NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007

Promising Practices for Improved Record Reporting

Many states faced challenges in creating state estimates for the NIAA records report over the three years of data collection. Often, these challenges in estimating were direct results of structural or reporting problems of actual NICS records. This brief presents a strategy that at least one state has implemented to address that problem.

Estimation Problem
Inability to create accurate estimates of available mental health records.

Reporting Problem
Records are not being sent from mental health record holders to the NICS index.

Strategy
Create a centrally managed technology solution that will transmit mental health data from participating agencies to the NICS Index.

Automate Communication Between Mental Health Record Holders and NICS Index

About this strategy

In most cases, records are submitted to the NICS Index through the state repository. Often, and for a number of reasons, it is difficult for states to gather mental health records from the multiple agencies that hold them. One solution to this problem is to install a centrally-managed process that automates record transfer from all agencies that hold mental health records to the NICS index.

- **Who it may work for:** States that have mental health records available at originating agencies, but have trouble transferring them to NICS.

- **Costs**: Costs of planning, software development and testing, as well as training.

Why this strategy makes a difference

An automated records transfer process from multiple mental health agencies not only increases the number of records available, but also imposes quality control and eliminates the extensive time that manual entry requires. This leads to an increase in both the number and quality of records being made available to NICS.

Who's Doing It? New York

With support from NARIP funding, New York has developed a centrally managed automated NICS Transmission System that allows each agency that holds mental health records to electronically transfer those records to the NICS Index. This has significantly improved New York's reporting of mental health records.

For more information:

New York
Janine Kava
Public Information Officer
(518) 457-8828
Janine.kava@dcjs.ny.gov

Bureau of Justice Statistics
Devon Adams
202-307-0765
Devon.Adams@usdoj.gov
More on NICS here