

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hourly Task Guidelines Implementation Analysis: First Year of Implementation



Prepared for the California Department of Social Services

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Introduction and Background

- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) developed Hourly Task Guidelines (HTGs) for the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 12301.2 and with the input of the HTGs Workgroup comprised of a broad range of stakeholders.
- The HTGs were designed to promote accurate and consistent assessments by social workers while continuing to ensure that the needs of consumers are appropriately met.
- Twelve tasks were identified as needing new HTGs: Meal Preparation, Meal Cleanup, Feeding, Bowel and Bladder Care, Menstrual Care, Routine Bed Baths, Dressing, Ambulation, Transfer, Bathing and Grooming, Rubbing Skin and Repositioning, and Care and Assistance with Prosthetic Devices.
- Other tasks such as Laundry, Domestic, and Shopping/Errands already had time guidelines in place, and other tasks were not suited for time guidelines due to the unique circumstance, infrequency of the task, and/or specialized level of expertise.
- While HTGs provide a standardized framework (task definitions, time ranges, factors for consideration of time, and exceptions) to guide the assessment process, the needs of IHSS consumers vary considerably. Exceptions to the HTGs' time ranges may be made by the social worker in order to address the individualized needs of IHSS consumers who may require more or less time on certain tasks.
- Based upon the requirements of the enabling legislation and CDSS' and program stakeholders' interest in assessing the impact of HTGs, CDSS entered into a contract with the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the California State University, Sacramento (CSUS), to conduct an evaluation of the impact of HTGs through June 2008. The findings are being reported quarterly as mandated by the State Budget Acts of 2006 and 2007.

Scope of Complete Post-implementation Analysis

To provide a more complete picture of the implementation of HTGs, the ISR will utilize a multiple perspectives approach including five separate analyses:

- 1. Assessment of the average authorized hours for consumers:** Analysis conducted using the State's Case Management, Information Payrolling System (CMIPS) service authorization data
- 2. Examination of exceptions:** Analysis conducted on data from a sample of cases collected by the State QA Field Monitoring Units during their State monitoring case reviews
- 3. Examination of feedback from IHSS consumers about their service authorizations:** Analysis conducted on data collected through a survey of a randomly selected sample of consumers statewide
- 4. Review of the impact of HTGs on State Hearings:** Analysis conducted on data collected from CDSS' State Hearings Division
- 5. Review of the impact of HTGs on the workload of county social workers:** Analysis conducted on data collected through a survey of a randomly selected sample of county social workers

Objective 1: To determine whether the implementation of HTGs has increased or decreased the number of hours authorized in the Initial Assessment

Objective 2: To determine whether the implementation of HTGs has increased or decreased the number of hours authorized in Reassessments

Objective 3: To determine whether the implementation of HTGs has created greater consensus/consistency in the assignment of hours for various tasks

Objective 4: To determine whether the implementation of HTGs has impacted the number of hours assigned to the ranks within the task areas

Objective 5: To determine whether the implementation of HTGs has impacted the percentage of cases falling within and outside the HTGs time ranges

Previous Updates

- The first update, provided July 2007, reflected only an analysis of CMIPS service authorization data by comparing the first seven months of the post-implementation (September 2006 through March 2007) with the same seven months (September 2005 through March 2006) in the prior year for both Initial Assessment and Reassessment cases.
- The second update, provided October 2007, provided an analysis of CMIPS service authorizations for the pre- and post-implementation period through June of the pre- and post-implementation year (a 10-month period for each); while adding another data perspective, State QA Field Monitoring case data, to provide an analysis of State QA Monitoring data collected January through June of 2007 to examine the utilization of exceptions.

Current Update

- This update provides an analysis of CMIPS service authorizations for the pre- and post-implementation period through August of the pre- and post-implementation year (a 12-month period for each). The update also includes an additional analysis, *Matched Group Cases*, to provide a closer examination of individual cases. Matched groups identify cases that had an Initial Assessment or Reassessment in the pre-implementation period and a Reassessment in the post-implementation period.
- The update does not provide any additional State QA Field Monitoring case data as the last update did because the State began reviews for the current State Fiscal Year (FY) September 2007 and only a few weeks of data was available for this report quarter.
- It is important to note that findings in this update are *preliminary* and may not reflect longer-term impacts of the HTGs.

Future Updates

- The remaining post-implementation analyses will include a cumulative evaluation of data from CMIPS, State QA Field Monitoring, State Hearings, and consumer and social worker surveys:

CMIPS Data

- The CMIPS service authorizations will continue to be reported cumulatively in each subsequent update.

State Field Monitoring Data

- State Field Monitoring data will be reported cumulatively to include the reviews from the current FY. New data should be available for the next update.

State Hearings Data

- The ISR performed some exploratory analysis of data provided by the State Hearings Division (SHD), but because the way in which the data was reported, the findings provided little insight into the impact of HTGs on State Hearings and thus was not included in this update.
- A more powerful and informative examination using SHD appeals data matched with case numbers provided in CMIPS has been developed. It is anticipated that the recently requested corrected information necessary to complete analysis may be available for the next quarterly update.

Consumer Surveys Data

- The ISR has completed the pilot for the Consumer Survey. While the pilot survey indicated that the survey instrument itself was valid, a very low response rate (43 of 1,000 surveys distributed) yielded little concrete information. It did, however, suggest a different survey methodology was needed to ensure a significant representative sample of consumers (5,000 surveys to be distributed) for the statewide (full) survey.
- With the assistance of the HTG Sub-Committee, a better survey dissemination procedure was created and minor adjustments to the survey instrument were made.
- The statewide Consumer Survey is expected to be completed in the next two quarters and findings will be released as part of the Update covering the period through the end of the current FY (June 30, 2008).

Social Worker Survey Data

- The Social Worker Survey has been constructed and is undergoing review. Two focus groups with social workers will review the instrument for clarity, content, and dissemination approach. Data collection is expected to begin in late February or March 2008.

Key Findings

- **Initial Assessments (n=60,038):** There was an overall weekly average decrease of 1 minute for the the12 HTG tasks.¹
- **Reassessments (n=137,199):** There was an overall weekly average decrease of 7 minutes for the 12 HTG tasks.¹
- The cumulative effect indicated for the 12-month pre- to post-implementation period reveals an overall weekly average decrease:
 - The rate of decrease in average overall minutes for HTG tasks appears to be leveling off for Initial Assessments.
 - The rate of decrease in average overall weekly minutes for HTG tasks has moderated from the first quarter² post-implementation (13 minutes) to about half that for quarters two, three, and the last two months of the 12-month period (8, 5, and 7 minutes).
- **Matched Groups of Cases:** In the comparison of weekly hours for consumers in the two years (pre- to the post-implementation year), the majority of matched cases in two groups having assessments in both the pre- and post-implementation periods showed an increase in time over all HTG tasks:

Note: The matched group is divided based on the whether the assessment in the pre-period was the Initial Assessment or a Reassessment. For cases in the matched group where one or more than one assessment occurred either in the pre- or post-period, the most recent assessment within that year was used for the analysis.

- **Initial Assessment to Reassessment (n=21,667):**
 - 60 percent (n=13,082) of cases who had both an Initial Assessment in the pre-period and a Reassessment in the post-period had an increase in time (over the two assessments).

¹ Because the HTGs are based on weekly hours, results are reported in changes in the average hours per week. Total monthly population impacts may be calculated by multiplying the average changes for those tasks with hours assigned weekly by 4.33, summed across tasks and multiplied by the number of consumers affected.

² The first complete quarter's findings included the period of September 2006 with the October through December 2006 quarter.

- 21 percent (n=4,489) of the cases showed no change in time from Initial Assessment to Reassessment.
- 12 percent (n=2,644) of the cases, had a decrease of more than 1 hour.
- 7 percent (n=1,452) of the cases had a decrease of less than 1 hour.
- **Reassessment to Reassessment (n=60,163):**
 - 52 percent (n=31,221) of cases who had both a Reassessment in the pre-period and a Reassessment in the post-period had an increase in time (over the two assessments).
 - 28 percent (n=16,846) of the cases, showed no change in time from Reassessment to Reassessment.
 - 13 percent (n=7,727) of the cases had a decrease of more than 1 hour.
 - 7 percent (4,369) of the cases had a decrease of less than 1 hour.
- Overall, there continues to be greater consistency in authorized hours among ranks and tasks. This is indicated by a reduction in standard deviations and an increase in the percentage of cases falling within the range.
- The increase in consistency suggests that the HTGs' task definitions and time guide factors continue to be successful in bringing greater uniformity to the assessment process.
- Indications that assessments are being conducted on an individualized basis and that the HTGs are not simply having a blanket effect on authorized time continue to be reflected by variations in increases and decreases in average time within the same rank level in different tasks and across tasks by counties.

Summary and Conclusion

- As with any new change in policy in a program involving such a large population, there is likely to be an adjustment period for incorporating policy into program operations.
- The cumulative effect indicated for the 12-month pre- to post-implementation period reveals an overall average decrease consistent with trends reported in the previous update:
 - The rate of decrease in average overall minutes for HTG tasks appears to be leveling off for Initial Assessments.
 - The rate of decrease in average overall minutes for HTG tasks has moderated from the first quarter post-implementation (13 minutes) to about half that for quarters two, three and the last two months of the 12-month period (8, 5, and 7 minutes).
 - The fact that we are not seeing changes within some tasks and ranks may be an indicator that at the end of one year of HTG implementation, the impact of the implementation of the HTGs are becoming more stable as the processes become more routine.
- The additional *Matched Groups of Cases* analysis, looking at cases having assessments in both the pre- and post-implementation periods, confirms the previous findings in terms of the individuality of the assessment process. This is evidenced by variability in the changes within various tasks areas and by the movement between ranks, which we are detecting for some cases over the two assessments.
- The Matched Group analysis also suggests a majority of cases going from Initial Assessment to Reassessment, as well as cases going from Reassessment to Reassessment, experienced an increase in authorized hours after the implementation of the HTGs.

- Finally, the HTGs do appear to have achieved the desired impact of bringing greater consistency to the assessment process without having sacrificed the individuality needed during that process. This is evidenced by the reduced variance in authorized hours and variations in increases and decreases in average time within the same rank level in different tasks and across tasks by counties. This is also supported by the preliminary findings in the Matched Group analysis.
- However, the extent to which the HTGs alone are impacting the service authorizations versus particular changes in an individual's needs and/or the impact of social worker training and county and State QA monitoring oversight is unknown.