

Child Welfare IT Managers' Webinar Series: Back to Basics

"Project Life Cycle Part Two"

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Coordinator: Welcome, and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. During the question and answer session, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. And now I'd like to turn the meeting over to Ms. Joyce Rose. Thank you.

Joyce Rose: Hello, and welcome to webinar three of our Back to Basics series. This webinar will continue a review of the initial stages of a child welfare project lifecycle, and is brought to you on behalf of the Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, and is presented by ICF International.

I am Joyce Rose, your host and moderator for today's webinar. Joining me a bit later will be Linnette Carlson of New Mexico and Tresa Young of Ohio.

So, changes in funding availability and priority mean that opportunities for in-person discussions and networking among professionals working in state child welfare IT systems will be limited this year and likely in future years.

Through this Webinar series, the Division of State Systems within the Children's Bureau is offering a venue for information sharing and discussion.

We will be offering six webinars, one per month, between April and September 2013. While the webinars offer some structured content, our goal is that they start discussion and information sharing within and across state and federal attendees. The webinars are intended not just for child welfare IT systems managers, but also the staff with whom they work, who are key players in getting and keeping child welfare IT systems up and running.

Although our series theme is Back to Basics, we invite and encourage participation from both experienced and newer managers and staff, recognizing that even the most experienced among us has something new to learn or may need a refresher. This and all future webinars are being recorded and are being made available online as reference and information resources for you and your staff.

A ListServe notification will be distributed once they are posted. And for your information, webinars one and two are now available online, and accessible at the site listed on this slide. Today's third webinar in the Back to Basics series, the Child Welfare Information Technology System Project Lifecycle Part 2, is a continuation of the high level review of key project stages. Part 1 of this two-part offering was completed last month.

The next webinar, webinar four in our series, in the Back to Basics series, is entitled Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them, currently scheduled for the end of July. Topics for the final two webinars have not yet been determined, but please watch for more information.

In terms of participating in today's webinar, attendees are encouraged to participate in our webinar with questions and comments. All of our attendee lines are muted now, but we will open them at the end of the presentation for Q&A.

You also can submit questions at any time through the GoToWebinar Chat feature, and those questions will be answered at the conclusion of the presentation. Now should we run out of time, we will respond to your questions via email. Or should you have additional questions, you may submit those to me at the email address listed on this slide, joyce@kassets.com.

We are extremely interested in knowing who is attending this Webinar in terms of position or capacity. It is our intent, throughout all of the Back to Basics Webinars to make the content applicable and attractive for all disciplines participating in the State SACWIS or CWIS effort.

We ask that you self-select one of the five categories listed. Also, recognizing that not all states are SACWIS states and to be inclusive of everyone, we will use the more generic Child Welfare Information System, CWIS identifier. I'm now going to ask my colleague, Elizabeth, to conduct the poll and then provide the results.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay, so the poll should be up on your screen, and I see we have people responding. I'll give you all just a few more seconds here to get your responses in. And it looks like for today, 13 percent are child welfare information systems project managers, 27 percent are CWIS program managers, 33 percent are CWIS technical managers, 7 percent are project staff, and the remainder are ACF Children's Bureau personnel.

Joyce Rose: Thank you, Elizabeth. And for your information, I actually could see the poll this time.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Oh, wonderful.

Joyce Rose: So that is a wonderful representation, and we thank you all for attending. So let's quickly look at today's agenda, which is - we will, I will be doing some introductions. We're going to then talk about implementation, moving to maintenance operations, and then our two wonderful state guest presenters are going to talk about a wide variety of federal requirements, and I think you will find it all very interesting.

We'll follow that with hopefully a rousing Q&A session, and then we'll do a brief wrap-up. So let's move on to introductions. Our guest presenters probably really need very little introduction, but let me briefly introduce and extend a truly warm welcome to both Linnette and Tresa. Linnette Carlson has been a licensed social worker for 40 years and has 29 years of experience in state child welfare.

She has worked on the New Mexico SACWIS FACTS system, from implementation in 1997 to present. Linnette combines many years of program experience with her IT business analyst skills, focusing on analyzing and identifying needed modifications to IT systems to meet federal reporting compliance, while maintaining social work best practices in building a SACWIS communications between program and IT staff.

Tresa Young has been the Bureau Chief, Automated Systems, Office of Families and Children, Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services since 2008. She has more than 25 years of child welfare experience, and degrees and certifications in social work, project management and business contract management.

We are so pleased to have both experienced and qualified individuals as our guest presenters. And myself, formerly the Project Director for the State of Wisconsin SACWIS project, retiring from state service several years ago, and

then becoming involved with several ACF Children's Bureau-sponsored training events since that time.

So let's start this Webinar by reviewing the implementation stage of the project lifecycle, looking at the pilot phase. And we will include the challenges of training here. So what's a pilot? A pilot release is a deployment of new software to a controlled production environment, or a subset of users performing their normal business tasks.

The purpose of a pilot is multi-fold. Primarily, a pilot demonstrates and supports the goal that the application design works as expected, and it truly meets your organization's business and technical requirements. Performance and operational criteria should be developed as part of a pilot evaluation plan, prior to the pilot release in order to be able to measure whether the application meets a variety of deliverables and your expectations.

The plan may include metrics related to training and end-user comprehension, response time, system stability, data conversion processes and usability. Secondly, a pilot is a valuable learning experience whereby informed decisions can be made regarding the full statewide implementation process.

Thirdly, the lessons learned and applied from a successful pilot reduces the organization's risk during full scale deployment. Pilot releases generally happen in succession. For example, you might deploy the application to a limited number of users, a specific county or locality whereby feedback from these users is then used to evaluate the results and resolve issues that may arise.

Then an updated release of the application is redeployed to those same pilot participants, and the pilot evaluation process is repeated until the process

manager, under advisement from the release team, decides that the application and the organization are ready for full, statewide implementation.

A major component in the success of any computerized system is the people who use it. Therefore, effective end-user training is essential to implementing, gaining end-user acceptance and use of a child welfare information system. However, it was my experience that training was both challenging and frustrating prior to and during implementation, and in fact, our training strategy changed throughout the statewide implementation process.

In the realm of educational endeavors for adults, these four tenets of adult learning may assist your project to form a training strategy and curriculum for your project. Adults want to learn only what they need to know. Secondly, adults want to understand why specific information is important to learn. Adults want training when they need it, not before, and adults want to learn at their own pace, not the group pace.

So keeping the tenets in mind, a successful training program will convince the skeptics that a SACWIS is both crucial and necessary. A good initial impression of the project can be established by means of effective training. Properly trained staff will have a superior comprehension and awareness of the project.

Without proper training, the success of a child welfare information system initiative is really at risk, because training is what gives the end-users the required skills and knowledge to reach anticipated levels of productivity. Training produces greater confidence, which translates into the end-user entering data correctly.

Appropriately trained end-users will use the system more efficiently and effectively, decreasing their dependence on support. Bottom line, proper system implementation commences with training of the end-users, who really are the most important component of a large child welfare information system in becoming successful.

The pilot phase should also be used to assess training approaches and whether one or multiple types of training produce the best outcomes. We all know that not only do people learn differently, but also adults have specific learning tenets, which we just reviewed. So providing a combination of training methodologies may best accommodate the variety of your targeted end-users.

The combination of training may include initial classrooms, instructor-led, followed up by one-on-one sessions and of course the emergence of assorted e-learning technologies. Webcasting, using Web cams to set up a virtual classroom, Webinars like we are using today, podcasting, YouTube, Twitter, or self-paced online classes expand the training possibilities enormously, and provide a broad spectrum from which to choose from, as well as providing a reduction in training costs.

However, be prepared to provide capsulized training specific to an end-user's business needs, as well as those with different levels of computer skills. Bottom line, schedule enough training time and types to ensure that end-users are prepared. Plan on everything taking more time than what was expected, and finally, don't schedule training too far in advance so end-users forget what they've learned prior to implementation.

So, we're going to move now to our second attendee poll, but I want to introduce it by saying that in October of 2012 the Center for Learning and Performance Technologies released the results of their annual Learning Tools

Survey. Topping the list of the 100 tools for learning in 2012 was Twitter at number one, and YouTube at number two.

If you are curious as to what else made the list, just do a Google search on Top 100 Tools for Learning in 2012. Of interest on this list is whether any states present in today's Webinar may be using either Twitter or YouTube as e-learning tools. Now having done some research, I found that Utah, Washington and California - and there may be many more, have their own YouTube channels focusing on public outreach and in some cases, employee training.

If you look at the Utah.gov web site and hover over the Connect option on the top banner, you will find all sorts of social media connections, including Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, YouTube, podcasts, et cetera. The Georgia SACWIS Shines training unit actually tried using YouTube for end-user training but found that their training videos turned out to be too long for what YouTube allows. Thus they abandoned the YouTube media for application training.

Now, I believe the standard allowable length of a YouTube video is 15 minutes and 30 seconds. So that actually would be a constraint if you were considering using that medium for application training. Elizabeth, let's now find out what or if our attendees are using any of the e-learning tools for end-user training.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay, we have launched the poll, if people could start choosing.

Joyce Rose: I understand this is - yes, it's a multiple choice, right? You can select all that apply?

Elizabeth Mertinko: Yes.

Joyce Rose: Great.

Elizabeth Mertinko: And we'll go ahead and give people just another here - minute here to respond. Okay, if anyone else wants to go ahead and get a vote in, I'm just about to close it. Okay. And it looks like with the Webinar closed now - or with the poll closed, we have 13 percent using webcasting with web cams or a virtual classroom, 67 percent webinars or podcasting. No one reported using YouTube or Twitter, 60 percent using online self-paced courses and 33 percent are using a combination of all of the above.

Joyce Rose: That's actually I was not surprised by the YouTube or Twitter percentage. Again there - as I said, there are certainly some constraints with using those media. But I think we are consistent in terms of using Webinars and Webcasting and online self-paced courses. And it's obvious that not one media serves the 100 percent of the challenges, so a combination is really what I would have expected to see and did see, so thank you so very much.

So, moving along here, once we get through pilot, it's then time to focus full statewide implementation and maintenance and operations. So a carefully defined, communicated and rigorous statewide implementation plan is needed in order to meet the project goals encompassing implementation schedules and quality of service.

Some of the criteria that can be applied to determine application implementation readiness are, in terms of staffing, obviously you need to assemble the right implementation team. I think it's critical that you select staff who are willing and able to handle multiple tasks simultaneously, and who can work under pressure to meet critical deadlines.

You would probably want to include technical experts who understand the technical aspects of development and implementation, and even better, if they know SACWIS or child welfare business models, that's an absolute plus.

You want to bring the trainers onto the implementation team early on so they can establish a timeline for training, prepare course materials and curriculum, organize training facilities, all the while helping to ensure that end-users are prepared when the application arrives.

Include experts or power users, certainly good testers for quick-fix items, and determine what level and who on the team will provide onsite support at key urban and small locations during implementation. Develop and include local subject matter experts, or SMEs, on the implementation team, but I think it's critical that you try to avoid using those SMEs who are also assigned day-to-day case work.

So for schedules, we want to determine a schedule that allows sufficient time for the upstart development of the application, interface programs and data conversion routines. We need to determine a schedule whereby the number of implementation teams and phases are limited in order to reduce risk, balance workload and ensure maximum manageability.

It's important to design a schedule whereby statewide end-users are implemented based upon geographic locations, to realize efficiencies for planning, training, travel and ongoing support in order to control project costs.

In regards to communication, it's important to identify key end-user partners who are well respected and leaders in statewide child welfare organizations,

whereby being the early adapters and implementers of this child welfare application positively influences other's participation.

We need to effectively communicate that the child welfare application ultimately reflects an effective information system strategy encompassing local, state and federal shared core values and guiding principles that one, the systems assists in the delivery of services to at risk children and families more effectively and promptly, two, that the system facilitates inter-agency coordination by providing immediate information.

Three, the system addresses the essential need to develop better shared information about each child who is separated from his or her family, four, the system responds to local, state and federal information and reporting requirements with the most up-to-date, aggregate, case-level and management reports and finally, that the system supports consistent, timely and effective child welfare practices.

And there are any number of communication vehicles and methods that can be used to get the message out, and keep end-users informed in a timely manner, certainly ranging from the old fashioned email distribution to webinars, webcasts, podcasts, and even potentially venturing into the social media world.

And I think our poll showed that our - at least our attendees today are, in fact, using a combination of webinars, webcasts, podcasts for training but also I am sure for the whole communication challenges.

So maintenance operations, a successful transition from development to maintenance and operations begins at the very beginning of the project lifecycle, and continues through the development and implementation stages

to the system maintenance stage. Maintenance and operations then continues until and if the system is retired.

Once the system has been implemented in one or many locations, the system begins its shift to maintenance and operations, M&O status. The transition from development to M&O needs to be carefully monitored. Outstanding system fixes must be identified, addressed and prioritized before the initial project is closed out.

This transition can be difficult. During development, team leaders, team members and system users become accustomed to fast turnaround related to system problem-solving. Once the system moves into the M&O status, subsequent system changes get added to a queue, whereby careful change management and prioritization processes must be in place, as the dedicated project team may no longer be available or in place.

This reality increases the importance of making sure that the system is working satisfactorily, that all final acceptance criteria have been met, and that the maintenance team is ready to assume application support. While development and implementation may be over, you are left with a newer and probably bigger system to maintain and operate.

Make sure the help desk for the system is ready to answer questions concerning the new system features, and the general procedures and processes are in place to provide support for end-users. An ongoing training plan will be required. New end-users will need training, and trainers will need to add and maintain training material covering system enhancements to their regular course curriculum.

Similar scope expansion is required in the area of technical support. Once implementation is complete, the staff providing ongoing system maintenance and support will rely upon good system documentation to troubleshoot and fix system or application problems.

It is strongly recommended and best practice that an organization develops system documentation standards. By standardization of system documentation, the support team can be assured that all that relevant information is available for each system component, and this information can be accessed and updated as needed through a version control tool.

So now, let us move to a rather lengthy review of federal requirements, and I am going to invite Tresa, Tresa Young to speak to an assortment of federal requirements, starting with the APDU. Tresa?

Tresa Young: Good afternoon. I'll be discussing high level requirements and lessons learned, tips for completing Advanced Planning Document Updates, SACWIS Assessment Review Guides, and preparing for onsite federal reviews and monitoring visits.

There's many ways to approach these requirements, and I am grateful for the help that I've received along the way from other states who've been willing to share their documents with me, and also with the state and vendor staff team that I work with here in Ohio, who take the time to review the work and push the team to do the best work that we can.

So it's definitely a group effort, and I would encourage those of you who are in the audience, if you haven't reached out to other states, to do so, because that was big help to me along the way in improving our work here.

In terms of the Advanced Planning Documentation Update, most of you probably know that is a high level plan that is due, that basically grants the state funding for your SACWIS project. It is due sixty days prior to the end of your authorized budget cycle.

Typically for the Advanced Planning Document Update, you do include a schedule, and for the funding cycle is typically an annual funding cycle, so the project schedule for the annual period is typically more detailed, but ACF does like to see a project for the full life of the project - I'm sorry, schedule for the full life of the project.

Again, the reason you want to make very clear in your Advanced Planning Document Update that your development funding request is very clear. And it's preferred that you make the request that you are asking for, for development funding, in your cover letter very clear to the analysts when you are submitting your document.

These are lessons learned for me, and that I thought others might be able to learn from. And again, there's probably many ways to approach the Advanced Planning Document Update process. I like to get the easy things out of the way, so the attachments, all those things that you need, your cost allocation approval letters, your table organizations, all the attachments, ahead of time so that I don't need to worry about getting those when the plan is due.

I also learned, I think, early when I started, my descriptions of our project work or development work were a little lengthy, and I learned over time that I really need to make those succinct. Our federal analysts have a lot of work to review, so they do want to know enough detail to understand what we're proposing or you're proposing to do with the system, but it needs to be

succinct and flow well to ease the amount of time that it takes for the federal analysts to review the document.

Another lesson learned for us, which sounds really obvious in terms of using consistent project initiative terms, really wasn't obvious for me. Sometimes, early on when I started, we would use different names for different initiatives across required documents. Over time, I began to be much more consistent, and make sure that any project term was the same across all federal documents, as well as all state documents.

So within the APDU, I use consistent project initiative terms, and I typically, in the sections where I'm talking about what work we're going to do, cross-reference the APDU budget, like where the item is in the budget, where the item is on the schedule, and then I typically cross-reference which SARG element or which SACWIS Assessment Review guide element or compliance requirement is being referred to when I'm describing that project initiative.

And finally, another lesson learned was to make sure that those initiatives, the names of those initiative projects were always the same and that the coding, you know, on any vendor invoice and the claims that we submitted to ACF all matched up and were the same.

And it made it much easier when it came time to do our APDU budget, because we knew exactly, basically, what money we had spent, and what money we had claimed. And we reviewed that regularly, which made the APDU process much easier.

Again, using those consistent terms makes it easy when you need to create additional budget documents - our state is on a state budget year instead of a

federal fiscal year, and it also makes it easy if you want to use the items from your APDU for other plans, such as the IV-B plan.

Another just lesson learned or to do is, I typically maintain - we have a lot of pilots, we're blessed in Ohio to have a lot of pilots that are going on, and I maintain documentation of those pilot projects, so that again, I'm not needing to do that at the last minute when the APDU is due.

Probably the most important or one of the most important pieces of doing an APDU is making sure that you've involved all the stakeholders and the various teams, and your federal analysts and your leadership in reviewing the document prior to the document being submitted.

And in Ohio we've really, have made these federal requirements, these documentation requirements a training tool. So we use the advanced planning document process as well as the other - SACWIS Assessment Review Guide documentation process I'll talk about, as actual training tools. And we have multiple teams participate in the development and in the review of those tools.

We also use the SACWIS Components Matrix, and if you don't have a copy of that, I would advocate for you to ask for your - to ask for one from your federal analyst. It's just a very simple matrix of the components requirement. And I've used that as an attachment in my APDU. It's just a nice reference guide that you can look at easily. Your federal analyst as well as your team can see what progress you've made on various compliance requirements since the last visit or since the last APDU submission.

Again, if you need development funding, it's important to ensure that the language and the business case that you're describing in your APDU describes new functionality or significant change in the application. And obviously

problem areas or large initiatives shouldn't be new to your leadership, and they should be discussed in advance with your federal analysts.

Another lesson learned for me is, in the beginning we had quite a few metrics, and metrics can be helpful or they can also raise additional questions, and not be all that useful. So if you have lots of metrics that say, you know, lots of things about load time or things that might matter, maybe to a very technical person but to the end-user or to, you know, the folks who are using the system, might not be that important, those are the kinds of metrics, sometimes, that might frustrate a reviewer.

So metrics are good as long as they're meaningful and that they're standardized. So things that we like to include here are, you know, the response time from our help desk and whether or not we're seeing a decrease in issues, or how we've used the information from the help desk, feedback on our training or our technical assistance and our knowledge base, and feedback from our users on enhancements that we've implemented, and then some performance data.

And we do link in, sometimes, information related to how the system is either being improved to support goals that we have for visitation standards, or our performance improvement plan, or the child and family services review.

Okay, I'm going to talk a little bit about the SACWIS Assessment Review Guide documentation, and this is a rather comprehensive document that is really the foundation of the SACWIS documentation for your system. The document is due ninety days prior to an onsite review or your compliance review, and there are many attachments that are required with what is referred to as the SARGe.

So it's a good idea to make sure that you've reviewed those in advance, and talk with your analysts about how they prefer to receive all those attachments, and which ones they want to see, at what period. So before you begin, basically, working on the document, I would suggest having a discussion with your analysts about their preferences.

In Ohio, again, like I said, we use these processes as training opportunities for staff. And so for us, to develop one from scratch took about ten months. And for us to do an update would take about three months. And again, just helpful tips for us, we had, you know, when we were putting the documentation together of the system, and how it met the compliance standards, one person basically owned the gold, what we call the gold copy.

And again, we used the SACWIS components matrix that I talked about before, to keep track of, you know, which business analyst or which technical person might be working on a particular assignment or portion of the SARGE. And we broke the SARGE down into tiny, manageable chunks, literally emails, you know, with the title, with the compliance element on it.

And we might do, you know, a few a day, but we didn't send out, like, big large sections. Because if you have a lot of other work going on, deployments and user support and other things, you don't want to, you know, pull people away for big extended periods of time. And they tend to do a better job if they're just focusing on a small amount of work that's manageable.

And as we discussed before, we did use a standard naming convention for each of the section assignments. Another thing that we did that we found helpful, the ACF SACWIS 101 presentation of all of the SACWIS compliance findings, we took the PowerPoint slides that ACF published, and we cut and pasted the compliance components required in the SARGE in each of those

question areas, just to make sure that our documentation was actually answering the question that had been asked.

We also listened to those presentations. There was rich discussion in them around things that ACF wanted to see in those various compliance areas, and all the folks who worked on the SARGe found that to be helpful. Again, it sounds obvious but, you know, throughout the document there are questions that are very, sometimes repetitive.

And at first to - I'll be honest, I was a little, you know, perturbed by that until I realized that sometimes we weren't asking the question the same each time. So I would say, if there is a question that is in the SARGe, and it's asked more than once - and there sometimes is, make sure that you are answering it the same way each time.

Again, something that we did was we used our SARGe, we actually took the SARG and we followed along with it, as if we were walking through our functionality. Because the SARGe is basically, again, the foundation of what ACF will look at when they come onsite to review your system.

And you really want them to have as good an understanding as they can of your system before they come onsite, so that you make the most of the time that you have during the review, as well as that you have a successful review, where your functionality is easily understandable. In the SARGe we use consistent formatting fonts for system tabs and functions and navigations. Again, it was almost like a how-to document in terms of using the application.

We had extensive reviews. We had subject matter experts. And then, we work on teams here, so it was amazing to have teams actually review the SARGe documents, because it really helps with how different perspectives see

language that's written and to have teams reviewing the work to make sure that the language and the description matches the understanding of the functionality.

These are quick, some lessons learned for preparing for a compliance review or a monitoring visit. Again, this is probably one of the most critical things is have methods to obtain feedback from your users, and know what your users are saying about your system long before ACF comes on site. And communicate that user feedback to your federal analysts before they come.

You don't want your review to be the first time that a federal analyst is hearing about an issue that a user has, or you don't want a user basically describing functionality completely differently than how you have indicated that your system works. So I'm pretty up front about issues that we have, things that we're working on in the user community to improve use of the system.

This was another lesson learned from us, is to make sure that you assess any dependent environment that you have before your onsite visit and any data or interfaces that may be having maintenance or testing or demonstrations, and making sure that you have backup of any data that you're going to need access to for your actual onsite review.

Leadership attendance, knowledge and support for your review makes a big different. I've been very thankful that Ohio's had strong leadership and participation in our review, and I think it's improved the quality of our reviews. Again, when you're doing the presentations or demonstration for an actual onsite review, you should anticipate that your federal analyst is not going to follow the happy path.

So when you're helping staff prepare for the demonstration, they need to understand that although the system ideally, you know, functions in a certain way, and that data is entered typically in a certain way, the federal analyst is going to ask you to go off that path and look at the screen and say, oh well, what happens if I do this? Or what happens if it doesn't do that, and I might go there?

That's something that we really should just help staff be prepared for as they get ready for any kind of federal onsite review. And it's also helpful to let the federal analysts do that, and to let them take the lead on what they want to see when they're looking at the screen.

Always have more than one example ready. You will be asked, for example, show me how such and such, show me how the system makes a service referral. Always have more than one example because you will probably be asked for more than one. The audience of the folks who are participating in these reviews from the federal team typically have different perspectives.

I try to help my team understand the different perspectives of the audience of the federal review team. Some of the team was more interested in items that might relate to the CFSR or your performance improvement plan, or maybe IV-E audits or IV-E eligibility. Some folks were looking more at the system in terms of reporting, or literal SACWIS compliance or SACWIS functionality.

These again were just kind of fun things that I - we just recently had a review and these are the kind of things that I really tried to help my team understand that make your federal analysts go hmm, or additional - can make them give you more additional questions.

Every time they're looking at a screen they're always going to be asking themselves, is there anything on that screen that should prepopulate or come from somewhere else? They're going to be watching as you're doing a demonstration, did you have to enter it more than once?

They're going to be looking at values that are on the screen, and looking to make sure that value is used consistently throughout the application. When you're showing functionality, they're going to be asking for you to show, or to demonstrate whether or not there's an audit trail for that information.

They'll be thinking about, hey, does this meet a validation rule, if I don't do this and I put in, you know, that the person's 2000 years old or something like that, does the logic and the business flow make sense or need a validation rule? They're always looking for ease of use for end-users, and whether or not data is easy to edit.

Again, as we talked about the SACWIS Assessment Review Guide documentation, they're going to be thinking about that documentation and watching the demo, and trying to make sure that they match up, that there are not inconsistencies. And again, as we discussed, they're going to be thinking about, when they go out onsite to the counties, if the description how the system's used by the users or the caseworker match the demo and also your SARGe documentation.

And again, I mean, the helpful part of the review is the perspective of always looking at the system to think about, are there ways the system can be used to keep children safer or to improve practice. And these are just the federal reference guides for these documents, and I also wanted to share, even though it's not on the slide that we do have a knowledge base that is available on the web.

And I can give that to Joyce. But we do have a lot of system documentation out on the Web. We also do have - we do use YouTube, and we have quite a few GoToWebinar trainings that are linked to our knowledge base. So anybody who is interested in what we're doing here in Ohio can get that on the Web.

And I'd be happy to help anyone with any of these processes, so feel free to contact me at any time. Thank you.

Joyce Rose: Thank you, Tresa. That was very well done, and you certainly covered a lot of material. And yes, I will take you up on your offer to be able to provide the Ohio knowledge Web URL. So I think it's time now for Linnette to continue with the federal requirements, and she is going to start with AFCARS. Linnette?

Elizabeth Mertinko: I - this is Elizabeth. I actually need to interrupt and apologize to our audience. We are having massive thunderstorms rolling through Fairfax, which is where we're hosting the webinar. So if you're experiencing some intermittent flickering in the audio or video, I just ask that you be patient with us.

And Linnette, if it's okay, I'm going to advance your slides for you, because I think one of the casualties has been that you have come out of the GoToWebinar as a presenter. Will that be okay?

Linnette Carlson: That's fine. I was wondering about that, so...

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay, yes. If you could go ahead and start, and I will get - I will forward the slides and get to your slides.

Linnette Carlson: Okay, excellent. If you would do that, and I'll just cue you when to transition.

Elizabeth Mertinko: That would be perfect. Thank you so much.

Linnette Carlson: You bet. One less thing to do. Good afternoon from the land of enchantment, New Mexico. As you will see in the slides, I've divided a portion of this part of the Webinar two sections, the first to address AFCARS, NCANDS and CFSR, and the second to address NYTD.

The purpose in doing this was that the NYTD regulations, design and implementation began at a much later date, and thus some of the challenges and lessons learned began and occurred in a completely different time frame. In talking about AFCARS, as you can see, I have some general information about AFCARS and its beginning.

Effective in January 21 of 1994, the federal regulations at 45 CFF - CFR, I'm sorry, 1355.4 implemented Section 479 of the IV-E of the Social Security Act. These regulations are more commonly known as the AFCARS regulations, which stand for Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System.

It includes appendices as well as the dictionary, care standards and the penalty amounts that a Title IV-E agency may be assessed if found out of compliance with the AFCARS standards. On January 6, 2012, the interim final rules were published that implemented amendments to Title IV-E.

As a result of these amendments, conforming changes were made to the AFCARS regulations, including to the appendices, to ensure that the same requirements for data collection and reporting apply to a tribal IV-E agency as are currently applied to the Title State IV-E agencies. AFCARS collects case

level information from state and tribal IV-E agencies on all children in foster care, and those who have been adopted with a Title IV-E agency involvement.

AFCARS uses - ACF uses AFCARS data for a number of reasons, including the following, determining awards for the adoption and (SIM) program, preparing the Child Welfare Outcomes report, conducting the Child and Family Services review, conducting Title IV-E foster care eligibility reviews, determining the allotment of funds for the Chafee Foster Care Independence program, conducting trend analysis and short and long term planning efforts, targeting areas for initial and increased technical assistance efforts, discretionary service grant research and evaluation and regulatory change, responding to requests to data from federal, state, tribal and private agencies.

As you'll see from the slide, there are 66 foster care elements and 37 adoption elements. Children that are included in a foster care population are those who were in foster care for more than 24 hours through achieving permanency, in other words, discharge from all foster care placement through reunification, adoption, emancipation, et cetera.

Examples of the data reported in AFCARS is the demographic information on the foster child, as well as the foster or adoptive parents, the number of removal episodes the child has experienced, the number of placements and the current removal episode and current placement setting.

As you can see from the slide, AFCARS data is submitted twice, two times per year. There is the Reporting Period A and there is a Reporting Period B, and on the slide I've shown those parameter periods as well as the data file submission deadline.

As we go to the next slide, one of the things that in talking about references, AFCARS in itself could be a day-long education piece, and obviously, we don't have time for that, nor do you want to be on a webinar for that long. So what my real point here, is in looking at providing you with AFCARS references is that there are tremendous a number of resources that are available, and the ACF, the Children's Bureau Web site related to AFCARS is a vital resource.

In other words, visit it quickly, and become good friends with it. It includes policy issuances related to AFCARS as well as other resources such as Technical Bulletins. In the first bullet, it's a great starting place, as it contains general information about AFCARS, including information and links to the next three listed bullet sites, the policy guidance and resources, AFCARS Assessment Review Guide and current information on AFCARS Assessment Review and final report.

The second bullet is - as I referenced is, provides direct linkage to the Child Welfare Policy manual, in which Section 1 pertains to AFCARS. The Children's Bureau also issues additional policy documents in the format of TIs and IMs, some of those being methods for extracting data for submission to AFCARS, changes in the AFCARS file names, decisions regarding AFCARS penalties and AFCARS file name, and AFCARS Assessment Reviews.

It also contains Children's Bureau documents that were issued to supplement the information in the federal regulation, and provides additional guidance and assistance to states that tribal - Title IV-E agencies in developing, implementing and maintaining their AFCARS systems.

AFCARS resources also are Technical Bulletins, software utility, federal information processing standard codes and disability special needs code

tables. In the fourth bullet you'll notice, there I provided information regarding the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Information Technology.

Their Web site contains information, including Webinars related to AFCARS updates, federal guidance, AFCARS reviews for training and technical assistance, materials and training and technical assistance examples. If you could switch the slide now to NCANDS.

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System is what NCANDS is. And in this slide you will see that it is a voluntary data system, gathering information from 50 states as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, regarding the reports of child abuse and neglect.

It was established in response to the Child Abuse Prevention Act, which was Public Law 93-247 across the country. And key findings are published in the Child Welfare Reports to Congress and the Annual Maltreatment Report. It includes two different submissions, the Child File, which is 146 fields, and the Agency File, which contains four sections regarding preventative services, screened out referrals, response time and staffing, historical services of victims and fatalities not on the SACWIS system.

And you can see that the NCANDS data is submitted one time per year, and the parameter periods are October 1 to September 30, which follows the federal fiscal year, and I have the deadline that is there. What I might make the comment to, because often people will say, how does NCANDS compare to AFCARS?

And my definition has been that NCANDS starts from the moment that your intake person picks up the phone, to 90 days past the completion of the child abuse/neglect investigation. AFCARS begins the moment that child comes

into care, in foster care, excluding the children who have been in care less than 24 hours, through that child attaining permanency, which could be a very short period of time, or it could be at the age of 18.

The NCANDS - I'm not going to go through all of these resources here because it has the same feel and flavor as the overview that I gave you from the AFCARS section, but it's important to note there is excellent resources regarding technical documentation, survey instruments, program logic, as well as technical assistance.

In the case of NCANDS, that is through W. R. McDonald Associates, and I have the web site there, as well as there is information that is contained at the, at Cornell University, information and assistance, and they do a lot of data analysis, and that's an excellent resource for you as well.

In having to cover three, four, actually, federal requirements in a very short period of time you can see I'm doing very high level, but I want to spend most of the time talking about lessons and challenges that New Mexico found.

So we're going to move on to the CFSR slide, and as many of you know, the Children and Family Services Review enables the Children's Bureau to ensure conformity with the federal child welfare requirements, and to determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services, and assist states to enhance their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes.

Ultimately, the goal of the Federal Reviews is to help states improve child welfare services and achieve the following outcomes for family and children who receive services, meaning safety, permanency and family and child well being.

And by safety, we mean children are the first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect, and that children are maintained safely in their homes whenever possible and appropriate. And permanency, what is indicated is looking and striving for children to have permanency and stability in their living situations, the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for families.

And family and child well being strives to have families to have the enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs, and children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

As many of you have participated in the CFSR reviews, there has been a Round 1 and a Round 2, and of course we're kind of waiting for Round 3 and the time frames that will be looked at that, and how the focus will be.

The one thing that's really important to look at, in NCANDS, you actually have a Child File Data, which is all the information that comes from your SACWIS system, and then you have an Agency File, which actually is looking at things that are not in your SACWIS system, things that are obtained other sources, as they're hired to bring together and marry your information for a full picture.

AFCARS is your submission that again comes strictly out of your SACWIS system, complying with those federal regulations. An interesting and most important thing about CFSR is that it is a very extensive - it's not just a data review or data submission.

It is actually an onsite review where their team comes in and reviews, reads cases, interviews stakeholders, staff, et cetera, and is utilized to establish a national standard, and then for the state to establish their own goals, commonly referred to as the PIP or the Program Improvement guide. And so it's a very extensive and in-depth process.

If you go to the next slide, again I'm taking the same approach and not going through, as you can all go through these resources. And know that as you go to ACF Web sites, there is - these are just pieces of what's on their web site, it's very complete, and has a lot of information, regardless if you are a program person or an IT person.

So again, looking through the ACF Web site as far as the CFSR process, the planning, information related to CFSR reports and program improvement plans and national summaries, you'll also notice that there is a reference to the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Information and Technology. They have excellent information on CFSR. And you also, you will notice that there is a Web site to JBFInternational.com, which has been involved with the onsite reviews.

Now, in finishing this first section of the presentation and looking at some of the challenges and lessons learned related to AFCARS, NCANDS and CFSR, I will go through those and then go a bit around the process of NYTD. As we all know, that's been a new and interesting challenge, but a much needed dataset of information.

In looking at New Mexico's challenges and lessons learned, one thing to not be repetitive, many of the things that Tresa said on the, her things that might make your analysts go hmm, or lessons learned related to SACWIS very much applies to AFCARS, NCANDS and CFSR.

Our - I wanted to give you a little bit of a background on New Mexico's system. We call ourselves an antique or a dinosaur. You have to understand that our SACWIS system, which is our single source for all of our data related to CFSR, NCANDS, AFCARS, NYTD, is Title IV-E, Medicaid, all of those, was created and implemented in 1997.

And so we are a client server base that's over 16 years old, and it was a transfer system from Connecticut. What we indicate in being that antique is, because in 16 years, as we all know, child welfare and information technology has kept an unprecedented, rapid pace of change.

It used to be that child welfare moved fairly slowly, and IT could keep up. Now both are changing at extreme pace, and it's very hard to keep those in sync. The other part is being a client server and not being yet Web-based, it becomes an additional challenge in being able to meet the flexibility and the needed changes in order to not just meet federal requirements, but also to meet the needs of our children and our families.

One of the first things I'd like to say is that in our lesson learned is, we have survived. And we are persevering, and through perseverance is growth. Like the - one of the things that was probably one of the highest compliments that we had is when the federal ACF has come out and looked at our data, they were truly shocked to find that our transfer system no longer looked like a transfer system.

And so it's been a long, hard journey, but one that even though it was a nose-to-the-grindstone, blood, sweat and tears and not a short sprint but a marathon, we did survive. And how we survived, I can encapsulate into a couple of different ways in some of those data systems.

One was a strong team. And when I say team, it is a very broad team. It takes several, using ACF, the state, there's - as far as your state management, your IT, your program staff, the national resource centers to come together and work, to work on the various projects and so that you have, are capturing data follies.

The team half emphasis is the partnership relationship that utilizes resources available from ACF and the others to develop a reasonable plan. The other thing in that team, you need to have a strong companion at the executive management level to drive the project.

And in that, department management is that you will need their support to make sure that program and IT resources are available. You need to have a proficient programmatic lead who can make decisions on behalf of the program. IT should work at the direction of, and in support of the program, otherwise you get an automated system that does not meet programming needs.

And that is critical. And in New Mexico we've been very fortunate. As I've worked with other states, often IT will indicate AFCARS, NCANDS, CFSR, all of that technical information and data often is being done in the IT shop, and it's been very difficult to get program staff to the table. In other states I hear it's vice versa.

In New Mexico, from the onset, we have had program at the table with IT and working together with our ACF partners in order to meet the needs, that not only the technological needs, but also for children and families. The other thing in a strong team is teamwork, working together to develop a comprehensive action plan to move New Mexico forward.

That team also has to be, have adequate IT and social work staff. That's an understatement for all of us, and I'll get to some of that and the realities. The other part of this, the lessons learned is communication, and that, again, is the federal, state, agency, divisional, statewide, regional, counties, your legislative, et cetera, must have excellent communication.

And I want to say, from New Mexico, and all of these entities, these federal regulations, New Mexico has utilized and benefited tremendously from the ACF staff, in order to identify our, the regulations, to confirm or clarify our interpretations and how we were going to implement those, that met not only the federal regulations and needs, but also those of the agency as well as the children and families that we worked with.

As with any communication, we have learned the critical thing is keeping the communication flowing consistently and constantly, keeping the users involved at every point. Tresa talked about that. In New Mexico, IT did bring on business analysts that were to serve as liaisons between the program and technical.

And on the program side we developed a management analyst program unit, which are called the FACTS specialists, that represent programs and are tied very closely to policy and procedure initiatives within the protective services, where we're needing to go, where we are going, where we have been.

It is - the reason there is a critical need for, in our state, for the management analysts, is often IT shops have indicated that when they have hired program staff as liaisons to be in their staff, to be between program and technical, is that within a couple of years, because child welfare is changing so much,

they're lost their expertise as far as what is relevant and current in the field, or at least it is diminished.

Another thing on communication is keeping executive management informed on a regular basis. You will need more resources, and you will need the top managers to get your support - to support your requests. Then it is not only the changes that need to be made and implemented, as well as having adequate staff in order to meet the demands of the project.

The other one that is critical is keeping your federal partners informed. They should not be that distant relative. They should be someone that you would be communicating on a regular basis. We have been so blessed by the op analysts in all avenues, SACWIS, AFCARS, the technical assistance from WRMA, as well as the National Resource Center on Youth Development on - for NYTD.

The other thing that we wanted to talk about is, in communication, you must, must, must keep clear, detailed and extensive written documentation regarding your project. You are going to be juggling many different ones, or at least we are in New Mexico.

And so it's very clear to make sure that you have that documentation of your conversations with your federal partners, with other entities, to make sure that you are staying on track and are following what your program needs in compliance.

The other ones - Joyce did a wonderful job on training and talking about training, and that is just, it is just critical. It's one of those things, whatever you plan for training of your staff, whether it's your user staff, who are going to be entering that information directly into your child welfare information system on how or where to enter it and understanding why it's important.

And that's a critical one, that they understand, it's not just entering data for data's sake, but their process of entering that data, how it impacts the child in custody or that the agency has to impact with. So we always have a thing as, whatever you have a plan for your training of your user staff or anyone else, double it.

The other one is training your state technical staff, and your power users or super users, your management, so that everyone is planning for any new implementations or modifications and maintenance of the system. Often people think that once you've implemented your system, you're done.

And in New Mexico, being a Tier 1 SACWIS system, we have really had to educate not only within our own agency and our IT shop, but even more importantly, the legislature, because they come back and say, your system, you're Tier 1, you don't need any more money, you are fine. And just what you are want are cool tools. And of course we know that the Web has so many advantages.

The other thing in just talking a little bit about our reality is that as we indicated earlier that fact, even though a Tier 1 or fully compliant SACWIS system is over 16 years old. We do have a plan to move towards a Web, which would be implemented in 2017. So we're talking 20 years from implementation.

The funny things that we often say, and people will want to discount our current system because it is client server, one of those challenges that you have is, and we talked about perseverance, is that we have used this time to basically utilize our technology and our know how to very much get in line

with our federal requirements, to maximize all the resources that are available to focus on data quality, tracking, reporting, compliance and outcomes.

And so those will not go wasted when we actually transition from our current client server system into our Web. Now some of the things that, in our reality, is that - first, I'll just say, it's not easy to incorporate all federal regulations, state law, agency policy and procedure and best practice into a child welfare system application, while understanding that not always do things fit together nicely like a puzzle.

Sometimes things conflict, or there are different purposes for the data. And so one of the things that New Mexico has done in that reality is having this management analyst team that comes together and the blessing is they have a tremendous amount of institutional knowledge.

Some of the team have been with the project - the majority of the team have been with the project since implementation, so that means 16 years. And so when we're talking about AFCARS and NCANDS and CFSR, we're - have that institutional knowledge to see where we might have problems as far as over-stepping or counteracting a change or having what we call unintended consequences.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Linnette, I'm sorry to interrupt you, but we have just about 15 minutes remaining in the webinar, so if we could.

Linnette Carlson: Got it.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Could you cover NYTD just a little bit, and then give us a little time for Q&A, that would be great.

Linnette Carlson: You're great. And actually, this is going to be very quick. On NYTD, purposely, because it is new, is - I actually have a lot of the information on the slides and I don't plan to go into details, so that will go quite quickly. As you see, what we collect in the reporting data, it all is tied to the John H. Chafee Independence Program. So I'm going to get there.

The next slide, we're just going to look here, and there are some references for you that are looking at the served population, the baseline population and the follow-up population, which keep everybody kind of confused at times, so this is an excellent resource table to find that and to be able to look at where the data requirement elements and the data collection requirements.

The other slide, if we go to that, is the United Independence Services living data collected, and that has to do - shows all those services, again, for your reference. And the next slide, Slide 30 has the NYTD Outcomes Area, which shows all the different outcomes that NYTD covers.

And then I will show - and the one thing that just is so important in NYTD, in just that emphasis on that we know nationally that children in foster care who age out of foster care do not have historically good outcomes. And so NYTD is a much needed focus on those teenagers from age 15.5 month or age through their emancipation, through 21, and of course with the new coverage to Medicaid to 26, it is vital.

I'm going to focus here just real quickly on some of the New Mexico challenges with NYTD. And that was defining the reporting categories to ourself. Every state reports the same broad categories for the served populations, but every state has different activities under these broad categories that may not be the same.

So there's difficulty in showing what the data is compared from state to state. The federal definition around education and grade level is very difficult to work with. The definition is technically the last grade that the youth completed. Mixed in for New Mexico, we have struggled with having that information, particularly with immigration from Mexico and children not having information regarding that last grade completed, not just attended.

We currently have a work group and a memorandum of understanding with the department of education, the administrative office support and protective services where we're working on getting that information much more easily accessed to the - between the agencies.

On challenges, the other is surveying youth who turned 17 while on the 48-hour hold. We are required to survey all children who are seventeen while they're in care within 45 days of their 17th birthday. We have children who come into their care within a day or two of their 18th birthday.

And as we have all indicated, finding youth to survey at 19 can be difficult, as youth change addresses, cell phone numbers, et cetera. We are seeing that youth are not wanting to stay in touch with us after leaving foster care - I know that's a shock, for many of youth receiving services, and we have a difficult time finding them to survey.

Our last submission was our first 19-year-olds, and we failed the penetration rates for the number of youth to participate in the survey. And right now what we're utilizing, we had tried some other types of software, but currently we're using Survey Monkey to survey our youth, because you can easily enter the data that's not housed in our FACTS system, and we merge the files prior to creating the XML file for submission, and the data only ever exists in that format.

And then just going to the next slide, is for NYTD, some lessons learned, it paid off to be aware of AFCARS changes that would end up dovetailing into NYTD. It paid off to be involved in NYTD from the very beginning, and New Mexico learned that data systems are never perfectly built for the differing reporting requirements, so that we can adapt the best we can.

And the last slide is again, resources for you for NYTD, again the ACF Web site. Also notice the link to the National Resource Center for Youth Development, and the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Information Data and Technology. Thank you.

Joyce Rose: Linnette, thank you so very much for the excellent review of these very important federal reporting requirements, et cetera. And now let's move on to our Q&A session. Elizabeth , I'm going to turn this over to you, I guess.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. And actually Mary, if you could - Mary is our operator. If you could go ahead and let people know how to queue up for Q&A.

Coordinator: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press star 1. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. Your name is required to introduce your question. To withdraw your request you may press star 2. And it'll be one moment for our first question, please.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay, and while we're giving people a minute to get in line, we do have an online question, and I think it's for all three of you. What are some good ways to train your staff when you have a major system upgrade and classroom training is not an option? What works best, asking supervisors to do the staff training, sending out detailed desk guides or doing a webinar?

Joyce Rose: Well, this is Joyce, and I'm going to look to our two guest presenters, because they're probably a bit more current than I am. So Tresa or Linnette?

Tresa Young: I think actually the best mechanism in Ohio that we have used, honestly, for training, is to really involve the users in the testing cycle. So even though we do have - we have what we call SACWIS deployment calls, and we try to do those at least two or three weeks in advance of releasing a build, so we do, you know, regular system documentation and reviews of the call with users - or I'm sorry, of the deployments with users.

And we do do knowledge-based articles as well as Webinar trainings. And in some counties we do do onsite assistance, but I have found, honestly, the most effective thing is involving some of those super users in the testing process in advance of something major being deployed.

Linnette Carlson: This is Linnette, and I concur with Tresa, because one of the answers is all of the above. We have a very detailed FACTS desktop guide that is meant to be not a manual but truly a desktop guide, and they could add additional information, FACTS flows, PowerPoints, et cetera, too.

But also, and then having specialized manuals as well for those groups like in-home services, placement providers, supervisors. But we found - and my staff are de-centralized, so they're around the state, so they actually are in state - county offices.

And what many of the people, what we do is when we do a major release, we have been going, historically, out to the county offices and present in a PowerPoint format, so that people feel like they have an opportunity to ask

questions. As we all know, in webinars, often people don't like to ask questions.

And so we're really exploring multi types of approaches. We also do - if a county needs some special help, we do some one-on-one training with them as well. But definitely you're looking at Webinars and other kinds of methods, technologies as resources and funding are being reduced.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Great. Thank you both. Mary, do we have anybody on the line with a question?

Coordinator: I'm not showing any questions from the phone line.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. One thing I would encourage the audience to think about, somebody did IM during our poll on using e-learning, and noted that part of the reason we might not have had a higher response rate from our participants today is that there are still many states that aren't doing any form of e-learning.

And so, you know, given that, I think I would like to ask them to think about, and if anyone's interested in sharing, how they are doing training and what has proven most effective. While our audience is contemplating that, we do have another online question.

It's hard to get resources for development and testing of system enhancements after your SACWIS project is considered "over" by your leadership, and it's almost impossible to get funding for system documentation. Any tips on keeping documentation up to date after the project ends, but you're in the maintenance and operations phase?

Joyce Rose: Well, this is Joyce, and certainly we all - I think we all know that one of the most unfavorite things to do is, particularly I think for developers, is to actually do documentation. And I think it's just a best practice for your organization to have that as part of your development methodology, that documentation has to be current and certainly to use whatever technology tools you can in terms of version control and that sort of thing.

Tresa, Linnette, current experiences?

Linnette Carlson: Tresa, do you want to go first?

Tresa Young: I do think it is a challenge, and I think that the leadership needs, like you said, Joyce, to emphasize the importance of it. I know on our team we have some folks who are better at it than others, and we do try to set, you know, share and to reward and to acknowledge good documentation on the team, to help inspire or maybe improve some of the skill sets of other staff on the team.

And in terms of, you know, the project being over or the system being over, I think, you know, really leadership has a responsibility to help folks understand, you know, that the system is never - child welfare is never over, and your system really, you know, has to keep pace, as Linnette was talking about, with child welfare changes.

So even if it's just new regulations or maybe pilots, which I said we've used in Ohio a lot, and I would say, you know, if anything else, trying to get additional funding through either pilots or state initiatives, that you can get investment in to make your system current or more up to date. But I do think documentation is a big challenge, I would agree.

Linnette Carlson: I concur. And I think part of it is how - from the very beginning, one is if you have a vendor that is in, doing your system or working with you, is that is part of their contract, is to provide current and up to date documentation, and to not undersell to your management and your leadership that there is an ongoing documentation requirement, and kind of just saying, when the feds are involved, there's always documentation, and in maintenance and operation, that that is required.

And I think the other one to talk about is ownership. In New Mexico, early in our SACWIS cycle, there was - it's like a hot potato. Whose responsibility was it? Was it IT or was it program? And what we've learned is a collaboration. It really is neither. It's actually all the entities as well as your financial people to come together and have pieces of that and come, and put that together, but definitely having resources.

Because that's one of the places that people will quickly cut your resources. So it's - we know, it's all - you've got AFCARS, you know, improvement plans, you've got your APD, all of the other kinds of - your NCANDS mapping documents and all of those things as well.

Joyce Rose: So I think what might be interesting is, Linnette, to follow what happens in New Mexico when you do your migration to Web-based application, and you will have 20 years of system documentation, and many changes. And it will be interesting to see how supportive that documentation is to your transition project.

Linnette Carlson: Absolutely. And one of our challenges is going to be, is that institutional knowledge. Many of the people that have been on my team that, the FACTS specialists are going to be retiring during that four-year period. And so that

transfer of institutional knowledge, not only on the program side but on the IT side is critical.

Joyce Rose: Yes, yes.

Linnette Carlson: And the other interesting - is while we're doing that transition we also have to maintain our current client server in making sure that it meets the needs of the field, while having a moratorium on changes that is typical for whenever you're doing a transition like this.

Joyce Rose: Be very interesting to watch.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Mary, do we have other questions on the line?

Coordinator: I'm not showing any other questions.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. We have more coming in online, so that must be the popular way to send in questions today. Could the presenters speak to how they incorporate other federal reporting requirements such as the caseworker visit measures into their SACWIS systems?

Joyce Rose: Linnette, is that...

Linnette Carlson: Sure. Sure, I can do that. You know, as we said, our SACWIS system is our child welfare information system, so it is incorporated into the business flow of our workers' workflow. So we have information and it - around visitation, that meets the federal requirements for the quantitative data, but we also have information in for documentation about what occurred at those visits, what is more of a qualitative piece.

You know, it's been a challenge as far as you have to have the online functionality, but then you also have to have the back end or the batch functionality to extract the data to make sure it's meeting the calculations of the federal requirements. So it's been a work in progress, and it's one of those, as new child welfare requirements that, you know, had to be incorporated and extracted.

In our state, what we have in the mantra is what gets measured gets done. And we have a very proactive process in which we monitor those worker child visits on a monthly basis, to keep the field advised and giving them reminders to make sure that they are getting that not only accomplished, but also documented.

Tresa Young: And this is Tresa. I would just concur, but our system is the system of record, and it - all the data, basically, for our visitation reports comes from the SACWIS system. We have a message board on the - you know, as you log in, and we frequently post messages on our performance on that message log.

So the end users are directly getting where we're at with visits, and we send reminders, you know, that - to the case workers that they - on our message board, that they need to enter their visits timely. So we also have business intelligence channel kind of tools that allow county workers to review visitation data and performance data at the child level and at the unit level.

Joyce Rose: Elizabeth , do we have any more Chat questions? Hello? Elizabeth ?

Elizabeth Mertinko: I am sorry, I was on mute. We don't have any more in chat, but Mary, do we have anyone queued up for questions on the phone?

Coordinator: I am not showing anyone.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay, then Joyce, before I turn it back over to you, I just would like to thank again all of our audience for their patience during our thunderstorm. I think we managed to stay online most of the time, but if any of you did experience brief lapses in the audio or the video, thank you for your patience. And with that, Joyce, I will turn it back over to you.

Joyce Rose: Thank you. Let's do a quick wrap up. We obviously have just completed webinar number four out of our six part series - or webinar number three, I'm sorry. I just got ahead of myself. So what was accomplished today? Well we provided a basic review and refresher of the continued stages of child welfare information system project lifecycle, recapping at a high level, implementation, maintenance and operations, training and other assorted federal requirements.

And in fact we covered in detail assorted federal requirements from a state perspective, from our two very distinguished state participants. So Linnette and Tresa, I again want to thank you so very much for your participation. So what's next? Well if there are any questions that come in, we will provide follow-up regarding those.

And I think there's a couple of components that we may want to consider getting access to, the URL for the Ohio Knowledge Web. And we may want to get the SACWIS Components Matrix, and get that copied or posted or distributed to our attendees.

So now the next Webinar, Webinar Number 4 will go through some of the common pitfalls and how to avoid them, from planning through statewide implementation, so it's the whole lifecycle. And that's going to be towards the end of July. Please watch for specifics.

Again, a reminder that this webinar has been recorded and will be made available online. When it is complete and posted, you will get a message via the SACWIS Manager's ListServe, with the link which is the one that's on the screen, as all the Webinars are posted at that URL.

So we encourage you to submit any specific ideas for future Webinar topics to me at joyce@kassets.com. And again, I thank you all for attending. Thank you. Goodbye.

Coordinator: Thank you for your participation on today's call. The call has concluded. You may disconnect at this time. Thank you.