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| **HOW HIFIS LEADS SUPPORT GOVERNANCE** |

This *HIFIS How To: Guidance* resource provides practical information on how HIFIS Leads can support the governance of HIFIS implementation and the implementation of a Coordinated Access system. This tool outlines these key elements:

1. [The Importance of Governance](#_1._THE_IMPORTANCE)
2. [HIFIS Lead Responsibilities](#_2._HIFIS_LEAD)
3. [Setting up a HIFIS Working Group](#_3._SETTING_UP)
4. [How to Engage Stakeholders](#_4._HOW_TO)
5. [Related Resources](#_5._RELATED_RESOURCES)

## **1. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNANCE**

Successful implementation of Coordinated Access and a Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) is based on a clear governance structure that clarifies who makes decisions about the systems work and how they work together. Effective design and implementation requires community input. An inclusive governance structure, relying on a representative group of stakeholders, helps to build trust in this process.

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| **WHAT A LEADERSHIP GROUP CAN PROVIDE*** Vision for the project
* Decision-making and accountability
* Direction on work plans
* Neutral party for problem-solving and overseeing progress
* Connection of Coordinated Access to Reaching Home funding
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An example of a basic governance structure (see Figure 1), shows that a Leadership Group oversees the work of the Coordinated Access and HIFIS Leads. The Leads in turn work with their respective working groups and report to the Leadership Group.



Figure 1 Governance Structure

## **2. HIFIS LEAD RESPONSIBILITIES**

The governance of HIFIS will be determined by what you want your Coordinated Access system to do. The HIFIS Lead will be responsible to take that vision for Coordinated Access in the community and operationalize it in HIFIS.

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| **HIFIS LEAD RESPONSIBILITIES*** Project manage the implementation of HIFIS
* Collaborate with the Coordinated Access Lead
* Report to the Leadership Group
* Set up and manage a HIFIS Working Group
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The HIFIS Implementation Roadmap (see pg. 14-15 in the [HIFIS Implementation Guide](https://www.homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/hifis-implementation-guide)) outlines the implementation process and provides guidance on the tasks and activities that a HIFIS Lead may do throughout that process are described in the [HIFIS Lead Task List](https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/hifis-lead-task-list/).

## **3. SETTING UP A HIFIS WORKING GROUP**

A working group can be a great resource that supports the HIFIS Lead in planning and deploying stages, and even after for maintenance and quality improvements of HIFIS. If your community is new to HIFIS and Coordinated Access, engaging stakeholders in a working group can help build trust as they will better understand HIFIS and how it can meet their needs.

A HIFIS Working Group could collaborate on drafting a data sharing agreement (with legal input), help determine and test HIFIS configuration, also test new releases, develop policies for the local help desk, develop data management processes and policies, provide training, troubleshoot and problem-solve HIFIS issues, etc.

**TIP**: Remember to obtain approval for setting up a HIFIS Working Group and be sure to build several months into your timeline, so that there is enough time to obtain approvals, set up the group and do the required work before launching HIFIS.

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| **STEPS FOR SETTING UP A HIFIS WORKING GROUP**1. Identify who should be part of the group.
2. Determine what commitment you will need from them (time, tasks).
3. Develop a Terms of Reference for/with the group
4. Evaluate over time, in order to adapt and make changes
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**STEP 1.** Identify who should be a part of the group. Generate a list(s).

Your Working Group (or HIFIS Action Team) should include users from frontline staff, a case manager, an active supervisor who might be looking at and extracting reports.

**STEP 2**. Determine what commitment you will need from them in both time and tasks.

**Time** – Typically, the commitment required of the group may be regular in the planning stages of implementation, but as decisions are made and implementation moves through the phases, fewer meetings may be required. It may rise again as you are ready to deploy in order to test for example, and then taper off again after deployment and only sporadically during maintenance.

**Tasks** – Most HIFIS Leads will chair the meetings themselves, and will ask members to take on other tasks, but it depends on you and members of your Working Group. Know their skills and their interests. Perhaps someone would make a great Chairperson, which would free you up to manage. Others will be great support to testing HIFIS before and after deployment, or in training delivery.

**STEP 3.** Develop a Terms of Reference.

The **HIFIS How To: Guidance** resource[*Developing a Terms of Reference for a HIFIS Working Group*](https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/developing-a-terms-of-reference-for-a-hifis-working-group/)provides you with more information about developing a Terms of Reference.

**STEP 4.** Evaluate in order to adapt and make changes.

After some time, the group may need to re-focus or membership has declined and you may want to initiate an evaluation of the how the group is working at that time, or set the time of after one year there will be an evaluation that way everyone knows what to expect. Similar to the Leadership Group your member may need to change as you move past implementation into sustaining HIFIS in the long-term.

## **4. HOW TO ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS**

Service Providers in your community that you will want to engage will be busy people. Acknowledging their valuable time and offering them something in exchange (outcomes, specific role, and snacks) can help get them interested in the project/work. HIFIS Leads offer these suggestions for engaging with your stakeholders.

* + Know the people as well as, who and how they would be an asset. When you engage with them about the Working Group be clear about what you need and how their skills would help.
	+ Outline in what ways the intended outcomes of the Working Group can influence their work by making things better/easier.
	+ Offer specific tasks. This helps make participation clear and for people to know what their role will be in the group.
	+ At meetings, ensure that the agenda is SMART: specific, meaningful, agreed, results-based, time-specific. Make sure that you cover key messages.
	+ Stick to the schedule. Everyone’s time is valuable and people will value the work if their time is valued in return.
	+ Offer snacks!! Seems simple, but people will appreciated it. They may be more inclined to attend and engage more because of this nice gesture.

## **5. RELATED RESOURCES**

* [HIFIS Implementation Guide](https://www.homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/hifis-implementation-guide), Section 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, Section 1.3
* [Coordinated Access Guide](https://www.homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/reaching-home-coordinated-access-guide), section 3.4 Setting Up the Governance Structure
* [Tools for Supporting Transformational Change](https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/tools-supporting-transformational-change/) – A presentation at the HIFIS Regional Workshop series 2019-20)
* [HIFIS Lead Task List](https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/hifis-lead-task-list/) - This tool can be used as a checklist to help guide planning activities.