Universal Data Elements

Universal data elements are those which all HMIS participating continuum projects are required to complete. It is important to note that federal funding sources (programs) often require the projects they fund to maintain and report on additional data elements – identified as Program Specific elements.

HMIS Universal Data Elements are elements required to be collected by all projects using the software as an HMIS. Projects funded by any one or more of the federal partners must collect the Universal Data Elements as are projects that are not funded by any federal partner (e.g. missions) but are entering data as part of the Continuum of Care's HMIS implementation.

Universal data elements enable the HMIS the ability to record unique, unduplicated client records, establish participation in a project within a date range, and identify clients who meet time criteria for chronic homelessness.

The Universal Data Elements include:

- 3.1 Name
- 3.2 Social Security Number
- 3.3 Date of Birth
- 3.4 Race
- 3.5 Ethnicity
- 3.6 Gender
- 3.7 Veteran Status
- 3.8 Disabling Condition
- 3.10 Project Start Date
- 3.11 Project Exit Date
- 3.12 Destination
- 3.15 Relationship to Head of Household
- 3.16 Client Location
- 3.20 Housing Move-in Date
- 3.917 Living Situation

Refer to the HMIS Data Dictionary, found on the **2020 HMIS Data Standards page**, for universal data elements requirements.

Program-Specific Data Elements

Program-Specific Data elements provide information about the characteristics of clients, the services that are provided, and client outcomes. The HMIS Federal Partners have cooperatively developed these elements. Some of the program specific data elements are collected across all federal partner programs. Others are limited to a single federal partner program or even further to a single component of one of the federal partner programs. Program specific guidance will be issued through HUD in cooperation with their partner programs for each of the federal partner programs utilizing HMIS that will provide users the specific guidance the federal program requires on each applicable element.

An HMIS must have the ability to enable and restrict visibility of elements based on the funding needs of the program. An HMIS may do this in whatever manner they choose (hard coding, customization via system administrators, etc.). HMIS vendors should note that no federal partner expects that any project would have all elements visible to the user. The preference among the federal partners is that only the program specific elements required for the programs that fund a specific project are visible to the user.

The Program-Specific Data Elements that are required for federal reporting include elements that may be used by more than one federal funder program. The following are common across Federal partners:

- 4.2 Income and Sources
- 4.3 Non-Cash Benefits
- 4.4 Health Insurance
- 4.5 Physical Disability
- 4.6 Developmental Disability
- 4.7 Chronic Health Condition
- 4.8 HIV/AIDS
- 4.9 Mental Health Problem
- 4.10 Substance Abuse
- 4.11 Domestic Violence
- 4.12 Contact
- 4.13 Date of Engagement
- 4.14 Bed-Night Date
- 4.18 Housing Assessment Disposition