Minimizing Duplicate RoIs & Handle Changes in Data Sharing Permissions

As a community, we have moved to an open data sharing system that benefits both agency efficiencies and client experiences. The new ROI seeks client permission to share with agencies both in and out of the system. Once the client signs this agreement, sharing of data and documents can happen. Most immediately, staff at different agencies across the community are able to use the information they see already entered in HMIS, including the uploaded new ROI. Provided that information is accurate, this sharing allows agency staff to build upon what information is already known and focus on any additional information that is needed to quickly provide services to the client. Thus, the agency staff saved time by not re-entering the same data, and the client was bothered less by not having to repeat the same questions.

Sharing data only works if people take the time to enter correct data, and then trust the process enough to rely on data that someone else gathered and entered. When we begin to use the data in HMIS without re-asking for information, we will begin to save time and function as a "system." This means we have to rely on each other to enter quality data and to explain the RoI well, so that one RoI is enough. It's good for 7 years. In other words, each agency's work is dependent upon that of others and vice versa. When explaining the RoI, please remember to take the time to explain the benefits of sharing inside and outside the system:

Benefits to Sharing Inside the System:

1) Limits the number of times that a client has to respond to a question and minimize some paperwork, like completing the RoI,
2) Allows providers to use the information in the system to coordinate their services more quickly,
3) Maintains a record of the client's needs so that he or she can be put on a waiting list and be provided resources as soon as possible.
4) Makes it easier to locate a client who has been determined eligible and prioritized for your services through Coordinated Assessment by being able to view service and transaction history as well as client contact information
5) Allows staff to use data already entered at coordinated assessment to complete agency intake forms without having to ask the client repetitive questions, which reduces risks of re-traumatization.

Benefits of Sharing Outside the System:

1) Enable agencies like yours to be able to communicate directly with other service providers for the purpose of coordinating and expediting client services , and
2) Allows for expert analysis to help our community better understand what is working and where improvements are needed, as well as to better demonstrate the need for services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

With that in mind, below are steps that should be taken to minimize duplicate RoIs and to complete a client's cancellation of prior sharing permission.

Step 1. BEFORE completing a RoI for a client, check in ServicePoint to see if the client already has a new completed RoI dated November 2014 or later.[1] This includes checking incidents in the client profile to for a note that the client has done a phone ROI at Caritas and needs to complete a written one upon presenting at any participating agency.

➔ If your agency's workflow is such that there are staff who collect the RoI but do not have a ServicePoint license, then those staff should ask the ServicePoint data entry person to check the system before they work with the client. For a client search, it's best for staff to provide name, DOB, SSN and Client ID if they know the ID.

[1] After several years of implementation, you will need to also check that the RoI signature date is still within the 7 year time limit. Clearly, this will not be needed for a long time, but including as a reminder for the future.

Scenario A: Your client already has the 2014 HMIS RoI in the system where they agreed to all types of sharing.

- ➔ Staff check in ServicePoint and see that a completed RoI has already been uploaded to the system and the client has initialed on the first page that they acknowledge the Austin/Travis County HMIS data sharing policy and said "Yes" to sharing outside the system and signed the RoI on the third page. There is no need to revisit their RoI unless the client requests to change his or her sharing permissions. Hooray! The beauty of our participating in one shared data system!
- ➔ ONLY IF the client asks to CANCEL his or her PRIOR SHARING permissions to either become anonymous or to stop sharing their information outside the system, then follow the steps below.
    1. Emphasize the benefits of sharing their information inside and outside the system. See "Benefits to Sharing Inside and Outside the System" listed in the introduction.
    2. If the client is certain they want to restrict their sharing, then the client will need to complete a Data Sharing Permission Cancellation Form and send that to the Agency who completed the earlier RoI.
    3. That Agency needs to contact ECHO on the first day that they receive the Data Sharing Permission Cancellation Form.
    4. ECHO and the original Agency must make any changes in the system to restrict the client's information and the original agency must upload the Cancellation Form.
    5. ECHO will contact the new organization and let them know to complete a new RoI with the more restrictive sharing permissions.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IT IS NEVER APPROPRIATE TO REMOVE A GLOBAL GROUP. IN THE SITUATION WHERE A CLIENT WANTS TO BECOME ANONYMOUS OR RESTRICT THEIR SHARING OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM, CONTACT ECHO BEFORE MAKING ANY CHANGES TO SERVICEPOINT.

Scenario B: Your client already has the 2014 HMIS RoI in the system, and opted to NOT share their information outside the system.

- ➔ Staff check ServicePoint and see that a completed RoI has already been uploaded to the system and the client has initialed on the first page that they acknowledge the Austin/Travis County HMIS data sharing policy but has said "No" to sharing outside the system on the third page of the RoI.
- ➔ Check with the client that they want to keep these sharing restrictions. Explain the benefits of sharing their information outside the system. See "Benefits of Sharing Information Outside the System" listed in the introduction.
    1. If the client wants to share their information outside the system, then complete a new RoI and upload it to the system and note "Yes" on the RoI tab.

    OR

    2. If there is no change to the client's sharing permissions, then you are done!

Scenario C: Your client says they recently completed a RoI and on that RoI requested to be an anonymous client.

- ➔ See if you can verify that the client is listed as anonymous in the system and that they have a new RoI completed. If the client knows their Client Id, you can do a search with that ID to verify their RoI and sharing permissions. If the client doesn't know their client ID, then for good measure, do a search on any personal identifiers that you have for the client to double-check that they are indeed unsearchable in the system.
- ➔ Check with the client that they want to remain anonymous. Take the time to explain the numerous benefits to them of sharing their information in ServicePoint. See "Benefits to Sharing Inside and Outside the System" listed in the introduction.
    1. If the client wishes to remain anonymous and they know their Client ID, then there is nothing more to do.

    OR

    2. If an anonymous client doesn't know their Client ID and so can't be found in ServicePoint, then complete a new RoI with their current sharing permissions, whether that is to remain anonymous or to begin sharing their information, and upload that to their new client record.

    OR

3. If an anonymous client knows their Client ID and wants to start sharing their information, then complete a new RoI with their new sharing permissions. You will still need to create a new client record and upload that RoI to the new client record. Note "Yes" on the RoI tab of the new client record and add a Global Visibility Group. Contact ECHO to discuss merging the old anonymous record with the new client record.

Notes on Duplicate RoIs: Again, checking in the system first will prevent you from creating unnecessary duplicate RoIs, but in the instance that it happens, here are a few notes.

- ➔ **Exact Same Sharing Permissions:** If your agency has completed a duplicate RoI and then find that there is already a RoI in the system for that client with the exact same sharing permissions, then the earlier RoI is the valid one. Shred the new RoI you created.
- ➔ **Less Sharing to More Sharing:** If your agency has completed a duplicate RoI and then find out that the client already had a RoI in the system where the client said they wanted more restrictive sharing permissions and now the client is stating they want to share their information, then this newer RoI documenting the client's desire to share more information is the valid one. Upload the new RoI to ServicePoint.
    1. If on the new RoI, the client has initialed on the first page acknowledging the data sharing policy, then add a Global Visibility Group, if they do not already have one.
    2. If on the new RoI, the client has said "Yes" on the third page to sharing outside the system, then note "Yes" on the RoI tab.
    3. If the client is moving from being anonymous to sharing and they know their Client ID from their anonymous record, contact ECHO to merge the two records.
- ➔ **More Sharing to Less Sharing:** If your agency completes a duplicate RoI and then find out that the client already had a RoI in the system where they wanted to share and now the client is stating they no longer want to share their information, then follow these steps.
    1. Emphasize the benefits of sharing their information inside and outside the system. See "Benefits to Sharing Inside and Outside the System" listed in the introduction.
    2. If the client is certain they want to restrict their sharing, then the client will need to complete a Data Sharing Permission Cancellation Form and send that to the Agency who completed the earlier RoI.
    3. The Agency who completed the earlier RoI needs to contact ECHO on the first day that they receive the Data Sharing Permission Cancellation Form.
    4. ECHO and the original Agency must make any changes in the system to restrict the client's information and the original agency must upload the Cancellation Form.
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