



# IOWA Access Project Concept Paper

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**Date:** 04/27/2007

**Project Name:** CoMIS (County Management Information System)

**Requesting Agency:** Iowa State Association of Counties Community Services Affiliate (ISAC)

**Project Point(s)-of-Contact:** Robin Harlow, ISAC, (515) 244-7181; John Grush, Committee Chair, (515)-433-4887; Karen Walters-Crammond, Co-Chair, (515) 243-0867

**Project Sponsor:** Iowa State Association of Counties Community Services Affiliate (ISAC), Linn Adams, President, (641) 939-8168

**Goal:** Development of a standardized information system allowing the counties to share data between themselves and the State of Iowa for the management, tracking and reporting of community services.

**Project Purpose:** To connect county and state agencies with a shared system which will capture and report standardized information for Iowans accessing the community services system while abiding by HIPAA, State and Federal laws.

**Background:** Collectively, counties manage over \$300 million for services provided to over 50,000 Iowa citizens with mental illness, mental retardation, or other developmental disabilities. In addition, counties provide other community services, such as General Assistance, Substance Abuse, and Veterans Affairs.

In 1996 the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) issued a Microsoft Access database to the counties in Iowa called CoMIS. The purpose of this database is to capture Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities information across the State. Because of the structure of CoMis, counties are not connected. This separation resulted in the following:

- A lack of standardized data
- The inability to efficiently manage and evaluate services
- The inability to track clients as they move from county to county
- No collection of state-wide information on General Assistance, Substance Abuse, and Veterans Affairs

Due to various limitations of CoMIS, individual county needs, and limited support from DHS, some counties developed alternative data systems or re-worked CoMIS to address these problems. There are multiple data systems collecting data in different ways.

A committee comprised of Central Point of Coordination administrators, office personnel, IT personnel and representatives from ISAC and DHS has been charged with the task of determining the scope, design and Implementation of a new County Management Information System (CoMIS).

## **Expected Results in this Project:**

- Improve management, tracking and reporting of all community services.
  - Increase validity and consistency of data collected across the state.
  - Connect counties and state allowing for rapid, real-time data sharing.
  - Improve access to Community Services by citizens.
  - Accurate and complete information for county and state-wide planning, funding, and performance measurement decisions.
  - Assist DHS and the counties in meeting federal and state/legislative reporting requirements.
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**Request:** The CoMIS Committee developed by the Iowa State Association of Counties Community Services Affiliate is requesting financial and technical assistance provided by IOWAccess to assist with developing the scope of the project. The cost of this request is estimated to be \$20,000.

### **Resources Being Contributed:**

- The Iowa State Association of Counties Community Services Affiliate representing the 99 Iowa Counties.
- The time and commitment of a committee comprised of Central Point of Coordination administrators, Information Technology personnel, and County Office personnel along with Representatives from the Iowa Department of Human Services and the Iowa State Association of Counties.
- Iowa State Association of Counties is willing to host the application and provide support and maintenance of said application as it will tie into their clearinghouse to provide connectivity across all agencies.
- County financial participation in the development, implementation and future maintenance of a new CoMIS program.
- Various other interested parties to be determined as the process evolves.

### **Interested Parties:**

- The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC)
- The Iowa Department of Human Services (IADHS)
- The MH/DD Commission
- The Iowa Association of Community Providers
- Individuals receiving Community Services in the State of Iowa

### **Recipients of this Service:**

- Individuals receiving Community Services
  - Iowa Counties
  - Iowa Department of Human Services
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