Merritt
William Graham
J. Patrick Henry
Carolyn Hillman
Gavin Kasper
Mark Kraus
Debbie LaBounty
Carmen Gallardo
Thomas Piniewski
Adrian Slocum

Importance of HUD Entry/Exit

The HUD 40118 Entry/Exit form is a critically important tool for tracking client-, program-, and system-level outcomes. The form includes all required indicators (shown in **RED**) for local data collection as well as completion of the HUD Annual Progress Report (or APR).

The HUD 40118 Entry/Exit form must be completed for every client during each stay at your facility, including children, in order to obtain an accurate count of the homeless population. Be sure to follow the Client Entry flow chart.

After you enter emergency contacts and any accompanying household members, use the orange Entry/Exit button at the right-hand corner of Client Point to bring up the Entry/Exit form. As long as you have entered household members first, you should be able to include information entered for the primary household member for all family members by clicking the appropriate boxes at the top of the page. Be sure to update the data for each family member to provide your organization with the most comprehensive and accurate data.

Be sure to select the HUD 40118 Entry/Exit form (unless your program receives PATH-funding). While there are other types available, only the HUD 40118 form meets HUD APR and local community data requirements.

When each client leaves your program, you are expected to complete their stay by finalizing the Exit form. You may update the profile information during your client's program stay and final upon their departure.

The initial entry gives a "baseline" of client need at time of program entrance and allows program to illustrate how program participation has effected the client.

To learn more about how the HMIS prepares the HUD APR report, check out the white paper titled, "How Information is Pulled into the HUD APR" by Bowman Systems - now available on the HAWNY website (www.wnyhomeless.org) on the BAS-Net page.

BAS-Net In The Buffalo News

Computers Harnessed to Track Homelessness

With the federal government demanding better information on why people are homeless, agencies in Erie County have begun using a new computer system to keep tabs on their progress toward eliminating homelessness here.

At least 30 agencies are involved in the Buffalo Area Services Network, a pilot project of the Homeless Alliance of Western New York to improve the efficiency of area programs that spend millions each year fighting chronic homelessness.

The effort, funded by a five-year, \$614,000 grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, will make it clearer what programs work well and which ones need some work, said Diane R. Bessel, associate director of the Homeless Alliance and administrator of BAS-Net.

"It's requiring a lot of the programs to rethink how they do business," said Bessel. "Our providers are getting more information from clients and they're better able to serve them."

The grant put a computer and Internet service in 48 area homelessness programs, many of which had relied on pen and paper for their minimal record keeping.

The Homeless Alliance needs data from those programs as it applies for funding from HUD, which itself is under pressure from Congress to provide better data about the battle against homelessness.

Each year, the area receives between \$6 million and \$8 million from HUD - part of the more than \$1 billion given out nationwide - for transitional and permanent housing programs for homeless people.

That money will be at risk if the Homeless Alliance is unable to prove the effectiveness of those programs, said Bessel.

The Homeless Alliance began implementing the Internet-based computer system last fall with two agencies, the Salvation Army-Buffalo Area Services and Cornerstone Manor, a shelter for women and children.

"I don't feel like we're in the medieval ages anymore," said Carolyn Hillman, director of residential services for the Salvation Army.

The program will become more valuable, said Hillman, when all agencies that provide services for homeless people come on-line and are able to share information with each other.

Fully implemented, for example, the system will allow agencies to determine which of them has space for a client with the click of a button, rather than several time-consuming phone calls.

"There's some real opportunity to streamline things," said Bessel.

Introduction of BAS-Net bolsters the rollout in March of an ambitious community plan by the Homeless Alliance and other groups to end chronic homelessness in the area by 2016.

On any night in Erie County, 2,100 men, women and children are without homes of their own.

"PRISM: A Community Solution to Homelessness," will focus millions of dollars in homelessness funding on gaps in service and encourage collaboration and cooperation among agencies.

Jay Tokasz
The Buffalo News
April 29th 2006



If you have any questions about local homelessness or about BAS-Net, please contact:

Homeless Alliance of WNY
2211 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14214
Phone: 716-853-1101
Fax: 716-853-1750
Website: www.wnyhomeless.org

*Facilitating dialogue and strategic action
to end homelessness.*

**The Buffalo Area Services Network is
welcoming a New System Administrator:**

Ms. Laila Bondi-Marschner
Research Director
BAS-Net Administrator
☺

**Thank You All Very Much
for Your Support and Hard Work
To Implement BAS-Net!**

Diane Bessel

Improving Your BAS-Net Data and Profile

Below are some helpful tips for improving data collection and program information within BAS-Net:

BAS-Net Data: Many providers have expressed concern about the data being entered into BAS-Net by end users. Most importantly, administrators want to make sure that users are asking the same questions and using the same definitions when entering data into the system. To assist in this process, the BAS-Net Staff has developed a guide titled, "Collecting Data in BAS-Net." The guide provides the most current definitions for all local and HUD-required indicators. The guide can also be used to collect information for the HUD Annual Progress Report. Copies were distributed via email and are available on the HAWNY website (www.wnyhomeless.org) on the BAS-Net Page.

Quick-lists: The use of provider and referral quick-lists can make it easier for your program to track use of supportive services. For many organizations, the use of these services is important to document for match and grant funding purposes. Providers can now input "multiple services" at the same time using the feature available in Client Point and Shelter Point. See the Help menu for further details.

Provider Profiles: By updating your provider profile you can ensure that accurate information about your program is available to all BAS-Net system users. BAS-Net Site Contacts have the ability to modify their profile through the Admin section of BAS-Net and can turn public viewing on and off. For more information, see your Site Contact Manual or contact the BAS-Net Administrator. An electronic copy of the provider profile form is available on the Homeless Alliance website on the BAS-Net page.