

MFP/HHS COMMITTEE #1
March 5, 2009

Worksession

MEMORANDUM

March 3, 2009

TO: Management and Fiscal Policy Committee
Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Dr. Costis Toregas, Council IT Adviser 

SUBJECT: Technology in the Department of Health and Human Services

Expected to participate in the discussion:

Uma Ahluwalia, Director, DHHS
Steven Emanuel, Chief Information Officer
Andrew Mekelburg, Vice President, Federal Government Relations, Verizon
Communications, Inc.
Daniel Stein, Stewards of Change
Lani Spund, Silicon Valley Consulting Group

Background

As the economic challenges for our residents increase, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is where many of them will turn for additional assistance and a host of supportive services. Currently, more than 75,000 contacts with the public are received every day, a number that necessitates a strong technology foundation. In addition, the number of stand-alone systems once in production was so large that it made efficient processing of this expanding number of transactions problematic. Recently, a joint effort between DHHS and DTS undertook an assessment to improve the current situation. This assessment was a collaborative process that assisted with a summarization of HHS systems. As a result, over 130 different "systems" were identified. Subsequently, some solutions were determined to be sub-sets of other systems or repetitive elsewhere. As a result of retirements AND changes to AIF to absorb some other systems, the strategy enabled HHS to reduce their portfolio to 34 systems. This allows HHS, as they move forward, to further define modernization efforts as their information needs center around a much reduced portfolio.

In order to respond adequately to the technology challenge, DHHS must make optimal use of IT resources, be in a position to improve existing services, and bring in new systems and approaches that can help them absorb this expected rise in demand for services.

In such an environment, it is important that the County's commitment to supporting a technology modernization effort is strong and mirrors similar commitments in other functional areas, such as finance, human resources, and procurement. This joint meeting of the MFP and HHS Committees will allow Councilmembers to explore in more detail the status and needs of IT within DHHS. There are two compelling reasons for having this discussion now: to ensure that the administrative needs of DHHS (contract management, personnel management, and other key requirements) are adequately reflected within the TechMod programmatic initiatives, and to explore mechanisms through which we can establish a technology effort around the programmatic needs of DHHS, including the implementation of integrated case management. There is precious little time to waste, as significant budgetary and programmatic decisions will get more and more difficult in the future.

In addition, the worksession will enable a review of the "State of the Art" in health and human services information systems, and perhaps explore the contribution that Web 2.0 technology and other modern capabilities can make to this vital and undercapitalized area of high visibility and high concern for our County residents.

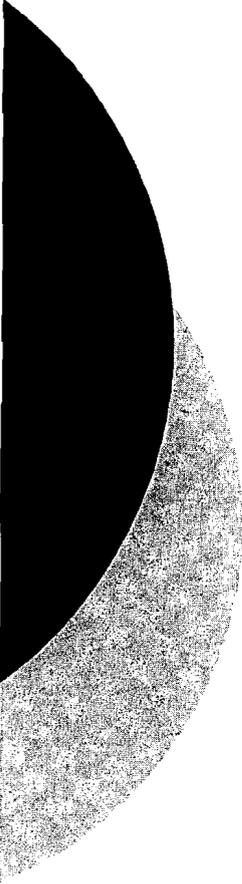
Presentations

In addition to providing technology services to many departments and agencies in Montgomery County, Verizon is a major employer with concerns about skyrocketing health costs and improving employee experiences in their search for good health care. The first presentation will target three aspects of this health care experience:

1. a picture of national health care trends;
2. a discussion of the Obama stimulus package, with emphasis on its impact on health care; and
3. best practices for establishing a strong IT solution for an employer health and human services care system.

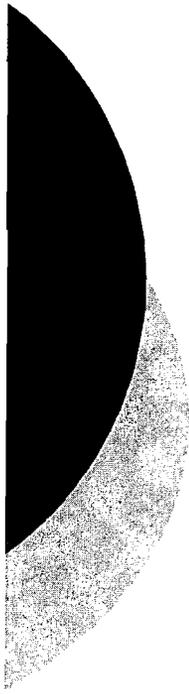
The second presentation will address the emerging thinking about case management and the role that information technology can play. There are many new technologies that can support streamlined operations, but also increasing concerns about privacy, interoperability, and financial streams between government, the provider community, and the insurers who make up the foundation of health care at the national level today. Understanding the systemic forces that define the County's own health and human services systems is an important prerequisite to developing effective technology-based responses.

Finally, ©1-9 give a preliminary look into the County health and human services systems and into what is emerging as a future strategy for taking advantage of existing processes, and creating a strong and robust new IT platform that will address current problems. Relating the County's health and human services system to existing technology platforms and their performance, identifying the new directions that are being pursued in the field, and taking advantage of funding opportunities are three dimensions that the worksession will address.



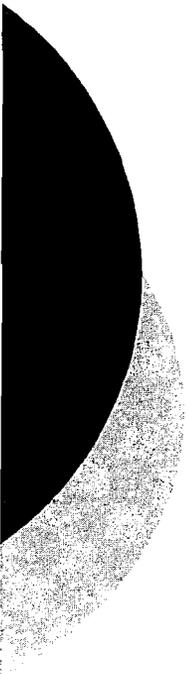
DHHS

**Business Process and
Technology Analysis
County Council
MFP/HHS Committee Briefing
March 5, 2009**



Future Technology Environment:

- Fully integrated and seamless health and human services delivery system where best practices are well supported by technology
- Modernize applications to ensure that staff have the tools for effective service delivery
- Improving overall client outcomes as outlined in the Department Performance Plan throughout the department and with our private sector partners



Key Partnerships:

- DHHS will be aligned and participate as appropriate with other County technology initiatives to maximize the service to our customers while gaining internal efficiencies.
- DHHS and DTS have forged a partnership to collaborate in implementing and supporting the integrated solution.



Technology Services Participation

DTS Collaboration Efforts with HHS Program Plans

- ERP / CRM correlation with HHS Strategy
- Joint DTS / HHS Assessment of ERP Application Capabilities

Assistance with the Evaluation of the HHS Portfolio

- Aid in Core Application vs. Non-Essential in support of HHS IT
- Linkage of portfolio for ERP replication

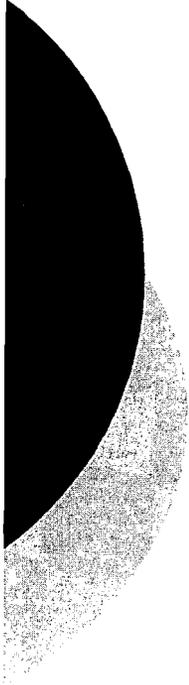
Project Management Support for the HHS Strategy

- Participation in Vendor/Partner Discussions
- Linkage to ERP and CRM efforts
- PM Recommendations



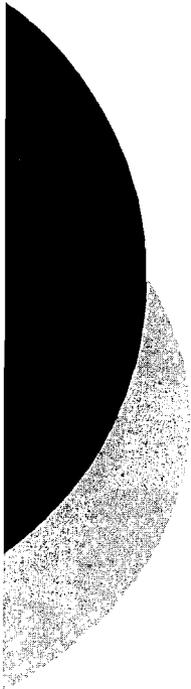
Work to Date:

- HHS validated the perception that gaps exist between current business processes throughout the Department and technological capabilities impacting efficiencies, productivity, and client outcomes.
- A joint internal report by HHS and DTS was issued that analyzes HHS technology needs and the capacity of existing COTS program packages in meeting our IT and business needs.
- Retained industry experts SOC, SVCG to conduct Department wide assessments for Business Process and Technology.
- Designed and launched Phase 1 of the assessments.



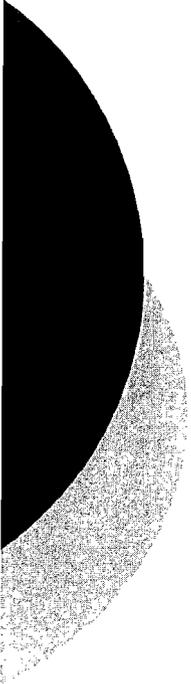
Work to date continued:

- Service Integration is the vehicle that has created the need for a single case record
- In partnership with County Attorney, we have finalized our policy on privacy practices and the sharing of information that addresses HIPAA and other federal and state confidentiality statutes – enabling us to move towards an enterprise system
- Our data integrity concerns and end user dissatisfaction with applications are acute



Current Activity:

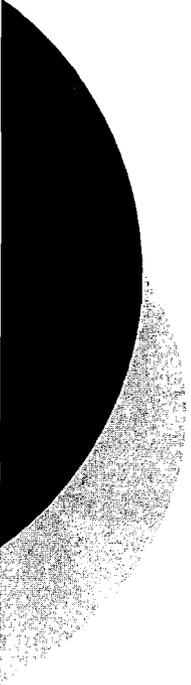
- Received funding in the amount of \$250K for a Business and IT assessment from Casey Family Programs
- Have contracted with industry recognized vendors to conduct our business process and technical framework analysis
- Upon completion of the assessment we will put together a technology modernization plan – that will align business process improvement activities with stated client outcomes by leveraging technology



Next Steps:

- This first phase assessment will develop the template for a full HHS wide assessment that will analyze the “as is” business processes and “to be” maps using the GFOA swim lane templates using the consulting services from RNR.
- HHS has been placed within the County’s Technology Modernization Framework for purposes of standardizing all technology activities and will be supported by a multi-department steering committee with key department directors, similar to the structures that have been created for ERP, CRM and MCTime.





Next steps continued

- At the end of this engagement HHS will have a plan for an enterprise application that spans the life span programs that HHS offers.