**Utah Clicks-Universal Application System**

Location: Utah  
Date Submitted: 2006, Updated 4/2009  
Category: Emerging Practice

**BACKGROUND**

One of the six Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) performance outcome measures states that, “Services will be organized so that families can use them easily”. However, families often report that filling out similar paperwork for multiple agencies is both frustrating and time-consuming. Likewise, having to visit multiple offices to pick up and drop off paperwork makes it difficult for many individuals to access all the services and programs they need and want. The development of an easy to use, streamlined application process for these families is necessary to improve the delivery of services.

Based on the Universal Application System (UAS) technology, Utah Clicks is a web-based interagency application process designed to help families apply for multiple programs. Families can complete paperwork online in a non-duplicative manner and submit their applications electronically to participating programs, such as Medicaid, WIC, CHIP, Head Start and others.

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this program is to create a streamlined process for families and children with special health care needs to apply for multiple services and programs.

**TARGET POPULATION SERVED**

This program is targeted to Utah families who need to access multiple services.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Because the UAS (Utah Clicks) allows families to complete and submit paperwork online for multiple programs, the need to visit multiple offices is minimized and administrative costs across state programs can be reduced. To complete the UAS, the consumer is first asked a series of screening questions. Based on their responses, programs for which they may be eligible are suggested by the UAS. The consumer then chooses those programs for which they wish to apply. The UAS collects applicant information but does not determine absolute eligibility—this responsibility remains with each program. Depending on how many programs the family applies for, the entire application process is typically completed in less than one hour. Questions are compiled from all selected applications and displayed to the consumer by topic. Thus, the consumer sees and answers groups of related questions, e.g. family demographics, health questions, income questions, rather than answering questions related to specific applications; no question is asked more than once.

After submitting an application, consumers can later view the status of their application and view notes made by the intake worker. Most importantly, the UAS is confidential and protected by a user name and password, which is created by the consumer. The website is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week and has English and Spanish versions.

In addition to the application process, the UAS provides a secure area where electronically submitted applications can be retrieved by intake workers or other designated staff. This area, called the Eligibility Staging Area, provides an interface where eligibility workers and office managers can view applications, assign applications to intake workers, and insert notes for themselves or ones that the consumer can view, view the history of an application, and archive applications as needed. Dynamic reports provide local office and state program managers with the daily progress of applications, compare statistics by year, and even see the distribution of submitted applications by office.

Participatory action research (PAR) methods were used throughout the original grant (Opening Utah’s Doors--2001-2005). Parents, administrators and local health and human services representatives have been involved in all stages of the development of Utah Clicks.

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**TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED**

#11: Percent of children with and without special health care needs having a medical home.

#15: Percent of children 0 through 17 years who are adequately insured.
services staff were involved in the development, piloting and launching of Utah Clicks. Families were invaluable in offering recommendations on how to make the UAS practical and user-friendly. In retrospect, family input often served as “tie breakers” in decision-making related to moving Utah Clicks forward.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA
Utah Clicks was launched in Utah in May 2005 and is currently available to all families statewide. A survey connected with Utah Clicks indicates that only 2% of consumers using Utah Clicks actually go into agency offices to use the system. With only word-of-mouth publicity during the initial 5-month period, approximately 600 applications were submitted via Utah Clicks. In October 2005, two newspaper articles introduced Utah Clicks to the public thus providing slightly higher visibility. During the second five-month period, 4600 applications were submitted via Utah Clicks, a 780% increase in usage. These results suggest that there is a high demand for this service. Additionally:

- 97% of UAS users who completed the online survey would recommend the UAS to other families.
- 40% of the electronic submissions are sent before/after business hours, indicating the 24/7 availability is of value to consumers.
- More than 50% of those surveyed use the program on their home computers and less than 5% use computers at agency offices to access service.

PROGRAM COST
This program was originally funded by a Maternal and Child Health Bureau grant. Additionally, participating programs in Utah (e.g. Medicaid, WIC, etc.) contribute a portion of the annual funds needed to maintain Utah Clicks. As the UAS developer, Utah State University agreed to host the original version of the project and negotiations are now being made for the Utah Information Technology branch to take over as host to the program.

The original four year grant budget of $660,000 supported the initial development, pilot testing and launching of the UAS. Project staff devoted to the UAS portion of the grant includes one part time program expert and two part-time computer programmers.

ASSETS & CHALLENGES
Assets
- A growing number of consumers now look first to the Internet to locate information and to buy services, so there was some evidence that families would use the UAS technology.

Challenges
- Utah is experiencing budget cuts which continue to make it difficult for state programs to find money to maintain Utah Clicks.
- The next challenge is to measure the cost savings afforded via the online application/submission process, e.g. reductions in paper and mailing costs, reduced need for frontline staff, etc.

LESSONS LEARNED
- Family participation in the development of this online tool was critically important to the success of the UAS.
- Consumer feedback is an important part of influencing agencies to participate in this program. Due to strong consumer advocacy for the UAS, more and more agency partners are requesting that their paperwork be added to the system.

FUTURE STEPS
Utah has now adopted Utah Clicks and is underwriting its continuation and maintenance via blended interagency funding.

COLLABORATIONS
Parents, state and local program staff for multiple agencies, and evaluators were involved throughout the grant cycle. State programs which are included as part of the Utah Clicks program are: Medicaid, CSHCN, WIC, Baby Your Baby, Early Intervention, Division of Services for Persons with Disabilities, Part B Preschool, Mental Health, and Head Start. Although not all of these partners’ paperwork/application is currently available via Utah Clicks, their collaboration has been vital for the success and promotion of Utah Clicks.

PEER REVIEW & REPLICATION
There was no peer review of the program at the time of submission.

Indiana and Oregon are in the process of replicating the UAS (Oregon Clicks and Indiana WINS) to help consumers complete and submit applications in their states.

RESOURCES PROVIDED
To get more information about this program, visit: www.utahclicks.org

Key words: Service Integration, Access to Healthcare, CSHCN

**For more information about programs included in AMCHP’s Innovation Station database, contact bp@amchp.org. Please be sure to include the title of the program in the subject heading of your email**