AWESome news

March / April 2008

mobius

"This is too easy, it's like shopping on-line." – Mobius Trainee on learning the new system:

In this Issue:

Work Underway

Financial Tools is where much of the action is now, and a big part of that is getting the next Mobius release ready. Several working groups are finalizing business requirements, signing off design and moving into development. Val Reiss leads the Program and Services team; Cindy Holowach, the Evidence, Eligibility, Calculation and Rules team; Josh Chatterley, the Financial Processing team. These are just three of the teams working on Financial Tools. Other teams are establishing the technical environments, readying the infrastructure, bringing the testers on board (Corrie Elfring-Jones is back with us. Yea!!!), developing the training plan, and planning for deployment. If this sounds complex, it is! That's why there is also one team which is all about co-ordination, led by Almas Murani.

Centrally Delivered Services and our partners at Advanced Education and Technology (AET) are planning for processing of Learner applications using Mobius (see article on LISO). E&I staff are also working with AET staff to bring provider, program and course information from the program registry system (where many of our Training Provider partners directly enter the data) over into Mobius.

With the service management component of Mobius now in production, Renae Leitch and Vicki Ozaruk have already established the Mobius Change Management Committee and have a set of improvements in testing for release April/May. Renae also has three positions in for classification and imminent recruitment, for a new Mobius Support Office – think of a one-stop shop for Mobius (more information on this next issue!)

We've had several meetings with other ministries who will be using the same Curam product to look for common business processes and efficiency opportunities. Service Alberta is leading this. We are also co-coordinating our planning with Seniors and Community Services as currently we share several legacy systems.

We are planning for our next phase which will include replacement of LISA and the CCD systems. We have two projects underway: one is looking at all of the applications and interfaces which are linked with LISA (would you believe over 63!) to ensure we don't unintentionally drop something; and, the second is analyzing the currently defined Financial Tools to identify additional or modified business requirements for ETW/NETW. The information we glean will be used to update our business case as we go forward for Phase Two approvals and funding! A

Mobius in Production – We Hear You!

You, our Mobius users out there, you have been just great, letting us know where the glitches have been and helping us to analyze the problems, tracking the specific occurrences (thanks NAIT!), and reporting back when the fix seems to work. The access problem (we were first to use the new Alberta Secure Access Service for non-GOA users) is still not fully resolved to the standards we would like, so we are still working on it. We heard about other glitches but also have heard suggestions for improvements. We want to let you know what we hear and what we're doing.

Within the next week or two, you will find on the AWES Initiative page (on the left navigation bar on the Alberta Works on-line manual http://employment.alberta.ca/hre/is/reg/Awes.asp a new listing – a log of all the suggestions for change we've received and a status report on each. There will also be a template to submit a change suggestion, and we'll describe the process. With your continued help, we'll make Mobius work the best we can for you! A

Interview with George Alvarez and Gayle Faires

Q1: Now that Mobius Release 1 is up and running, would you say we've met our objectives around Privacy as outlined in the Business Vision?

A1: Mobius is a good example of the way in which working with the Information and Privacy Office (IPO) is meant to occur. The IPO was involved right from the beginning, which allowed us to identify potential privacy issues early in the process so that they could be properly mitigated. Mobius Release 1 has met the IPO objectives around privacy by restricting access to information based on role and sensitivity. The degree of access granted is based on the user's job responsibilities. The IPO has no concerns around privacy with Mobius Release 1

George Alvarez and Gayle Faires,
Information and Privacy Office

Q2: Service Partners have expressed frustration at having to use 3 search criteria to look up a client in Mobius. In CAIS, they only had to use the SIN, or if it was one of their clients, a partial name. Why is it different with Mobius?

A2: One of the recommendations from the Auditor General Report was that service partners' access to GOA system should be restricted. In the past, service partners had no restrictions and were able to do a random search for E&I clients on the system. Mobius has been configured to restrict service partners to a 'need to know basis'. This means they can only view and access personal information on their clients. This mitigates the potential for privacy breaches.

Q3: According to the Business Vision, the client "owns" their own personal information and E&I is the steward of information. This is a bit of a change in philosophy for the department. What does this mean from a FOIP perspective?

A3: Actually the change in philosophy happened in 1995 with the enactment of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The Act gives an individual the right to request access to any record, including a record containing personal information about themselves in the custody or under the control of a public body (i.e. any part of the government, it's staff and it's agents), subject to limited and specific exceptions. The FOIP Act speaks to an individual's personal information which in a sense is "owned" by the individual. A purpose of the FOIP Act is to control the manner in which a public body may collect personal information from individuals and to control the use and disclosure. The public body is charged with the protection of privacy of personal information in their custody or under their control which makes the public body the "steward" of the information

Building on this, the department's privacy policy identifies that one of the principles that governs the department's commitment to privacy is that E&I "*is a caretaker of the personal information it manages.*" A

LISO Project

E&I and Advanced Education and Technology (AET) have had a Shared Services Agreement (SSA) about learner and student services since 1999. Two of its provisions manage the shared processing of E&I learner funding applications and the use of AET's Student Finance System. Our next Mobius release (Financial Tools, Learner implementation) will replace the Student Finance System and will make the some of the processes more efficient. The program alignment of EI and Non-EI Learners which will come into effect with Mobius Release 2 implementation will enable the application processing to be aligned. A joint working group analyzed the future processes and made recommendations to ADMs from both ministries. A single centralized processing centre for all E&I learner applications was recommended.

This new centralized office, to be called the Learner Income Support Office, will be operated and managed by Centrally Delivered Services (CDS). A committee has been formed and work has begun on developing this full-service office. The office will provide Mobius related functions such as data entry, assessing, electronic fund transfers, tuition refunds, audit and more. Currently the committee is determining the work functions as they relate to the Financial Tools within Mobius. The committee also includes human resource staff from both E&I and AET to ensure the talents and skills of employees are used in ways that meet the aspirations of the employees and the needs of the departments. The Executive Director of CDS, Chuck Conroy, is excited about the new Learner Income Support Office.

"Developing a new office to fund Learners, with a great system like Mobius and all the talented staff from both departments to assist, is a great opportunity. This is an opportunity to really improve our support to Learners and Training Providers", he said.

The Shared Services Agreement between AET and E&I will continue as we try to best support each other's services. For example, this includes a co-located, co-managed Student Funding Contact Centre (SFCC) and E&I provision of in-person services to AET loan students through its work sites across the province. A

Mobius Training Provider / E&I Team

A new awesome team meets for the first time April 23rd, with representatives from the over 1,200 service partner users and from E&I - Delivery Services (Contract Service Coordinator, Centrally Delivered Services, Learner Specialist), Information Management and Applications Support (IMAS), Workforce Supports and the Initiative Team. The team will use Web-Ex to support bi-weekly, efficient meetings to meet its purpose: "to assist and advise Alberta Employment and Immigration (E&I) on the planning, release development and production use of Mobius, as a key partner in the provision of services to Albertans." All agendas will have items in these three aspects of Mobius.

Each of the members of the E&I / Training Provider Advisory Committee may appoint one of their staff to this team. As the Advisory Committee has representatives from the various Associations, this team's membership should reflect an excellent cross-section of our training providers. A

AWESese

Information Services

Simply put, information services is a function within Mobius that enables a user to enter data that is extracted at a later date for reporting purposes. But this is the clinical definition. Entering visits to our LMICs and delivery events into Mobius will provide us with a great deal of very useful information!

Depending on how you enter your visits to the LMIC (daily data entry vs. weekly vs. monthly), you may be able to chart the busiest times of the week/ month to help with resourcing your centers. How about when it comes time to operational plan reporting? Specific details about Service Delivery events and how many individuals your event reached are at your electronic finger tips!

When you are searching for ideas for a career fair or a community presentation, you can search the province to get examples from your provincial co-workers. We love to share so just call! You could ask for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, get information on a speaker or help with the setup logistics

When it comes to the second and third-quarter progress reports on our department's business plan, Information Services data can be an invaluable resource to help provide details.

Entering your Delivery Events and LMIC data will not only help your office, but also your provincial co-workers.

So keep on entering!! A

Feature Teaser - To Task or Not to Task…

The task function in the Mobius computer system is AWESome, (sorry, couldn't resist!) case management tool. But are you using this technology to it's s maximum potential?

Tasks must be created in the system when an external user (our service partners) requires internal approval and when our internal users require a higher level approval. However, tasks can do so much more!

To remind yourself that you will need to call an individual you are working with, you can create a task. When you need to follow up on documentation you are expecting, you can create a task. When you need to ask a co-worker or service delivery partner to provide a service, you guessed it….you can create a task.

Tasks come in two types; Assigned and Reserved. Assigned tasks are those that you are asking someone else complete. Reserved tasks are tasks that you have either reserved for yourself to complete or tasks that have been assigned to you by someone else and you have agreed to complete.

In Lethbridge, for example, they have chosen to use the task function for referrals to service partners, eliminating the need to manually fax a referral – a great time saver! In some of the Northwest offices they are using the task function as a new and improved 'bf' system – way to go! No doubt there are many more excellent examples of how this helps to improve our efficiency and simplify our business.

There are just a couple of things to keep in mind. You need to check your assigned tasks everyday! If someone has assigned a task to you, it will not show up in your Mobius Inbox until you reserve it. You also need to stay on top of deleting your completed tasks, so your Mobius Inbox us up to date. Finally, you will need to ensure you are subscribed to the appropriate work queue – you can do this by selecting: "subscribe to work queue" from your inbox. This will ensure you are receiving assigned tasks.

So in answer to the original question: To Task or not to Task…….we say Task! A

Mobius Reports

In the November 2007 edition of the AWESome News, we announced that a small cross-divisional committee was developing Mobius reports. The committee is developing the reports in three batches as follows:

In the first batch there are three critical reports (click for mock ups) E&I staff can get these reports through the Strategic Information Environment (SIE). Our service partners don't have access to SIE but we are working to provide them electronic access through another method.

Service Listing

This report lists the counts of service plans in each of the six pillars of service (employment, career, skill development, support non financial, support – financial and information services). It is a point-in-time snapshot of these activities. It is targeted for release the last week of April.

Follow Up Listings

Contract administrators and managers will use this report to obtain an overview on the completion of required follow-up activities by contracted service providers. It is also used by service providers to manage required follow-up activities for clients completing studies. It is a point-in-time snapshot of the status of follow-up activities. The report is undergoing some fine tuning and is targeted to be completed the last week of April.

Clients Participation in Program-Services

This report is used to oversee and analyze the activities undertaken by E&I clients to the service level. It is a point in time snapshot of these activities. There are some data fixes underway in this report and anticipated delivery is the last week of April.

For the second batch, an inventory of reporting requirements was created based on current reports available to users and emerging needs following the replacement of CAIS with Mobius Release 1. Reports in this batch include the HRSDC monthly extract and client participation in program-services to the contract level. These batch processes will ready us for the replacement of SFS with Mobius Release 2. Reports in this batch are targeted for delivery in June 2008.

The third batch is comprised of other priority reports based on a review of all current reports and on the redesign or redevelopment of any reports required for Release 2. The delivery date and identification of these reports is still under review. A

Dear AWESome

Why are there so few mandatory fields in Mobius? For example, we need valid addresses for our income support clients but address is not mandatory in the registration screens.

Dear Inquirer:

You are correct that we need valid addresses when providing income support benefits to individuals. However, we offer many other services that are not necessarily financial. One of our underlying principles is to collect only the information you need to provide the identified service. For example, if an individual needs career information or a referral to Child Support Services, why do we need their address? And if it's not needed, why slow down the process by collecting and entering data that's not required? However, if someone is applying for Income Support, we do require an address as well as other information such as family composition and income. So it's really the service or benefit we're providing that determines the mandatory information we need to collect.

Send us a question. If we use it in the newsletter, we'll send you an AWESome prize. Please forward your questions to ***AWES@gov.ab.ca****.*

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What's Coming Up?

- Mobius Support Office
- What's New for You in Financial Tools?
- Transitioning Learner data off the Student Finance System
- Preparing for Phase Two – ETW/NETW

The AWESome News is brought to you by the AWES Communications in Action Committee: Susan Shave, Northeast Region (chair); Karen Pawliuk, NorQuest; Heather Macadam, Workforce Supports; Elena Hutchinson, Centrally Delivered Services; Prakash Poudyal, Workforce Supports; Teresa Pickering, Workforce Supports; Dorothy Schreiber, Communications.

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