

Case Study:

Streamlining Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part B ADAP Eligibility: Moving to 12-month Self Attestation in Illinois

The Challenge

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau's (HAB) issued Policy Clarification Notice (PCN) 21-02, *Determining Client Eligibility & Payor of Last Resort in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program* in 2021. Prior to this date, the Illinois Department of Public Health required clients to complete a full eligibility application for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) services every six months. Illinois was already using Provide Enterprise as their centralized data system where RWHAP Parts A, Part B, and Part B AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), and other partners across the state could complete and track electronic eligibility assessments. However, the paperwork required to complete an application was still heavily fragmented. Clients were required to complete and sign separate forms for different RWHAP Parts, a process that involved redundant data entry and numerous required signatures and dates, creating a significant administrative burden for clients, providers, and health department staff. If an eligibility application was submitted with one form missing, the application could not move forward. This often resulted in weeks of delay, as clients were required to return in person to sign the form.

Goals and Key Strategies

After HRSA HAB issued PCN 21-02, Illinois RWHAP Part B and Part B ADAP leadership focused on streamlining the eligibility process within Provide Enterprise to consolidate the application into a single "program agreement form," which had fewer pages and required only one signature. After eligibility was initially determined, they extended the eligibility confirmation to 12 months and introduced self-attestation for confirmation for those at the 12-month mark who did not have any changes to their information. This was achieved via the following strategies:

- **Extended the eligibility confirmation timeline to a 12-month full eligibility assessment and aligned confirmation cycle with clients' birth months.**

In May 2023, the Illinois Department of Public Health implemented a 12-month full eligibility assessment in alignment with PCN 21-02 that moved eligibility from a six-month to 12-month cycle. The rollout updating staff of the new 12-month system and paperwork consolidation included a series of webinars conducted in collaboration with

AIDS Foundation Chicago and the Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center (MAETC), a RWHAP Part F recipient, offered during and after business hours to maximize participation. Webinars were made available live and recorded to ensure broad access and awareness of the upcoming changes. Administrators partnered with MATEC (to support logistics of hosting the training and keeping track of outreach. Training content was developed internally to provide one-on-one technical assistance for department staff; sessions tailored for community-based organizations and other agencies; and open sessions specifically for the clients they serve, allowing users to walk through the product and ask questions. Provide Enterprise, the state's vendor that housed all client data and the new combined program agreement form, also had data systems teams who were engaged to support the transition. Feedback from staff who assess and determine RWHAP eligibility informed additional refinements to improve usability and streamline the process for end users. The Illinois Department of Public Health held multiple internal brainstorming sessions and meetings with internal and external data managers to support implementation. The changes to eligibility were also reflected in the web user account, which is the online platform for eligibility determination offered to clients.

- **Implemented a 12-month self-attestation following the completion of the full assessment period.**

Following determination of initial eligibility, Illinois Department of Public Health implemented a 12-month self-attestation process, as permitted under PCN 21-02. This approach allowed clients or their case managers to complete self-attestation confirming that no changes have occurred in their eligibility information through a single, consolidated form at the 12-month mark. Similarly, when updates are required for only one component of eligibility, clients can submit a single form, significantly reducing administrative time and effort. After the client self-attests at the 12-month mark, they are required to confirm their eligibility in its entirety, including providing all relevant documentation, the next time their eligibility is due.

- **Aligned eligibility cycles with clients' birth months for easier tracking.**

Illinois Department of Public Health aligned eligibility cycles with clients' birth months to simplify tracking and improve client recall. To transition to this system, eligibility periods were temporarily adjusted, ranging from nine to 18 months, to synchronize renewal dates with each client's birth month. This alignment made it easier for clients to remember when to complete their eligibility confirmations. The department also provided visual charts and guidance materials to help clients and providers understand the new cycle structure.

Outcomes

Today, Illinois RWHAP Part B and Part B ADAP are seamlessly integrated, sharing both the same eligibility cycle timeline and combined application. Staff have reported that streamlining eligibility through the processes outlined above has significantly reduced application processing times and eliminated massive amounts of redundant data entry, with a program administrator noting that the workload for staff was reduced by half. Simplified documentation requirements have minimized errors and incomplete submissions. As a result, many applications now receive same-day approval, with most processed within 24 hours, ensuring that clients obtain their medications promptly once a valid prescription is available.

Coordination & Integration

The Illinois Department of Public Health has a data sharing agreement with consortia divided into eight specific regions, each with a regional lead agency such as an AIDS Foundation of Chicago or clinic. RWHAP Part A agencies that are within the regions covered by the lead agency can have access to a read-only account within Provide Enterprise if they submit a formal request to the state. Some RWHAP Part A recipients have full access and are not read-only if the lead agency funds them using both PRWHAP Parts A and Part B funds. Furthermore, efforts are underway to explore integration with RWHAP Parts C and Part D through shared data systems to enhance coordination and streamline client services.

Lessons Learned

Aligning eligibility renewal dates with clients' birth months established a simple and memorable system that makes the process easier to navigate. Successful implementation depends on strong communication and early engagement to ensure clients and partners are adequately prepared for the transition. Increasing opportunities for in-person meetings between Illinois Department of Public Health staff and clients and other partners rather than relying solely on virtual meetings would further enhance decision-making and collaboration. These in-person sessions created space for real-time feedback, system adjustments, and interactive participation through Q&A and community engagement. Communication efforts were essential, as some clients continued to submit applications every six months out of habit.

Next Steps

The next phase will pilot cross-RWHAP Part eligibility streamlining and explore data sharing agreements with other Illinois state agencies, such as the Department of Revenue, to automate income verification and further simplify the eligibility process. This phase will aim to enhance the coordination of eligibility systems across RWHAP Parts to improve efficiency and reduce administrative burden.