NCJA State Justice Information Sharing Exchange with the White House PM-ISE

Held in Conjunction with the National Criminal Justice Forum
Breckenridge, Colorado

Thursday, August 12, 2014

On August 12, 2014, the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) hosted a dialogue between CEOS of State Criminal Justice Planning Agencies Administrators (SAAs) and justice information sharing leaders from five states, along with Mike Howell, deputy program manager for the White House Information Sharing Environment (PM-ISE), and representatives from other national level service provider organizations. During the 90-minute session, held in conjunction with the National Forum on Criminal Justice, Howell provided background on PM-ISE and its new initiative, Project Interoperability, which leverages existing tools, standards and former implementations to advance responsible justice information sharing.

Since 9/11, PM-ISE has been promoting federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and international information sharing related to counterterrorism, weapons of mass destruction and homeland security. That is how PM-ISE came to work on projects like the National Suspicious Activity Reporting initiative, and the establishment of the national network Fusion Centers that use those exchanges. Mr. Howell advised that PM-ISE has recognized that there significant progress and commonality in the issues facing information sharing environments (ISEs) in the states, and would like to know how PM-ISE can help states, and help states help each other. "We want to find the people who have tools that are useful to each other, find people who are trying to solve the same problems, and catalyze collaboration. Basically, PM-ISE is not an operational place; we are not going to build the solutions you need, we are trying to help you find each other and work with each other."

Two years ago PM-ISE began working on an interoperability framework that falls into three categories:

1) *Technical Tools*. PM-ISE took the architecture framework for information sharing and broke it down into component tools such as ID credentials and access management and NIEM.

2) *Management.* This category includes administrative concepts such as governance, policy, budgeting, performance management, and stakeholder engagement that other states could benefit from. 3) *Mission*. Addresses the business need; Identification of the problems to be solved with management and technical tools

Leaders from Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan and New Jersey each shared information about one justice information sharing (JIS) implementation underway in their states and resulting solutions or tools that could be reused to promote interoperability regionally or across state lines. They also addressed challenges and lessons learned along the way. Summaries of these experiences are provided below.

Alabama

As in other states, a significant portion of Alabama's criminal justice-involved population has a substance abuse addiction, mental health disorder, or both. The Alabama Secure Sharing Utility for Recidivism Reduction (ASSURE) project administered through the Alabama Information Services Division will improve the continuity of care for persons with substance abuse and mental health issues who are entering or leaving a detention setting or are under community supervision. ASSURE facilitates lawful and timely health information exchanges between and among the myriad of criminal justice and physical and behavioral health agencies. Through this project, Alabama has produced a Project Charter, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and Privacy and Civil Liberties Policy, as well as a uniform consent form and registry. Through this implementation, the State of Alabama is using and consequently enhancing, national justice information sharing standards. Among other national justice information sharing standards or Global Standards Package solutions, ASSURE is using the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) to build their exchanges and the Global Federated Identify and Privilege Management (GFIPM) so consumers can use existing credentials to access the system. Enhancements to these tools, made to mostly to meet the needs of the health community, will benefit future implementations. A summary of the ASSURE project highlighting business problems, reusability factors, benefits and outcomes, and lessons learned is available here.

Colorado

For some time, Colorado has had a combined justice information system accessible to all key law enforcement and criminal justice system practitioners. The Colorado Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (CICJIS) is an integrated computer information system that links five state-level criminal justice agencies--law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and adult and juvenile corrections-- to create one virtual criminal justice information system. CICJIS was one of the early adopters of NIEM, receiving the Best of NIEM award in 2009.

One of the challenges the agency faces is providing other entities, such as substance abuse or mental health treatment personnel, access to a closed-system environment originally designed primarily for law enforcement purposes. They also do not currently link to the state's Department of Education, and this continues to be an issue. Community corrections also developed their own case management system, but it does not interact with other systems. The state also implemented a sex offender registration system (SORNA) that needs to be publically accessible in order to comply with the Adam Walsh Act. In response, CICJIS is implementing new services and systems in an effort to comply with new laws and the needs of different agencies. Unfortunately, these are typically stand-alone components to fit particularized needs to respond to a federal or local request. It was further noted that, in addition to technology, policies and practices continue to pose a barrier to information sharing. For example, schools may not want to report violent incidents. Colorado has a fusion center and the major metropolitan departments share a records management system (RMS). CICJIS opened the RMS to the state, but smaller departments found that costs significantly outweighed the benefits of using the system.

Illinois

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) is structured to be the host and coordinator for information sharing in the state. Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed an Executive Order to establish the Illinois Data Exchange Coordinating Council (IDECC) in April 2014, following the ICJIA's two-year effort to educate and train leaders and practitioners in the state on the benefits of the national information sharing tools and standards available today that make exchanging critical information much easier and more secure. In 2006, Illinois was one of the leaders in the area of justice information sharing but, due to the loss of a couple key champions, the initiative lost momentum. As a result, ICJIA was faced with regaining buy-in and momentum to reestablish a statewide justice information sharing initiative. ICJIA has used IDECC as the catalyst for a multi-jurisdictional, cross-discipline, initiative that will improve offender reentry by creating two-way data exchange between the Illinois Department of Corrections and two pilot counties. The exchange will use tools of the Global Standards Package and will be replicable in the state's remaining 100 counties.

Michigan

The Michigan State Police (MSP) serves as the SAA and among other divisions, oversees the Grants and Community Services Division and Criminal Justice Information Center. Among other responsibilities, the MSP is the host for submitting all Suspicious Activity Reports (SARS) to the shared portal, e-Guardian, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Homeland Security. Michigan was one of the first states to use the shared space and e-guardian. The agency's current challenge is that the tools provided to local agencies to conduct research or submit SAR information creates additional work for the officer on the street and is not used. To address the challenge, MSP purchased a more user friendly case management system that was formerly administered by Saginaw County Sheriff's Department, and is now housed in MSP's Criminal Justice Information Center. They have been piloting the system for about a year now and estimate that roughly 65 of the 650 police departments in the state are using the system. The system provides better functionality and is cost-effective for participating departments. Upfront licensing costs and the first year of participating fees ($200/per year per officer) are covered. Currently, efforts are underway to bring on the larger police departments in the state.

The Tenth Circuit Court in Saginaw County, in collaboration with MSP, recently implemented a Saginaw Justice System Risk Assessment and Case Management Project. Through this implementation, Saginaw County designed and implemented a process to gather, share and use validated objective juvenile and youthful offender risk and needs assessment. Global Reference Architecture Components and NIEM standards were used in this process. The Tenth Circuit Court also participates in a multijurisdictional juvenile justice data sharing initiative that is a component of Michigan Juvenile Justice 20/20, and lead by the Twentieth Circuit Court, Juvenile Services. It was noted that with 83 counties in Michigan and roughly 82 separate systems for courts, guidance from the State Court Administrator's Office could likely expedite information sharing in the state.

It was also noted that courts are a big target of opportunity for standardizing, automating and facilitating the sharing of information. "It would be interesting to know how many states have a strong,

unified, central administration of their court system versus those unified in name only perhaps vs those that aren't unified at all."

New Jersey

The SAA in New Jersey is a big supporter of the New Jersey Corr-Stat Information Sharing initiative. The overall goal of this initiative is to enhance public safety, prevention, and response efforts to intercept or reduce the impact of potential terrorist or criminal events. The initiative provides law enforcement, public safety and private sector communities with the information needed to better understand the environment, including threats and hazards. The New Jersey ISE is led by the Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC) and is governed by the leadership of the state police, Office of Homeland Security Preparedness, Office of Information Technology and ROIC Executive Committee with support from New Jersey executive stakeholders and other partners within the safety, justice, and information sharing communities. The New Jersey Corr-Stat Information Sharing initiative will leverage a common operating model that is based on the Shared Space environment developed as the platform for the National SARS Initiative. It will promote information sharing by enabling the free flow of information in support of statewide law enforcement, homeland security and emergency management systems to prevent, mitigate, respond to investigate and recover from crime and all man-made natural disasters. A summary of the NJ Corr-Stat NJ Information Sharing Solutions initiative highlighting business problems, reusability factors, global solutions, reusability factors, benefits and outcomes and lessons learned is available here.

For More Information

Alabama, Michigan and New Jersey have received funding through the U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance to advance justice information sharing efforts. More information about these three implementations and other BJA funded JIS initiatives are available on BJA's website. Additional resources and artifacts are also available to other states wishing to pursue similar exchanges through the Justice Information Sharing Network document repository.

Observations

- Role of SAA:
  - Many SAAS are major supporters of JIS; they attend CJIS meetings and pursue funding but do not have to know the technical details of the JIS.
  - One often overlooked need is for information sharing to support planning and decision-making. It was noted that SAAs are interested in having the information they need to make funding decisions, conduct evaluations, and support successful programs. Said one meeting attendee, "Chief Executives are better able to make critical decisions when they are provided with all pertinent and timely information. While operational needs of fusion centers and cops on the streets are important, the same architecture that provides operational data can also support other uses of that information."
- There have been significant advancement in standards and tools, and implementation is not as difficult as it was for initial implementers.

- All states have limits on what justice information can be shared in-state or interstate Information Sharing is limited by the CJIS Security Policy.
- All practitioners want Single Sign On (SSO) capabilities. Good examples of GFIPM implementation can be found on the [Office of Justice Programs website](#).
- Courts are a target for opportunities for standardizing, automating and facilitating the sharing of information. "It would be interesting to know how many states have a strong, unified, central administration of their court system versus those unified in name only perhaps versus those that aren't unified at all."
- From the Human Trafficking Focus Group: It was noted during the focus group, participants identified the need to do a better job of getting the corrections, law enforcement, and social services programs to work together and exchange information.

Addressing and Understanding HIPPA, 42 CFR part 22, FERPA

- One resource that is needed is someone who understands, HIPPA which is significant when talking to human services practitioners. There is a desire for more subject matter experts (SMEs) who understand where and how HIPPA applies to technology. Everyone will struggle with medical information, privacy, and the policies and security around it.
- It was noted that Pennsylvania has a robust health exchange.
- The consent/waiver process is a good short term solution for some of these sharing problems but a long term solution at the operational level would be to have the federal leaders get their heads together (AG, Heads of HHS and so forth) and properly define what is required from HIPPA and 42 CFR part 22 and FERPA. Tips for Building Buy-in
- Provide education and training until you reach a tipping point.
- Find returns on investments and use those as tools to get attention.
- People are generally risk adverse; it is helpful to see examples of successful implementations and build buy-in through a preponderance of the evidence. BJA packages on Alabama, Michigan, New Jersey implementations provide examples for describing the problem to be solved and the proposed solution. Case studies should be posted online and available.
- Invite court personnel to the Forum and bring them into these discussions. Need to address sustainability; it was noted implementations can lose momentum when leadership changes.

Suggestions for sustainability:

- Need executive sponsorship and leadership. If a jurisdiction prefers to use its own products in lieu of state-sponsored ones, the state can standardize exchanges to access the information.
- In Michigan, there is a message from the Governor: whatever is done will be more efficient and, therefore, more effective. MSP has a strategic plan that is posted on their website that guides the direction of their activities with deadlines; leadership could change tomorrow but the strategic plan does not change.
- In some states, Executive Orders stand until cancelled by their successors.

- It is important to not only to obtain OMB funding, but also to start the initiative before an administrative change.

Peer-to-peer learning:

There was agreement that there is a benefit in getting state teams involved in information sharing together. New Jersey stakeholders benefitted from peer-to-peer learning from their fusion center experience. Tom O'Reilly would like to host a meeting in New Jersey with their ISE and representatives from 6-7 other states to talk and learn from each other and facilitate peer-to-peer mentoring. It would be beneficial to host more peer-to-peer dialogues like this. States share common problems and can help each other solve those problems. PM-ISE requested to be part of that.

There are three components which were identified through this peer-to-peer experience that are essential for successful justice information sharing implementations: Successful initiatives are that: 1) address a real crime problem; 2) have senior leadership and a good governance model; and 3) adopt and use national JIS standards.

Knowledge portal/repository:

PM-ISE would like to develop a knowledge portal/repository where information is provided in one place where collaboration sites like JISP and IIR can be accessed and resources "stitched" together.

NCJA Action Steps

Work with the NCJA State Justice Information Sharing Committee members and, where necessary, identify resources to:

- Host more peer–to-peer learning opportunities with SAAs and other state decision-makers to discuss the state of information sharing environments, issues, replicable strategies and lessons learned (convene 6-7 states representing various disciplines).
- Summarize information about the state of information sharing environments and produce state profiles.
- Continue to educate and provide training to SAAs through webinars, summaries (similar to BJA JIS implementation summaries), information distributed through websites and social media, and articles in the NCJA *Justice Bulletin*. Potential topics:
    o PM-ISE's Interoperability Framework: What is it and What's in it for Me?
    o JIS Implementations Using Standards (Case Studies): KS, AL, MI, NJ
    o Addressing and Understanding HIPPA, 42 CFR Part 22, FERPA
    o Information Sharing for Planning, Decision-making and Sustainability Access and Credential Management—What It is and Where It's Working: Tools for Implementation.
- Encourage other criminal justice partners, such as court officials, to attend the National Forum on Criminal Justice and state informational exchange sessions.
- Work with PM-ISE to develop collaboration portal to share resources.