Implementing the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System

Erik Martel

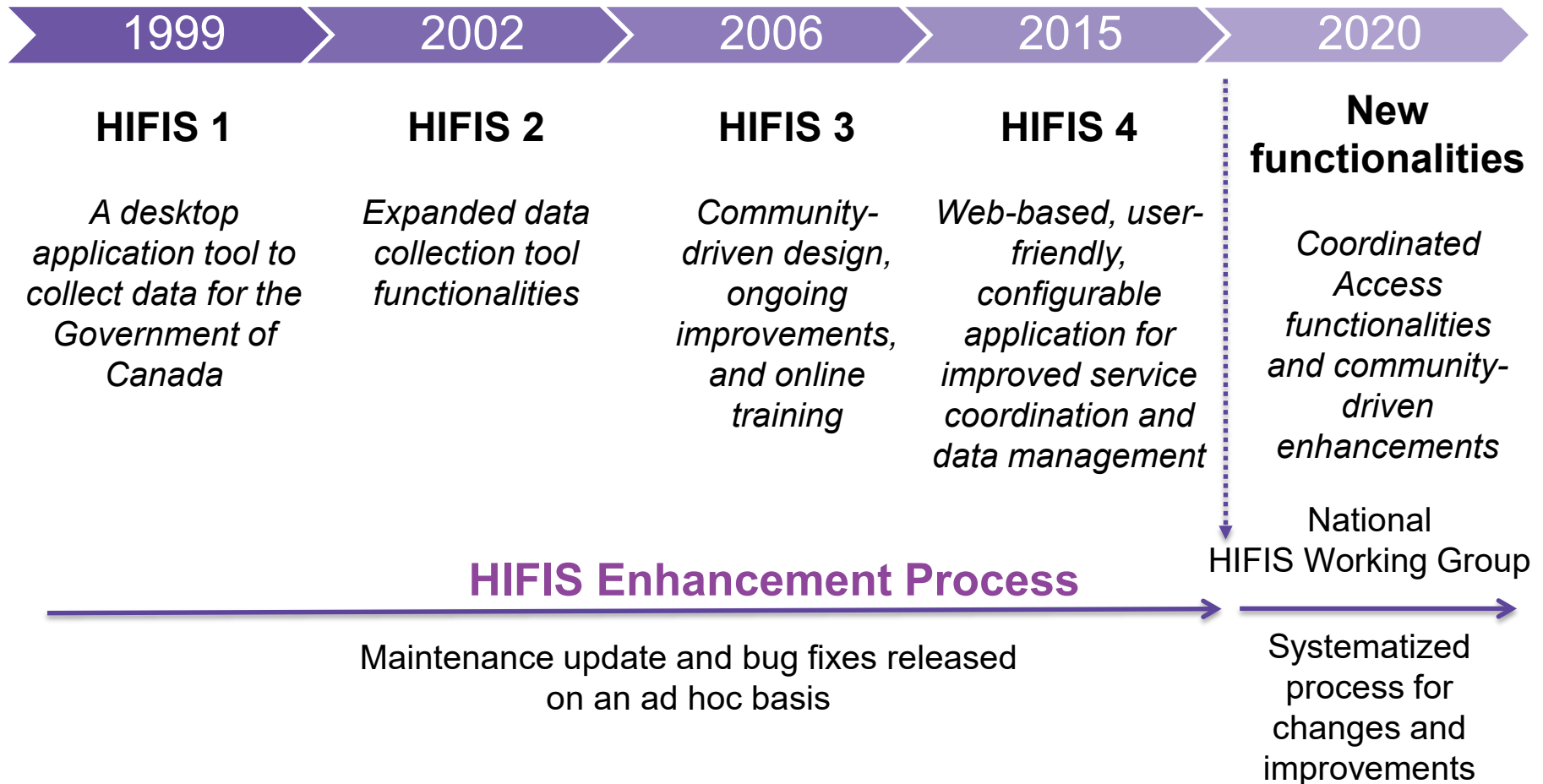**Employment and Social Development Canada**
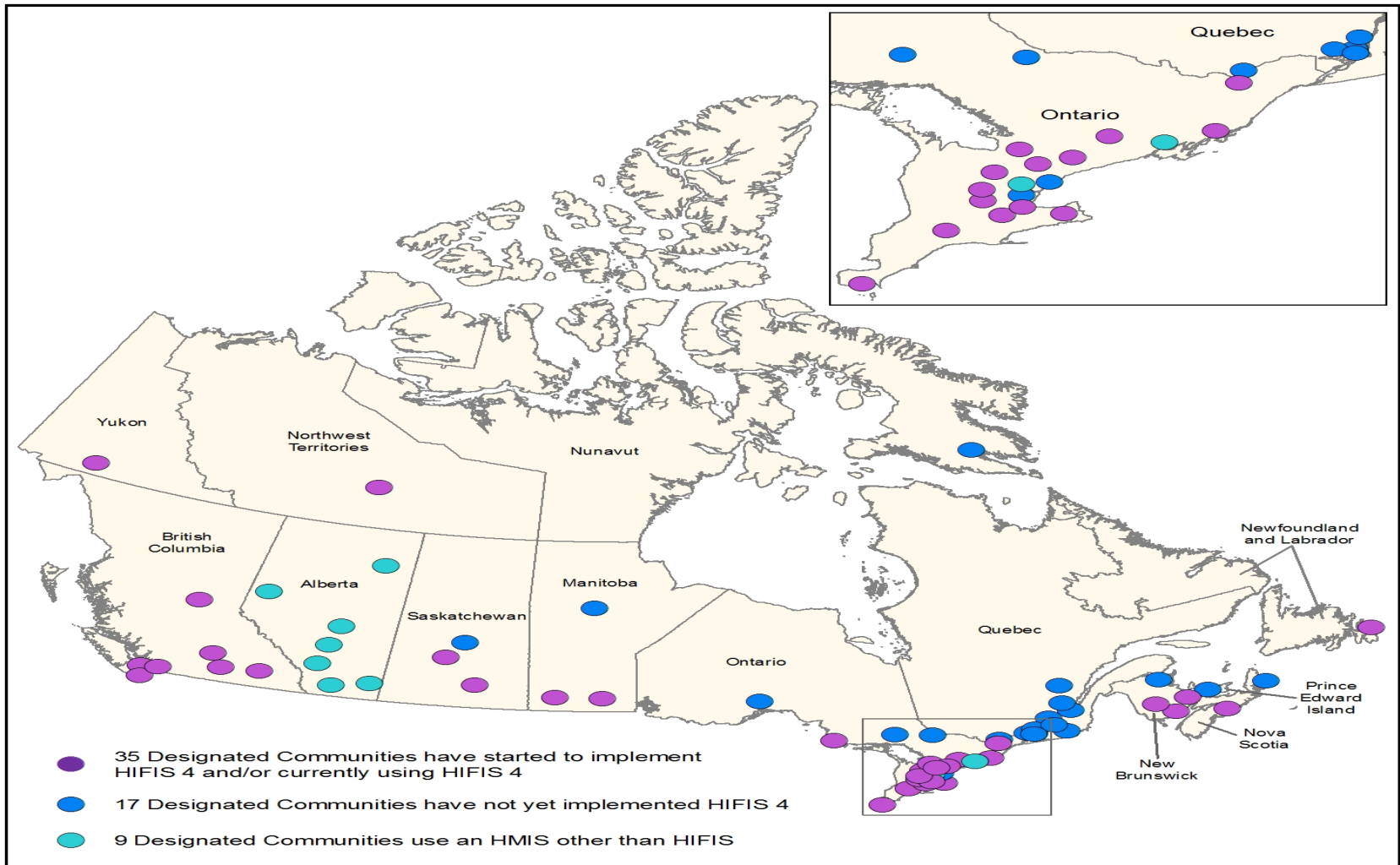
November 4, 2019

Purpose

1. To provide background information and communicate how HIFIS supports Coordinated Access

2. To describe the planning and implementation steps to deploy HIFIS

3. To present the suite of HIFIS supports and services available to communities.

HIFIS has evolved along housing and homelessness sector needs

1999	2002	2006	2015	2020
HIFIS 1	**HIFIS 2**	**HIFIS 3**	**HIFIS 4**	**New functionalities**
A desktop application tool to collect data for the Government of Canada	*Expanded data collection tool functionalities*	*Community-driven design, ongoing improvements, and online training*	*Web-based, user-friendly, configurable application for improved service coordination and data management*	*Coordinated Access functionalities and community-driven enhancements*

National HIFIS Working Group

HIFIS Enhancement Process

Maintenance update and bug fixes released on an ad hoc basis

Systematized process for changes and improvements

HIFIS 4 – Implementation Status

Legend:
- 35 Designated Communities have started to implement HIFIS 4 and/or currently using HIFIS 4
- 17 Designated Communities have not yet implemented HIFIS 4
- 9 Designated Communities use an HMIS other than HIFIS

HIFIS – the System to Support Coordinated Access under Reaching Home

HIFIS Key Features:

- Designed to support day-to-day **operational activities** of service providers

- **Collects real-time information** through various modules

- Captures data into **reports**, and speeds up the ability to make business decisions (this improves the reporting process and avoids the need to retrieve data manually)

- Works within a **web environment** that allow multiple service providers to collaborate through a community-wide system

HIFIS 4 MODULES	
Admissions	Group Activities
Assessment	Housing
Block Operations	Incidents
Calls and Visits Log	Medication Dispensing
Case Management	People
Clients	Service Restrictions
Conflict	Storage
Directory of Services	Turn Aways
Food Banks	Waiting Lists
Goods and Services	Reports

HIFIS offers several benefits to partners and clients

For Clients:

- Do not have to repeat their story to each different service provider they visit
- Prioritized and referred to the right services at the right time

**For Service Providers and Communities:**

- Data sharing leads to better collaboration to support service planning
- Allows to develop reports that improve the understanding of homelessness and housing resources locally
- Gives access to assessment tools that streamlines intake and prioritizes clients

For the Homelessness Sector:

- Advance the understanding of homelessness in Canada
- Inform policies and programs development

Implementating HIFIS requires planning and collaboration with a wide variety of partners

- Governance
- Implementation Planning
- Deploying HIFIS
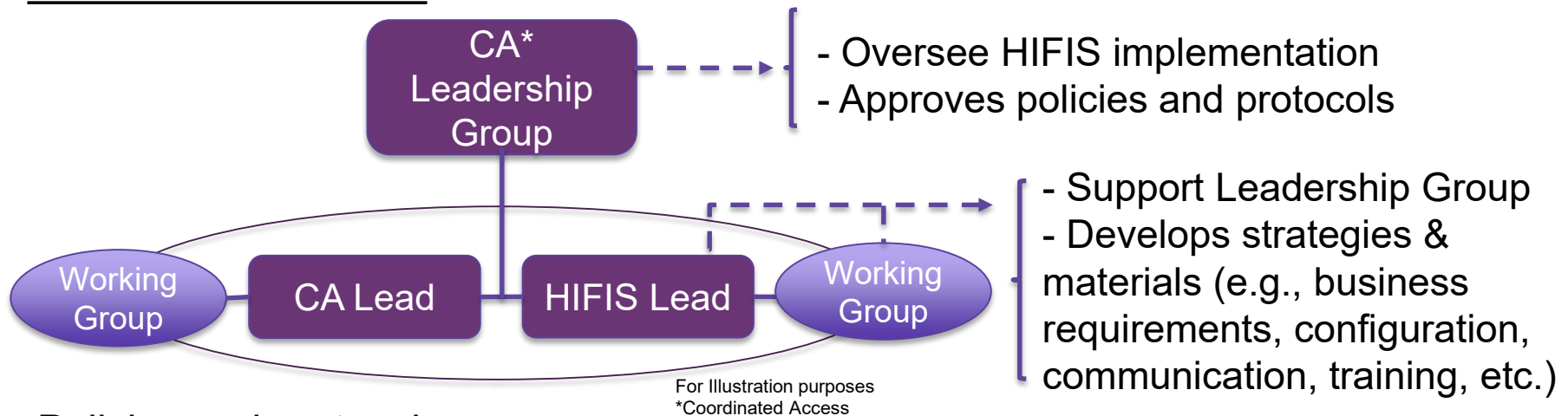- Client Support Services
- Sustainability
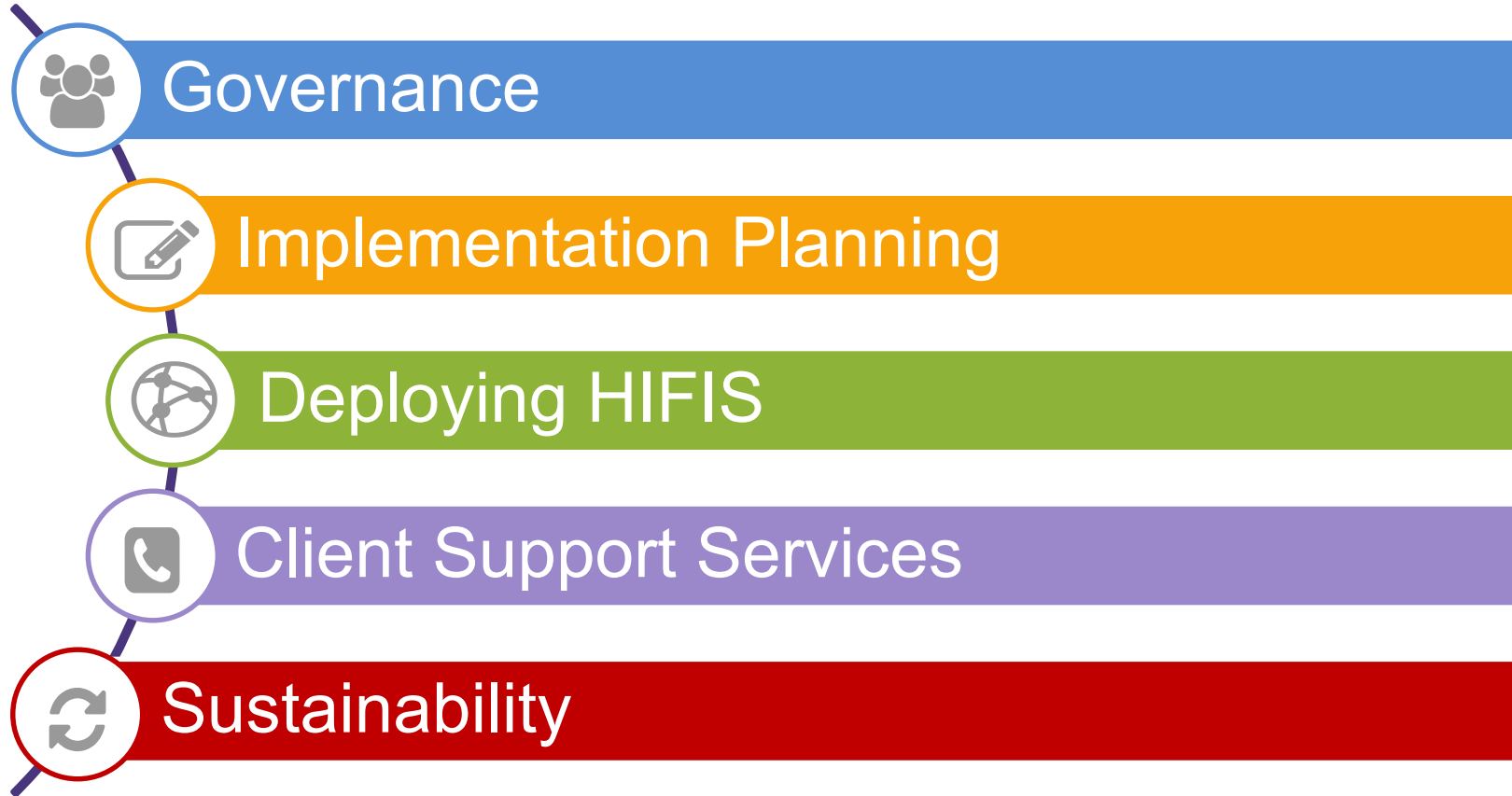
Governance

A system will be as good as its governance body, policies and protocols, which have direct implications on HMIS/HIFIS's set-up, usage and overall business value.

Governance structure

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │     CA*      │  ----→  - Oversee HIFIS implementation
                    │  Leadership  │         - Approves policies and protocols
                    │    Group     │
                    └──────────────┘
                           │
 ┌─────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌─────────┐
 │ Working │   │ CA Lead  │   │HIFIS Lead│   │ Working │  ----→  - Support Leadership Group
 │  Group  │   └──────────┘   └──────────┘   │  Group  │         - Develops strategies &
 └─────────┘                                 └─────────┘           materials (e.g., business
                                                                   requirements, configuration,
                                                                   communication, training, etc.)
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For Illustration purposes
*Coordinated Access

Policies and protocols

- Data entry, security and audit logs, privacy and consent, etc.

Data-Sharing

- Data Sharing Agreement, Community Data Provision Agreement, Confidentiality and User Agreement, Client Consent

Governance

Data Security – A Shared Responsibility

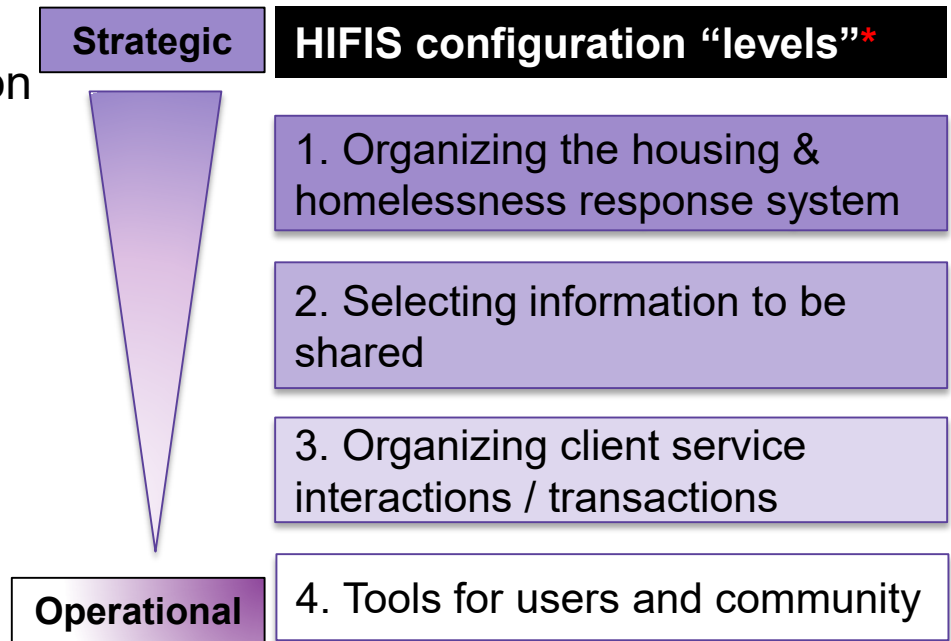| WHAT IS NEEDED		WHAT IS PROVIDED
GOVERNANCE	**IT INFRASTRUCTURE**	**HIFIS**
ACTIVITY • Define roles and responsibilities • Define user access rights • Develop and standardize policies and procedures (e.g., data entry protocol) • Develop applicable agreements (e.g., consent, CDSA)	• Secure server • Local encryption • Firewall • Establish user-rights • Back-ups and safeguards • On-site technical expertise	• Configurable access and viewing rights • Activity and audit logs • Integrated help centre • Anonymized data exports • Granular configurations at the source-code level • The ability to be clustered
OUTCOME Utilization of HIFIS and data are clearly defined	Collected data are secured from accidental data loss and/or external threats	Integrated and customizable privacy functions enables data to be collected, shared, and exported securely and privately

Implementation Planning

- Identification of the **HIFIS Host**, where HIFIS is installed and clients information is stored

- Management of **legacy systems** (if applicable)

- Definition of business requirements and configuration of HIFIS, based on system level decisions about CA

  - ➤ the specific services that are coordinated;

  - ➤ the tools used in triage and assessment;

  - ➤ which populations are prioritized; and

  - ➤ how service providers share information

Strategic

HIFIS configuration "levels"*

1. Organizing the housing & homelessness response system

2. Selecting information to be shared

3. Organizing client service interactions / transactions

Operational   4. Tools for users and community

- Identification of an **HIFIS administrator**(s) and its roles

HIFIS Deployment

- Identification of deployment strategy

- Testing HIFIS

  - ➤ Ensure HIFIS is configured to support staff roles adequately

- Development and provision of training

  - ➤ Workers (shelter, outreach, etc.), management, support desk, etc.

  - ➤ The following documents and tools can help develop tailored training:
    - **HIFIS toolkit, incl.** the User Guide for "How to" of HIFIS with a description of each HIFIS module
    - **HIFIS 4 Demo:** www.demo.hifis.ca for a look at what HIFIS 4 can do.
    - **Learning Hub:** The www.homelessnesslearninghub.ca for professional development and community capacity building for frontline service providers

Client Support Services

- Community help desks and ESDC's Client Support Centre have distinct functions.

Community-Level Client Support Tier 1-2	ESDC HIFIS Client Support Centre Tier 3

- First line for day-to-day supports for users
    • Incident management (e.g., service interruption,
    • Service requests (e.g., passwords)
- Supports for service providers and more advance supports (e.g., configuration changes, user account set-up)
- Point of contact with ESDC
- Implement new HIFIS releases
	- Supports local help desks clients
	- Central point for questions and information on:
	    • technical set-up, IT hosting and infrastructure
	    • configurations and customization
	    • enhancements and bug fixes
	- Provides HIFIS releases

Available Supports and Services

HIFIS Toolkit – A suite of guides supporting HIFIS implementation

Tailored training through:
- Regional Workshops 2019-2022

Online presence via:
- The Homelessness Learning Hub, an online platform for professional development and community capacity building for frontline service providers

HIFIS Client Support Centre:
- Provides ongoing support to communities in their HIFIS implementation by providing guidance and advice
- Support@HIFIS.ca – 1-866-324-2375 – 7:00 am to 5:00 pm EST

Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) to Designated Communities for Coordinated Access implementation
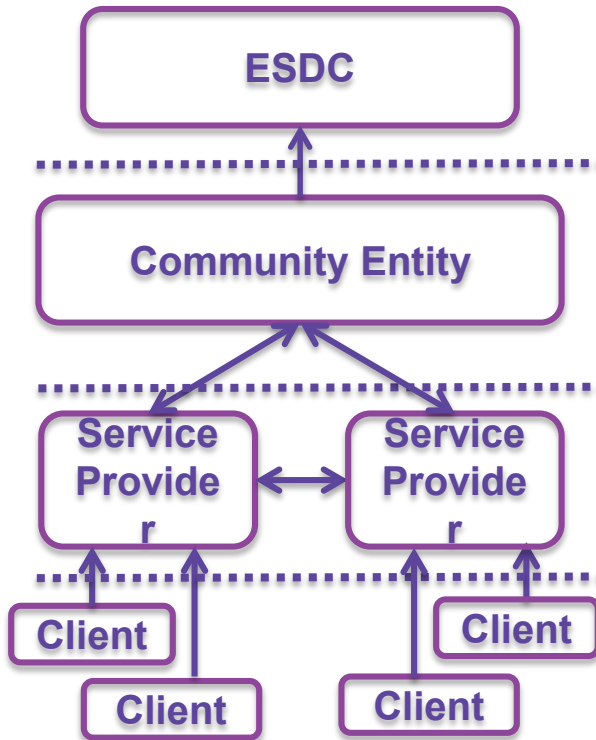- Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness info@caeh.ca

To expand your knowledge on Homelessness issues and HIFIS…

- For a hands-on look at what HIFIS 4 can do, visit the **HIFIS 4 Demo:** www.demo.hifis.ca
- For general information on HIFIS and getting started, visit the **HIFIS Website:** www.hifis.ca
- For monthly information on HPS, HIFIS, and other homelessness-related issues**,** subscribe to the **HPS Newsletter:** Subscribe at NC-HPSINFO-INFOSPLI-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.ca
- To access a wide range of supporting documents, visit the **Homelessness Learning Hub**, an online platform for professional development and community capacity building for frontline service providers at www.workspaceonhomelessness.ca
- HIFIS Help Desk: 1-866-324-2375 and support@hifis.ca

Data Sharing – Information Flow

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        ┌─────────────────┐
        │      ESDC       │
        └─────────────────┘
                 ▲
        ┌─────────────────┐
        │ Community Entity │
        └─────────────────┘
           ▲          ▲
    ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐
    │ Service  │◄─►│ Service  │
    │ Provider │  │ Provider │
    └──────────┘  └──────────┘
     ▲      ▲      ▲      ▲
  ┌──────┐       ┌──────┐
  │Client│       │Client│
  └──────┘       └──────┘
   ┌──────┐   ┌──────┐
   │Client│   │Client│
   └──────┘   └──────┘
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Data Provision Agreement (DPA), between the Community Entity and ESDC that grants a HIFIS license in exchange for the quarterly export of the HIFIS export fields

Community Data Sharing Agreement (CDSA), between the Community Entity and the service provider, developed by the Community Entity that details the partnership and expectation of both organizations

Confidentiality & User Agreement (CUA), between the service provider and the HIFIS user, developed by the service provider, that outlines the roles and responsibilities

Client Consent Form (CCF), between the service provider and the client, developed by the service provider, that details how the client information is collected, managed, and shared