Innovations in Technology and Project Management Practices That Can Improve Human Services

Purpose

Provide the industry perspective on realizing the promise of technology for presentation at a Conference on Modernizing Information Systems for Human Services. The paper describes technology innovations, the challenges of implementing innovations, and a framework for successful human services technology project implementation.

Background

The Human Services Information Technology Advisory Group (HSITAG) was founded in 1993 by a small group of private companies to serve as a collaborative source of knowledge, educational outreach, advice, and guidance about modern management methods and information technology to improve the delivery of human services programs. In 1997, HSITAG was formalized under the state and local government program of the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA). The current objectives of the group are legislation, communication, and partnerships.

Introduction

Representing a diverse cross-section of Information Technology (IT) companies, HSITAG can knowledgeably suggest technologies that will facilitate the modernization of information systems for human services. This paper presents a number of technology innovations that hold promise for improving human services delivery. It also describes some of the barriers that state and local jurisdictions must overcome to fully realize the promise of improvements that can come with technology. This document endorses a set of best practices for technology project management as one solution to help state and local jurisdictions capitalize on technology innovations.

HSITAG believes that information technology is a tool for the provision of human services—not a goal in itself. Keeping this in mind, HSITAG offers six

recommendations to improve the capacity of IT to modernize human services
programs:

1. Define and validate program delivery objectives and use them to drive IT
   decisions—not the other way around!
2. Increase the probability of project success through a balanced foundation
   of risk and responsibility—borne jointly by public-private partnership.
3. Encourage creative programs and IT implementations by removing real and
   perceived funding and policy barriers and limitations.
4. Create specific authority, flexibility, and incentives for integrated program
   delivery demonstrations.
5. Form a virtual academy for project management training and certification
   for the managers responsible for human services IT implementations.
6. Convene a federal task force to evaluate and implement the
   recommendations contained in the GAO report.

Innovations in Technology

A number of technology innovations offer significant opportunities for progress in
human services delivery. However, funding, policy, and legal constraints may hamper
technology use and full realization of possible improvements.

Innovation: Database Technology

The General Accounting Office (GAO) report entitled *Welfare Reform: Improving
State Automated Systems Requires Coordinated Federal Effort* (GAO/HEHS-00-48,
Apr. 2000) cites several noteworthy examples of state projects seeking to expand their
ability to obtain and analyze data from multiple sources.

For example, some states are recognizing that database technology provides around-
the-clock performance with increased speed and scalability. Gateway technologies
can make access to data on individual recipients, stored in multiple systems, more
readily available. With the advent of graphical user interfaces, the Internet, and the
Web, information now includes rich, unstructured data types—everything from

graphic images, such as photographs, to audio and video, including sound clips and movies. Geo-coding and mapping functionality have become routine tools.

Continued improvements and lower costs per byte of information have allowed data marts, data warehouses, and various decision support systems to grow exponentially, supporting outcome reporting without impacting transactional processing. "Slicing and dicing" data allows researchers to examine new patterns of information that are discovered. Data query tools enable users to create immediate, custom reports at their desks.

Database technology benefits human service delivery by providing a more complete picture of clients, their families, and their needs. The technology allows us to view, utilize, and profit from the wide variety of information that already exists but resides in separate applications. It facilitates the agencies' ability to make more informed decisions about recipients and helps us to run programs that benefit the most recipients in the most efficient manner possible.

Challenge

Despite the possibilities for better service delivery through the use of these database technology advances, data ownership issues may block these service improvement opportunities. Here is just one common example: the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) front-line worker has one address and the Child Support Enforcement worker has another for the same client. Both workers report to agencies that are liable for ensuring that benefits and services are delivered to the right location. Which address should be considered correct? Which worker is allowed to update the address?

In many instances like this one, technology capabilities far exceed the difficult territorial and political decisions on inter-jurisdictional use of the data. The issue is not just who owns the data—it also concerns the wider confidentiality and security of the data and case information.

Innovation: Security and Privacy Technologies

The most recent and promising advances in protecting confidential information can secure data at rest (while in the database) and in transit (over the network). It is now common to use data encryption for all traffic to and from a database. There is new granularity of security by combining the data with a label that identifies the sensitivity of the data and the groups of users who can view that data. Firewalls protect perimeter access. Authentication and single sign-ons validate authorized participants.

The benefit of improved security and privacy technology is an improved control of electronic access and dissemination of data. The tools exist to support the mandate to secure the confidential information about our clients while we share authorized access.

Challenge

Unfortunately, some legal requirements obstruct efficient uses of data sharing technology capabilities. There is already wide-scale recognition that the most difficult parts of complying and implementing the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) will be in addressing the non-technology issues. Examples of non-technology issues include: taking inventory of Protected Health Information; identifying all users and creating definitions and groups of users; matching user groups to protected information; creating policy and procedures for both privacy and security.

Another issue is data access for contractors who are working as agents of the state. Should they be granted the same legal access to records and other data as their state counterparts? Private sector staff have data processing and outsourced management responsibilities with various aspects of child support and other human services data, but some program records and data have restrictions that can impede state and local IT modernization efficiency and flexibility.

Innovation: Portal and Server Technology

There are new tools to build dynamic web sites and applications. Non-technical staff can create personalized portals. These tools provide greater flexibility of mixing and matching technologies. One example is Extensible Markup Language (XML), which can define a complete, platform-independent and system-independent environment for the authoring and delivery of information resources across the web. Platform and system independence are the mechanisms for expanding links among existing automated systems. These and other technology improvements further enhance the integration of services.

Challenge

Anecdotal evidence and the lack of progress indicate that funding structures have impeded headway in integrating service delivery. Which agency's funds pay for the front-end portal? Whose staff does the work? Who decides on the design? The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) summarizes the problem succinctly in its March 2001 *Information Technology Reforms for Human Services* paper (an addendum to its earlier *Crossroads: New Directions in Social Policy* report). "Program-based federal funding streams inhibit coordination among Federal agencies, contribute to delays in obtaining federal approvals, confuse the states about Federal requirements, and, ultimately, inhibit the states' ability to create systems that support integrated services to clients."

A second problem is the set of issues around data ownership, security, and privacy; these issues must be resolved so that a portal may support the flow of information to and from legacy systems. Missed opportunities for cross-agency data and functionality sharing include limited Medicaid functionality in eligibility systems and juvenile justice programs with child welfare systems.

Innovation: Internet Technology

The Web has made it possible to shift the focus of government programs away from the government and to the people and providers. The Web enables broader access

across agencies and systems. It supports even more outreach into the community as the costs continue to decline. It enables client and caregiver self-service. Business intelligence applications can recognize and track constituent requests, improving the quality of service.

There are many advantages to "jumping into the Web." Web-based technology supports smaller, component-based projects. Smaller components allow lower risk and lower cost investments. The publicity of the potential of the Web may be a driving factor in current technology decisions.

Challenge

The challenge is the heightened expectations of the capacity of the Internet to transform government services. In policy areas that involve less sensitive personal information or have more straightforward services to deliver, such service transformations are more easily achieved. In human services, with its many delivery mechanisms, governance structures, and deep impacts on the lives of citizens, the expectations for easy transformation via the Internet may not easily be met.

States are realizing only limited use of Internet or Intranet technology because of data ownership, data security, and cross-agency funding issues. But perhaps even more daunting are the project management issues. The April 2000 GAO report does an excellent job of reporting the increased challenge of planning and implementing systems development and modifications under the added complexity of working with multiple partners and stakeholders. Implementing technology is getting easier while non-technology issues are becoming more difficult.

The technologies described above are a sampling of the many that exist to support and improve the delivery of human services. In order to maximize the affect of these technologies, a supportive framework, as described below, must be established.

Project Management Practices

When asked why so many large projects have not satisfied state staff, the private sector community responds in many ways. One response is to acknowledge that information technology is merely the enabler. Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors that increase the likelihood of success.

Procurement Process Effects

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is the foundation for the partnership between the government agency, its stakeholders and the private sector. To provide a sound basis for the resulting project, the procurement should be considered as part of the project itself.

For example, communication must begin before the RFP is released. Doing so allows the private sector to propose more creative and more compliant solutions for lower cost. However, in an attempt to meet the public sector value of fair competition, communication between procurement officials and eligible vendors is often deeply restricted. Such restriction may limit the ability of the private sector community to adequately assess customer needs and propose an appropriate solution. This dearth of information ultimately limits competition to "insiders," thus preventing an open and fair procurement process.

Even with the best of communication channels, good responses and quality competition is dependent on having a reasonable amount of time to respond to the procurement and states providing full access to information before, during, and after the procurement.

It is important for public sector decision-makers to understand the factors that drive IT costs within the private sector. Delays cost money since industry cannot afford to keep personnel unassigned, waiting for a project to begin or decisions to be made. Timeframes that are inflexible while scope expands, increase costs. Holdbacks and penalties are added into the price. Finally, as stated above, increased risk means increased cost.

APHSA has a number of proposals for information technology procurement process reforms. Many of them are worthy of study. The Advanced Planning Document (APD) process is currently undergoing review at the federal level. These are issues that bear further examination.

Managing Expectations

Managing expectations is a shared responsibility among all of the project stakeholders. A pervasive problem that is experienced throughout information technology settings has been over-promising what a specific technology or solution can accomplish. Various factions may feed desires to showcase the latest "cutting-edge" technology. The private sector and the government purchasers have a mutual responsibility to recommend realistic timeframes, to acknowledge real and hidden costs, and to help predict the ramifications of a new IT implementation.

Cultural Change Management

System buy-in and acceptance are potential barriers to realizing the promise of technology implementations. There is an important distinction between a "training" issue and an "acceptance" issue. A system can incorporate the full set of state and federal requirements, but if the front-line workers will not accept and use the system, the system has failed. (In the case of child support enforcement certification standards, the system does not meet the criteria if the workers do not effectively use the system.) In preparing for the implementation of a new system, management must anticipate the cultural barriers and appoint an entity with the responsibility to lead and manage the myriad of cultural challenges associated with implementing large-scale mission and operations changes. Agency management should also assess the impact of solutions designed to support the business practices of selected, but not all, of the counties, jurisdictions, or local delivery organizations. For example, business process assumptions for a few large counties may not easily meet the business process needs of the small ones.

Communications

Many project management experts agree that communication is a key attribute for handling cultural change. Further, communication is a key ingredient for successful

projects. The communications component should be initiated before the procurement process begins and continue through the implementation stage. The communications plan should include the contractor's communication to its state counterparts and state communications throughout the organization and the stakeholders and back to the contractor. During the lifespan of the project, both the contractor and state should share their challenges and suggestions. Open communication is more likely to help work out any unforeseen glitches. Project partners must resist the temptation to hide schedule slippage, lack of resources, and the like. Without open channels of communication, coordination among stakeholders is impossible.

Risks and Responsibilities

Large information technology projects a**r**e inherently risky. The problems and failures of many projects are well documented, including delays, cost overruns, and terminations of projects, in spite of federal mandates and requirements. Front-page media coverage of the problems surrounding human services information technology is all too common.

States attempt to lower their own risk by demanding that greater risk exposure and responsibility be borne by private sector contractors. Unlimited liability, liquidated damages, and other financial penalties, while designed to ensure contractor compliance with deadlines and contractual requirements, have oftentimes resulted in unintended consequences. For example:

- If an agency takes the stance that the contractor is solely responsible for all aspects of a project, state stakeholders may be less involved and committed to the project, making it less likely to succeed.
- Potential financial penalties increase information technology costs because contractors must add these factors into their cost calculations.
- Immeasurable and inflexible terms and conditions in state RFPs and contracts limit competition because corporate counsels may preclude some larger or more experienced companies from bidding.

There are many productive methods to manage risk, most of them based on experience and methodology. Choosing companies that have a demonstrated capacity to control costs and risks is one method. Selecting for evidence of high-quality project management is another.

Project Management Expertise

The April 2000 GAO report found that states reported difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified IT staff. HSITAG believes that observation applies as well to project management staff. HSITAG membership report situations in which states have chosen proven program managers but failed to provide training to transition those individuals to successful project managers. Similarly, sometimes IT project managers are assigned programmatic implementations with limited familiarity with the target program agency or sufficient autonomy to drive decisions. An even more difficult scenario is when project responsibility is divided between program and IT divisions. HSITAG usually suggests that the program agency retain project responsibility, but augmented with training and certification for project management. The benefits of examining and improving project management expertise is to increase the likelihood of success in all automation projects, but especially those with the additional challenges and barriers that face human services agencies.

HSITAG Recommendations

Given the technology innovation opportunities and the state and local policy and funding contraints, and as a way of helping to create partnerships for modernizing human services systems, HSITAG has prepared the following recommendations derived from its Human Services Information Technology Statement of Principles.

1. **Define and validate program delivery objectives to drive IT decisions—not the other way around!**

This recommendation is echoed by many other entities, including GAO and APHSA. It is the natural result of the technology discussion above—that IT is an enabler, not a goal.

HSITAG believes that the criteria for success should be outcomes. These outcomes should be focused on the client and on self-sufficiency. Data is used to report on outcomes—and shared data is the key. Once a state or jurisdiction has defined the outcomes that it wants to achieve, it should define the business processes needed and evaluate resource capabilities. The last step is to decide on the IT solution that best fits.

Communicating desired outcomes with the IT private sector community is the mechanism for improving creativity in recommending technology solutions.

2. **Increase the probability of project success through a balanced foundation of risk and responsibility.**

   Shared project ownership, shared risk, and shared rewards are keys to project success. The vendor and customer must work as partners, not adversaries. Issues and problems should be dealt with quickly and openly. The human service program cannot succeed at the expense of the contractor. Similarly, the contractor's marred reputation cannot be carried forward to new customers.

3. **Encourage creative program and IT implementation by removing real and perceived funding and policy barriers and limitations.**

   It may seem self-serving for the private sector to address funding issues, but unfunded mandates present a problem to everyone. Historically, IT advances have been most dramatic during periods of enhanced federal funding. HSITAG recognizes the political peril for a state to spend "welfare" money on "program administration" or IT purposes, even when the return on investment can be cost justified.

HSITAG agrees with other organizations' recommendations that Congress should take steps to be sure program attributes, like eligibility and program funding, do not inhibit cross agency business initiatives that are supported by IT. There is a recognition that many years of complicated and sometimes conflicting legislation will be difficult to unravel.

4. **Create specific authority, flexibility, and incentives for integrated program delivery demonstrations.**

   Reward and support initiatives that address cross-agency funding and program requirement challenges. There are numerous opportunities for creative data sharing and data comparison, like between Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) case data and mental health, mental retardation information. Using front-end case management systems, web-enabled front-end portals and/or data warehouses can provide access to, and extend the life of, aging mainframe systems.

5. **Form a virtual academy for project management training and certification for human services IT implementations.**

   Rigorous project management methodologies are a critical component of successful IT implementations. However, at the state and local level of government, responsibility for ensuring the consistent application of best practices in project management is decentralized and fragmented across both the government and vendor communities.

   Government managers may be called upon to manage these implementation projects without the benefit of training in the skills necessary to be successful. As these projects grow to span multiple programs and increase in complexity, proven methods for promoting regular communication among all project stakeholders, for predicting system impacts and for defining and achieving results should be employed and leveraged.

Both the public and private sectors have acknowledged the need for an increased focus on project management. By combining association, foundation, public, and private resources to form a "virtual academy," project management certification standards and a clearinghouse for project management courses and practices could be institutionalized.

6. **Convene a federal task force to evaluate and implement GAO and Rockefeller Institute recommendations.**

Various organizations have been addressing the challenges discussed in this paper. They include the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government; the Annie E. Casey Foundation; the National Governors' Association; the American Public Human Services Association; the Information Technology Association of America; the Project Management Institute; the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and Labor; and various program area associations like the Child Welfare League and the National Child Support Enforcement Association. All have, in similar ways, recommended that steps be taken to modernize information technology for human services

HSITAG has previously endorsed the creation of a federal task force on human services information technology as recommended by GAO in its April 2000 Report entitled *Welfare Reform: Improving State Automated Systems Requires Coordinated Effort.*

The HSITAG also recommends that the federal task force identify and develop implementation plans for federal actions that would facilitate state efforts to improve human services delivery and program outcomes for low-income individuals and families though the use of information technology, including those recommendations resulting from the "Conference on Modernizing Information Systems for Human Services."

HSITAG further recommends that the federal task force include representation from the private sector and pledges to support the effort with its members' experience and commitment.

The Authors

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Suzanne Scherr, Industry Solutions Executive, is currently responsible for EDS' portfolio of information solutions offered to government customers worldwide. In this role, she defines and directs the development of new product and service offerings and fosters delivery alliances and partnerships. The majority of her 30-year career, both here and in the former Yugoslavia, has focused on public policy reform and marketing to governments. During her eleven years at EDS, Suzanne managed the department responsible for planning and research, competitive analysis and marketing to the U.S. Federal government, determined merger and acquisition strategies and directed the Family and Employment Services marketing group. She also held management positions at Maximus and AMS and has been a consultant to the nonprofit community and to numerous public agencies addressing health care or welfare reform. Suzanne recently co-authored *Year 2000 State and Local Government Contracting Manual*, published by Harcourt.

Bard Shollenberger joined Lockheed Martin IMS' Children and Family Services (CFS) in March, 1993 as Director of Government Relations. In this capacity, Bard works with the United States Congress, federal agencies, and state and local governments on policy and legislation affecting the nation's children and their families including child support enforcement, electronic benefit programs, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, child care, and food assistance. Prior to joining Lockheed Martin IMS, Bard served as the Director of Government Affairs with the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), the national association of state human service agencies. Bard has also served as Policy Analyst on Domestic Hunger policy and issues at Bread for the World, a national Christian anti-hunger organization; Director of the Hunger Action Division of the Community Nutrition Institute; and Director of Food and Nutrition Programs of the South Central Pennsylvania Community Action Agency.

Bob Stauffer has been the chair of the ITAA/HSITAG from its inception in 1993 through the present. Since October 1999, he has been the National Business Development Manager for Deloitte Consulting's Health and Human Services (HHS) Practice. Bob is responsible for the development and expansion of the Deloitte Consulting HHS practice. Prior to joining Deloitte, Bob was a Vice President for EDS where he held a similar position from July 1992 through September 1999. Prior to joining the private sector Bob worked in the Federal Government for 28 years. The majority of his Federal career was spent at the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families where he was responsible for the review and approval of the States' FAMIS (integrated eligibility systems), child welfare, and other program areas.

The Information Technology Association of America's

Human Service Information Technology Advisory Group

The Human Services Information Technology Advisory Group (HSITAG) was founded in 1993 by a small group of private companies interested in joining together to serve as a collaborative source of knowledge, educational outreach, advice, and guidance about modern management methods and information technology to improve the delivery of human services programs. In 1997, HSITAG formalized itself and its mission when it became part of the Enterprise Solutions Division's state and local government program at the Information Technology Association of America.

HSITAG members include senior executives from more than 25 of the nation's leading private sector companies working with public human services programs at all levels of government—federal, state, and local. HSITAG provides a unique private-sector perspective and vision regarding public sector human service issues including program management, service delivery and performance; and improved outcomes for program participants.

HSITAG partners with a number of federal departments and agencies including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (formerly the Health Care Financing Administration); U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service; and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. HSITAG also collaborates with organizations representing state government including the American Public Human Services Association and its affiliated human services groups; the National Governors' Association; the National Conference of State Legislatures; and the Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies. The group monitors

legislative trends in Congress and works to educate Members of Congress and relevant congressional committee staff on human services policy and issues.

Members find HSITAG an invaluable resource for interaction with government officials at all levels, as a mechanism to exchange viewpoints on human services issues, and for longer-range issues and policy development. HSITAG is also used as a resource by government and non-profit organizations to provide an IT industry perspective on panels and at conferences. Membership is open to all ITAA Enterprise Solution Division members. The group usually meets on the last Friday of each month in the Washington, D.C. area.

ITAA consists of 11,000 direct and affiliate members throughout the United States which produce products and services in the IT industry. The association plays a leading role in public policy issues of concern to the IT industry, including taxes and finance policy, intellectual property, telecommunications law, encryption, critical infrastructure protection, securities litigation reform, and human resources policy. ITAA members range from the smallest IT start-ups to industry leaders in the software, services, systems integration, telecommunications, Internet, and computer consulting fields. Learn more about ITAA and its positions on its web site at http://www.itaa.org.

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The Information Technology Association of America

Human Service Information Technology Advisory Group

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Services Provided

Planning—including re-engineering, requirements analysis, Advance Planning Documents, Requests for Proposals, and contract issues.

Independent Verification and Validation

Project Management

Application Development—including design, development, and implementation.

Training

Change Management

Hardware and Software

Operations

Maintenance

Program Services—including MMIS, Electronic Benefit Transfer, Data Center, Child Support Services such as payment processing, Workforce programs, Data Broker, Health Care enrollment, etc.

Information Technology Association of America
Human Services Information Technology Advisory Group

Human Services Information Technology Statement of Principles

In December 1994, the Human Services Information Technology Advisory Group formally adopted a statement on Welfare Reform Information Systems Principles. Similarly, HSITAG provides this statement in preparation for the reauthorization of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) in the 107th Congress.

The most ambitious and comprehensive reform of the nation's welfare programs since their inception began with the passage of PRWORA in 1996 and continues as the 107th Congress works to reauthorize the legislation. Information technology can be strategic to the continued success of PRWORA by improving the delivery of human services programs and to better linking and integrating services for low-income individuals and families.

As clients move toward self-sufficiency, agencies need accurate information, not only about clients but also about available resources and appropriate modes of applying them, about policy and program regulations, and to measure program outcomes and guide ongoing performance evaluations. Human services information technology systems and services, including those based on Internet and other emerging technologies, can: reduce waste; automate eligibility rules; minimize cumbersome paperwork and bureaucracy; improve service to clients; and improve program integrity. Good information technology systems and services should not merely computerize existing, antiquated practices, they should enable the design of new procedures in order to speed, integrate, and streamline services delivery, while freeing human service professionals to work with people, not paper.

A holistic approach to data collection and reporting should help prevent agencies from duplicating tasks. The goal should be a common data format for many programs -which could share information collected from the client once, not many times. Information technology should enable agencies to track and report program outcomes as well as improve service delivery and program evaluation.

There are many barriers to information technology modernization that impede the sound development and implementation of human services information technology services and systems: inadequate and segregated funding, arbitrary funding caps, onerous state contractual terms and conditions, inexperience and lack of training for state project managers, organizational cultural change issues, and the many stakeholders for large projects that may have differing needs and agendas.

Any effective policy approach to the next phase of welfare reform must reflect the following principles:

> States should define the outcomes that they want to achieve in each human service program and across programs and agencies before defining the business procedures needed to achieve those outcomes. They should then, and only then, determine the information technology needed to support the service delivery, management and evaluation of those outcomes and business processes. Outcomes should be the criteria both for the federal oversight and for the plans that States need to submit before implementing new systems.

> Federal welfare reform legislation and policies should encourage state innovation including the utilization of Internet and other emerging technologies. The Federal government should set minimum requirements based on outcomes for information systems, not detailed mandates, then approve State proposals that comply. States can tailor programs to meet their special needs.

The US Congress and federal agencies should support states by convening a federal task force, as recommended by GAO, led by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and including all human services stakeholders including private sector companies to identify and develop implementation plans for federal actions that would facilitate state's efforts to improve their information technology systems that serve low-income families. The federal task force should consider the following issues:

- o Addressing security and privacy issues, supporting recent technology advantages like the Internet and the need for greater flexibility to enable service provided by private, non-profit and faith-based agencies and their access to data.

- o Encouraging balanced risk and increased cooperation between the states and the private sector service providers, realizing that one-sided contractual terms increase cost without increasing the likelihood of success.

- o Supporting the organizational cultural change, project management techniques, training and implementation that new systems entail.

- o Establishing and providing continued leadership at the federal level to address financial barriers to sound human services information technology such as cost allocation, funding, and financial and programmatic stovepipes.

- o Recommending adequate funding and incentives to support the re-engineering, planning, design, and development of new human services information technology systems.

- o Endorsing specific program authority and funding for demonstration programs for developing and implementing innovated projects cross-program eligibility, integration and operation systems.

States must have adequate time and phased-in funding cycles to develop and implement human services information technology systems. Large-scale systems changes require intricate planning, development and implementation phases that must be acknowledged and supported up front.

Information technology should enable, and not hinder, human service agencies to deliver services to clients more efficiently and economically.

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