

Streamlining Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part B/ADAP Eligibility

Introducing a Universal Application in Nevada

The Challenge

Prior to 2014, Nevada Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) case managers had to navigate two separate CAREWare databases for RWHAP Parts A and B. Between 2013 and 2014, leaders from RWHAP Part A, Part B, and Part B AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) merged separate CAREWare databases into one system, but information was still confined to distinct sections of the database. For example, a user in the RWHAP Part A section could not see information in the RWHAP Part B section unless they were granted access; even then, they would have to navigate separate logins and compartmentalized information. Furthermore, while RWHAP Part B ADAP information was technically entered into the Part B database, it required case managers to complete a third set of paper forms and then ensure the proper electronic fields were selected. This meant that RWHAP Part A, Part B, and Part B ADAP each required clients to submit a separate application. This resulted in excessive paperwork for case managers and confusion for clients about where and when to apply.

Goals and Key Strategies

Nevada began a multi-year evolution to reduce client paperwork and administrative duplication while creating a seamless referral and eligibility process between RWHAP Parts A and B and Part B ADAP. These goals were informed by feedback from clients and providers, emphasizing the importance of simplicity and efficiency, and achieved by the following strategies:

- **Introduced a single, universal application for all RWHAP Parts.**

The universal application was launched in 2017 by merging the RWHAP Part A and Part B application process into a single customized web interface within the CAREWare database. This interface is powered by RWISE (Ryan White Integrated Statewide Eligibility), a secure web-based system developed by TriYoung that connects directly to Nevada's centralized, statewide CAREWare database. By incorporating the Nevada Medication Assistance Program (Nevada's Part B ADAP) into this system, the state effectively eliminated ADAP as a separate application, allowing medication eligibility to be determined automatically through the same universal screening for all coverage plans.

Between 2018 and 2019, RWHAP subrecipients, including clinical providers from RWHAP Part C and Part D, transitioned into the common CAREWare system, allowing real-time data visibility across the entire state. RWISE manages the entire client eligibility process

by providing a single, secure portal where all eligibility staff can enter data and upload documents. This allows all RWHAP Parts in Nevada (A, B, C, D, and ADAP) to standardize their workflow and ensure everyone is using the same forms and criteria. For clients, this streamlines the application process regardless of which part of the program they are applying. For subrecipients, it reduces the administrative burden of managing multiple funding eligibility procedures since compliance requirements are now the same for all. This simplifies continuous quality improvement processes, internal chart reviews, audits, and management of site visits and monitoring from funders.

- **Established monthly meetings and ongoing communication between RWHAP Parts A and B/Part B ADAP eligibility teams**

Both RWHAP Parts A and Part B have dedicated eligibility teams. These teams have monthly meetings to share updates from both programs, discuss challenges that have been identified, and develop solutions. These meetings also help the RWHAP Part A and B teams coordinate their eligibility work and ensure they interpret the universal eligibility policies in a consistent way. Communication is not limited to those meetings and regular email exchange was encouraged between teams.

- **Worked closely with software developers.**

Project Director engagement from RWHAP Parts A and B with jProg (CAREWare developer) and TriYoung (RWISE developer) ensured that the merging and migration of client records was done expeditiously and accurately. A major step in accomplishing the integration was ensuring that both RWHAP Parts established their own aligned contracts with jProg and TriYoung to bring the previously separated databases onto the same system. It also helped ensure the appropriate levels of visibility for the merged data were set correctly by the software's user types and the privileges granted to those users. RWHAP Part A and B leadership, primarily the program administrators, in Nevada found that if engagement with the software developer is an option, it can be beneficial and reduce burden on RWHAP staff that might be engaged in other ongoing work or projects.

- **Scheduled biannual training on eligibility, Federal Poverty Level (FPL) requirements, and RWISE use.**

Training is a joint venture between RWHAP Part A and Part B to discuss aligning eligibility requirements and demonstrating how to use the RWISE system.

Outcomes

The integration of the CAREWare database improved referral response times within 14 days from 50% to 80% and enabled consistent access to client eligibility data across agencies and RWHAP Parts, enhanced accuracy, and strengthened communication between recipients and subrecipients.

Coordination & Integration

Nevada established a shared CAREWare database for RWHAP Parts A and B, with partial access extended to RWHAP Parts C and D. It took collaboration and planning to set up a data sharing agreement between RWHAP Parts A and B. While the RWHAP Parts A and B partners initially planned to start this process in 2020, they paused due to staff turnover and shifting needs in 2020-2022. As the process resumed in 2023, a major consideration for the agreement was determining how the state and county would share the financial responsibility for their software vendors, jProg and TriYoung. To solve this, their final data sharing agreement maps out exactly which parts of the system and contracts RWHAP Part A pays for and which parts RWHAP Part B pays for, intentionally avoiding locking in specific dollar amounts. Special considerations were also needed as not all information could be shared between the two. For instance, RWHAP Part B receives Medicaid eligibility information for ADAP purposes which couldn't be shared with RWHAP Part A, so restrictions had to be added to RWISE access to ensure it was visible only to authorized individuals.

In addition, all RWHAP Parts collaborated to develop a universal Nevada RWHAP application, creating a more streamlined and coordinated system for clients and providers. This application is currently available as a paper form or a fillable PDF. While application portal options may be explored in the future, Nevada staff emphasize that they will always retain a paper option to accommodate clients who do not have access to computers, or who lack the technical ability to use them.

Lessons Learned

As Nevada developed their unified application, they learned that consistent communication with partners, a shared commitment to project completion, and sustained patience were key to programmatic success, especially given the complex challenges that can arise due to long project timelines. This mutual understanding enabled both RWHAP Part A, and Part B, and Part B ADAP to effectively navigate conflicts and technical challenges encountered during the CAREWare system integration and introduction of the RWISE interface. Each side sharing the burden and being honest with each other was crucial and continues to be an important part of what allows different RWHAP Parts to work together.

No current staff members were present at the department during the implementation, emphasizing the need for detailed documentation of decision points and processes. After establishing a unified application, it was important to conduct a joint training for all RWHAP Parts to facilitate consistent adoption and application of the new process. Nevada acknowledged that given various staff turnover, the training would be repeated annually (or as needed) to ensure continuity across all positions.

Next Steps

Since the integration of their customized RWISE system, all RWHAP subrecipients have the same tools for entering eligibility information. This allows them to continue strengthening coordination through joint system management and ongoing communication.