

ADRC-TAE Monthly Call
IT Vendors and Resources
Thursday August 2, 2007

Moderators: Gilbert Thompson and Carrie Blakeway, The Lewin Group

Call Attendees:

Joseph Lugo, AoA	Krista Boston, MN
Fred Schroeder, MD	Russ Black, AL
Mary Alice Denning, NV	Susan Shepherd, WA
Peggy Spaulding, CO	Peggy Rightnour, MD
Joel Gluck, VT	Mary Anderson, IA
Shirley Kervin, FL	Susan Raymond, CO
Beverly Dunlap, AR	Katie Glendening, KS
Jan Latimer, LA	David Summers, WV
Stephanie Hull, MD	Lauren Coughlin, Lewin
Barbara Ettner, Lewin	Tim Engelhardt, Lewin
Sarah Lash, Lewin	Roger Auerbach, Lewin

This call was conducted in response to TA requests from the national meeting. Lewin worked with NASUA to create Vendor Profiles in the fall of 2003. We conducted telephone interviews with the vendors, and discussed administrative features, IR&A and case management functions, and price. This information was updated using a vendor survey in the summer of 2005. We worked with several grantees, including RI and MN, to provide feedback on the survey questions. We are constantly updating this information. If you're interested in taking part in this process, we encourage you to look at the questions we ask the vendors and provide us with feedback, especially if there are items you think we should be asking but haven't included.

On the vendor rating system, we encourage grantees to rate the vendors they are using. Vendors do not have access to the website, and you may rate them anonymously. We encourage both pilot sites and states to fill this out; it's important to get both perspectives. If enough people fill out the survey, we may summarize the results and send them to the vendors. This information would be valuable to them so they can improve features they receive poor ratings on.

The resource "Selecting an IT/MIS Vendor" contains a checklist and timeline. There are 8 steps adapted from various resources on the website that focus on selecting an outside vendor. Selecting a vendor can be a long and tedious process, and this timeline accurately reflects this.

The "MIS Requirements Development" familiarizes you with the IT development process. This resource was originally developed for the state of New Jersey. It's designed to help you determine what specifications you'll need, given the specific functions you do at your ADRC.

The "MIS Systems by Pilot Site" contains the most up-to-date information on grantee MIS systems that we have. If you see anything out of date, please let us know that as well.

The white paper by Gary Chapman and Carrie Blakeway, "Moving Forward: Opportunities for Information Technology Advances in the Aging Network" outlines where IT stands and where it is moving to.

We have observed that there is a lot of interest around what other pilot sites are using and various other concerns about choosing a vendor. We are planning on arranging smaller calls in the future, where we will invite states using similar software to participate.

A challenge can be finding a product that does it all. Unless your state is willing to invest in the purchase of a whole new system, it can be difficult. You may like some parts, not others, and end up going with multiple vendors.

Some states are looking to move towards federated database models.

Colorado expressed challenges around populating resources and the cost to maintain information. Other grantees suggested using grant funds to hire staff to input local resources into the MIS system, and ensuring that there is a standard process and convention for how all information is added to the database. Minnesota has a lot of experience with database management -- migration of data, cleanup, ensuring consistency, etc and grantees with those types of questions may want to contact Krista Boston or Mary Chilvers.

The next ADRC-TAE Monthly Call will be on Thursday, September 6th at 2:30 PM Eastern.