Minnesota Eligibility Technology System Executive Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Details

- January 27, 2017
- 1-3 p.m.
- Room 200, State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155

Participants

Voting Members

- Janet Goligowski, Stearns County – present via phone
- Deborah Huskins, Hennepin County – absent
- Chuck Johnson, DHS - present
- Kari Koob, MNsure – present
- Nathan Moracco, DHS - present
- Allison O'Toole, MNsure - present

Non-Voting Members

- Jesse Oman, MNIT – present
- Scott Peterson, MNIT – absent

Guests

- Greg Poehling, MNIT
- Dawn Egbert, MNIT

Agenda Items

Call to Order & Welcome

Chuck Johnson, DHS

Chuck Johnson, ESC co-chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Members introduced themselves.

Chuck noted that the role of METS ESC is to ensure the IT support is in place to provide health care to Minnesotans. Despite any uncertainties that may exist at the state and federal level

concerning the Affordable Care Act (ACA), this group will continue to focus on current law and system improvements.

Administrative Items

MOTION: Nathan moved to approve the draft December 20 meeting minutes. Allison seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

METS IT Program Status Update

Greg Poehling, Director of Program Management Division, MNIT Services @ DHS/MNsure

Greg Poehling of MNIT presented the ESC update.

Greg started out by reviewing the spring 2017 release, noting that it is scheduled for an April 1 deployment, and will go to test next week. The items included in the spring release are largely items that had originally been slated for the winter 2016 but put on hold. He noted that METS PMT had recommended the scope for approval at their 1/5/17 meeting.

Greg then walked through the items included in the spring release, noting that defects are a large portion of the scope, which is in line with the goal of PMT to dedicate 20% of development time to defect fixes. Included in spring release is Assister Portal, Cost Sharing (AI/AN status), Cúram Warrantee defect fix, Notice work, 7 PRISM defect fixes, Renewals notice defect fixes (correcting over 15 defects), MA-FPL Rate tables (annual periodic work), and METS-MMIS Interface technical fix.

Greg then asked for a motion to recommend approval of the spring release scope.

Chuck asked for additional detail on how much faster the METS-MMIS Interface will be following the spring release, noting that it would be helpful to better understand the performance improvement and impact on business. He also asked for clarification about the annual/periodic work, inquiring if this was part of operations. Greg responded, that some annual work is project work and some is operational, but that certain work will be built into releases. This specific item (Annual work to update the MA-FPL Rate table) is operational, but called out here because it is part of the spring release.

Nathan asked further, seeking clarification if this work is being done by an operational or development resources. Greg responded that it is operational, and uses operational resources.

Chuck noted that this work had already been approved as part of the winter 2016 release, but asked for a motion to approve these items as part of the spring 2017 release.

MOTION: Allison moved to recommend approval of the scope of the 2017 spring release. Nathan seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Greg then went on to discuss the summer 2017 release, noting that it was recommended for approval by METS PMT on 1/24/17. It includes: the Annual Cúram Upgrade, Supervisor

Workspace and updated Org/Location Structure, splitting of the Standard Eligibility Notice, potential Carrier Integration work and yet-to-be-determined defect work.

Greg requested a motion to approve PMT's recommendation of these items for summer release – with a placeholder for defect work and the potential addition of carrier integration work.

Janet noted the absence of the reinstatement project, and asked for help understanding how that project might fit into the 2017 picture. She also asked for clarification on the MMIS interface work throughout the year.

Greg responded that reinstatement is a big project, noting that in PMT discussions it hasn't fallen above the line in terms of work for 2017, although there are other projects being discussed that will move us in the right direction, including the renewals notice work and reasonable opportunity period. Reinstatement is also reliant on other technical work, like the METS-MMIS Interface Redesign & Effective Dates, which need to happen before the interface redesign can be done. Also other projects that help move us in the right direction. Finally, he noted that MMIS Improvements will happen throughout 2017.

Chuck added that there are some trade-offs to be made with these other projects. We know we need to provide help to the renewals process, reduce the workload for counties and Mncare staff, and we are trying to figure out the best way to do that knowing the size of the reinstatement project. This involves looking at what we can we do in the short term to address these upfront issues. He said he also understands that there are other projects that should likely happen before reinstatement, but cited a continued focus on renewals.

Greg added that much of the defect work is also focused on helping county workers.

Janet asked if reinstatement isn't its own project, if the end result of multiple other projects will assist with the county work. Greg responded that reinstatement means different things to different people, but noted that the things that we're working on are improving processes for county workers, even if it isn't the whole reinstatement picture. Chuck noted that it would be nice to quantify what degree of relief these other renewals-focused efforts would provide in the absence of reinstatement.

Chuck asked for clarification about the carrier integration and defects placeholders – asking if the intent was to allow PMT to do further definition or have it come back to ESC.

Greg responded that MNIT does have the business priorities for the carrier integration work but are still working on determining levels of effort (LOE), since resources in this area are currently focused on 1095 work. He said that next week they will lay out a proposed release plan for this work, and that some items could be included in the summer release. Concerning defects, there is a project team working to prioritize defects (top 75), and this information should come to PMT in the next two weeks with level of efforts and a proposal of when the defect work can be done in the releases, including summer. Greg added that he is asking for a

recommendation for approval now, with those placeholders, so that PMT can then review information and possibly make decisions on where this information can be fit into releases.

Chuck asked a question about the supervisor workspace and org/location structure project – wondering if this is something done and delivered in summer or if it is a first step in a larger project? Greg noted that he believes it is more than a one-release project, but this allows work to begin. Chuck also requested more specifics on the business benefit to this project, and what exactly will come in the summer release.

Chuck continued by noting that he appreciates the focus that PMT is placing on defect fixes, as well as when specific defect fixes are built into the Cúram Upgrade. He urged MNIT to keep pressure on IBM to keep including these fixes in upgrades so that Minnesota doesn't have to do this work separately.

Nathan asked if it was known what percentage of the overall summer release (resources) is taken up by the Cúram Upgrade, and noted that he'd like to be able to track how much of a release is taken up by upgrades moving forward.

Greg responded that he couldn't specifically say as MNIT is just now looking through what's included in the upgrade. He did state that it is not as big as the fall 2016 upgrade, and that MNIT doesn't anticipate as many development resources as 2016, but it could require equal or greater testing resources, but this is still being analyzed. Greg added that we should plan for a chunk of one quarterly release will go towards the upgrade.

Nathan asked about the carrier integration work, and if that is work also planned to occur each quarter. Greg responded that the carrier integration items on slide 8 are clearly defined, and work is underway to figure out when, how and which items can be fit into releases. He added that carrier integration work may be part of each release in 2017.

Nathan also asked about the plans for defect work, and if that will be part of every release in 2017. Greg responded that yes, there are a lot of defects in the backlog, and that levels of efforts for the prioritized list are being gathered to help slot these items into releases. He also noted the PMT goal of dedicating at least 20% of development time per release to defects. Nathan stated that he would like to ensure that the governance bodies are being transparent about the use of resources, and the dedication of resources to defects, and how they are being utilized.

Chuck noted that Greg had mentioned the focus at fixing defects at previous meetings, but requested more information about the criteria and process being used by PMT to determine which defects will be addressed. He did add that defect fixes do add value (reduce manual workarounds) and provide program integrity, specifically noting pregnant/auto newborn work around and the fact that this was listed as a defect fix in the Cúram upgrade.

Janet inquired about the amount of resources that will be available for new project work as we plan out 2017 Releases (with the time dedicated to the upgrade and defects in 2017), and inquired about off-cycle work in 2017.

Greg responded that MNIT is now using the term 'ongoing' work instead of 'off-cycle' to describe project work that is not for new development, but is ongoing operational work accounted for in resources. Greg acknowledged that METS now has increased operational support needs, which does decrease the availability of time and resources (both MNIT and business) to do new development work.

Greg went on to discuss the focus on defects, in an effort to clean up the work that was done in the past. PMT has been focusing on defects and understanding operational obligations for METS in 2017.

Jesse asked if the defect backlog is expected to grow, shrink or maintain given the focus on defects in 2017, and reporting on this moving forward. Greg responded that generally speaking, defects grow, come at a faster rate than you can fix them.

Chuck acknowledged that this is the nature of the business, and that's why it's important to put a priority on defects to be fixed. He also noted that previously the defects weren't being addressed, at the expense of new development.

Motion: Chuck then sought a motion to recommend to approve the summer release as described, with the understanding that carrier integration and defect work is not yet fully scoped. Alison moved. Janet seconded. All voting members present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Greg then moved to fall and winter release planning. He noted that both MNIT and business resources have been working hard to plan for the final two releases in 2017. This work has led us to a list of potential items for fall & winter that fall within available resources and capacity – a list of 30 potential new development project items. Due to the resource and capacity analysis there are items above and below the line for Fall & Winter. He noted that while there is not yet a specific list in these releases, that there are certain projects being discussed. These items include METS-MMIS Interface Resign, Notices, Carrier Integration, Retrigger of FTR via Federal Hub, Passive Renewals, Unique Person ID (drill down), and Tribes as Processing Entities. Discovery is underway on DEED, PRISM Iteration 3 and FTI – noting that one of these can likely happen in 2017, maybe 2, but not all 3. Reasonable Opportunity Period/Non-Cooperation and Defects are also items being explored. These are all above the line for fall & winter releases in 2017. Greg asked if there were any questions or feedback from PMT as they continue planning.

Chuck asked about notices and the worker impact on items being considered, he reinforced the benefit on worker suppression for counties. He also inquired about the status of Passive Renewals, since a lot of work was done on that project but we ran out of testing time.

Greg responded that there is still some work left to do on Passive Renewals, and noted that project is being discussed against other priorities with MNsure, as there may be trade-offs with other priorities.

Chuck stated that he agrees with getting a good read on resources to maximize efforts. He then asked about the 3 up for discussion, noting that he would put DEED verification near the top given the likely impact on the auto renewal rate. Any testing to more clearly know what benefit this would bring would be helpful. FTI is a compliance risk and work needs to happen on identifying solutions, acknowledging that it is a state law and has budgetary impacts.

Janet asked about which of the three would be completed in the fall & winter releases. Greg clarified that not all 3 can be delivered in 2017 and that it also depends on the order of which one comes first. PMT is awaiting business responses and decisions on these and all the items under consideration.

Chuck noted that it would be helpful to have additional detail and levels of effort on these items at future meetings, including more detail on the defect fixes under consideration. He would ask the PMT, based on comments made by ESC members, to do a hard examination of the prioritization of defects and look at trading off some defect work for new development work. This information may help provide better information and awareness on the value of the defect work.

Greg went on to review the 2017 roadmap. He called out the 'Ongoing Efforts' at the bottom of the roadmap. These ongoing efforts have resources accounted for, with specific work built into releases as much as possible in an effort to not do off-cycle releases anymore.

Nathan noted that DHS has made it clear that progress is being made on premium reconciliation, following inquiries from the legislature. While 2014 was slower than expected DHS is hopeful that reconciling 2015 and 2016 will be quicker. He also inquired about the MAXIS to METS project and whether this project is mostly a business role or if there is there an IT component, noting the work occurring at the Counties connected to the migration.

Greg noted that MNIT is still monitoring the MAXIS to METS project and providing assistance, noting that the migration did start slow and that bigger numbers will be coming in 2017.

Nathan also asked about the difference between METS-MMIS Improvements and as a separate projects. Greg responded that the work in spring is an improvement item (addressing issues as they occur), but we are also working on the full redesign. Nathan added that it would be helpful to quantify the improvements and better articulate the business impact.

Greg then turned to the 1095 project roadmap slide, noting that the final group of 1095-A notices were mailed today, meeting the January 31 deadline. He stated that the project team spent significant effort to develop improved process, which was key to getting them mailed on time. He noted that the team is currently testing code for 1095-A corrections and voids which will be delivered in mid-February.

Allison congratulated the team for the great work, nothing that it did take extra effort but that it was a job well done.

Greg continued by saying that 1095-B forms will soon follow, although the IRS did push the deadline back. The current plan is for all 1.2 million forms to be mailed by March 2, with

mailing beginning next week. Chuck inquired about the potential of automation for corrections and voids for 1095-B forms as well.

Greg highlighted the carrier integration roadmap, noting that much of this had already been discussed. These efforts are still in planning phases, with levels of effort being gathered so the work can be planned into releases.

Greg next turned to the public program roadmap, highlighting the previously mentioned MMIS Interface functionality in the spring release and noting that about 20% of planned MAXIS to METS cases have migrated now, and that it will increase over coming months.

Finally, Greg presented the project status dashboard, noting that there is only one project in red, carrier integration, which is due to the planning work still being in progress. He also noted that the 1095-A project would be green if it was reported today. (The report presented was as of 1/20/17).

Chuck noted that he was pleased to see the solid green across the projects included in 17.1 given the fact that they are almost ready to go to testing.

New Business

Allison provided an update on open enrollment, noting that there are only five days to go. She also noted that the Legislature passed and Governor signed a premium relief bill, which MNsure is promoting alongside MMB, as it provides good financial relief that she's hoping Minnesotans will take advantage of. There will be extended hours of operation over the weekend and increased staffing for the expected rush given both the 1/31 deadline and the passage of premium relief legislation.

Allison added that the enrollment numbers are looking good across the board. She added that she may be coming to ESC in upcoming months concerning the outstanding RFI and the subsequent step of an RFP.

Finally, Allison noted that a MNsure advisory committee recently provided a report on SHOP to the MNSure board, highlighting the needs of the small business community in MN. Meetings underway with these groups and the team is looking at different ways to handle this line of business. She noted that SHOP enrollments have doubled this year, and added that recommendations on SHOP may be coming to ESC in future meetings if they interface with METS.

Nathan provided an update on MinnesotaCare renewals, noting that the official recent renewals push saw approximately 87,000 renewals. He noted the significant communications effort that was in place to encourage renewals, along with a targeted campaign in December to get the word out. It was a much improved effort than in previous years.

However, he added that the process did require finding additional resources, including overtime and temporary staff, as well as augmentation with a 3rd party vendor. DHS is proud

of what was accomplished, but hope to be able to bring the resource requirements down moving forward.

Nathan concluded by saying that there is always a percentage of the population that doesn't engage during renewals, and encouraged anyone who is still eligible to apply to do so.

Chuck wrapped up the meeting by noting that ESC meetings will likely be held on Friday afternoons during the legislative session, and times and locations may be a little more fluid due to tight room reservations during session. He also noted that audio for meetings will be posted after the meeting due to the inability to live stream audio from rooms in the State Office Building (SOB). Following the conclusion of the legislative session in May, they will hope to go back to holding meetings on Tuesdays.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

MOTION: Kari moved to adjourn. There were no objections and the meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.