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# Memo

**To:** Julie Krow, Director, Office of Children, Youth and Families, Colorado Department of Human Services

**From:** Frank Alexander, Colorado Human Services Directors Association

**CC:** Reggie Bicha, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Human Services

**Date:** 2/24/2012

**Re:** CHATS Technical Issues

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CHSDA members have pulled together a list of concerns regarding the CHATS system. Some of the concerns identified in this document may have previously been brought to your attention and may have already been corrected.

Contained in this document is a listing of concerns classified according to topic. Beginning on page 6 is a standalone document that summarizes CHATS issues and a corresponding spreadsheet that provides updates from the counties. The spreadsheets are attached.

Thank you for your support and time on these issues. CHSDA is committed to working in strong partnership with CDHS to identify and resolve these and other concerns.

## General Administration related to the CHATS System

- Business Offices are still processing abundant manual claims.
- This system was supposed to save the caseworker time and make case management easier and faster but it has done the exact opposite. Caseworkers spend untold hours ensuring authorizations are accurate and available to EPPIC so the card swipes correctly.
- Entering and maintaining new recoveries is difficult, especially when multiple 'shops' are involved; i.e. Caseworker calculates recovery, Business Office establishes some payment plans, Recovery Units establish other payment plans, etc.
- Many help desk tickets simply age out; close because the case has closed and so it is not an issue anymore for that particular case, but the underlying issue still exists and pops up again later within a different case and so a new help desk ticket is sent, and on and on.....

- The system has had some workload impacts, such as the need when making payments to use the “tool” to review the legacy system with data in the new system. It appears that not all of the old data migrated to the new system and sometimes it is incorrect in the new system. For example, payment address sometimes populated incorrectly. The net effect is a doubling of workload for payments.
- We have lost some good school-based providers because of confidentiality issues.
- Adjustments to eligibility are difficult to manage within timeframes. For example, when the employer adjusts a person’s work schedule the information does not get to the worker before the client swipes the card. In big counties, you need someone to be constantly making adjustments.
- CHATS is not programmed for efficiency based on updating data in the system in accordance to regulations. Our biggest time-consuming issue is in regard to making appropriate changes to the parent fee; this is a protected field where we cannot make the appropriate changes according to regulations. Because of the required 15 day notice regulation, we cannot make changes to the parent fee. Because of the system limitations, it creates numerous recoveries and manual adjustments. Many times there is swipe data with no parent fee assessed when there should be - such as in a re-opened case when there is no gap in coverage.
- The CHATS system has not been updated with the current state FPL levels which results in incorrect determination of eligibility.

### **Financial Data**

- Changing County Rates is very difficult and labor intensive.
- There are no reports on billing.

### **Provider Payments**

- For the most part, it has gone really well. The response to problems has been immediate and thorough. There has been great support but there are morale issues with staff. For example, it was miscalculating rates (manual or misusing during pilot).
- The provider payments may take anywhere between overnight to 7 days.
- The fiscal agreements are difficult to establish. They may not be timely because of all of the work involved for eligibility technicians.

- **CHATS and Future CCCAP Allocation Formula** - In the context of the CCAP Allocation Task Group, one angle on the CHATS system has come up which might be worth conversation. CDHS wants (and frankly, the Counties want) all counties to pay providers at what is called the unit level – a record is made in CHATS for each unit of child care service each child uses, and that drives the data for payments. This is a fine idea, but the realities of the CHATS system overall and the point-of-services sub-system, coupled with client and provider behaviors has put the counties in an awkward position. We simply cannot get the work done if we attempt to pay all manual claims at that level of detail. This issue surfaced because the state wants to use data collected from CHATS, at that level of detail, to represent utilization in the allocation formula.

The Counties would support using the data from CHATS at the unit level if/when it becomes practical and possible to generate the data. Unfortunately, we ran into the perspective from CDHS that they warned counties that we should be paying at the unit level and they want to assume that, if we are not doing that following their expressing the expectation, we are choosing to process payments another way and therefore will have to suffer the adverse outcome in the allocation. To put this in context, we were told at the inception of the new CHATS system that our business Office billing functions would essentially disappear – we would have little to do with CHATS. At least one county is, instead, devoting approximately 2.5 FTE to Child Care billing as it is, when they had one FTE doing Child Care billing under the old system.

What the CDHS staff have now heard is that it is not a matter of choice – the system is heavily demanding and time intensive for counties. Some counties have chosen to pay at the unit level, and they cannot keep up, so presumably, they are building a growing backlog and not producing timely data in CHATS. Other counties have chosen to pay providers timely, but pay some portion of the payments with a lesser level of detail in CHATS (at the child or the provider level). This does not feed the CHATS system with the information it would need to produce good utilization data that is desirable for allocation formulas.

The bottom line – we cannot assume that the counties have the necessary resources simply to comply with a directive to pay all manual claims at the unit level, or that they are making a choice not to out of defiance. The CHATS system needs to be brought to a working order so that counties can do the work in ways that are preferred by all of us, and then time needs to pass such that sufficient data is resident in CHATS to produce valid utilization data before it can be incorporated into the allocation formula. These thoughts address not only the functionality of the CHATS system, but also the attitude about county compliance and the presumption that the counties would opt not to do what is needed and then have to absorb the consequence of that action with severely reduced allocations.

## **Interfaces – Automated interfaces with other systems**

- There is a known disconnect between CHATs and EPPIC (EPPIC – Card Management System used in POS process). What is in CHATs does not always show up in EPPIC, not case or county specific. (Example: Three children authorized on one case in CHATs, EPPIC only reads one or two of the children.) Sometimes an entire case may not connect with EPPIC.
- SIDMOD interface is still not working correctly so many data fixes are still outstanding, i.e. name changes or spelling corrections.

## **Correspondence – CHATS generated correspondence**

- Does not always work correctly: (Example: Correspondence could not release on 12-2 (Friday) so it had to be done on the 5<sup>th</sup>.) This inhibits the counties from giving the appropriate time frame of adverse action.
- Correspondence in CHATS is not cross-referenced with provider number and the client case number, by client name. If you have to research whether correspondence was generated for a provider on a given day, it is difficult to find the notice for your client because there are no client case numbers on the listing of provider correspondences. You have to open and close notices until you find the one you're looking for. This is a huge time consumer.
- The correspondence is not automatically printed by the system, so if the worker for some reason does not print the correspondence the notices are not mailed to client and provider. There should be an alert that tells the worker that correspondence has not been printed.

## **Reports – CHATS Reports**

- In addition to the correspondence issue identified, the resources and access to providers' statements needs to be addressed. The resources to individually select and print by case/provider are resource exhaustive.
- No reports are available for making claims adjustments (payment adjustments). The actual payments need to be reviewed.
- Keeping track of allocation and expenditures, application numbers and reasons for application, case closure numbers and reasons for closures, processing time frames, etc. is very difficult because the reports do not supply us with the necessary data.

- The “Reports” section of the Issues lists that there are several tickets related to the RE203 “not generating,” but the problem is much more far-reaching than that.
- In the days of old CHATS, counties relied upon reports 869 “CC Payment Summary by Population & Activity” and to a lesser extent 865 “Payment Summary by Poverty Level” for tracking usage, trends and projecting future costs. We believe that these were to be replaced by New CHATS reports RE203 and RE109, which don’t provide consistent data and are extremely poorly labeled (for example, there aren’t any dates indicating the period being reported on and the data contained within varies when generated for a same period on a different day).

Counties pull the RE301 Caseload Management report and then manually count the number of cases per caseworker. However, this report is also temperamental, it has to be requested on the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last or last day of month or the numbers are incorrect. At a recent CCAP CHATS User Group meeting, it was mentioned that many counties are using the EBT Reconciliation Report and a report from CFMS to determine expenditures. However, these two reports are cumbersome and extracting data is time-consuming.

- The State should provide a summary of known issues. These should be shared with the counties and report when problems are fixed.

#### **CHATS Training (EUT – End User Training)**

- Access to CHATS is tied to new worker training; however, there is not a current schedule for new worker training.

#### **CCAT is not working correctly (Child Care Application Tool)**

- On-line applications stay in CCAT even if the application has been approved/denied.
- We are unable to pull applications from CCAT. A help desk ticket was filed in July 2011 and the issue is still not resolved. The county had to request the client fill out a paper application.
- Many times applications cannot be accessed. Counties get “kicked” out of CHATs. It also closes cases for being out of State when we have a Colorado address and this makes locating clients very difficult. If we can contact them, they must come in to the office and submit a paper application. We recommend that CCAT should be pulled until it works correctly.

## **Miscellaneous**

- None of the forms are in Spanish. .
- Security process is delayed for staff, even for prior staff (2 ½ weeks). Security paperwork is slow, over 30 days in one case, 300 hours of overtime.
- The system requires more information than the legacy system.
- We underestimated how many CCAP cards would need to be re-issued. Clients lose cards.

## **Summary of CHATS Issues December 29, 2011**

### **Background:**

The attached spreadsheet provides a summary of the CHATS Issues as reported to the counties on December 20, 2011 by the State CCCAP staff. Data from two reports have been used to create the summary. They are:

1. CHATS Issues – 12-20-2011
2. CHATS Report Availability

The detailed information is available from both of these reports.

### **Summary:**

As of December 20, 2011, there were 308 documented CHATS Issues in 12 different Tracks. The largest number, 126 or 41% are classified as Open. This indicates that the issue has been assigned to an analyst for further research.

Eighty-six issues, or 28%, have been identified as a “high priority defect” waiting for resolution. There are 42 issues, or 14%, that are defects waiting for information from the Vendor. The CHATS release in which the defect will be addressed has not been identified.

Thirty-six issues, or 12%, require a change to the design of CHATS and that must be approved by the CHATS Change Control Board. The remaining 18 issues, or 5%, are in various stages of research.

CHATS Reporting data is based on a total of 52 reports. Of this number, 26 or 50% are available, 20 or 38% have a defect reported and 6 or 12% are not available for use.

## Spreadsheet Legend

### Track Definitions:

Issue reporting has been grouped by twelve separate “Track” names in CHATS. The Track names refer to the following areas:

- Administration – General Administration related to the CHATS system
- CBC – Criminal Background Checks
- CCAT- Refers to the CHATS Portal (Child Care Application Tool)
- Client/Case – CHATS client and case information
- Correspondence – CHATS generated correspondence
- EPPIC – Card Management System used in POS process
- EUT – End User Training
- Financial – Financial data
- Interfaces – Automated interfaces with other systems
- Provider – Refers to CHATS Providers
- Reports – CHATS reports
- Training – CHATS training

### Ticket Status Definitions:

Ticket Status	Description
AppInProg	Issue described is a defect. The CHATS Release in which the defect will be addressed has been identified.
AppResearch	Issue is being researched.
AWC	Awaiting information from person who put in ticket.
AWCR	Issue is a change to design and must be approved by CHATS Change Control Board prior to work beginning.
AWDT	Data fix needed in order to address the defect
AWP	High Priority Defect
AWV	Awaiting action from Vendor. Issue described is a defect. The CHATS release in which the defect will be addressed has not been identified.
Open	Ticket has been assigned to an analyst for further research.



### **Other CHATs issues:**

- EPPIC: There is a known disconnect between CHATs and EPPIC. What is in CHATs does not always show up in EPPIC, not case or county specific. (Example: Three children authorized on one case in CHATs, EPPIC only reads one or two of the children.) Sometimes an entire case may not connect with EPPIC.
- Correspondence: Does not always work correctly: (Example: Correspondence could not release on 12-2 (Friday) so it had to be done on the 5<sup>th</sup>.) This inhibits the counties from giving the appropriate time frame of adverse action.
- CCAT: Not working correctly
  1. On line applications stay in CCAT even if the application has been approved/denied
  2. Unable to pull applications from CCAT. A help desk ticket was filed in July 2011 and the issue is still not resolved. The county had to request the client fill out a paper application.
  3. Many times applications cannot be accessed. We get “kicked” out of CHATs. It also closes cases for being out of State when we have a Colorado address. Makes locating clients very difficult. If we can contact them, they must come in to the office and submit a paper application. Recommend that CCAT should be pulled until it works correctly.
- Training: Access to CHATS is tied to new worker training; however, there is not a current schedule for new worker training.

Attach: Spreadsheet on CHATS Issues 2011