



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

March 20, 2009

INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT REPORT

Honorable Stacey E. Pickering
State Auditor
Office of the State Auditor
P. O. Box 956
Jackson, MS 39205-0956

Dear Mr. Pickering:

The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) has recently (within the past year) experienced some major changes within the top levels of leadership, the State Health Officer, the Chief Administrative Officer, and the Chief Information Officer. MSDH takes the responsibility to protect the integrity of the information and the information gathering processes in its possession seriously and is taking steps to correct those deficiencies discovered in the recent Office of the State Auditor IS Audit. The Health Informatics section is working with upper level management and ITS to develop a comprehensive plan that will meet or exceed IS audit compliance standards.

MSDH welcomes the opportunity to work with the Office of the State Auditor to improve the efficiency of services we provide for the citizens of Mississippi.

AUDIT FINDINGS:

Audit Finding 1 – MSDH Should Improve the MWITS Application Systems Reliability

MSDH Response:

Mississippi WIC acknowledges that MWITS is an antiquated and outdated system that needs to be replaced. MSDH obtained ITS Board approval on February 19, 2009 to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to transfer the WIC Spirit System to Mississippi, and implement a new Inventory Management system. We submitted the RFP and Advanced Planning Document Update (APDU) responses to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for approval on March 4, 2009. USDA acknowledged receipt of these documents on March 5, 2009 and noted that we will receive a response within 60 days (by May 4, 2009).

USDA now requires all states to first look at transferring in a State Agency Model (SAM) solution before requesting replacement systems that require ground up development. As a result, the Mississippi WIC Project Team spent extensive time evaluating the Wisconsin ROSIE WIC system and the WIC SPIRIT System, which is currently in production at the Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma. After extensive evaluations, the Mississippi WIC Project Team determined that MSDH will be able to accept and transfer the SPIRIT System solution with only minor modifications to the baseline SPIRIT System, to fully satisfy Mississippi's WIC clinical requirements for an automated solution. In addition to the SPIRIT implementation, MSDH will also integrate an Inventory Management solution to facilitate the food distribution requirements.

The SPIRIT System is a web based application with Smart Client technology and .NET-Java capability. The SPIRIT System offers complete automation for providing clinical services to WIC participants. It has a guided script that guides the WIC certifier step-by-step through the complete certification process, including appointment scheduling, enrollment, certification, nutrition education, and food prescription assignments.

The SPIRIT System will provide several benefits that will replace manual processes done by MSDH staff today. The most notable benefits are:

- Provides a centralized web-based solution
- Provides complete automation for the WIC certification process
- Provides automated growth charts
- Automatically assigns risk codes based on objective data, such as anthropometric measurements and biochemical measurements to determine WIC eligibility
- Provides online/offline capability with data synchronization capability for satellite clinics
- Automatically creates all USDA Participant Characteristics, CDC Pregnancy Nutrition Surveillance System (PNSS), and CDC Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System (PedNSS) extracts
- Provides the federally required FNS 798 Financial reports (Participation/Obligations projections)
- Provides caseload management, participation reporting, enrollment reporting, and dual participation investigation
- Provides a large number of canned reports and an adhoc reporting capability to produce customized reports
- Provides electronic signature capture
- Automatically provides Food Instrument "Issuance" data from the WIC Clinical System to the Food Management System
- Automatically provides Food Instrument "Redemption" data from the Food Management System to the WIC Clinical System
- Scans food items in WIC Food Centers using handheld scanners
- Provides the ability for state office distribution staff to track and approve food product orders electronically.

Upon approval from USDA, Mississippi will move forward with releasing the RFPs to implement SPIRIT. Below is the high level timeline for implementing SPIRIT:

05/30/2009	Approval of APDU and both RFPs by USDA
06/02/2009	Release of Q/A RFP by ITS
06/09/2009	Release of IC RFP by ITS
10/01/2009	SPIRIT Project Starts
02/01/2010	Release of Hardware/Software RFP by ITS
04/15/2010	Begin hardware deliveries & installation throughout the State
08/30/2010	SPIRIT Pilot
12/15/2010	Begin Phased Rollout/Implementation of SPIRIT
02/15/2011	Rollout/Implementation Complete

Audit Finding 2 – Time Study Data Control Process Should Be Improved

MSDH Response:

MSDH acknowledges that the Time Study Process is a paper and resource intensive, antiquated and outdated approach to the Time Study Process that needs to be replaced. As a result of the audit, the IS Department is in the process of reviewing online data entry systems that will allow the required data to be entered by the individual performing the activity. Three courses of action currently being reviewed are: 1) suitable applications that can be transferred from another state agency, 2) current off the shelf (COTS) programs, 3) develop an application in-house. Below is an estimated timeline for implementation of a Time Study Program Application:

04/30/2009	Determination of course of action 1, 2, or 3
07/31/2009	Q/A testing in selected MSDH county facilities
10/30/2009	Statewide implementation complete

Audit Finding 3 – MDH Should Provide for Regular HIPAA Related Network Security Reviews

MSDH Response:

Reference again the opening comments in that MSDH takes the responsibility to protect the integrity of the information and the information gathering processes in its possession seriously and is taking steps to correct those deficiencies. Using IT Governance Standards (COBIT 4.1), State Health Department Accreditation Standards, internal MSDH Disaster Recovery Procedures and working with ITS, the MSDH IS Department is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan that will provide for scheduled HIPAA reviews and meet or exceed IS audit compliance standards.

Below is an estimated timeline for implementation of a HIPAA review schedule:

06/30/2009	Completion of a MSDH Self Inspection Checklist and Network Review
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09/30/2009	Completion of corrective action taken as a result of self inspection
11/30/2009	HIPAA review from a certified HIPAA Security Review firm
03/30/2010	Completion of corrective action taken as a result of HIPAA Security Review
09/30/2010	Start MSDH Self Inspection Checklist and Network Review/repeat

Audit Finding 4 -- MSDH Should Ensure That WIC Locations Are Backing Up Files Offsite

MSDH Response:

In addition to the SPIRIT implementation, MSDH will also integrate an Inventory Management solution to facilitate the food distribution requirements. Reference response to Audit Finding 1 for timeframes for implementation for corrective action.

Audit Finding 5 -- MSDH Should Purge Terminated Employees from the DOH Active Directory

MSDH Response:

MSDH IS Department is reviewing the process by which newly hired personnel are registered in Active Directory and retired or terminated personnel are denied access and then deleted. The agents required in this process are Human Resources, District and Program Administrators, Network Security and Active Directory Administrators.

Below is an estimated timeline for implementation of a Time Study Program Application:

04/30/2009	Determination of an acceptable logical request flow process for personnel inclusion to and deletion from DOH Active Directory
06/26/2009	Process implemented, tested and operational

Sincerely,



F. E. Thompson, Jr., MD, MPH
State Health Officer