

MHSIP online
mental health statistics improvement program

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"Reinventing MHSIP" Focus Group Meetings

MHSIP has a tradition of re-examining, from time to time, the directions and approaches the group has taken to ensure we are addressing the important issues regarding mental health data. In the Fall of 1998, the Group agreed that a re-evaluation was again in order. In January 1999, Ron Manderscheid, Ph.D., Chief, Survey and Analysis Branch, at CMHS prepared a brief paper on the context of mental health data and informatics. Respondents representing various stakeholders were then invited to address each of the topics in the context paper. Using those documents as a basis for discussion, it was agreed by MHSIP Policy Group members at a February 1999 meeting to hold two focus groups with invited participants representing a broader array of stakeholders to discuss the future form and content of MHSIP.

Representatives of consumers, advocacy groups, public and private treatment providers, researchers, and local, state and federal government were invited to the two meetings. The first group included people with more general data and evaluation concerns; the second group included more people with interests in technological issues of data collection and analysis.

To provide a framework for focus group discussions, participants in each session were given copies of the context paper and responses, two documents discussing the history of MHSIP and the background of the focus group activity, and a description of a recent CMHS-funded data standards project being implemented by Abt Associates. All of these documents are available in the MHSIP Library.

The first focus group meeting was held in Alexandria, VA, May 4, 1999. The second was held in Washington, DC, June 1, 1999. The output from these two meetings will be the input to a MHSIP Policy Group meeting to be held in the summer of 1999 to prepare a "white paper" with recommendations to CMHS regarding the future shape and activities of MHSIP.



FOCUS GROUP LINKS

- [The MHSIP Retreat](#)
- [Beyond Our Borders](#)
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