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Fact Sheet on the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Reporting and Formatting Tool (RAFT) and Data Dashboard
Developed from Questions Answered during Conference Call Facilitated by the OFA PeerTA Network with Staff from West Virginia and New Jersey, TA Request No. 233

February 10, 2015 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time

Representatives from the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), New Jersey Department of Human Services, Office of Family Assistance (OFA), and OFA PeerTA Network Team conducted a conference call on February 10, 2015 to follow up on the presentation of West Virginia's Data Dashboard System during the OFA PeerTA webinar "West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Reporting and Formatting Tool (RAFT) and Data Dashboard" on January 13, 2015. New Jersey Department of Human Services staff had an opportunity to ask West Virginia additional questions about the administration of the West Virginia RAFT system:

Q: Is the RAFT warehouse a Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) product adapted to West Virginia's needs? At the end of the webinar, someone asked if it could be replicated.

A: RAFT is the DHHR's name for its data warehouse solution. It is not a COTS product, but is built on two COTS products that can support a wide variety of Data Warehousing needs – COGNOS, a front end tool that renders reports, and Oracle Data Warehouse Builder, an ETL tool that loads data from the transactional system and external sources into the RAFT database. West Virginia has already shared screenshots (https://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/uploaded_files/RAFT%20Webinar%20Transcript%2011315%20Final.pdf) of some of its reports that convey how we present the TANF information. West Virginia-specific COGNOS reports and ETL scripts would be of very little value, since the database structures would be different than those of other states.

Q: Would you explain the e-Recipient Automated Payment and Information Data System (RAPIDS) system?

A: This is a worker portal on the Java platform through which caseworkers can collect and assess eligibility for West Virginia-supported programs (Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, LIEAP, and West Virginia School Clothing Allowance).

Q: Is it one way in, one way out?

A: The e-RAPIDS system is server-based and browser-accessible. Users log in and can process Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF and West Virginia program-specific data.



Q: Can clients access e-RAPIDS through an Internet process?

A: Clients cannot access e-RAPIDS, which is a worker portal, over the Internet. inROADS, the DHHR self-service portal, is accessible through the Internet and allows citizens to apply for programs and perform self-service functions.

Q: Since West Virginia has an integrated system, its RAPIDS source system uses a single customer ID (PIN) for the integrated programs (Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF), so there is no need to match clients across these programs, which may be a challenge for other states. If the data resides outside of those source programs, they rely on the transformation load system to create the unique ID for one person. New Jersey's warehouse uses Business Objects to create reports. They have different systems, so they have to dump into their warehouse and then create the one unique ID to create one client across multiple programs. West Virginia already has a system, but if another program is outside, how does it work?

A: West Virginia reports on clients who are managed by its RAPIDS integrated eligibility (IE) system (Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, LIEAP, and school clothing allowance). Matching clients across these programs is not necessary, since it is inherent in the IE system itself. West Virginia has implemented a Master Data Management (MDM) tool using the Informatica MDM COTS tool, to merge and associate clients from across systems (e.g., Child Welfare). West Virginia does not use MDM with the data warehouse but might do so in the future. Other states that do not have an integrated eligibility system may find an MDM useful in matching clients across program-specific systems. Jon Cain mentioned it is a real commitment to use these tools. Business Objects is a data warehousing tool and can certainly be used to implement a RAFT-like data warehouse if desired.

Q: RAFT is tied to expenditure/cost by program – how are expenditures defined?
An integrative system benefits people, and to be able to report on this is powerful.

A: RAFT reports expenditures using a combination of allocations and expenditures. The eligibility system determines allocations which are readily accessible for supported programs, and is able to pull actual expenditure data from external systems in certain cost categories.

Q: How often do you update the warehouse?

A: There are eight distinct feeds which feed the various data warehouse tables. Most data comes monthly, but some are loaded weekly. The frequency is based on the requirements of the specific data set.



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Q: Do you pull the information from the federal hub and feed the warehouse?

A: The federal hub services are a part of the eRAPIDS solution and are exposed through our Enterprise Service Bus, but they are used only for the Medicaid processing system and are not integrated with the warehouse. Hub data is only used for Medicaid application.

Q: Do you have the TANF data federal file programmed in the warehouse?

A: Staff manually key in the federal work participation numbers when they get the numbers published.

Q: Where are the algorithms built to get the TANF data quarterly reports file information?

A: Work participation determination algorithms are built in the eligibility data system and are transmitted to the RAFT database. RAFT pulls out the information and creates a summarized view for the data management team.

Q: Is data for trending reports kept by year in the data warehouse?

A: We keep the data based on load frequency; for instance, if we get data monthly, we can provide trending data monthly.

Q: Do you keep a historical file anywhere?

A: Yes, there are some transactional details that we bring in that enable current period reporting. When the next (normally monthly) load occurs, we aggregate the data from the previous month and store for historical purposes. The current period data sometimes includes more details than the historical data depending on the reporting requirements.

Q: Do you ever change or correct anything in the warehouse that you have already reported?

A: All of our data is published with a date and time stamp, and we do not republish reports that have already gone out.

For additional information on the RAFT system, please contact:

Jon Cain (Primary Contact)

Director of Integrated Systems Management

West Virginia DHHR

Jon.W.Cain@wv.Gov



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Rodney Wright
Regional Program Manager
West Virginia DHHR
Rodney.A.Wright@wv.Gov