

Minnesota Eligibility Technology System Executive Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Details

- November 26, 2019
- 10 a.m. - noon
- Room 1100, Minnesota Senate Building, 95 University Ave. W., St. Paul, MN 55155

Participants

Voting Members

- Nate Clark, MNSure - present
- Janet Goligowski, Stearns County - not present
- Deborah Huskins, Hennepin County - not present
- Chuck Johnson, DHS - present
- Kari Koob, MNSure - present (via phone)

Non-Voting Members

- Jon Eichten, MNIT - present
- Greg Poehling, MNIT - present

Guests

- Lisa Koenig, MNIT
- Jackie Hippen, MNIT
- Marie Harmon, MNSure

Agenda Items

Call to Order & Welcome

Greg Poehling, MNIT

Greg Poehling, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Members introduced themselves. Greg reviewed the meeting agenda. Greg noted there was not a quorum present, as there was no county representative.

Administrative Items

ESC Members

Since there was not a quorum, the committee could not vote to approve the August 27, 2019, meeting minutes.

Greg then began discussion on a new ESC workgroup. He noted that at the August meeting, the Program Management Team (PMT) advised that there would be a shift in the approach in roadmap planning. In order to properly ensure the ESC is informed on the roadmap planning going forward, Greg proposed the development of a new METS ESC workgroup. The group would provide additional opportunities for information exchange outside of regularly scheduled ESC meetings regarding the roadmap. Greg then reviewed the information laid out in the [METS ESC Workgroup Concept document](#).

Chuck Johnson noted his support for the proposal as a way to provide additional visibility and oversight for the ESC. He advised that the body could help the ESC to have a more intentional conversation with the PMT and to understand the decisions they are making. The workgroup would ensure everyone on the ESC is kept informed during committee meetings.

Kari Koob asked how this group would bridge ESC meetings and how it would provide a different value. Greg advised that having the opportunity to converse directly with PMT members would be beneficial. He reiterated that the PMT had made some changes in roadmap planning moving forward and this group would provide additional investment and awareness of the projects. The group would also meet on a more regular basis than the ESC. Kari followed up to clarify that all recommendations would come to the ESC for a vote. Greg confirmed and noted that this group would work like other ESC workgroups and no decisions would be made during these meetings.

Jon Eichten expressed his support for creation of the workgroup and noted it would provide additional visibility and communication opportunities.

Pending county representative support, Greg advised the ESC could move forward with creating the workgroup.

METS IT Program Status Update

Lisa Koenig, Program Management Division Director, MNIT Services @ DHS/MNsure

Lisa Koenig of MNIT presented the [METS ESC Update slide deck](#).

She began with the 2019 fall release, which deployed five areas of functionality on September 21. Lisa noted that the METS to MMIS Interface project delivered its final release aimed at improving performance of the interface and resolving defects related to the redesign that was implemented in 2018. She advised that the PMT expects there to be a reduction in manual workarounds as a result of this release as well as a reduced need for MinnesotaCare special billing.

She noted the GetInsured Implementation project successfully deployed, providing a full integration between GetInsured and METS for the 2020 open enrollment period, which is now underway, replacing legacy plan selection and enrollment functionality. Lisa advised that

currently, the GetInsured project team is working on a plan to transition the project to ongoing systems monitoring and support.

Next, Lisa advised the renewals process improvements (phase I) effort successfully implemented processing and operational improvements by addressing qualified health plan (QHP) cases that missed renewal because of the batch process. Additionally, she noted that now everyone submitting a new application, a renewal or change in circumstances will need to provide their projected annual income (PAI) to be taken into consideration for their integrated case. These changes will allow next year's eligibility determination to be determined, decreasing the need for worker intervention.

Lisa then moved on to the winter release. She noted it was originally scheduled to deploy on December 15, 2019, but has now been rescheduled to deploy on January 12, 2020. This is to avoid deploying major new functionality during the MNsure open enrollment period and DHS renewals periods.

She advised that in this release, the notices team will focus on the standard eligibility notice, auto-close notices and pre-populated annual renewal notices. She advised this will be the final delivery of the notices project.

Next, Lisa noted the functionality deployed in this unique person ID release will reduce unintentional Social Security number (SSN) data entry errors made by citizens and workers by enhancing SSN data validation rules and requiring users to enter the SSN twice. She advised the project team will be examining three measures to assess the effectiveness of the SSN Exact Match change deploying in January. For each measure, they will be looking for post-deploy (February) numbers to be lower than the pre-deploy (December) numbers. Lisa advised the ESC can expect to see the results of these comparisons in March.

Additionally, Lisa noted that in August she had mentioned three high priority defects that the defects management team is delivering in the winter release. There are five additional defect fixes, not mentioned in August, that will also be deployed in the winter release. This includes correcting eligibility functionality in the unassisted path application with Medicare Part A, calculating the advanced premium tax credit (APTC) of the first month following the IRS reverification, calculating cost-sharing reductions as part of unassisted QHP eligibility rules (which will impact American Indian/Alaska Native/household members), correcting a problem where 2019 PAI spans are not being generated for certain household members, and correcting an error with MinnesotaCare and APTC eligibility when active minimum essential coverage exists.

Chuck asked if the SSN exact match is the only piece of the unique ID project deploying in the winter release. Lisa advised that was correct and she would review the release dates the PMT is targeting for the other pieces when she goes over the 2020 roadmap.

Lisa then presented on the METS 2019 Release Roadmap. She noted two things about the diagram. First, all the fall release project deploys are now shown as completed. Second, in the ongoing/annual work section, Data Mart 1.5 has been added. She advised this work was

previously part of the approved scope for the data access and management (reports) project, but a portion of the approved scope was recently split off to be managed as its own project. Lisa noted it will create an ad hoc reporting capability for DHS and MNsure, giving business partners the opportunity to query their own data.

Next, Lisa presented the 2020 Roadmap that the METS ESC approved in August. She noted that projects are shown in two categories: ongoing/annual work and development projects. Lisa advised that in the ongoing/annual work, infrastructure improvements and maintenance & operations were previously listed as just two efforts. Now the nine separate efforts they represent are detailed. She noted that among the development projects, five had not yet started when the ESC met in August are now shown as “in progress.”

Lisa advised that ESC members may remember that several projects were still under consideration for the 2020 roadmap when they last met in August. She noted that all but one of those has now been ruled out for capacity or funding reasons, and PMT does not have any additional roadmap recommendations this month. Lisa advised the one remaining candidate project under consideration is the Curam upgrade. She noted that DHS recently approved \$2.195 million in additional funding for this work, so the METS ESC can expect to see a recommendation on it at a future meeting.

Next, in August, Lisa noted that the ESC had asked her to share thoughts on how the committee could best influence the success of upcoming releases. She suggested the ESC focus on a few things. First, encouraging the earliest possible delivery of meaningful scope to production. Lisa advised the shift in roadmap recommendation and approvals for 2020 is a move in this direction, as the ESC will see project teams prioritizing delivery of more meaningful scope rather than scope that can be fit into predetermined releases. Second, she noted that ensuring that all project roadblocks escalated for ESC’s action are resolved as quickly as possible. Typically, the PMT is able to resolve roadblocks, but she would call out anything that needs the ESC’s action in the project status report. She added that the PMT would reach out if there were anything that needed attention in a timeframe outside of the committee’s schedule. And third, Lisa noted that ensuring projects move as quickly as possible through all their phases is important. As discussed in August, each project progresses through four phases that build upon each other. She noted that, for example, the ESC can help a project move through the initiation phase quickly by ensuring business readiness prior to a project’s start so that scope and policy can be captured, making an approach easier to identify, and the project can move swiftly into the next phase, which is planning.

Lisa then shared a high-level look at progress since the ESC last met. She advised that five of the 2020 projects not yet started in August are now active and two additional projects have advanced to the execution phase.

Next, Lisa presented updates to the 2020 roadmap deliverables schedule, which will be an important part of the METS ESC presentation moving forward. She noted it will be where they show which projects are delivering functionality in each release. Lisa noted that the text shown in black is identical to what the ESC saw in August, while red text represents changes

made either because they refined the format of the slide to provide a clearer picture of the work taking place, or because the information has changed since August.

Next, Lisa mentioned two projects have advanced to the execution stage, including Unique Person ID and Temporary Absence for MA. Now that these projects have completed planning, their targeted timeframes for deliverables are also shown on the schedule.

Moving on, Lisa began reviewing updates to the spring release since the ESC last met, and also covered the summer release. She noted that the fall release will be set in February and she will discuss its deliverables then. She also noted that this information was presented in August, but there have been some notable changes. In August, Lisa noted Effective Dates as “firm” for delivering in the spring release. Now, it is listed as “active.” She advised this project revised its approach as the result of a change request that was approved in September. The change request called for delivery of a new module, called “existing eligibility module.” This had not previously been planned for the project. Lisa noted the new module enables METS to consider the previous and existing program eligibility results needed to deliver the project’s business requirements. She advised that in consideration of the significant development and testing needs of the new module, the team and its sponsors decided to forego a spring release and instead deliver it in summer, along with functionality that establishes proper effective dates in certain circumstances.

Lisa advised that due to itemizing the operations projects below the red line, ESC members can now better see several items listed that will be delivering in the spring timeframe.

Lisa noted that in 2020, the former defects work stream that had been reported as a project will transition to operations and most defects will be worked on an ongoing basis.

Next, Lisa presented on the several defects fixes going into the spring release. Currently, she noted the new evidence for Medicare Part A is being created at auto renewal when there is already matching Medicare Part A benefit evidence on the case. This will be fixed so that the existing evidence is updated instead. Additionally, Lisa advised that currently, a reasonable opportunity period (ROP) expired transaction log message is not displayed when a is removed. With the fix, the message will display correctly. Similarly, she noted a ROP expired case note is not displayed when proof is removed from a pre-eligibility verification. With the fix, this message will display correctly.

Chuck noted that operations work included targeted work on data access and management reports throughout the year. He asked if this level of work on reports had been the previous practice or if this level of resource commitment and focus was new. Lisa reported that many reports were needed on an ongoing basis and required regular operations work. She also noted that there is a prioritized queue of additional reports that might be needed that this team would also work on developing those.

Greg asked how work shown as targeted or active on the deliverable schedule corresponded with the release of functionality. Lisa reported that once work moves from the planning and project initiation phase to the execution phase and the scope of projects is firm, the PMT

would update the timeline to communicate when new functionality would be delivered. Greg asked if updates to the deliverable schedule of this nature could be shared with the new ESC workgroup if they occurred between ESC meetings. Lisa said that information could be provided to the workgroup if it decided it wanted to receive that sort of information.

Lisa then presented on the summer 2020 release timeframe. She noted this was new information since the ESC last met. Lisa advised that for Unique Person ID, the objective in the summer timeframe is to deploy modifications to the eligibility verification system to handle multiple person records, so that providers can find the correct active ID for eligibility verification and claims submission without client or state staff assistance. She noted this enhancement will reduce claims rejections and labor costs to resolve them, result in fewer service disruptions for enrollees, and decrease accounts receivable days for providers and managed care organizations. Lisa then advised that the Effective Dates project was not targeting to release in summer when the ESC met in August but has revised its approach as a result of the change request that was approved in September. The change request called for delivery of an existing eligibility module, which enables METS to consider the previous and existing program eligibility results needed to deliver the project's business requirements. Next, Lisa advised that Temporary Absence for MA implements a new 2019 law that requires DHS to identify MA enrollees who are temporarily absent from the state for more than 30 consecutive days, and to deliver MA coverage to these enrollees via fee for service rather than through managed care plans. Finally, as expected throughout the year, she noted the data access & management reports team will deliver several reports each month during the timeframe of the summer release.

Lisa finished her presentation with the project status report. She noted 19 projects were in green status, four in yellow and one in red. Lisa talked more specifically about the project in red, noting that Cost Sharing for MA is driven by legislation which calls for changes to MA cost-sharing requirements. Lisa advised it is a complex project which spans several systems including METS, MAXIS, MMIS and the interfaces from MAXIS and METS to MMIS, and will require moving some functionality from the source systems to MMIS. She noted the project was initially activated in 2016 but has spent large segments of time on hold due to resource constraints. It was added to the projects reported to METS ESC in May 2019. Lisa noted the current status of the project is in red due to schedule, as it has experienced significant delays due to frequent turnover of resources, resources assigned with limited knowledge of cost sharing policy, processes and rules, and incomplete policy documentation resulting in incomplete documentation of business requirements. Additionally, Lisa advised the scope and risk for this project is in caution status. She noted that on the scope side, the lack of resource continuity and limited decision documentation has required the team to revisit and restate the project scope and objectives. Furthermore, Lisa advised that on the risk side, the project is monitoring concerns about the availability of MAXIS resources and is closely monitoring the Effective Dates project for decisions that could impact or require reworking the METS and METS to MMIS interface technical design. She noted that the team has accepted updated scope and made schedule changes to get on track. Lisa advised this week a request for

approval will be sent to project sponsors and then PMT will have an approval step as it actively monitors this project. They expect to see it back to green by the end of December.

Regarding the yellow projects, Lisa noted that the Data Mart 1.5 project is experiencing resource contentions with the data access and management reports project, which is working on a legislative report and other operational reports needed by business areas (DHS, MNsure & County). She advised the project will not be able to achieve its original schedule and is in the process of re-baselining to a new schedule. Lisa noted that the Tribes as Processing Entities project is yellow because scope has not been finalized due to outstanding questions on the business side. However, the project is on track to have DHS business scope and decisions completed by mid-December. Next, Lisa noted that 1095-B Operations is in yellow due to a risk of missing the schedule because the IRS is significantly later than expected in finalizing template changes. She advised these changes are needed no later than December 5 in order to make the January 31 deadline for mailing all forms to customers. Lisa noted the project will be requesting an automatic 30-day deadline extension from the IRS if it has not received the final template changes by December 2. Finally, Lisa advised that infrastructure improvements for compliance and audits is in yellow due to delays in completing setup and data validation for two reports. She noted the project expects to go back to green once this work is complete on December 6.

Chuck asked for more details on the 1095-B project delays. Lisa clarified it was in yellow status due to risk that the IRS would not supply a needed template by December 5. She noted template had been delayed from what the project team had originally anticipated.

Greg asked if the 1095-B project has the proper resources to reach out to the IRS to communicate the needs by December 5. Lisa said she would follow up to confirm, but she believed the answer was yes and that the team anticipated applying for an automatic extension on December 2.

Kari asked for more detail on what reports were affected by resource contention within the Data Access & Management project. Lisa said she would follow up.

Nate Clark asked if there would be any changes to the delivery schedule based on the status reports that Lisa had just shared. Lisa reported she was not anticipating updates to the delivery schedule as a result of the status. However, she noted sometimes the project delivery schedule does need to be updated as issues come up. She said she would report and share if that is the case in the future.

[METS IT Program Status Update and Quarterly Financial Report](#)

Jackie Hippen, Director of Enterprise Planning and Administration, MNIT Services @ DHS/MNsure

Jackie Hippen, Director of Enterprise Planning and Administration at MNIT, presented the [Minnesota Eligibility Technology System Fiscal Report for the quarter ended September 30, 2019](#). Jackie reviewed the report structure and noted she will focus on two areas, including a

wrap up of FY19 by comparing the estimated actual expenditures to the original budget and a first look at the full FY20 budget for development and operations, as well as projected expenditures for this fiscal year.

Jackie advised that for FY19, most of the year-end expenses have been processed, and the FY19 column has switched from budget to estimated actuals. Jackie explained that in the FY20 column, the ESC will see a total FY20 development budget of approximately \$39.49 million. She noted that funding for development related to the METS APD is matched by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and awarded on a federal fiscal year, so a portion of the current award is represented in FY20 and the remainder in FY21. She explained that the total APD budget in the FY20 column equals \$36.8 million—approximately \$8.5 million from the federal FY19 award and \$28.3 million from the federal FY20 award. Jackie mentioned that last quarter's report showed \$15.7 million budgeted for the final quarter of federal FY19, but they are only including \$8.5 million going forward. She noted they are recognizing approximately \$7 million in underspend for last year's award for multiple reasons, including a technical accounting change during federal FY19 which enabled MNIT to attribute \$4.5 million in expenses to federal FY18 that were processed during federal FY19 in addition to three in-flight projects in federal FY19 not approved for funding in federal FY20. Jackie advised that work on notices, defects and reasonable opportunity period would have continued at full pace given funding in the following year. She noted that instead, all three ramped down to prepare for closure as of November 30, 2019.

Chuck noted the \$4.5 million accounting change was something they discussed during the previous quarterly report and both were planned.

Jackie noted that the ESC will see a total FY20 operations budget of approximately \$31.2 million. She advised MNIT's portion of the operations budget totals \$29.8 million, which is slightly less than the budget for FY19. Jackie noted this was developed based on a review of what was needed last year, and a preview of operational priorities approved by the PMT for FY20. She advised that though MNIT underspent the FY19 operations budget by \$2.3 million, they were able to justify keeping the total budget consistent in FY20. Jackie noted that as more development projects are completed, costs previously attributable to development will transition, or have transitioned, to operations. This includes staff supporting the technology, hardware/software/licensing and MNIT central costs. She advised that in addition to the \$29.8 million for MNIT, \$1.4 million has been budgeted for GetInsured's operational support in FY20.

Jackie noted the MNIT portion of operations is assumed to remain consistent in FY21 but will be re-evaluated at the end of this year. Jackie advised the increase of \$1 million from FY20 to FY21 is due to an increase in amount due to GetInsured in their second year of operations.

Jackie noted that on a development budget of \$45.4 million, MNIT will spend \$42.7 million, resulting in underspending of \$2.7 million. Jackie advised this further breaks down to a \$500,000 underspend in the APD development budget and \$2.2 million for private-only development. For the APD, she noted MNIT had overspent in service contracts, which was

offset by underspending in state staff and staff augmentation. Jackie advised they also show underspending in MNIT Central services, because not all FY19 payments were processed prior to year-end close. Those payments will be processed in FY20 and attributed to the appropriate federal fiscal year. For private-only development, she noted the \$150,000 underspend is a result of the lag in MNIT Central payments. Jackie noted of the remaining \$2 million in underspend, \$1 million is attributable to MNIT, split between state staff, staff augmentation and service contracts, and \$1 million is specific to MNSure.

Jackie then presented on operations. She noted that on a budget of \$30 million, they will spend \$27.7 million, or 92 percent. Jackie advised their goal going forward is to be within 5 percent of budget within each cost category. She then described how they ended FY19. Jackie advised they spent 97 percent of the state staff budget, with staff augmentation underspent and service contracts overspent. She noted that netted together, they spent approximately 89 percent of budget. Jackie advised that a balance of over \$800,000 remains for hardware and software. As development activities and budgets decrease, METS Operations will become responsible for a greater percentage of ongoing hardware, software & licensing costs. She noted MNIT did not see as much of an impact on FY19 expenses as expected and this underspend has been acknowledged in the FY20 operations budget. Jackie advised that MNIT Central expenses ended the year 96 percent spent but would have been even closer to fully spent if all FY19 charges had been processed prior to year-end. She noted that general administration ended the year 20 percent underspent, mostly due to a FY18 occupancy settlement credit processed in FY19. Occupancy charges make up more than 80 percent of the total general administration budget. Jackie noted MNIT will work closely with the DHS Financial Operations division to better understand and anticipate these charges going forward.

Chuck asked if the difference between the \$27.7 million operations budget in 2017 and the \$31 million operations budget for 2020 was entirely attributable to the GetInsured contract and cost growth. Jackie affirmed and cost growth was a large part of it. She noted cost growth has been driven by increases in hardware/software costs, natural inflation and MNIT Central costs, but primarily finishing development on the APD side and moving certain cost categories into operations.

Jackie ended by going over the FY20 quarterly report. She noted they currently expect both development and operations to end the year within five percent of their stated budgets.

Greg noted that they will plan to either schedule a meeting before the January ESC meeting or approve the budget at the January ESC meeting.

New Business

Nate reported that MNSure is halfway through the open enrollment period and things are going well. He noted that website visits, assister tools and plan comparison tool usage is up, which are all good signs. Nate advised MNSure is happy that systems have been stable and the new GetInsured system has been working very well from both a customer service and backend point of view. He noted enrollments were in line with this time of year.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjourn

MOTION: Chuck moved to adjourn the meeting. Jon seconded. There were no objections and the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.