PRISM and Common Measures
February 6, 2007

Present: Jeanette Fish, John Glen, Aaron Hughes, Karen Humelbaugh, April McGuire, Al Pierce, Evelyn Roth, Lily Sehon, Rod Simmons, Graham Slater, Greg White.
Absent: Ray Worden.

<u>What would be needed for us to have a single data system to meet the needs of WISPR and Common Measures?</u>

Gus, Al, and John distributed a one-pager titled, *Overview of Common Measures and WISPR*.

- Provided key definitions of common measures, workforce information streamlined performance reporting system (WISPR), the WISPR reporting system.
- The heart of WISPR is an electronic file of standardized individual job seeker records (for exiters only).
- WISPR includes seven DOL programs. Note that it does not include Job Corps, Title II … but these are on the list of federal common measures programs.
- We currently compute common measures from separate OED and 1B databases. But ideally, the common measures would be reported through and from the WISPR system.
- WISPR must be implemented by November 2007, for the quarter ending September 2007, but submission of a single combined file is two years out.
    - OED will be pulling a group together to work on definitions; but we can't make final choices until DOL issues final regulations.
    - DCCWD Title 1b is already collecting most of the data needed; they would change their programming to meet the needs WISPR.
    - The goal would be to get all relevant programs developing and submitting a single file within two years.

Answering the question above: **"A mechanism (data warehouse) to collect data from all seven DOL programs … to produce the WISPR data extract and calculate the common measures. The data extract must be able to produce the same unique identifier for each individual record to report participation across reporting periods and programs."**
Greg added: **the flexibility to let all partners get what they need from the system … old measures, new measures, modified measures, etc.**

We have told DOL that we will deal with the unique identifier issue as part of our response to the IMIS project.

Lily and Aaron put together a one-pager titled, *PRISM: Current Measures or Common Measures?*

- Common measures and WISPR are really not on the Vocational Rehabilitation priority list, because they're not requirements.
- OVRS is held accountable for seven measures, none of which are the common measures.
- OVRS is not permitted to share any information about the people they serve, because that would identify individuals as having disabilities.
    - About two-thirds of OVRS individuals give permission for their information to be shared with workforce partners, but that's always in the context of being de-identified.
    - OVRS currently participates with PRISM measures; could that continue with the new common measures?
    - OVRS would need a really tight contract to identify how the information would be used.

Discussion:
- If we developed a single data warehouse to include all individual data for all Oregon workforce partners, we would only send data from the seven WISPR programs to the feds.
- If we include all partners (e.g. OVRS) in the Oregon computations of the common measures, the Oregon numbers would be different than the federal numbers (because a different mix of programs would be included).

DHS Self-Sufficiency Programs: TANF Jobs measures six things, three of which are very similar to the PRISM measures and common measures. TANF currently uses the PRISM measures for legislative and other presentations and has adopted these for measures of their own program.

DHS expressed concern that we would lose the historical data on performance measures. Greg and John confirmed that the historic raw data would still be available; we could re-compute the common or other new measures from those raw data. Greg also suggested that we could run measures based on both definitions, at least for a transition period.

Are the common measures "better" than the PRISM measures?

Greg: One improvement is the use of wage, rather than wage gain. Greg felt that we should change the PRISM measures to the IPI measures; but at this point, he sees the value of changing them to the common measures.

IPI also came up with the idea of "nesting measures" … determining how many African-American females were served by a particular program, and what their outcomes were.

Lily: how close is the average wage at placement figure from PRISM to the average wage needed for common measures?

IPI = Integrated Performance Information project; funded by DOL; collaboration of Washington, Oregon, and six other states, to talk about and develop an ideal set of measures.

Karen:
- Two things to decide:
  - What measures shall we use?
    - Could be common measures plus a few more. But we need to limit this.
  - What system helps us get there?

Lily: if most workforce agencies are moving to the common measures, DHS could go along with that. They want to be comparable to other workforce partners.

What DHS likes about PRISM is that the data is a lot more current than the national-source measures DHS gets.

John: what would be the advantages and disadvantages to moving to the common measures?

Group response:

Advantages	Disadvantages
New definition of exit: individuals will not show on reports until they've exited the entire system, not just after they've exited particular agencies. Not clear whether this is an advantage or a disadvantage.	
Less need to explain why the 1b measures are different from PRISM – e.g. calls from local boards, legislature, etc. Having a single set of data that are used.	Significant up-front cost.
We won't be talking two different languages … we won't have to explain two sets of measures.	Significant up-front program design, to ensure that it will meet flexible needs in the future.
Common measures are truly systemwide, rather than silo.	Individual agencies would not get individual reports, unless we build that in

	to the new system.
Might help spending of the funds / federal fund allocation.	May require statutory change.
Because they're the common measures "and I said so" – all federal agencies will be moving this way.	Unknown impact on agencies outside of the direct workforce agencies.
Goodwill with our (federal) funding agencies.	
Right now we have duplicated counts; with the common measures, this would be eliminated.	
Prefer the wage level to the wage gain concept.	
Policy makers can focus on single measures … not having to worry about impact on state measures versus federal measures.	
Continuation over time, beyond Governors, etc.	

April: if everyone loaded their data into "the black box," would there be individual agency data records?

Al: Maybe we don't want to go to the common measures right now; maybe we should plan on being there by the 2009 deadline.

Graham: Even if we made the decision within the next three or four months, it would probably take until 2009 to accomplish what would be a huge task.

Aaron: We know what PRISM placement looks like, but we don't know what the new measure would look like. Could someone write a program to create comparable common measures for a certain time period?

- Answer: Yes, this could be done, if you used the date of the exit from particular programs … not the exit from the overall system.

Major difference between developing a system for common measure reporting versus developing an "information tool" system that would allow essentially unlimited measure development. This would increase the value for partners etc., and may result in resource commitments that would help toward development.

What we're really talking about is building a new system, that would be in place by 2009, with some IMIS recommendations incorporated (e.g. common identifier), would meet all WISPR and Common Measures requirements, and would be a customized query tool.

Discussion on these topics adjourned; will continue at next meeting.

What other information do we need, in order to make an informed decision about using common measures or current PRISM measures?

Should we recommend changing from PRISM measures to the common measures?

If yes, who do we talk to about this; to whom do we make the recommendation?

If no, is it because we think changing the measures is a bad idea or because we don't think it's our role to make that recommendation?

Should we consider developing a whole new performance system?

If yes, what should our approach be? What additional information do we need?

OWIB Performance and System Improvement Committee

Greg gave a brief overview of the new OWIB Committee, which has its first meeting on February 8.

Greg would like to form a new group of program staff to support the OWIB committee. This group could focus on IMIS, common measures, next iteration of PRISM, data warehouse on the education side.

Some consensus that the members of the current work group would form the nucleus of the group Greg's envisioning, but further discussion needed.