



ArPath: Advancing Electronic LTSS Systems in Arkansas

Suzanne Bierman

Arkansas Division of Aging & Adult Services (DAAS)

Hilltop Institute Symposium

June 14, 2012



**Arkansas
Department of
Human Services**

**DIVISION OF AGING
& ADULT SERVICES**

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

What is ArPath?



What is ArPath?

- Arkansas's web-based information system for elderly and adult disabled populations served through Medicaid HCBS waiver programs administered by DAAS.
- Includes information gathered during face-to-face assessment process using the interRAI home care tool; utilizes objective criteria to determine medical eligibility for Medicaid funded LTSS.

What is ArPath?

- Universal assessment? Is this assessment system universal? Is it just an assessment system or something broader?
- Populations, settings and scope of information included has become more expansive as the project continues to evolve
- Is it just an assessment? No – LTSS information system containing electronic record from intake to pre-screen to assessment and care planning

What is ArPath?

- Populations and settings – phased implementation process
 - Institutional and community settings?
 - Different LTSS populations – developmental disabilities, behavioral health included?
- ArPath = Arkansas Paranormal Truth Hunters?

Description of ArPath Functionality

- The ArPath system will:
 - Screen potential clients for possible eligibility;
 - Contain an algorithm to determine medical eligibility;
 - Support the collection of documentation and gathering of information from other sources in order to understand the specific needs of the individual;
 - Ensure that clients at risk of nursing facility placement are aware of all potential service options;
 - Document current and potential care contributions from community resources and the individual's informal supports;
 - Develop an automated care plan to identify specific problems and needs

ArPath – Integration with other state systems

- MMIS – claims and provider information
- Answer – eligibility information
- Harmony – AAA SAMS information
- Many existing DAAS databases converted for inclusion in ArPath

ArPath Goals

- DAAS goals are to:
- Capture standardized data and use it for multiple purposes including: screening; eligibility determination; care planning; program and policy development; case mix; quality improvement and quality assurance;
- Make meaningful comparisons (using acuity information) across populations, settings and programs
- Create budget accountability by ensuring that eligibility determinations are correct
- Standardize inter-rater reliability and promote accurate assessments and service plans
- Promote consumer choice
- Reduce administrative burdens
- Promote equity by prioritizing individuals for services when waitlists are present or budgets are limited
- Support efforts to project future service and budget needs

Background Information

- CMS grant (State Profile Tool) funded 2009 consultants' report – “Recommendations to Balance Arkansas’s Long-Term Care System”, which recommended implementing an automated assessment tool
- Other DHS Divisions adopting standardized assessment tools (DD, Behavioral Health)
- Projected Medicaid Shortfalls in 2014 - Medicaid Payment Reform Initiative
 - Objective assessment system and access to data seen as necessary precursors to Arkansas’s implementation of payment improvement initiative

Funding for ArPath

- Impact of recession – Although available net funds declined during the recession, Arkansas was one of only four states in the US that entered fiscal 2011 without an official deficit.
- Projected Medicaid Shortfalls in 2014 - Medicaid Payment Reform Initiative
- Decision made to implement objective automated assessment tool; funding approved by Governor and paid for with Medicaid Stimulus funding and MFP Rebalancing funds; expected gross costs of \$1.5 million
- RFQ process to select software vendor – CH Mack selected – MedCompass software
- Universal assessment initiative will be implemented for Medicaid funded HCBS waiver programs (ElderChoices, AAPD, Assisted Living, and consumer directed personal care) by January 2013

Collaborating with Stakeholders

- Arkansas's development process has primarily focused on DHS stakeholders
 - A cross-divisional work group was established; this group crosswalked current assessments and identified all elements necessary to meet waiver and eligibility requirements
 - Contractors helped the state identify existing national uniform assessment tools that might meet the state's needs with some state-specific modifications (iHC selected)
 - DAAS field staff will be involved in testing of the tool
- Providers – Balancing Advisory Group; AAAs involved in efforts to integrate ArPath with SAMS data collected through Harmony software;
- Public – DAAS hosted ArPath kick-off event in August of 2011 to introduce a broader group of outside stakeholders to the system
LTC payment reform work-group to begin meeting later this year

Implementation Process

- Where are we? Beginning, middle or fully implemented?
 - Middle stage:
 - Assessment tool selected and procurement process completed;
 - Almost done working through business requirements with software vendor;
 - Medical eligibility algorithm completed;
 - Waiver amendments being finalized and will be submitted to CMS this month;
 - Changes to provider manuals still need to be promulgated;
 - ArPath training scheduled for November and December;
 - Anticipated Go Live Date of January 7, 2013

Implementation Challenges

- Organizational structure and fragmentation within DHS – different divisions with different priorities have responsibility for LTSS
- Agreement on scope of the project and purposes for which this information will be used
- Timely access to data needed to inform creation of algorithms (eligibility, payment)

Next Steps

- Training and testing for Phase I (HCBS) roll-out
GoLive Date of January 2013
- Review of payment algorithm analysis and payment reform decisions
- In Phase II of implementation, ArPath will be rolled out to include nursing facilities
 - Many policy decisions remain; payment improvement initiatives on LTSS to begin this summer, but ArPath system viewed as necessary precursor for these efforts

Lessons Learned

- Semantics matter! Be careful about initial nomenclature used to describe system
- Timeframes are likely to shift
- Good technical assistance is important
- Consider and make important policy decisions prior to implementing system
- Remember the Arkansas Paranormal Truth Hunters – research the name of your system before committing to it!

Questions or more information?

Suzanne Bierman

Data & Policy Analyst

Arkansas Department of Human Services

Division of Aging & Adult Services

501.320.6003

suzanne.bierman@arkansas.gov