Minnesota Eligibility Technology System Executive Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Details

- August 27, 2019
- 10 a.m. – noon
- Room 1150, Minnesota Senate Building, 95 University Ave. W., St. Paul, MN 55155

Participants

Voting Members

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

Non-Voting Members

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

Guests

- Lisa Koenig, MNIT
- Jackie Hippen, MNIT
- Eva Groebner, MNsure

Agenda Items

Call to Order & Welcome

Chuck Johnson, DHS

Chuck Johnson, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Members introduced themselves. Chuck reviewed the meeting agenda.

Administrative Items

ESC Members

MOTION: Deborah Huskins moved to approve the draft May 28, 2019, meeting minutes. Nate Clark seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

METS IT Program Status Update and Quarterly Financial Report

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

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

METS IT Program Status Update

Lisa Koenig of MNIT presented the METS ESC Update slide deck.

Lisa reported that the summer release had been successfully deployed on June 16, 2019.

Lisa then presented plans for the fall release. The release date has been moved from September 15 to September 21 to allow additional testing and defect resolution, and to allow MNsure to test new GetInsured compatibility. The Release Management Group is managing coordination decisions around several project needs and is confident that this delay will ensure a high-quality release.

Lisa informed the committee that the METS to MMIS Interface project will deliver a final release to resolve defects introduced during a redesign in 2018. This release is anticipated to resolve errors in recording MinnesotaCare eligibility start and end dates, prevent premium billing from occurring past the MinnesotaCare redetermination date, and correct household relationships in the interface. Lisa reported that MNIT anticipated fewer MinnesotaCare special billing requests and less frequent manual workarounds following this release.

Lisa reported changes to the "Need to renew" pre-populated annual renewal notice and standard eligibility notice will include updating current and future eligibility dates to clarify changes brought about by reassessment of a consumer's health care eligibility. Lisa also stated that that the notices will inform qualified health plan eligible applicants of open enrollment dates and enrollment eligibility information.

Lisa reported legacy plan selection and enrollment functionality at MNsure would be replaced by GetInsured, which is set for full integration with METS before the 2020 open enrollment period. GetInsured will also play a key role in back-end transactions between MNsure and the health insurance carriers, notice creation and 1095 form creation for plan year 2020.

Lisa noted Phase 1 of the Renewals Process Improvements project will update cases that missed renewal because of the batch process. Updates will allow for next year's eligibility to be determined in these cases, in order to reduce caseworker intervention. Other processing and operational improvement will streamline manual renewal processes, also benefitting caseworkers.

Finally, the fall release will resolve duplicitous calculation of projected annual income, which has been an issue in MinnesotaCare and qualified health plan automatic renewals. Lisa

informed the committee that resolution of this defect would reduce the time that affected households need to wait for reinstatement of coverage and would eliminate manual intervention by caseworkers.

Lisa summarized that the status of the fall release as critical. MNIT Quality Assurance has been conducting release regression testing to ensure system compatibility, and to resolve discrepancies before performance testing is run.

Greg Poehling asked whether the results of performance testing can be shared with the committee before the next ESC meeting, which Lisa confirmed.

Lisa continued with the 2019 winter release focus.

Lisa explained that the first phase of the Unique Person ID project will focus on increasing merge capability and improve person matching in order to address the amount of duplicated person records in METS. Deborah asked Lisa to clarify whether the project might take a year or more to complete. Lisa confirmed a timeline extending beyond the winter release but noted she could not specify a full timeline.

Next, Lisa recapped the METS 2019 release roadmap on slide 6. She noted that since the May 28 ESC meeting, the Verify Lawful Presence project had undergone file format updates requested by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and the project status had been updated as complete. All summer release project deploys had been updated to a completed status.

Lisa referred to slide seven to summarize the projects ending in 2019. She noted that many of the projects set to end in 2019 had been active over the course of two or more years, showing longstanding efforts involved in their resolution.

Lisa reported that slide nine references the changes to METS funding and how projects have been re-prioritized by the project management team (PMT) after completion of the federal funding request process in late June. Development funding was reduced by 16% over last year and certain activities that were previously eligible for development funding no longer are. The result is cancellation of four projects: Reasonable Opportunity Period Phase 3, Consumer Ability To Upload Verification Discovery, Address Standardization Discovery and Advanced Evidence Sharing. Six additional projects remain under consideration for 2020, but were not included in PMT's recommended roadmap due to funding concerns.

Curam Upgrade 2020, the fifth project listed as TBD for 2020, has been identified as a project that cannot be completed without additional funding. Lisa outlined that the last product upgrade took place in 2018, so a full 2020 upgrade would include more than 130 enhancements and defect fixes, many of which are specific to Minnesota. Additionally, upgrading Oracle now would eliminate the need to update the METS database until 2024, as opposed to renewing a support contract with Oracle.

Nate inquired as to whether the first four projects on the TBD 2020 list were higher priority than the others. Lisa clarified that all six items were of equal priority as PMT considers

whether they will be scheduled for 2020. Deborah added for the record that making recommendations can be a difficult task, as there are many valuable changes the agencies all need. She made specific reference to the difference in tracking and management that the third phase of the Reasonable Opportunity Period project could make, and relevance to allow consumers the ability to upload verification, noting that the process is antiquated. Deborah asked that the cancelled projects be revisited in the future if more resources become available.

Before presenting METS 2020 recommendations, Lisa introduced an updated approach to making project recommendations. She stated that in previous years, project priorities and deployment dates were submitted to the ESC for approval. DHS and MNsure IT projects progress through four stages that build upon one another: initiation, planning, execution and finally closing. In the past, project teams may have made scope decisions based upon the timeline due dates rather than making business need decisions. The new model for the Roadmap recommendations acknowledges that specific timelines cannot be accurately identified until the planning stage; therefore, PMT will now recommend only the project priorities. Lisa assured ESC members that despite no longer recommending deployment dates to ESC, PMT would still ensure project timeliness through a deliverables schedule, which can be modified as a project progresses.

Greg asked Lisa to clarify items that would be difficult to commit to prior to the planning stage of a release. Lisa elaborated that the initiation stage fleshes out the scope of the stages and establishes a high-level timeline. The planning stage then breaks down the scope to tasks and deliverables, with effort level estimations and a sequence established to determine the best path toward the deliverables. Without knowing the specific tasks, deliverables, duration and order, it is difficult to accurately lay out the schedule for a deployment.

Deborah asked if PMT still intends to deploy in releases. Lisa confirmed that the PMT anticipates maintaining quarterly releases.

Nate asked Lisa to clarify at which stage creation of a business requirements document (BRD) and development would take place. She replied that BRD is in the planning stage, and that development requires BRD in order to code, so it is in the execution stage.

Lisa then introduced the METS 2020 recommended work on slide 11. She explained that the proposed roadmap breaks down into three categories: ongoing/annual work, development projects that are in process and recommended to continue, and new development projects to start. Lisa noted that the first two efforts under ongoing/annual work were similar to previous years.

Lisa presented four development projects in progress and expected to continue into 2020. She noted the Unique Person ID, Effective Dates and Renewals Improvements projects are funded by federal funding in 2019 and have been submitted for continued funding through the federal fiscal year 2020.

Lisa directed attention to the right column, the new development projects set to start on or after October 1, 2019, if the federal funding request is approved.

She noted that Temporary Absence for MA would identify Medical Assistance enrollees that are absent from Minnesota for more than 30 consecutive days, in order to provide fee-for-service rather than managed care plans, per 2019 legislation. Eligibility Message Functionality will focus on the transfer to MMIS for MA and MinnesotaCare eligibility changes. Tribes as Processing Entities will expand the number of tribes that are set in METS as organization and location entities, allowing applicants that identify with a tribe to have their case managed by their tribe rather than their case being assigned by program eligibility and county of residence. METS Eligibility Determination: Pregnant Women and Auto Newborns aims to close functional gaps in eligibility and enrollment for pregnant women and newborns that are granted automatic MA eligibility. The METS Eligibility: Income project (formerly known as METS Eligibility Determinations) would eliminate manual workarounds related to self-employment losses and would support appropriate data for accurate income determinations. METS Electronic Eligibility Verification (Discovery) intends to develop additional functionality for electronically verified eligibility factors using state DEED data and/or the federal hub.

Chuck referred to slide seven where METS to MMIS Interface showed an asterisk noting that it is continuing into 2020. He asked if that would fall under operations and maintenance on the ongoing/annual work for the 2020 recommended work. Lisa clarified that project is wrapping up in 2019, and that the 2020 reference on slide seven is to resolve any remaining defects or issues, they will be resolved in the TBD portion of the roadmap.

Lisa then presented slide 12, the 2020 roadmap and deliverable schedule. She explained that only one project is far enough along to track a delivery timeline, the effective dates project. She speculated that the unique person ID project would be better defined by late September and that the renewals process improvements project would be available shortly thereafter. Lisa also clarified that deliverables would be locked in approximately eight months before a release was scheduled to deploy. Other reasons that the 2020 spring release appears lighter than previous quarterly releases include the conclusion of a variety of longstanding projects in 2019, reduced access to federal funds resulting in cancellation of several projects, and that utilization of operations or other funding have not yet been determined moving into 2020.

Deborah inquired whether the Curam upgrade, which is under consideration for 2020, would count as development, and whether it would appear on the deliverables schedule. Lisa confirmed that any projects approved would be added to this schedule as time progresses.

Chuck asked if the spring release was set with the two items (Effective Dates and Operations & Maintenance) on the roadmap. Lisa stated that the scope freeze deadline has passed for the spring release, and both of these terms have met the qualifications. She elaborated that the PMT has processes in place to add projects after the scope freeze deadline, but Effective Dates and Operations & Maintenance are the only items currently confirmed for the spring release.

Chuck asked about the specifics of spring operations & maintenance. Lisa said it would typically be projects mentioned earlier, such as 1095-A and 1095-B forms, as well as periodic and annual work, but that she would share more specifics with the committee at a later date.

Chuck recapped that the roadmap would typically be voted on for the upcoming year, but moving into 2020 there would be more votes required throughout the year based on updates to the project schedule presented by the PMT. He suggested changes to how the ESC votes moving forward might be necessary, such as scheduling the ESC meetings more frequently, voting up front and accepting project lifecycle updates throughout the year, or a suggestion somewhere in between.

Deborah stated that she discussed the update to release procedures with county PMT members. She noted her understanding was that the roadmap format change served to prevent forced or artificial release dates in proposals, and to guard against "time creeps" or loss of control over proposed project timeframes. She suggested that these changes call for tight oversight from every level from the project managers up to the ESC.

Greg noted that he agreed with Deborah and suggested more oversight for the first year of the implemented process changes.

Chuck asked Lisa to project a schedule for ESC decision points for upcoming releases. Lisa replied that she would refer to the 2020 scope freeze dates in order to look at approval of projects that are accepted into a release. She explained that there could be different phases in ongoing projects in order to determine expected phase completion dates. She agreed to propose that information at the next ESC meeting. She also suggested that the committee consider, when making their motion, whether projects should stop or continue when they reach a point at which a new vote may be needed in order to progress.

Greg suggested that the procedural change might best be facilitated by a subgroup of the ESC that could meet more regularly over the upcoming months to keep projects moving forward.

Chuck suggested the creation of a new subgroup for such efforts rather than housing them with the meetings planning workgroup or the budget workgroup.

Greg speculated that the subgroup could meet monthly to get updates from Lisa for the 2020 PMT planning and share guidance to PMT between ESC meetings. He suggested the subgroup could operate on a presumption of approval but leave formal approvals to the ESC meetings.

Jon Eichten observed that open meeting law may not allow a subgroup to take an official governing action when meeting privately.

Deborah suggested that actionable proposals for a subgroup be tabled until the next ESC meeting in order to establish better guidelines and make motions at that time. She additionally requested that PMT elevate any concerns to members of the ESC in between official meetings.

MOTION: Deborah moved to approve the 2020 spring release as presented by PMT. Nate seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

MOTION: Deborah moved to approve the 2020 roadmap management process as presented by the PMT. Nate seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Lisa moved to the project status updates on slide 14. She reported the GetInsured implementation had moved from red to a cautionary yellow due to identified risks relating mostly to product testing and reported defects. GetInsured deploys defect fixes weekly for MNsure staff to retest. Lisa shared that two critical no-go defects have been identified: one was slotted to undergo deploy, and the other remained under investigation by GetInsured.

Lisa reported the Renewals Process Improvements project was yellow due to defects detected while developing the winter release, in turn potentially impacting the fall release. Lisa shared that a fix had been developed for testing.

Lisa reported the Infrastructure Improvements Compliance and Audits project designed to monitor user activity and access within the MNsure IT system was yellow. Delays in setup and data validation for reporting had impacted the project schedule. The team had presented plans to catch up on these tasks within a week's time.

Lisa noted two projects were reflected as red. The Cost Sharing for MA project faced delays brought about by its complex multi-system nature. Policy documentation, deliverables and tasks need finalization, and level of effort for the tasks needs estimation and sequencing. After these achievements, a more precise schedule will be determined for the project. Additionally, the Effective Dates project turned red following delays in requirement refinement and fit-gap analysis. The project has a "Get to Green" plan in place, and PMT anticipates a two-week resolution.

Chuck asked if Lisa had additional information about how this schedule may be impacted moving forward. Lisa stated that fit-gap analysis may present more scope knowledge. She reiterated that the resolution is anticipated within a brief window, and the next phase can progress.

Quarterly Financial Report

Jackie Hippen, interim director of enterprise planning and administration at MNIT, presented the METS Fiscal Report for FY 2019, quarter 4. Jackie summarized the first page, noting the statutory requirement to produce the report quarterly, report tables related to cost categories, and the information about lag and its reasoning to show five quarters. She stated that aside from the quarter end date, this page has not changed from previous quarters.

Jackie directed the committee to page two, beginning with the four-year view in table 1. She pointed out that the 2018 biennium is actual expenses, fiscal year 2019 is shown as budget information, and the 2020 and 2021 columns are preliminary. She noted the original system development funding ended on December 31, 2017, and only impacts totals shown for fiscal

year 2018. The METS eligibility and enrollment advanced planning document (APD) relates to a joint state and federal investment in functionality for METS, running on the federal fiscal year of October 1 to September 30, and thus the majority of the approved APD is in state fiscal year 2019, with the remainder reflected in state fiscal year 2020. Jackie explained that this is what impacts fiscal year 2020, making it appear smaller than the previous two years reflected on the page. She then stated that there is an anticipated underspending over the last three months of 2019, which can be reinvested into the 2020 METS APD. Jackie noted that the fiscal year 2020 operations budget is currently based on fiscal year 2019 statistics.

Jackie directed the committee to page three and observed an anticipated 6% underspend for fiscal year 2019. She noted that in late July, DHS submitted their federal fiscal year 2020 APD to CMS for federal approval, which should be received by October 1, 2019. Three quarters of the approved federal spending would be added to the fiscal year 2020 budget.

Jackie noted that the integration of GetInsured continues, and the MNsure board's approved budget would be combined with the APD dollars for a complete development budget for fiscal year 2020. Jackie also noted that the final fiscal year 2020 budget would distinguish specific costs to smaller populations that benefit the system as a whole. Jackie stated that the year over year objective is to anticipate METS spending accurately, and to attempt to predict its cost spending level.

Greg asked what the approximate amount of the three quarters federal award would mean to the development for ESC. Jackie replied that would be roughly $9-10 million per quarter, likely $27-28 million in total.

Jackie reported that the $45 million of budgeted development spending aligns with $36.8 million in year-to-date expenditures and an estimated $7 million in encumbrances, resulting in a 4% (or $1.6 million) underspend in state fiscal year 2019. This can be further broken down to a $300,000 pressure in the METS APD with an estimated remaining balance of $1.9 million for GetInsured development. In regard to the $300,000 pressure, Jackie noted that some of the $7 million in encumbrances might ultimately transpire in fiscal year 2020, and that alignment with the federal fiscal year allows some additional flexibility. Jackie noted that while staff augmentation and service contracts appear over budget, state personnel is under budget, and that timing issues between federal and state fiscal years can impact these measures, as well.

Jackie noted that the MNIT enterprise services ended the year 30% underspent due to several enterprise costs attributable to METS being charged elsewhere. A correction will be processed in the first quarter of state fiscal year 2020. Additionally, lower than expected occupancy costs led to underspending toward general administration.

Regarding operations, Jackie reported that the $30 million budget aligns with $23.2 million in year-to-date expenditures and an estimated $5 million in encumbrances, leaving about 6% (or $1.8 million) underspent. Jackie noted a pressure of $570,000 for service contracts, offset by more than $700,000 in underspending for staff augmentation. She also noted a balance of over $800,000 remains for hardware/software, since as development activities and budgets

decrease, METS operations will be responsible for a greater percentage of the ongoing hardware, software and licensing costs. Jackie noted the fiscal year 2020 operations budget would reduce the budgeted amount for hardware/software to reflect this underspend. Additionally, lower than expected occupancy costs in operations led to underspending toward general administration.

Chuck reiterated that the development budget will include APD funding in the next iteration of the fiscal report, and that approval of the next fiscal report would include setting the operations budget for 2020. Chuck noted underspending in operations for two consecutive years and suggested the ESC budget work group discuss the pattern of underspending.

MOTION: Nate moved to approve the quarter-end June 30, 2019 fiscal report for submission to the Legislative Oversight Committee. Deborah seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

New Business

Nate reported that the start of the open enrollment period was about nine weeks out. He noted MNsure's readiness efforts were well underway.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjourn

MOTION: Deborah moved to adjourn. Nate seconded. There were no objections and the meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.