



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

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December 9, 2016

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chairman
House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman
House Committee on Oversight
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Abney and Chairwoman Serpa,

Thank you for the opportunity to share more information on the Unified Health Infrastructure Project (UHIP). Attached you will find the materials and summaries that are responsive to your weekly request.

Governor Raimondo is committed to ensuring the best-quality service for DHS customers and continues to hold the project team accountable. We are grateful for her leadership, and we continue to work together to strengthen project oversight and stabilize the system as quickly as possible. This week, the Governor ordered immediate actions to improve customer service at Department of Human Services field offices and bolster ongoing efforts to stabilize the state's new, integrated eligibility software system as quickly as possible.

DHS will offer extended Saturday hours from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at two additional field office locations: the Pawtucket and Warwick offices. As previously reported, DHS already offers Saturday hours and extended hours on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Providence and Woonsocket offices. DHS will immediately begin a process to hire 35 additional staff on a temporary basis to more quickly process pending applications. Governor Raimondo also has deployed managers from other state agencies to provide leadership to improve customer service.

This project continues to be our top priority. We are committed to continued and meaningful progress: fixing technical issues, improving the way we do business and better serving our customers.

We're still not where we want to be, but we're on the path to improvement. Over the coming weeks and months and in line with industry standards, we expect issues to be less frequent, wait times to normalize, our employees to continue to become more comfortable with the system, and applications to be processed more efficiently. We are seeing improvements every day.

In the long term, the new system will improve customer service, ensure that the state is delivering the right services to the right people at the right time, and save taxpayers tens of millions of dollars.

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Below, please find this week's response to your weekly questions.

Weekly Question #1: A couple of weeks ago, we sent a plan to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that lays out actions we are taking to ensure a fully compliant SNAP program that best serves the needs of the Rhode Islanders we serve. We are still in discussions with FNS to finalize our new weekly report, therefore, they are not requiring us to submit a weekly report today.

Weekly Question #2: Updated responses to Original Questions #8, #10, and #16 are below.

- *Original Question #8:* Precise numbers on how many existing clients didn't receive any benefits, how many received some but not all that they were entitled to, and how many received incorrect payments.
 - **Response:** All of the below missing or incorrect benefits were identified this week and have already been resolved as a part of our ongoing reconciliation activities.

Program	Missing/Incorrect Benefits Identified This Week (All Resolved within 24 hours of Issue Identification)
SNAP	39
RIW	15
CCAP	136
GPA	47
SSP	432

* Data range: December 2 to December 8

- *Original Question # 10:* How many providers did not receive payments when they were accustomed to receiving?
 - **Response:** Please see above. This was a regular batch payment week. Reconciliation payments will continue through the duration of the reconciliation period.
- *Original Question # 16:* Glitches reports.
 - **Response:** The production reports used by Deloitte to lists priority issues that need to be addressed and fixed are attached. (Labeled "Daily Health Reports.") Lists of priority issues can be found on slide two of each daily health report.

Weekly Question #3: Application and payment manual work arounds.

- **Response:** Below are data, tracked by Deloitte, on manual workarounds for each program as defined in our report to the Honorable Joint Committee two weeks ago. As a reminder, this data reflects instances in which an individual or worker reported a challenge processing an application or generating an eligibility determination and a specific data fix was deployed.

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Application Manual Work Arouns (December 2 - December 8)

Program	Manual Workaround Executed	Total Applications	% of Applications Completed via Manual Work Around Process
CCAP	0	130	0%
GPA	0	4	0%
Medicaid	3	1214	.24%
RIW	1	160	.63%
SNAP	1	640	.16%
SSP	0	24	0%

Payment Manual Work Arouns (December 2 – December 8)

Program	Manual Payments Executed	Total Payments	% of Payments completed via Manual Work Around
CCAP		630**	
RIW	15	294	5.1%
SNAP	39	1,933	2.02%

**Manual reconciliation of payments are scheduled for the week of 12/12. Necessary data corrections will be applied to these provider payments to correct under/over payments.

As previously mentioned, in addition to the manual system work around data presented above, we have been working to develop a more comprehensive report on manual and technology-assisted interim business processes outside of the system that are currently deployed across programs. Below please find data (and data definitions) related to the instances in which these processes were utilized this week.

Technology Assisted/Manual Interim Business Process	Instances This Week	Estimated End Date for Interim Business Process	Interim Business Process Definition
Long Term Care Payments	21 off cycle payments	Feb-17	Long Term Care eligibility and customer service authorizations are processed in RIBridges. An interim business process is used to transmit those service authorizations into MMIS for payment to be generated to providers.

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Childcare Payments	136 off cycle payments	Dec-16	Child care providers are paid on a bi-weekly payment cycle based upon attendance sheets that have been submitted. The technology assisted interim business process includes making payments to providers through the UHIP system but requires manual input of the attendance sheets into the portal for off cycle payments.
GPA Burial	47 payments to funeral homes	Jan-17	An interim business process is being used to make payments to funeral homes for eligible GPA recipients.

In addition to the programs above, the following three programs are currently wholly reliant on technology-assisted interim business processes. As such, the universe of potential enrollments reliant on those processes is described below.

Technology Assisted/Manual Interim Business Process	Overall Program Enrollments	Estimated End Date for Interim Business Process	Interim Business Process Definition
Rite Share	8,000	Jan-17	Customers are enrolled in RiteShare through an existing Microsoft Access database that was established prior to the RIBridges go-live. Once enrolled, customers are entered into MMIS.

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Sherlock	<100	Jan-17	Sherlock eligibility is performed in RIBridges. An interim process is used to produce a report for EOHHS staff to perform the disability assessment to confirm the enrollment into the program.
Katie Beckett	1,000	Jan-17	Katie Beckett eligibility is performed in RIBridges. An interim process is used to produce a report for EOHHS staff to perform the disability assessment to confirm the enrollment into the program.
Support Services	~50 payments (this week)	Feb-17	Support Services payments are executed weekly to provide transportation services to RIW clients. An interim business process is in place to provide a report to the State containing these individuals who are subsequently provided with bus passes through RIPTA for their transportation until the Support Services payment is fully functional.
Breast and Cervical Cancer (BCC)	5-10 enrollments (this week)	Feb-17	BCC program eligibility is performed in RIBridges. An interim business process is used to enter enrollment transactions into MMIS.

Please note, as a part of the SSP monthly issuance process, anywhere from 100-200 accounts will need to be reconciled through a manual quality control review every month. Banks routinely reject payments related to individuals who become deceased, have closed accounts, or have changed their bank account number since the last time the SSP monthly process was executed. Once these rejections are received, an outreach phase begins to reach out to these customers to confirm the correct information for their accounts. In the interim, a manual check is issued to get the individuals paid prior to the next monthly issuance run where the corrected bank account information can be used to process payment.

We are hopeful that this extended description of manual system work arounds, and manual/technology assisted business processes is responsive to the Honorable Joint Committee, and welcome your feedback on our new approach to reporting.

Weekly Question #4: An update on our escalation team in the Call Center.

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Response: Our Escalation Unit continues to handle complex and urgent cases to help connect customers to services as quickly as possible. The Escalation Unit is staffed by some of our most experienced and knowledgeable employees. Between Friday, Dec. 2 and Wednesday, Dec. 7, they were able to close 88 cases.

Weekly Question #5: The status of the DHS call-back system:

Response: The DHS Call Back system has offered customers the option for a call back if they are unable to wait on hold. Callbacks are being made daily and the list continues to be managed and worked. As of yesterday afternoon, DHS employees made a total of about 700 call backs to customers since Thursday, Dec. 1. We continue to work toward ways to improve service.

Weekly Question #6: Report on additional efforts to enhance employee engagement and examples of any suggestions or feedback implemented.

Response:

A. **Coffee Hour with the Director** – Director Depena has been offering a private forum for field office employees to voice their concerns and reactions to the implementation of RIBridges. It’s an opportunity for the field office workers to freely express their opinions and offer constructive feedback on how we can better work together to improve the way we deliver services. It is not required of DHS employees to attend, but many took advantage of the forums and seized the opportunity for open discussion with leadership. Small groups attend, and Director Depena provides coffee and tea. The Director works with DHS supervisors to ensure there is adequate coverage while the coffee hour meetings are in progress. Leadership is following up on all comments and concerns derived from those meetings. Our largest office, Providence, had two sessions to ensure employees who wanted to join were able to – and to also ensure our office had enough employees doing their work during that time.

B. **Customer Service Training with Amica** – Amica is providing further customer service training to DHS employees in December to enhance skills in new and innovative ways. The goal of this training is to further develop customer service skills to better understand and rectify the needs of our customers.

Weekly Question #7: Report on progress toward implementing different measures to address regional office wait times and capture true customer experience (once implemented):

Response: We continue to assess, monitor and maintain the lobby business practices to improve customer wait times and experiences.

Providence has successfully implemented a new lobby management plan which includes staff assigned to status inquiries, case triaging, EBT requests, SNAP screenings and monitoring of lobby volume. As we continue to implement and pilot this process we make necessary adjustments to meet the needs of our

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customers. The remaining five offices are currently being evaluated so that we can transfer best practices to these offices.

Thanks to these important changes in the Providence Field Office we have been able to more accurately reflect the true wait times experienced by our customers. We have been able to move the point at which we “turn on the clock” for purposes of measuring wait time to the first time that a customer is seen at the greeter station when they enter the lobby. In the past we were not able to reliably capture wait times until a customer was seen at a service window. Now we are able to capture the wait time from the moment when the customer is seen at the greeting station at the entry to the lobby.

With regards to capturing the customer experience more broadly, we have posted suggestion boxes in each of our field offices and have placed Comment Cards to collect customer feedback. DHS communication staff is charged with collecting, evaluating and providing feedback to improve our customer service. Additionally, customers have the option to Facebook message our communications team with their experiences within their local offices as well.

Weekly Question #8: Attached, please find document titled “**UHIP Daily Media Updates.**”

- **Please Note:** As with last week, during today’s update to the media, we released new UHIP metrics, which show the status of applications in the RI Bridges system. Those metrics are (File labeled “**UHIP Metrics 12-9-16**”).

Additionally, per Sharon Reynolds-Ferland’s recent request, attached are health daily updates which include Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, December 9, 2016 (**See attached “Production Daily Health Reports”**).

We hope these materials are helpful in answering your questions, and are happy to follow up with any additional data or information you need moving forward.

Sincerely,



Michael DiBiase, Director, Department of Administration

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State of Rhode Island General Assembly

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Elizabeth Roberts, Secretary, Executive Office of Health and Human Services



Melba Depeña Affigne, Director, Department of Human Services