Minnesota Eligibility Technology System Executive Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Details

- June 26, 2018
- 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- Room 1200, Minnesota Senate Building, 95 University Ave W, St. Paul, MN 55155

Participants

Voting Members

- Nate Clark, MNsure – present
- Janet Goligowski, Stearns County – present
- Deborah Huskins, Hennepin County – present
- Chuck Johnson, DHS - present
- Kari Koob, MNsure – present
- Nathan Moracco, DHS - present

Non-Voting Members

- Jenna Covey, MNIT – present
- Greg Poehling, MNIT – present

Guests

- Deb Tibstra, MNIT
- Gary Hendricks, Swift County
- Todd Patzer, Lac qui Parle County
- Kari Ouimette, Scott County
- Marie Harmon, MNsure

Agenda Items

Call to Order & Welcome

Greg Poehling, MNIT

Greg Poehling, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Members introduced themselves. Greg walked through the meeting agenda.

Administrative Items

ESC Members

MOTION: Chuck Johnson, co-chair, moved to approve the draft May 22, 2018 meeting minutes. Deborah Huskins seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Periodic Data Matching (PDM) Field Test

Deborah Huskins, Human Services and Public Health Department Area Director, Hennepin County

Janet Goligowski, Gateway Services Division Director, Stearns County

Deborah Huskins noted that the proposal for the Periodic Data Matching Field Test was discussed at the previous meeting, so this would be an update to that proposal. Deborah also noted that there were individuals on the phone and in the audience who are available to answer questions.

Deborah gave an overview of PDM. She explain that PDM was a piece of legislation passed by the legislature several years ago to require a check on eligibility approximately halfway through the coverage year for individuals who received Medical Assistance (MA) through METS. Deborah noted that PDM is passed and established state policy that the legislature expects to be implemented. Though it is close to being ready, it has not yet been implemented. Deborah explained that counties understand that PDM will mean more work for both county staff and those who received MA through METS. Deborah noted that the legislature partially funded the costs for counties to perform PDM.

Deborah stated that the basic intent of the field test is to determine after running one full cycle of PDM whether both the IT functions and business processes are working substantially as intended so as to warrant proceeding with ongoing and full implementation of PDM. Deborah referenced the PDM Field Test Handout and presented the details found therein. Deborah concluded her presentation by noting that once the analysis has concluded, the governance structure of METS (using PMT and ESC) to make decisions.

Kari Koob inquired about the test's sample size and asked how many notices would be sent. Additionally, Kari asked if there would be any follow-up activity (such as phone calls) to ensure adequate sample size. Deborah explained that the field test would be statewide and would not include individuals that are in the process of needing renewals. Individuals are flagged for PDM after roughly after five months of eligibility. Deborah noted that if an individual's information is substantiated by the Federal Hub, no notice is generated. Furthermore, Deborah noted that if the information the Federal Hub returns indicates the individual is not eligible for MA, the case would be flagged, a notice would be generated and the individual would need to contact their county. Deborah was not sure on the number of cases in the July batch, but noted it was in the thousands.

Chuck asked if the implication is that any defects that are identified are likely to go through prioritization to be fixed, which is normal, but specifically, if small changes or tweaks need to go through the same governance process. Greg said that sometimes there may be a tweak or

two, but a majority of defects that are identified within a project go through the process to be prioritized.

Chuck asked if since ESC has largely deferred go/no-go decisions to the PMT, whether there would be a process for members of ESC who might disagree with a go/no-go decision around PDM. Deborah noted that because of the visibility of this issue, especially to the counties, it would be important for the ESC to at least have the opportunity to review and approve what comes out of PMT. Janet Goligowski noted that the counties are developing a PDM evaluation tool so that the feedback that is received has some standardization to it. She noted she believes it is important, not only for the PMT to evaluate the results, but also for the ESC to receive them. Janet noted she would be interested in a trend report, as well as hearing technically what the PMT may have decided or discussed.

Chuck noted that when the ESC last met, members had noted that the fall release contains a fix to the interface, which will likely fix some of the potential problems counties might see during the early stages of PDM. Chuck asked for clarification that when the ESC is looking at the PDM assessment in November, it will be looking at whether PDM is functioning the way it should be given not only the PDM release, but also the subsequent fix on the interface. Janet noted that to Chuck's point, there will be additional releases, such as the reasonable opportunity period release related to appropriately closing cases, that may have a positive effect on how PDM runs as a field test. Janet said the assessment tool should help identify where those types of changes have occurred so the ESC can make those decisions moving forward. Deborah added that the Assessment Workgroup will be meeting this Thursday and she will bring this idea back to them. She noted that if there are interface issues earlier on, such as before the MMIS interface correction, and they decline in number, the workgroup would take that into account in the evaluation.

Nathan Moracco noted that since the handout was a standalone document, it implied the METS PMT was bringing forward the PDM field test proposal, which he didn't believe was technically accurate. Deborah said her understanding was that in the interest of using the governance process as designed, the PMT had been the first body for all of METS to evaluate the field test proposal. She noted that the county membership on the PMT had been intimately involved in the development of the proposal and the PMT members all had the opportunity to weigh in. Deborah stated that counties were using the governance process, but it's also fair to say that it's the counties that are asking for the field test. Nathan asked for clarification on whether the PMT voted that there should be a field test or if PMT helped build the proposal to come to ESC. Kari Ouimette noted that the PMT did vote on the proposal and also recently reviewed and approved the handout Deborah had presented earlier in the meeting. She stated the PMT had given the green light for the final version to be presented to the ESC.

Nathan asked for clarification as to whether the counties had seen the reports and OneSource document mentioned in the criteria section of the handout. Debora noted that the counties have seen the training and OneSource documents that had been developed earlier. In terms of reports, Deborah said they are still looking into what data they would actually be receiving

and that the reports are being developed, but they are not "in hand." Kari Ouimette noted that she had seen mock-ups of the reports, but clarified that the "live" reports—the list of individuals selected for the PDM process and who have received a discrepancy notice—won't be released until after the batch actually runs. Essentially, this report will help identify individuals within each county who had a discrepancy for PDM and verify whether or not they are actually receiving notices, in addition to being user-friendly and accurate.

Nathan suggested amending the handout to change the language from "Is the interface working properly…" to "Is the interface working as expected…" He noted that if the system works as it's known to work, with the general workarounds and defects, then it is working as expected rather than working properly. Janet agreed to make the amendment.

Nathan asked for clarification on the last paragraph of the handout, which reads, "If it is determined that defect fixes are required to METS before PDM can be turned back on, the defects would be prioritized per existing procedures and through the governance structure." Nathan asked who the determining parties are and what the role is of the PMT. Deborah noted that after the analysis of the workgroup, a report would be given to the PMT. Once the PMT has received the report, they would make a recommendation to the ESC. Deborah clarified that this would determine if the project should be implemented or not. Nathan recommended that the language in the paragraph should reflect that clearly. Chuck noted that the timeline helps clarify the evaluation process.

Kari Ouimette offered clarity around Chuck's earlier question about defect prioritization. She noted that in the PMT meeting the previous week, the PMT discussed the "warranty period" for the project. The PDM project is currently under a warranty period, as it went into production earlier this year, but by the time the field test begins, the warranty period will be over. Kari noted that they had discussed presenting an extension of the warranty period for PMT to consider, which would make a difference if defects do arise. Greg advised that, as a sponsor, he believes extending the warranty period would be a good idea. Greg added that this would mean some defects could be addressed without going through a prioritization process.

Gary Hendricks, Swift County commissioner, noted that the mail is not the main source of information for most individuals and wanted to know if other options had been considered in order to ensure that the closure notices would be issued timely and given proper notice. Nathan advised that the Department of Human Services has looked at other options on the business end, but mail is something that has stood up in court and appeals. Nathan noted that this doesn't mean notices can't be supplemented by other avenues—they just can't be eliminated in the short term at this time. He stated that as DHS thinks about modernizing their program, notices are certainly a big piece under consideration.

MOTION: Deborah moved to approve a full cycle field test of PDM. Janet seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

METS IT Program Status Update
Deb Tibstra, Director of Application Services Division, MNIT Services @ DHS/MNsure

Deb Tibstra of MNIT presented details on the 2018 summer release detailed in the METS ESC Update slide desk. She noted the release is schedule for the weekend of July 15, 2018. Deb noted that the release includes the annual Cúram upgrade. Highlights of this year's upgrade include improved citizen portal navigation, general usability improvements and defect fixes in initial application, case management and eligibility modules, improvements in the work queues and notifications, and improvements in navigations, display of information, and accessibility.

Deb noted that in addition to the Cúram upgrade, there are three significant product upgrades to ensure the platform of METS is up to date: upgrades for Oracle, EngagePoint and Hadoop. She advised that although the new products do not bring new functionality, bringing all of the products to a more current version is critical to the ongoing support of the software vendors and protection against security vulnerabilities. Deb stated the business value is in the stability and security of the underlying METS platform. Deb also noted that there is a financial impact to system operations by keeping current, when they don't keep current with upgrades, software vendors like Oracle will charge for extended support on older versions.

Furthermore, Deb noted that in addition to the product upgrades in the summer release, MNIT is deploying one defect fix under PDM and eight defects related to the Enrollment System of Record (ESOR).

Deb advised that though it is not directly a part of the summer release, the GetInsured implementation project will have its first major delivery in July. Starting July 2, consumers will be able access GetInsured's plan comparison tool through both MNsure.org and a link on the plan shopping landing page. Deb noted that internally, there will be plan management functionality that allows MNsure and carriers to test functionality and load and validate plan data.

Chuck asked Deb if MNIT staff has experience working with the 12C component of the Oracle upgrade elsewhere and if it had been updated across other applications. Deb said she understood Chuck's worries and that there is an inherent risk with any major product upgrade. Deb mentioned that since 12C has been on the marketplace for so long and METS is one of the last to migrate to this edition, MNIT does not expect any problems. Deb said the team plans to do both regression and performance testing.

Kari Koob ask Deb if the upgrade gets them to the most current release or just with an acceptable level of support from Oracle. Deb explained that the upgrade is within an acceptable and common place to be. Deb noted it is common for the state to not be on the "bleeding edge" for a variety of reasons, but that they would be supported for some time.

Nathan inquired with Deb about how this upgrade compares to future upgrades. He wanted to know if the upgrade is major and if the capacity would be similar. Deb said this is major and a unique situation because MNIT has to upgrade so many products at the same time as, IBM/Cúram is requiring 12C or higher.

Deb continued her status update with the fall release. She mentioned that the deploy includes the 2019 marketplace setup functionality, which prepares METS for the annual MNsure open enrollment period set to begin November 1, 2018. Deb also stated that the MMIS interface project is delivering the final parts of redesign, including the remaining event messages and the restricting of the interface to improve both quality and performance. She included that the fall release will also bring defect fixes, focused primarily on auto and manual renewals. Deb advised that the reasonable opportunity period (ROP) renewals defect fixes are included in this release. Futhermore, she noted the spring release delivered ROP phase one and room was held in the fall release for defect fixes related to that deployment; there are now four defects that have been prioritized to be fixed in this release. Deb closed by stating the fall release is scheduled to deploy production the week of September 15, 2018.

Deb continued with the winter release, which once again includes the MMIS interface, which will focus on the integration layer between METS and MMIS. Also, she stated that in this release, MNIT will deliver fixes that maybe introduced into the fall interface as a result of the fall interface redesign project. She noted the Federal Tax Information (FTI) renewals project is part of a two phase project aimed at safe-guarding FTI from unauthorized access or disclosure. MNIT delivered the first phase in 2017 as part of the PDM process. She noted the second phase will be deployed in the winter release and will address the renewal processing.

Deb noted ROP phase 2 will focus on pre-eligibility verifications, such as income verifications for MA, which will cause eligibility to be denied for individuals who fail to provide verifications in a reasonable time frame. Deb noted this project is of certified, meaning it is tentative and there will be a decision point in the process which will formally decide if it's ready, or certified, for inclusion in the winter release.

Furthermore, Deb advised the winter release had originally been scheduled for delivery to production the weekend of December 15, 2018, but the PMT recently approved moving the release from the weekend of December 15, 2018, to the weekend of January 12, 2019. She noted that MNsure's open enrollment period currently ends on December 15, 2018, and MNsure will need to keep the system available until midnight or later to serve consumers. Deb explained MNIT does not have capacity to deploy the winter release and change from open enrollment period to special enrollment within one weekend. Deb noted only the deployment date has changed; all other release milestones, such as requirement due date and development testing days, will remain the same.

Deb noted that the IT operations team is already preparing for the upcoming open enrollment period for MNsure. Even though open enrollment does not begin until November 1, IT operation preparations begin in June. She noted that they are reviewing what went well last year and what they can improve on this year. She also noted that last month, Lisa Koenig presented that the PMT was beginning the 2019 roadmap planning process with the federal advanced planning document process. She advised that process is going on now and will continue through July. Deb said to expect to hear more about the 2019 roadmap after that process wraps up and the PMT begins consideration for operational and program work for 2019.

Deb continued with an update on the ROP Phase 2 project and its proof of concept. She reminded the committee that during the last meeting, Lisa noted that most of the scope of the ROP was removed from the fall release the project needed a longer project testing runway than was available. Deb advised this is not a problem unique to ROP as METS implements more and more complex functionality, like PDM. Deb noted that has led MNIT to explore a different approach for testing, which is why they have developed a proof of concept. Currently, MNIT bundles all of the projects into a release very early and when delivering projects to test, they assume all of the work will go together throughout the lower testing regions and into production. This means projects become intertwined in the testing, and at the same time, they are testing the functionality for a specific project, as well as the overall integration and regression testing in the same environment at the same time. She advised this can often lead to very difficult decisions in PMT when they are forced to implement defects in some projects, rather than jeopardizing the entire release as a whole. This proof of concept approach is to insert a new layer of testing into the process, which will allow them to separate functional testing from the overall integration and regression testing. The new layer is focusing on testing that particular project only, in this case, ROP Phase 2. If the method is of sufficient quality, the project will be formally assigned to official release and moved in with the other projects. At that time, the entire release would then be tested from an overall integration and regression testing perspective.

Deb stated that PMT approved the proof of concept approach that will deliver ROP Phase 2 in either the upcoming winter release or the spring 2019 release, with winter being the preference and target at this time. PMT expects to know around October 18 if the ROP Phase 2 project will go into the winter or spring release.

Janet noted that the new proof of concept will add a quality differential that isn't currently present, even though it may affect the timing of some releases.

Chuck asked if the release process would be changed to a more continuous delivery model with the new proof of concept model. Deb noted that is beyond the change in testing approach, but there is a possibility of a more frequent deploy schedule in the future.

Continuing, Deb updated the committee on the METS to MMIS Interface Project. Deb advised that previous changes have raised the match rate between MMIS and METS from 77 percent in April of 2016 to 97.6 percent in June of 2018. She noted that the next phase of the interface project will complete the redesign portion with the final event messaging pieces. They have reserved time in the winter release for any defects that may come out of the fall release, in addition to addressing defects that are outside of the redesign project as previously mentioned. She advised that with the changes in the fall release, caseworkers will see a difference in processing speed and accuracy.

Deb then presented on the Infrastructure Improvements project, noting it is a collection of projects that are focused on enhancing or completing the underlying infrastructure of METS.

Deb finished with an update on the program status slide for all active METS projects. Deb advised that the infrastructure improvement project is currently in red status due to the

compliance and audits subproject and the consolidation of the extremely large audit and compliance data tables, as well as insuring the reporting has satisfactory response time, which has been taking longer than originally planned. She stated the team does have a new timeline with the majority of the tables dealt with by the end of July and the remainder scheduled to be completed in September. She noted that they expect this project to stay in a red status until early September, as the project team is not planning to adjust the schedule. She advised that the project is trending green, as it is on schedule according to the revised timeline.

Deb noted there are currently two projects in yellow status. First is one the committee has spent some time talking about, which is ROP Phase 2, which is delayed due to the shift in testing approach. She stated the GetInsured Implementation is also in a yellow status because the project team did not meet the contractual milestones of May 31, 2018 for completing the requirements in design. She said the team has agreed on a new deadline of June 29, 2018 and they are working towards it. Deb noted that GetInsured was onsite last week and the project team worked through three day-long sessions. They will continue to work and meet through the requirements and design to get the project back on track.

Greg asked if GetInsured being in a yellow status affects its implementation happening in July. Deb advised that is does not affect the July 2 date.

New Business

ESC Members

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

MOTION: Janet moved to adjourn. Deborah seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.