This document summarizes the engagement undertaken by Alliant Consulting Inc. to conduct a business process review related to use of the MnCHOICES tool as used for intake and assessment by lead agencies across the state.

**Engagement Objectives and Deliverables:**

The outcomes of this engagement include:
1. Documentation of the commonly agreed upon vision for goals and objectives of the MnCHOICES application
2. Document recommended changes to business processes
3. Lead agency feedback will be documented, including ideas for improvement in process which will serve as draft requirements for MnCHOICES 2.0
4. Business processes needing more explanation or enhanced training will be identified
5. Summarized and prioritized business requirements for MnCHOICES 2.0

Objectives:
- Reexamine original goals and gain agreement on updated vision, goals and objectives of MnCHOICES application
- Understand the barriers to consistent use and achievement of the goals and objectives of MnCHOICES in the “as is” environment
- Garner and document feedback on general usability, performance, workflow and technical issues by directly reaching out to users for their input to achieve a level of understanding through discussion

All of the objectives have been accomplished and documentation provided to Lori Miller and Rita Chamberlin for future reference and use. The approach and outcomes of the work are summarized in the attached “Update to Leadership”, dated 10-31-2016.

The following is a high-level summary of the engagement approach, key findings and recommendations. The feedback received from focus groups is summarized below and detailed comments are included in the Complement Document to the Summary of MnCHOICES 2.0 Business Process Review.

This information will serve as the basis for development of design recommendations for MnCHOICES 2.0 and where possible, improvements in 1.0.

The next phase of work to be completed is detailed change design and planning. During the focus groups, DSD staff solicited volunteers to participate in the redesign process, by providing input to format and content change recommendations to address the barriers identified. They will play an integral role in the development of redesign specifications along with DHS policy subject matter experts and MN.IT.
OBJECTIVES OF REDESIGN – MnCHOICES 2.0

- Redesign the tool to mitigate barriers to its use and to consistent outcomes
- Better support person-centered planning and adherence to state and federal mandates, including inter-rater reliability

APPROACH

1. Internal team reviewed and updated the vision and objectives of the Intake and Assessment process
2. Conducted focus groups with 84 lead agencies (83 counties and 1 tribe), and received input from one more county
   - 16 sites, 3 focus groups per site: Intake workers, Assessors, Supervisors/Managers
   - Participants included: intake workers, assessors, case managers, care coordinators, mentors, supervisors, managers, directors
   - Organized detailed feedback to identify priorities, feedback themes, and design features

FINDINGS

Barriers to use of the Tool:

1. The tool is organized in a way that inhibits person-centered practice and experience
   - Difficulty in completing the tool while interviewing people and observing their circumstances:
     - Too many fields to be entered
     - Flow of data entry is not aligned or able to flex with natural communication flow
     - Many assessors are uncomfortable typing while interviewing - prefer handwriting
   - Too many questions that seem redundant, or inappropriate for the person being interviewed (e.g. why am I asking someone in hospice about their interest in employment)

2. The tool poses significant inter-rater reliability and time-wasting challenges
   - Language used in the tool is inconsistent and lacks clarity- leaving the assessor unsure as to how and where to document information. Slows down the process and impacts inter-rater reliability
   - Questions asking for judgment rather than descriptive responses- lead to inconsistent outcomes and lack of documented rationale for decisions

3. Significant technical issues disrupt the assessment process and make tool use difficult
   - Unreliable technical performance: slow response, freezing, data loss
   - Inability to save data and close the file, then reopen without losing work completed
   - Lacks features to organize and flag work status
   - Lack of effective interface with other critical systems: limited, cumbersome and unreliable interface with SWNDX. Lacks useful & needed data such as MA status.
Summary of MnCHOICES 2.0 Design Requirements Business Process Review
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Intake Process:
1. Lead agencies are not structured similarly to handle intake
   - Not all have an intake area
   - Staffed by people from office support to professionals
   - Various protocols to responding to constituents
   - Use a variety of tools to document the intake information
2. MnCHOICES is not tool of choice for most lead agencies (seen as redundant to agency’s primary Intake tool)
   - Less than 5 indicated that they use MnCHOICES as the intake tool as intended
   - Result: turnaround times for assessment scheduling are not accurately represented in the system for performance measurement

Assessment Process:
1. Roles and functions are not clear nor consistent across the state, leading to confusion about how to use the tool- lead agencies seek greater clarity around state expectations
2. People tend to use the format of the tool as their discussion guide. That was not the intention of the tool, and the tool is not proving to be an effective discussion guide
3. There is a sense that the tool makes the assessment process too lengthy and overly burdensome for all involved
4. Assessors are not generally “running eligibility” in the field, often are taking notes as well as working in the program, then going to back to the office and entering information to be able to complete their work.
5. The combination of unclear language in the questions and response selections and a lack of training on programs and resources result in hesitance to run eligibility before checking back with supervisors/colleagues/Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to be sure they have it right and can provide accurate feedback to the recipient.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Required features and attributes of tool redesign - Conditions of Satisfaction:
- Eliminate redundancies- streamline to support focus of the assessment purpose and plan development (end product)
- Allow natural, person-centered interview and communication style- free form note-taking (electronic pen or typing);
- Tool must be useful for novice and experienced user; edit language and provide guidance to improve inter-rater reliability
- Separate criteria for quality and eligibility to support assessment work in the person’s home being completed during in-person interview (ideally no more than 2 hours)
- Develop tailored, (age-specific/MCO) variations of the tool
- Address technical deficits: spell check, consistent formatting, write-to –text, search/auto-populate, alerts/statuses, workload and management reporting, saving of versions, off-line functionality- stability, reliability, increased speed and responsiveness
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- Eliminate redundancies…Streamline or pare down to support focus of assessment purpose and its end product (plan development). Something about policy/business making it shorter or more focused to the purpose – staying in scope.

Documents provided to DHS:
Excel File: MnCHOICES 2.0 Focus Group Feedback Detailed
Excel File: MnCHOICES 2.0 Focus Group Feedback Unanimous
PowerPoint: Leadership MnCHOICES 2.0 Phase 1 10 31 FINAL
PowerPoint: MnCHOICES 2.0 BPR CSWG-11-4 FINAL
Word: MC2.0 One Page Findings Summary-Final
Word: MC 2.0 Vision mtg 6 FINAL VISION NOTES 7 19 2016

Folders- containing meeting notes:
Internal Alignment Meetings (where vision was developed)
Health Plans (Coordinating meetings with Health Plans)
Regional Focus Groups (Planning/notes)
Sponsor Updates
Weekly Updates