Understanding VOCA Data and Building Partnerships

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Problem statement
The data collected from service providers receiving funding under the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) through the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS), receive limited attention in terms of quality and completeness, and have been utilized in only narrow capacities to understand the nature and impact of the programs being funded to serve crime victims across Wisconsin. This project provided the opportunity for the development of a partnership project between OCVS as the VOCA Administrator and the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) in Wisconsin, as a way to better understand the existing VOCA data and utilize it to examine trends and monitor the expenditure of funds across the state. This project also sets the stage for future data collection, analysis, and reporting to enhance the tools and information currently collected by OCVS.

OCVS, in conjunction with the Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis (BJIA), which serves as the SAC for Wisconsin, wanted to build capacity to collect and use quality, meaningful data for the VOCA subgrants awarded annually to victim service providers across the state. To effectively manage the VOCA funds, it is not only essential to collect data as a means for compliance with federal reporting requirements, but the data should also be analyzed and incorporated into planning and evaluation at the state and local levels. The ability to collect quality data rests on a sound data collection process that takes the inherent burden of data management, as well as the nature of victim services, into account. OCVS has been concerned about the quality and relevance of the data reported and recognizes that VOCA data could be better incorporated into a comprehensive grant planning and review process. Considering the large amount of funding provided to VOCA subgrantees, having a robust process for collecting and analyzing the data on the various services provided to victims is critical to helping ensure that the funds are well spent and address the needs of victims across Wisconsin.

OCVS does not collect separate state or local quantitative VOCA data beyond what is required for federal reporting. This project provided a starting point to understand the data currently being collected and helped to develop a plan for future data collection to enhance the quality and utility of the VOCA data. The two main
systems where subgrantees report victim service data are the Office for Victims of Crime Performance Measurement Tool (OVC PMT) and the Wisconsin Department of Justice’s Egrants system.

**OVC PMT:** On October 1, 2015 Wisconsin VOCA subgrantees began collecting the Office of Crime Victim Services Performance Measurement Tool (OVC PMT) data, which was a departure from the data previously collected by the subgrantees. There are currently 117 VOCA subgrantees throughout Wisconsin. Data currently collected through the OVC PMT includes victim demographics, victimization type, and services provided. For the past two years, OCVS has reviewed OVC PMT data in a limited capacity, but has not thoroughly analyzed it to understand the quality and completeness of the data, as well as to understand overall trends and patterns across subgrantees. In addition, OCVS does not currently require any additional data beyond what is included in the OVC PMT reporting.

**Egrants:** Egrants is the web-based grant management system utilized by the Wisconsin Department of Justice to track both federal and state grants. OCVS utilizes Egrants to manage the fiscal and programmatic aspects of the VOCA subgrants. OCVS collects qualitative data from subgrantees in the form of open-ended narrative questions on a quarterly basis. In addition, OCVS tracks the amount of funds expended and if it is attaining the federal requirement where 10 percent of the grant should be allocated to each of these categories of victims: sexual assault, domestic abuse, child abuse, and underserved. OCVS has only reviewed and used this data in a limited capacity as well.

OCVS and BJIA worked collaboratively to identify areas of improvement in the data collection and analysis process in order to improve the accuracy, relevance, and usefulness of the data collected on the activities and services of VOCA subgrantees. In turn, improved data can be of better use for the purpose of program and grant management at both the state and local level. Doing so helps support data-driven, and evidence-based decisions regarding resource allocation and victim services. Additionally, increasing capacity to analyze reported data will
improve victim services throughout the state by identifying gaps in services and providing an understanding of current victims served. Once this foundation is further laid for the VOCA subgrants, OCVS anticipates that it can begin to combine the VOCA program data with other system data (VAWA, Crime Victim Compensation, law enforcement, courts, etc.) to form a more complete picture of victim services and victimization in Wisconsin. Given the role of the SAC in collecting and analyzing data from multiple points in the system, this project has formed a relationship that has the potential to lead to future partnership efforts between the SAC and OCVS on the analysis and reporting of data related to victim services.

**Methodology**
The SAC used multiple methods to gain an understanding of the VOCA data collection process and to determine areas of improvement in terms of data collection, analysis, use for grant management, and dissemination. The project consisted of semi-structured focus groups, analyzing the VOCA data currently collected, reviewing the current data collection mechanisms, creating data dashboards, drafting recommendations for OCVS as to how the process could be improved, and developing a post-project plan.

**Focus Groups**
Project staff met with a local stakeholder to receive an overview of Osnium, a case management system for victim service providers that is in widespread use in the state. The overview provided project staff insight into the data many subgrantees collect, how they enter it, how the underlying database is structured, and, lastly, the reporting functionality for extracting that data for reporting purposes. The overview also provided staff with important context during focus groups where participants discussed the strengths and limitations of their case management systems and the processes they use to convert case-level records into PMT data.

Staff organized and conducted six semi-structured focus groups around the state. Staff began this process by conducting an interest survey among all 117 VOCA subgrantees in the state. This was done by emailing
subgrantees a letter that provided an overview of the project, outlined the purpose of the focus groups within the broader project, and included a link to a web-based survey. The survey gauged general interest in attending the focus groups, as well as preferred dates and locations. Based on the responses, staff determined that six focus groups would be sufficient to allow most interested subgrantees to attend while also keeping individual events to a manageable size. Over a two week period staff conducted a total of six focus group discussions in Milwaukee, Appleton, Wausau, Eau Claire, and Madison (two sessions). Staff used Cvent, a meeting management site, to organize participant registration for each group. The registration email requested that no more than two or three people attend per agency in order to ensure participants came from a variety of agencies. All subgrantees, not simply those who expressed interest, received links to register for the events.

The groups were held over two weeks, with each group lasting about three and a half hours. There were 85 focus group participants across the six sessions. Specific questions, attendance counts, and general timing of the groups can be found in Appendices A and B. The questions focused on how participants currently collect data and what they do with the data collected. Attendees were also asked what they like and do not like about various data collection systems, what they would like to see different, and if what is collected is an accurate representation of the services they provide. SAC staff facilitated each group while an OCVS staff member wrote various responses, such as pros and cons of different systems, on flip charts during the discussion. An additional SAC staff member and an OCVS staff member each took detailed notes. The participants shared insights not only on how VOCA data collection could be improved but also on the quality of the data currently collected.

Participants discussed definitions that were unclear, data elements that were confusing, and items they know they are not counting or calculating correctly. A staff member from OCVS and a staff member from the SAC each individually reviewed all notes from the focus groups and organized them into common themes. The outcomes can be found in the resulting thematic analysis report included in Appendix C. OCVS plans to disseminate the report to subgrantees and stakeholders.
SAC Recommendations for OCVS
SAC staff created recommendations for OCVS related to VOCA data collection and use of data for grant management. These recommendations were informed by the outcomes of project activities such as the focus groups and data analysis, as well as by reviewing the OVC directions and definitions for submitting PMT data, Egrants questions, and what other states collect from VOCA subgrantees. The recommendations document includes multiple sections related to various aspects of VOCA data collection and grants management functions that OCVS heads as the administering agency. SAC staff individually created recommendations and then the ideas were merged and organized into one final recommendations document. Takeaways from the recommendations are in the results section and the full recommendations are in Appendix F.

Data Analysis and Data Dashboards
SAC staff conducted an extensive analysis of existing VOCA data. Existing data can be broadly dichotomized into the quantitative information reported in the PMT system and the largely qualitative program reporting data collected in the DOJ Egrants system. The PMT can be further broken down into the Subgrantee Award Report or SAR which contains fiscal information including award amount and funding allocation by category and the PMT quarterly data which consists largely of counts of services rendered and persons served within various service categories and victim classifications. This part of the project provided SAC staff extensive experience with the data OCVS currently has available related to VOCA subgrantees and positioned them to make specific recommendations on how workflows could be streamlined and automated, as well as how the resulting data could be refined to either be made more useful or less noisy. Specific recommendations appear in the recommendations report as well as in the data quality report.

Thorough analysis of egrants data was a priority because OCVS has authority over the information collected in Egrants and can readily implement any proposed changes. Analysis of qualitative program reporting information was done using R and included word clouds, as well as simple analysis of response length by question and by
subgrantee. In addition, subgrantee responses were examined for similarity across quarters using the Jaccard similarity coefficient; these scores were also averaged by question. In all, this analysis provided OCVS with a sampling of tools that they can implement to both better understand, in broad quantitative terms, the content of current Egrants data as well as identify potential revisions and additions to the data collection instrument.

An additional goal was the creation of data dashboards using the quantitative PMT data. Dashboards were created using both SAR as well as quarterly PMT reports. There were two basic goals served by this process. The first was data quality – OCVS requested maintainable tools to assist them in identifying erroneous or suspect PMT and SAR data points. Second, OCVS desired tools to visualize the existing data so that they can examine trends over time as well as across space both at the program level and at the level of individual subgrantees. All products were created with a sustainable workflow to ensure that OCVS can maintain and update the dashboards in the future; hand coding data was kept to a minimum. Samples of the dashboards are included in the data quality report in Appendix D and a demonstration of the full set of dashboards can be provided upon request.

SAC staff also used SAR data to develop a simple infographic that outlines the overarching goals of this project and provides some simple statistics on VOCA services and funding around the state. Data behind the infographic were drawn from the interactive dashboards and can be readily updated each project year. The infographic is included in Appendix E.

**Results**

**Focus groups**

Six regional focus groups were conducted with 85 total participants. Major themes are below and further results can be found in Appendix C.
Subgrantees were asked about their data collection process. Most subgrantees shared that much of their data starts out on paper and is then entered either into a spreadsheet or case management system. A few subgrantees stated that data is directly entered into their case management system to start. When it is time for quarterly PMT reporting, subgrantees run reports out of their case management system or use a spreadsheet to figure out their counts to report. Several subgrantees feel they do not trust their case management system or do not understand how the reports are produced and so they keep a separate record in a spreadsheet to cross check numbers prior to reporting. There was interest in having a web-based, user-friendly records management system that has easily understandable reports that are simple to run.

To further understand their data collection process, subgrantees were asked about what information they collect. Many subgrantees indicated they collect a lot of information such as victim and family information/demographics, perpetrator information, services provided and those not provided, referrals, as well as many other activities. However, given that many subgrantees have multiple funding sources, they are asked to collect similar information in different ways. For example, one funder might ask for race to be collected one way and another funder might ask for different race categories. Subgrantees find this issue to be particularly burdensome. In addition, subgrantees were asked when they collect their data. While many subgrantees take notes when speaking with victims, when that information gets put in electronic form or entered into their case management system varies from agency to agency. Some subgrantees said that this process surely means that a portion of the data “gets lost,” especially crisis call data. When asked if agencies check their data for accuracy, given many believe there are issues with data quality, most participants said they check to see if the numbers “look right” at the time of quarterly reporting and do not do much beyond that.

Subgrantees were then asked what they like and dislike about the current required reporting systems, OVC PMT and Egrants. Subgrantees find OVC PMT to not be too overly complex, enjoy that it is web-based, and has some built in validations. However, they would prefer that the data collected in OVC PMT better capture service
complexity/intensity rather than just simple counts of services provided or people served. They also identified several data elements or definitions that they found to be confusing, vague, or otherwise problematic. For example, subgrantees expressed confusion over which contacts could truly be considered anonymous or why the age groupings are defined such that most service recipients fall into a single age category. For a more detailed list of subgrantee concerns see the focus group report in Appendix C.

Since subgrantees think OVC PMT does not capture everything they do, they appreciate that Egrants has qualitative questions where they can provide a narrative about their services that gives context to the numbers. As for the content of the questions, some mentioned that answering the same questions every quarter feels repetitive, and they often lack new information to add. They would also like OCVS to provide feedback on their responses.

Lastly, subgrantees were asked about if and how they use their VOCA data. The majority of subgrantees do not use their VOCA data for anything other than required reporting purposes. They expressed that VOCA data, as it is reported in the PMT, is of limited use to them because it reflects only a fraction of what they do as an agency. The data reflect only the activities supported by VOCA dollars. While most are not using their VOCA data alone, many are using all of their data combined across funding sources and program areas in order to improve their agencies such as:

- To identify trends in needs, clients, and services;
- Compare services and resource allocation for agency restructuring and hiring;
- Share service characteristics and needs with community stakeholders in the form of newsletters, press releases, annual reports, and presentations; and
- Present organizational need for other grant funding opportunities, prevention efforts, fundraisers, and for inter-agency collaboration.

Much of the subgrantees feedback was used to inform the SAC’s recommendations for OCVS as to how the VOCA data collection, data dissemination, and data use for grant management processes can be improved, such
as additional training and identifying additional data that could capture outcomes and impacts. These recommendations are listed in detail in the recommendations document included in Appendix F.

**Data Analysis**

Project staff completed an infographic that can be disseminated to subgrantees and stakeholders. It provides a quick snapshot of SAR data that does not require subgrantees read a complex report. During focus groups, subgrantees stated they want to see products of the data they enter and this was a first step in making VOCA data more available. SAR data was used from the 2017 project year. Most victims served were white, female, and between the ages of 25 and 59. The top two victim populations by funding allocation were domestic/family violence (34%) and child abuse (28%). Of the underserved population, which is 21% of the funding allocation, the top two victimizations by funding allocation were adults molested as children (35%) and elder abuse (17%). The infographic can be found in Appendix E.

As described in the methods section, the analysis of existing data – Egrants and PMT – was done using a mixture of Tableau dashboards and R analysis. The full set of conclusions from the data quality report are not presented here but are available in the data quality report in Appendix D and also made their way into the recommendations document SAC staff provided OCVS. Those documents can be reviewed for detailed findings; general results are summarized below.

Aside from fiscal data, the information entered in Egrants consists of narrative responses. These data are useful to provide context to the numbers reported in the PMT and provide OCVS staff a window into the activities, impacts, successes, and challenges subgrantees face. At the same time, however, the qualitative data are difficult to summarize in a manner that enables OCVS staff to make broad generalizations about these topics. A key recommendation is to include quantitative or close-ended questions in the program reports. Additional data elements collected could also focus specifically on outcomes and impacts to supplement the PMT’s focus on subgrantee outputs. SAC staff created sample word clouds and tables of frequent word pairs (n-grams) that may
be useful to assist OCVS in drawing generalizations from the narrative responses. These could be calculated for each subgrantee, or for each question. If these materials are found to be informative the process used to create them has been streamlined into a reproducible and extensible workflow. Analysis of the Egrants data also suggested that some questions need to be revised and that subgrantees need specific guidance on how to answer these questions. Some subgrantees tended to write much longer responses to questions than others – most responses were no more than two or three hundred words but some responses were as much as ten times longer. A related issue is that some subgrantees appeared comfortable recycling most or all of their narrative response to a question from one quarter to the next while others did not. This creates redundancy for OCVS staff reviewing this information which they have already seen. On the other hand, if, say, the challenges an agency faces have not changed from one quarter to the next then expecting that subgrantees devise unique responses each quarter creates an unnecessary and frustrating reporting burden. By reducing reporting frequency, altering questions to elicit clear, concise, and maximally informative responses, and providing guidance and examples of appropriate responses, OCVS can potentially improve the utility of Egrants data for program management purposes. A secondary benefit is a reduced workload for OCVS staff who no longer have to read responses that turn out to be duplicative, unduly long, or otherwise not insightful. It also has the benefit of clarifying the process for subgrantees and hopefully increasing the effectiveness of their reporting, while also streamlining their reporting burden. Revising the current questions is part of the post-project work planned between the SAC and OCVS.

The PMT data – both SAR and quarterly program reports – were examined using the dashboards created for OCVS. Review of the data indicated revisions or clarifications to the definitions of agency designation and service area would improve the utility of the SAR data. There is also an apparent discrepancy between the total funds awarded in the SAR report and the sum of the funds allocated to each service category; this is something under active review by OCVS. Additional data points in the SAR along with consistency in the service area definition
would better enable OCVS to examine the geographic allocation of funds and identify funding gaps. This is something OCVS may wish to explore with OVC or incorporate into planned Egrants revisions. The SAR workflow could also possibly be streamlined to reduce the likelihood of data entry errors and the reporting burden on subgrantees.

Examination of the quarterly program reports suggests that subgrantees are entering all service recipients as new service recipients in the first quarter; there is apparently a data validation in place that enforces this. However, under this reporting model we should expect a dramatic spike in the number of new service recipients in the first quarter of each year. This pattern was not observed for most subgrantees which suggests that new service recipients may be undercounted in the second, third, and fourth quarters. Alternatively, this pattern could indicate that the total service recipients is undercounted in the first quarter as a result of the requirement that new service recipients match total service recipients in that quarter. In any case, this reporting requirement should be revisited and, if retained, subgrantees may need assistance implementing it consistently and accurately in practice.

Additional dashboards enable OCVS to examine variation in the number of total service recipients to identify quarters where the number was unusually high or low relative to the median quarter. Standout growth or decline relative to the previous quarter can also be examined using these dashboards. A final data quality dashboard visualizes the range in the number of service recipients, both adjusted and unadjusted, to identify subgrantees with unusual variation in the number of reported service recipients. A series of visualizations was also created to examine the breakdown of services and service recipients by category and visualize these patterns over time. Victim type and special classification are also included in these dashboards. The goal with these products was to equip OCVS with tools to analyze the services and service recipient population of each subgrantee at a glance. This is something that could be shared with subgrantees or used by OCVS internally for program monitoring purposes or during site visits. Identification of unusual data patterns for a number of
subgrantees was an unexpected but welcome byproduct of these dashboards. Examples can be found in the full data quality report included in Appendix D.

Data export functionality could also be improved. For the SAR, the data export indicates which grant-years are funding each project but does not provide the distribution of project funds across the grant-years supporting it. This means that extensive hand coding of data is necessary to create a dashboard that enables OCVS to quickly determine the proportion of each grant-year’s funds allocated to each service category. The PMT quarterly program reports lack an export function that consists of all grantees’ program reports for the project year for all grantees at once. This means that all grantee quarterly reports must be exported each quarter and then merged into a single file to permit an analysis of trends over time. This process is complicated by changes in column order, names, and data elements across quarters.

**SAC Recommendations for OCVS**
SAC staff organized recommendations for OCVS into sections and the main takeaways are below. The complete recommendations document is in Appendix F.

*Egrants*: SAC staff suggest that OCVS revisit the qualitative questions asked of subgrantees. Revisions could improve the quality of responses received and in turn improve OCVS’ ability to use the responses in a meaningful way. Many subgrantees stated during focus groups that the questions seem redundant. The wording of the questions could be more specific so that they do not seem as redundant to subgrantees and so OCVS obtains responses that are not duplicative and are insightful, informative, and useful for project evaluation and oversight. It also seems subgrantees lack clear guidance on what expected responses look like. OCVS should provide instruction and/or example responses so subgrantees feel they understand what is expected and so response length and content are more consistent and meaningful.
OVC PMT: Many aspects of the OVC PMT are out of the control of OCVS, however, OCVS staff should consider editing and expanding the OVC PMT definitions to provide clarity for subgrantees. Many categories are unclear as to what the category is or what fits in it and it is also unclear how to report or count victims or services in the categories. Subgrantees vocalized these issues during focus groups and provided specific areas of common confusion. Another way to improve the quality of data reported via the OVC PMT is to review the Excel spreadsheet used by several subgrantees for basic tracking of the data that then gets entered into the OVC PMT. Staff should explore where validations or dropdowns could be implemented. This could be done for both the quarterly reports and the annual report.

In addition, the SAR worksheet requires agencies to identify an agency type or “designation”. There are four broad categories – government agencies, non-profits, tribal governments or agencies, and campus organizations. Within each category there are subcategories and these are not necessarily unique to each category. For example, both government and campus organizations can have law enforcement agencies. OCVS should work with subgrantees to develop definitions and guidelines for sorting agencies into the appropriate organization types. These fields represent a useful means to understand the allocation of grant funds but only if the categories are meaningfully distinguished and applied consistently across agencies. Similarly, the SAR data presents an opportunity to understand the geographic distribution of VOCA funds. The SAR requests that subgrantees “select the counties that cover the service area affected by the VOCA-funded program or project.” While this sounds simple, OCVS should develop clear definitions about service area. Should service area be based on the actual physical location of staff/facilities or the location of service recipients? How should call centers, whose recipients could be anywhere and whose location may be unknown, be handled? With absent answers to these questions the geographic data reported cannot be reliably used to determine the geographic allocation of VOCA funds.
Data collection and dissemination: Subgrantees want to see their data put to use. SAC staff created VOCA dashboards based on SAR/PMT data. These should be maintained and enhanced according to OCVS’ needs going forward. This data can be used for grant management purposes and to have improved accessibility to the data in order to share it with stakeholders. Additionally, OCVS staff should consider implementing a statewide data collection and reporting system for use by victim services agencies to enter client data. Currently, OCVS does not receive individual-level data. Doing so, or at a minimum providing a common system for agencies to use to collect the data on clients and services provided, would increase the capability to enhance evidence-based decision making at the state and local level, and would have several other benefits. A statewide system would allow collection of higher quality and more consistent data across agencies. A new system could have built in validations and dropdown lists, and staff could provide help documentation and in-person trainings or webinars. The results has the potential to be consistent and high quality data, less confusion for subgrantees surrounding data entry, and clarity on what their reports actually show. A statewide system would be less burdensome for subgrantees as it could be a cost-free solution, including no or minimal need for technical support on their end. There would be no need to hassle with customizations at the subgrantee level and less time investment than managing current reporting and case management options. It would also allow them to have fewer places where they enter data, something many subgrantees stressed they want during focus groups. The system should have built in, user friendly reports that are more readily accessible than their current capabilities to retrieve agency data and that address various program reporting requirements. These can be used for grant management, performance measurement and management, grant writing, dissemination/presentations to stakeholders, public relations purposes, and outreach and education. It would also be useful to have a flag for whether victims entered are VOCA funded so if users choose, all clients could be entered and subgrantees could run reports for all clients or just VOCA clients. Currently, many subgrantees do not use just their VOCA data for anything other than VOCA grant reporting purposes, so having reports they
could run for just VOCA reporting and also reports they could run for all clients would be a vast improvement. It would also allow flexibility in how the data could be provided to OCVS for future analysis and reporting. Initial requirements for such a system have been discussed and additional planning for a potential system are included in the post-project plan.

**Additional data:** OCVS should consider collecting quantitative information on outcomes and impacts for VOCA-funded programs. Capturing outcomes and impacts could be part of a larger performance measure creation initiative or could be their own addition. Capturing these additional elements would allow subgrantees and OCVS to be able to assess a wider portion of the VOCA goals. This cannot be done given the data elements that are currently reported. This richer collection would additionally aid grant management and VOCA data dissemination to multiple stakeholders. This type of information is often useful in helping agencies receive donations and funding.

There was also overwhelming feedback from the focus group participants about collecting data on the intensity and duration of victim services. Given that subgrantees widely recognize that current reporting fails to capture the duration or intensity of services provided, there could be good buy-in from subgrantees for additional data collection if it “filled in” these holes in the current reporting.

**Training:** OCVS staff should provide subgrantees with additional training on data collection and data entry in the OVC PMT and in Egrants, to instill the basic importance of data collection and its appropriate use. A mixed method of training (in person and webinars) would be beneficial. Additionally, having speaking spots at various state conferences could also be a good platform to increase the message of data importance to victim service providers.

OCVS staff could also benefit from training. Knowing the ins and outs of the OVC PMT would allow OCVS staff to better assist subgrantees and do more with the data collected. All staff members should be on the same page
regarding definitions and counting methodology. More familiarity with Egrants would also allow OCVS staff to enhance assistance to subgrantees, as well as allow staff to know what adjustments can and cannot be made to the system. Basic Tableau training for some OCVS staff would increase capacity to use VOCA data in decision making and for stakeholder outreach.

Support and enhance OCVS: OCVS should consider adding additional VOCA staff and clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of all VOCA staff. OCVS would benefit from having the capacity to thoroughly review programmatic reports and data on a regular basis. With more attention on what is being reported, staff could identify common issues and in turn enhance technical assistance, training capacity, and receive improved reports. During focus group discussions, subgrantees indicated that they especially want feedback about their qualitative reporting in Egrants. More in depth review of subgrantee reports and follow-up may increase the quality of reports and also bring out common problem areas to shape technical assistance and training efforts. Additional capacity would also enable OCVS to use both the qualitative and quantitative data collected for grant decision making, such as making funding decisions. Using the information reported by subgrantees to support decisions is consistent with an evidence-based approach to policy and funding decisions.

Additional staff or restructuring could also allow for the creation of report templates. These reports could be disseminated to subgrantees, stakeholders, and also internally. Many subgrantees expressed a desire to see that what they report is being used or they at least want access to meaningful reports generated using their own data. The more information they have about their programs the better they are set up to make any adjustments necessary. Also, if subgrantees know their data is being used and disseminated, there may be more incentive to report in an accurate and timely manner.
These recommendations were provided to OCVS staff and used to create a post project plan for what OCVS wants to do going forward in terms of VOCA data collection and dissemination and how to use the data internally for project and grant management.

**Post project plan**

Based on meetings with BJIA and the Bureau of Computing Services, OCVS has created action items and a timeline for some of the Information Technology (IT) needs relating to data collection and analysis. Requirements include simple and complex changes to the Egrants system, implementing better qualitative informational questions, validating quantitative data for the SARs, and creating requirements for a statewide data collection system. Appendix G provides a thorough explanation of ways OCVS plans to make changes or enhance the work related to Egrants, OVC PMT, data collection and analysis and training. A timeline is also included, which covers a nine-month period.

**Project Implications**

This project will have a variety of implications that will improve the ability of OCVS to not only gather quantitative and qualitative data, but to also utilize the information in a meaningful and productive way.

Currently, OCVS awards funding through grant programs based on applications submitted and the described needs of the agencies. Quarterly program reports and OVC PMTs provide a basic picture of the victims being served, but there has not been a mechanism to completely gather all of that information and utilize it for big-picture activities. The changes and activities that are planned, as indicated in the Post-Project Plan, will allow OCVS to improve victim service planning on a statewide level by directing funding towards gaps and needs identified. It will also allow OCVS to provide the grant recipients with an overall view or dashboard of the victims they have served over a certain period of time.
On the subrecipient’s end, the short- and long-term implications would include a better understanding of definitions for reporting victimization types in the OVC PMTs, clearer program report questions in Egrants, and an opportunity to obtain a snapshot of services provided during the grant cycle so that organizational planning can be more efficient and effective.

In addition, the Center for Victim Research was able to assist OCVS, as the VOCA Administrator, with how to prorate data collection when subgrantees employ staff that are not 100% funded by a VOCA grant. OCVS has had conversations with CVR representatives to talk through the best mechanism for counting victims served. While we are still working on the best way to collect this data, the final determination will allow OCVS to accurately give direction to the subgrantees, and data collection will be more consistent.

**Partnership**
The partnership between OCVS and the SAC can be sustained by identifying action items in current work, as well as activities for future collaboration. OCVS and BJIA have built a stronger partnership over the past year because of the VOCA-SAC grant, and both feel that a continued partnership would be beneficial to victim services in Wisconsin. Initial steps are outlined in the Post-Project Plan (Appendix G), but there are also future opportunities for on-going work between the SAC and OCVS as the VOCA Administering Agency. OCVS also feels that a partnership can also be sustained with the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA), the collaborative agency on this project, because of the work being done at a federal level on the OVC PMT.

**Stakeholder Involvement**
Stakeholders, both internal and external to DOJ, have been informed throughout the grant year on the VOCA SAC project and the work being done. The OCVS Executive Director has been supportive of this project throughout the year, and is ensuring that our office receives adequate assistance from other DOJ divisions as needed. OCVS has regular meetings with the Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Tribal Coalitions, and
project status is shared with them at each meeting. The coalitions also provide information and outreach as needed for parts of project implementation. Follow-up from the focus groups was provided to participants and internal staff, and we will continue to build upon and implement the recommendations from those meetings. In addition, the OCVS Grants Advisory Committee is continually updated on the VOCA SAC work, and our office plans to incorporate our other major grant programs (Violence Against Women Act and Sexual Assault Victim Services) into the future project planning and data collection work. The Bureau of Computing Services has been part of some of the planning for technology changes to Egrants and the initial requirements gathering for a potential statewide data system. They will continue to be a partner as the post-project work moves forward. The Division of Law Enforcement Services (DLES), where the BJIA/SAC is located, has also been supportive of this project and the continued partnership between the SAC and OCVS. Overall, this project has helped to establish a stronger collaboration between the SAC and OCVS on many levels that we anticipate will lead to joint projects in this and related areas.
Appendix A: Focus Group Questions
Wisconsin Department of Justice  
Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Project  
Focus Group Questions

**OCVS:**

First off, thank you for being here today. We would like to start by introducing ourselves and giving you a bit of background about why we are conducting the focus groups.

(Have OCVS and BJIA staff introduce themselves)

We are conducting a small study to better understand the current data collected about the Victims of Crime Act or VOCA-funded programs and where there may be opportunities for improvement going forward. As you know, the annual funding for VOCA is currently over $30 million so it is critical that we have solid data on how the funding is being spent to serve victims across the state.

The purpose of this focus group is to have a discussion with you as representatives of various service providers in the state currently funded under the VOCA grant. Our goal is to better understand the current data collected by and about your programs, understand the needs of your programs, how you monitor program performance, manage records, and interact with existing reporting systems, and ultimately to make recommendations for potential changes to the current data collection process. It is important that we have accurate and reliable information about the programs funded under VOCA, so that we can understand the services provided and the impact the funding is having across the state.

**BJIA:**

Before we begin, let’s take care of a few housekeeping items:

- You should have received a consent form when you RSVP’d for today. If you need another copy of that form, just ask. Please turn in the signed form or review it again and if you have not yet signed it, please do so before we begin. Please call one of us over if you have any questions or concerns.
- As stated on the consent form, the discussion today will focus on your agency, not you as an individual, and your specific comments will not be connected to you or to your agency directly. We are looking for overall input across multiple service providers to build a picture of the current status of the VOCA data.
- The focus group will last for approximately 3 to 4 hours. We will take at least one break, but if you need to get up in between feel free to do so.
- We will be looking for each of you to contribute to the discussion and just ask that we give everyone the opportunity to speak on various issues. We do have a lot to get through and so we may have to cut some discussions short in order to save time to ensure we get through everything.

**Sticky Note Activity**  
**Tally (Flip Chart)**  
**Write Answers (Flip Chart/Board)**
- If there is something you feel merits discussion but doesn’t quite fit with any of our questions, there will some time set aside at the end for an open discussion.
- Thank you in advance for taking the time to participate and help improve the VOCA data in Wisconsin!

**Introductions**

1. Let’s start with introductions. You can just give your first name and then please tell us a bit about the type of agency you work for, what types of services your agency provides, and which services are funded in whole or in part by VOCA.

**9:20 | 1:20**

**Tracking Client & Service Information (Data Collection)**

2. We would like to know more about how you are tracking clients and the services you provide to them. I want you to think about both the information that you track for reporting requirements for grants or related purposes, as well as any individual records that you maintain on specific clients. Now I’m going to read off some different ways that you might track this information. Please raise your hand if you use this method. You might use more than one method and that’s ok.

   a. Osnim
   b. Apricot
   c. Microsoft Excel
   d. Microsoft Access
   e. Paper files or a ledger
   f. Some other method (prompt for what they use)
   g. How many of you raised your hand more than once?
      i. Probe if necessary: For those of you with your hand up, describe for me the mixture of data collection systems you use and what information you store in each.

3. Have any of your agencies recently changed from one of these systems to another?
   a. What system did you have previously and what system did you transition to?
   b. What prompted you to change to your current system? (probe for problems/limitations with former system as well as desirable features of new system)

4. Let’s talk generally about how you use this system for tracking and reporting client and/or service information. What works well about the system? What would you like to be able to do with the information that you cannot do with the current system?

5. Are all agency activities tracked (client and service information)? Or just ones that pertain to VOCA and any other grants that require it?
6. For the clients you meet face-to-face, what sort of information do you record?
   a. Is this information recorded in aggregate or at the individual case level? That is, do you retain (A.) individual records or (B.) simple counts or totals of individuals or services that fall into different categories?
      Note: Hand out colored sticky notes (2 colors depending on their response to this question). This will be for use later.
   b. When do you record this information? (prompts: automatically tracked as part of providing service, right after providing services, whenever staff have free time, weekly, monthly, etc.)

7. What about clients you serve over the phone? What information is collected on these service recipients?
   a. Do you retain (A.) individual records or (B.) simple counts or totals of individuals or services that fall into different categories?
   b. When do you record this information?

8. Does your agency do any sort of data quality assessment? For the data reported in either the PMT system or in Egrants does your agency have a process to identify duplicate data, data entry mistakes, or ambiguous data coding schemes? If so, how often is data reviewed for accuracy?

10:30 | 2:30

10 Minute break. Return at 10:40 | 2:40

VOCA Reporting (on OVC PMT and Egrants)

9. Now I want to talk about your reporting requirements under VOCA and other funding agencies.
   a. Is there any information that you currently report in either egrants or the PMT that you feel may be misleading or incomplete?
   b. Is there any information that is not recorded in egrants or the PMT that you would like to see added that would demonstrate that you are meeting stated goals?
   c. By show of hands, how many of you use pre-set reports generated by your records management software to meet your VOCA program reporting requirements? For those of you with your hands up, what records management software do you use?
   d. For those of you who did not raise your hands, are you totaling or aggregating individual records on service recipients to meet VOCA reporting requirements or do you or someone at your agency retain a separate set of records, a tally in excel for example, that you use for program reporting?
   e. How do you determine how much you’ve spent on each victim? (10% rule)

10. Now I’d like to specifically discuss the federal Performance Measurement Tool or PMT system.
   a. In general, do you feel PMT reporting adequately captures what your agency does, the people it serves, and how it allocates resources? Why or why not?
   b. What do you like about the PMT system?
c. What would you change about the PMT system?

11. Now I want to discuss DOJ’s Egrants reporting system. As you know, the Egrants reporting questions were recently changed. We are specifically interested in how you feel about the current set of program reporting questions.

a. In general, do you feel Egrants reporting adequately captures what your agency does, the people it serves, and how it allocates resources? Why or why not?

b. What do you like about the Egrants system?

c. What would you change about the Egrants system?

11:30 | 3:30

10 Minute break. Return at 11:40 | 3:40

Use of VOCA Data

12. Do you or someone at your agency monitor progress on your stated VOCA goals and objectives? If so, how? Do you use data from the PMT or Egrants reports or some other data source?

13. Have you used your data for purposes other than program reporting requirements for VOCA or other funders? Using your sticky notes that I handed out earlier, place a sticky on the flip chart if you or someone at your agency has utilized your data or records for this purpose.

a. Used your data to examine program performance

b. Used your data to do a needs assessment

c. Used program data to secure additional funding such as for a grant application

Note: Probe for examples use cases in each category – would anyone care to share an example of how you used data to examine program performance, do a needs assessment, or secure funding?

14. Are any program performance metrics, including those reported in the PMT system, shared with other staff or the Board or do only those entering data and working on the project know this information?

15. Not including DOJ and the Federal PMT system, do you share data on program performance, needs assessment, service gaps, impacts, etc. with anyone outside your agency such as community partners, local or state government, the media? If so, who do you share this information with and how?

16. We have time yet for a bit of open discussion. Knowing what we are trying to accomplish, what other topics do you think we should consider as we are working to better understand current and future data collection needs related to the VOCA funding?

12:30 | 4:30

Sticky Note Activity  Tally (Flip Chart)  Write Answers (Flip Chart/Board)
Appendix B: Focus Group Attendance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group-Location</th>
<th>Group 1-Madison</th>
<th>Group 2-Milwaukee</th>
<th>Group 3-Appleton</th>
<th>Group 4-Wausau</th>
<th>Group 5-Eau Claire</th>
<th>Group 6-Madison</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant Count</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>85</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Appendix C: Focus Group Outcomes Report
Overview: VOCA-SAC Partnership
Both housed within the Wisconsin Department of Justice, The Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS) and the Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis (BJIA), the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) for the State of Wisconsin, received a grant to help develop a better understanding of Wisconsin Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)-funded victim services and data reporting requirements. The grant project will enhance evidence-based decision making in the administration of the VOCA grant and improve the VOCA data collection process moving forward. The project includes evaluating the available data from 117 subgrantees, reviewing the data collection process, and assessing data quality. This in-depth analysis is being conducted through a variety of methods, one of which was soliciting feedback from VOCA subgrantees through six regional focus groups that included a total of 85 participants. SAC staff facilitated focus groups while SAC and OCVS staff took detailed notes which were subsequently organized into common themes. The focus groups were led through a series of semi-structured questions intended to address a variety of areas regarding data collection and analysis for VOCA-funded programs. The focus was on the processes and experiences across subgrantees, not information on individual programs. The results of this thematic analysis are presented below.

Collecting VOCA Data
Subgrantees that have a dedicated data and/or Information Technology (IT) staff member expressed their gratitude for this resource, while those without a dedicated staff person expressed a desire to have someone on staff dedicated specifically to VOCA data collection and reporting.

How do subgrantees collect information? Subgrantees commented that VOCA information is often recorded in more than one place. For example, in-person service recipients might be tracked in a dedicated case management system (CMS) while hotline calls might be tracked in a spreadsheet. Even those using a dedicated database or CMS often maintain a second set of records to serve as a cross-check against reports generated by the CMS. Overall, processes vary across subgrantees. However, depending on whether the subgrantee has a database or CMS, a common process emerged:

Figure 1. Flow of VOCA Information

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1 Some subgrantees put information directly into the database and/or a spreadsheet, skipping Step 2.
During intake or first interactions with victims, many direct service providers take notes, often on paper (Step 2). Some subgrantees mentioned that they have their direct services staff use a daily log/tracker for their activities. These notes are then transcribed into the subgrantees’ data collection or case management systems/databases (Step 3). Lastly, the information is pulled for reports, including data necessary to submit to the Performance Management Tool (PMT) with many subgrantees assessing accuracy and/or quality as part of this process.

**What information is collected?** Many, although not all subrecipients, track *everything* related to their clients and services, not just VOCA-required information. This includes victim and family information, perpetrator information, services provided and those not provided, referrals, as well as many other activities. In addition, a majority of the subgrantees receive other grant funds that also require data collection. Since other grants require information reported differently, some of these subgrantees use different databases and/or tracking processes for each funder. Subgrantees commented that it is burdensome to track the same type of information multiple ways (e.g. age groupings). Moreover, the reports produced for each grant are not “one-off reports.” Even subgrantees with industry standard records management systems had to run a series of reports to meet quarterly reporting requirements for VOCA.

Many groups discussed the importance of trauma-informed care when it came to recording victim information. Due to the fact that asking many questions during time of crisis can be triggering for victims, VOCA relevant or other important information may not be recorded.

**When do subgrantees collect information?** Many subgrantees take notes while speaking with a victim, however, when information is put in to their database varies by subgrantee. One subgrantee explained that this depends on the current level of crisis; data input occurs “whenever there is a spare minute.” Although the intent is to capture everything, often “stuff gets lost.” A challenge facing subgrantees is identifying the best time to collect information and balancing that data collection with their primary mission of direct service delivery.

**Do subgrantees assess the quality of the collected information?** Many subgrantees reported that they assess data quality at the time of quarterly reporting. This assessment is limited mainly to checking for duplicates and/or missing data and checking to see if anything looks “off” in their reporting. Some agencies have “cheat sheets” for definitions to maintain consistency in staff data reporting and database input, but overall, they expressed concern that the information collected and put into the database may be inaccurate given some of the challenges of this process in many agencies.
OVC PMT
In October 2015, subgrantees began collecting data required for the VOCA grant through the Office of Crime Victim Services Performance Measure Tool (OVC PMT), which was a substantive departure from the data previously collected. Focus group participants were asked what they like and dislike about the OVC PMT.

What do subgrantees like about the OVC PMT? Subgrantees like the OVC PMT website. They like that it:
- Is not overly complex;
- Is web-based and easy to access anywhere;
- Includes reports that are easy to download; and
- Has built-in validations that ensure numbers match.

What do subgrantees dislike about the OVC PMT? Subgrantees dislike the OVC PMT definitions. They feel that definitions are unclear, vague, and confusing, and that overall, categories do not reflect services very well. The following questions were raised by focus group participants:

- Why is every victim “new” in the first quarter? Many subgrantees explained that their records systems are not suited to counting records this way.
- Is there a better way to record gender identity than the “other” category?
- What is the reasoning behind the age categories? Subgrantees with multiple funding sources lamented the lack of consistency in age groupings across federal grants (e.g. HUD, VOCA, VAWA).
- VOCA age groups seem to lump almost all service recipients into a single ‘adult-aged’ category which is not insightful.
- Does “counseling” need to be a licensed therapist/social worker to be counted as such?
- Does “legal advocacy” need to be provided a lawyer to be counted as such?
- What is truly anonymous? Not all hotline calls turn out to be anonymous.
- How should contacts over email, Facebook, and text message be tracked? Many subgrantees noted a stark rise in these sorts of contacts, text message in particular, and desired clear direction on how time devoted to these contacts should be tracked in the PMT. For example, should a series of intermittent text messages spread over a day or more be counted as one or as many individual contacts?

Along with clearer definitions, subgrantees would like to be given more precise directions on how to count clients and services for staff that are partly VOCA-funded. It was apparent during the focus groups that this is not calculated consistently across subgrantees. Additionally, subgrantees would like more clarity on the purpose of reporting and how PMT data is used.
Subgrantees also came up with a list of elements that are misleading or missing from the OVC PMT reports (Figure 2 below). Most notably, subgrantees expressed interest in collecting information that accurately captures the complexity of their clients and services because many feel that the PMT reporting categories do not accurately reflect the time being spent with victims and all the resources they provide; subgrantees feel they are underreporting their services since many victims receive multiple services. Many subgrantees wondered why VOCA is not interested in collecting information about all of their programming. While subgrantees expressed a desire to improve the quality of the data being collected, it is important to note that many indicated resistance to collecting any more information, as they already feel overburdened by VOCA reporting requirements.

“Numbers don’t capture what you do and the time you spend with people. They don’t tell the story or reflect what people are doing.”

VOCA Priority Area Spending – how is this determined?

Every group discussed the challenge of estimating costs spent per VOCA priority area. Many subgrantees estimate how much money they have spent and divide that by the number of clients served to find the average cost per client. However, one subgrantee noted that this does not reflect reality as each client does not equally use the same amount of resources. For example, children cost more to serve than adults. Other subgrantees developed cost estimates for each service and multiplied that by the number of individuals receiving that service. Both approaches are limited in obvious ways and will almost certainly be inconsistent with the each other. Further direction in determining priority area spending was a focus for the participants across the groups.

“It’s not valid information – we just need some guidance. Something consistent – is this even helpful for you?”

2 List of themes is not presented in any particular order.
In addition, a subgrantee noted that if they are a Sexual Assault Service Provider (SASP) funded for sexual assault services, then all their spending falls in the sexual assault category. However, they often have clients presenting with many victimizations, such as domestic violence, and are not sure how to separate or split spending across categories. Subgrantees expressed a need for consistent guidance on how to approach these and similar situations.

**Egrants**

Egrants is the web-based grants management system utilized by the Wisconsin Department of Justice to track both federal and state grants. OCVS utilizes Egrants to manage the fiscal and programmatic aspects of the VOCA subgrants. OCVS collects qualitative data from subgrantees in the form of open-ended narrative questions on a quarterly basis. In addition, OCVS tracks the amount of funds expended and if it is attaining the federal requirements where 10 percent of the grant should be allocated to particular categories of victims.

Subgrantees indicated that they like the open-ended questions in Egrants, as the questions allow agencies to capture a lot more of what they do as opposed to numbers. They like that they can write as much as they want and that Egrants is easy to use for the most part.

Subgrantees do not like that the Egrants system times out without autosaving their program reports and that formatting is not simple. Some dislike how the printed reports differ from what they see on the screen. As for the content of the questions, some mentioned that answering the same questions every quarter feels repetitive, and they often lack new information to add. They would also like OCVS to provide feedback on their responses.

**Data Use**

The majority of subgrantees do not use their VOCA data for anything other than required reporting purposes. The general culture around data collection is that it is an obligation rather than a choice. Though some subgrantees use VOCA data to track goals from the grant, most do not, and they “sometimes lose track of them [goals and objectives] until it’s time to report them in Egrants then we scramble to come up with something.”

Those who do use their VOCA data, do so for a variety of reasons, such as:

- Identification of trends in needs, clients, and services;
- Evaluation of staff, project performance, and systems changes;
- Comparison of services and resource allocation for agency restructuring and hiring;
- Sharing of service characteristics and needs with community stakeholders in the form of newsletters, press releases, annual reports, and presentations; and
- Presentations of organizational need for other grant funding opportunities, prevention efforts, fundraisers, and for inter-agency collaboration.
However, subgrantees almost universally expressed that VOCA data as it is reported in the PMT is of limited use to them because it reflects only a fraction of what they do as an agency. The data reflect only the activities supported by VOCA dollars. Given that many subgrantees are also funded through VAWA or HUD and others, the VOCA “piece” of their activities might well be less than half of what the agency does in a given quarter. Thus, the data paint an incomplete picture and so subgrantees are reluctant to use it for soliciting funds, recruiting, outreach, or self-assessment.

Takeaways
Concerns about the burdensome nature of reporting and desire to streamline the process echoed throughout the focus group discussions. The issues surrounding VOCA data collection are two-fold. The first set of issues relates to how subgrantees track their own data and then convert that into a format suitable for program reporting to OVC. There were several factors that were common to subgrantees who were frustrated by data collection. These subgrantees typically lacked a staff person whose primary responsibility was to collect and maintain quality control over agency data. Some frustration was also a result of insufficient or improper case management systems, including systems being used in ways they were not designed or legacy systems that lacked support, ongoing software development, and customization. However, there were also several subgrantees who had industry standard case management systems, but had experienced difficulty using them and found the reporting functionality was limited and they were unsure of the accuracy. The inconsistency in tools utilized for data collection overall seemed to contribute to some of the data collection challenges.

The second set of issues relates more directly to what data is collected by OVC and OCVS and how that data is collected. These issues range from concerns about the quality of the data, including ambiguity in definitions and lack of consistency, to questions about how the data is used and how insightful and informative it could possibly be given the current structure. Subgrantees were universally supportive of collecting data; however, some expressed concern that the data was inaccurate, inconsistent, incomplete, or otherwise uninformative. Subgrantees who felt this way were less-than-excited about the prospect of additional data collection.

Improving VOCA data, then, is a matter of assuaging these concerns and correcting the identified deficiencies. As a starting point, subgrantees need additional guidance, training, and clarification on data definitions; this includes a range of issues such as how to count online or text message contacts and how to calculate funding allocations across service categories. Subgrantees need guidance on records systems including encouragement and support to transition away from legacy systems and systems such as simple databases or spreadsheets that are not suitable to the type of data collection necessary to meet program reporting requirements. Those agencies using or transitioning to industry standard case management systems need specialized support to ensure they are used properly so that resulting reports are accurate and trustworthy. Any changes to reporting requirements should be done in coordination with records systems vendors to ensure that new reporting requirements can be met. All in all, subgrantees would like a data collection and reporting system that is, at a minimum:
- Accessible from anywhere (especially for rural areas);
- Customizable;
- Takes less steps and is less time-consuming;
- Able to produce user-friendly reports; and
- User-friendly.

More generally, OVC and OCVS should examine existing data to identify additional data points that might better capture the outcomes and impacts of funded agencies rather than simply their outputs and activities. In addition, existing data fields should be examined for usefulness and clarity. Perhaps some qualitative Egrants questions should be asked annually rather than quarterly and perhaps there should be a reconsideration of the effort to determine funding allocation across VOCA priority/underserved areas as it is currently envisioned, or at a minimum this allocation effort should be more clearly defined. Improving VOCA data will require participation and support from all levels of the program – from OVC to OCVS down to the direct service providers.
Appendix D: Data Quality Report
VOCA Data Quality Report

Data Quality Report
Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis
Wisconsin Department of Justice
December 2018
VOCA Data Quality Report

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Section I: Introduction and Overview

The need for high quality data

Organizations, both public and private, are increasingly expected to utilize data driven decision-making. The evidence-based approach to decision making results in resource allocation that maximizes agency efficiency and effectiveness while also ensuring that we are responsible stewards of agency resources. The caveat, of course, is that the final product is only as good as the ingredients. Just as artificial and low-quality ingredients are spurned in culinary circles, so too should biased, excessively noisy, or irrelevant data be avoided for analytical and evaluation purposes. The adage that “something is better than nothing” may not, in fact, apply to data. Bad data invites bad decisions while simultaneously insulating those poor decisions against criticism on the grounds that they are the result of an objective, scientific, and rational approach to decision making. In short, high quality data is essential for an evidence-based approach to policy, programing, and decision-making in general to be effective.
This report presents an assessment of the quality of the data collected by the Wisconsin Office of Crime Victims Services (OCVS) from those agencies receiving funding under the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). As a division of the Wisconsin Department of Justice (WIDOJ), OCVS requires VOCA subrecipients to enter quarterly program monitoring reports in the WIDOJ grants management platform, Egrants. Agencies receiving VOCA funds are also obligated to report their activities to the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ), Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). This reporting is also done on a quarterly basis but the requested data is sent directly to OVC via the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) system. In addition to the quarterly activity report entered into the PMT, the USDOJ OVC also maintains financial information on grant recipients. This information is can be exported as the Subgrant Award Report (SAR). Data from these three sources – Egrants, PMT, and SAR – are the subject of this data quality report.

**What is high quality data?**

High quality data is broadly defined as meeting the following four criteria:

1. **Completeness**: Minimal missing or invalid data.
2. **Consistency**: Data are largely uniform or comparable across units and over time. This is a product both of the uniformity in reporting requirements and consistency of subgrantee interpretations of those reporting requirements.
3. **Accuracy**: Data reflect the true value or state of that which is being measured. High quality data have minimal noise and whatever noise is present should be random and therefore non-biasing.
4. **Relevance/Utility**: Data that are collected should serve a clear analytic or program evaluation purpose and all program evaluation and analytical needs should be met by the data that are available. Put simply, the available data should be useful to answer those burning questions that program evaluators ask about outcomes, impact, and program fidelity. A related issue is the format or structure of data; ideally data are stored in a format that is conducive to analysis with minimal restructuring required. While other criteria are conceivable, experience with these data suggests that those outlined above will be most useful to identify limitations and corresponding areas for improvement for these particular data and the collection systems that generate them. As should be expected, the criteria are not necessarily independent. For example, data that are missing or highly inconsistent are likely to be neither accurate nor useful for program evaluation or performance measurement purposes. Assessment of these criteria is based on both quantitative and qualitative measures. Prior to this report, the Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis (BJIA), in collaboration with OCVS, conducted six focus group discussions with VOCA subgrantees around the state. BJIA staff also created data dashboards using SAR and PMT data.
This report draws on the outcomes from the focus groups and the relevant dashboards/data visualizations to assess the quality of the VOCA data available to OCVS. Data collected in the PMT and Egrants are in wildly different formats - Egrants consists primarily in qualitative responses while the PMT tracks aggregate quantitative program outputs such as counts of service recipients. While this disparate information is perhaps good from a program monitoring standpoint because it affords OCVS both qualitative and quantitative data, it necessitates the use of varied and data-specific metrics to assess data quality. Consequently, this precludes any comparative statements about the validity and reliability of the data housed in these systems.

**Section II: Data Quality Assessment**

This section is organized into three subsections, each devoted to one of the three available data sources – Egrants, SAR, and PMT quarterly reports. Each subsection consists of more general commentary as well as appropriate quantitative metrics. The data in these systems vary dramatically; Egrants collects qualitative narratives while PMT consists almost entirely of simple counts and the SAR contains financial data. Consequently, the approach used for each data source is tailored to that data source.

**Egrants**

Egrants is the web-based grant management system utilized by the WIDOJ to track both federal and state grants. OCVS utilizes Egrants to manage the fiscal and programmatic aspects of the VOCA subgrants. While Egrants does permit quantitative questions such as yes/no or Likert scaled items, the data that are currently collected consist mostly of qualitative open-ended questions inviting lengthy narrative responses. The exception is the section requiring expense reporting across the selected priority areas. This information is currently collected from 117 subgrantees on a quarterly basis. Of note, OCVS elected to change these qualitative questions for the 2017-2018 grant year; the current complete data fields are listed in Appendix A. This report focused on the eight qualitative questions - these are listed below for convenience. Questions capturing funding allocation have been excluded from this analysis under the expectation that that data will no longer be collected directly from subgrantees.

**Q1.** Activities: A text box where subgrantee is expected to outline the agency activities this quarter that were supported by VOCA funds.

**Q2.** Provide a meaningful update on your VOCA project Goals & Objectives. In addition to the quantitative information you need to provide, please provide qualitative information in your answer as well. Please do not just cut and paste your Goals & Objectives into this section.
Q3. Describe any external (outside your agency) challenges encountered during the reporting period that hindered the VOCA project achieving its Goals & Objectives (ex. community challenges, challenges with partners or stakeholders, etc.).

Q4. Describe any internal challenges within your VOCA project that hindered the VOCA project during the reporting period (ex. staff vacancies, different client needs, lack of training, etc.).

Q5. Have there been any changes to the VOCA project (such as activity or services changes, personnel changes or vacancies)? If so, please explain the changes. As a reminder, some changes may require a modification.

Q6. Consider the data that your agency submitted in the OVC PMT system for the VOCA project for this reporting period. Please explain what you have learned about your VOCA project services through the OVC PMT data. For example, explain a profile of a “typical” victim served, explain any gaps in services, notable trends, or emerging issues, etc.

Q7. How will what you have learned from your answer to the previous question impact your service delivery?

Q8. Describe any activities performed by the VOCA project during the reporting period that support the VOCA priority areas that were identified in your application.

Qualitative questions such as these provide a richness of detail that is not available in simple counts of people served or services provided. Subgrantees certainly recognized this during focus group discussions. Many noted that PMT reporting did not adequately capture the “intensity” or “duration” of services rendered and appreciated the qualitative Egrants reporting as an opportunity to provide context for their activities. From a program management perspective, each subgrantee’s quarterly Egrants report can provide invaluable detail on the subgrantee’s activities, including successes, challenges, and lessons. However, from a quantitative analysis perspective, the current Egrants data is of limited value.

One approach to quantifying the content of the Egrants responses is a word cloud, with the size of the word indicating the relative frequency within the text responses. The cloud below is based on subgrantees descriptions of their activities the previous quarter. Stop words have been removed - these are commonly occurring words that convey little meaning on their own. Words such as in, the, there, what, that, because, about, and where are commonly accepted stop words, but there is no singular definitive list for the English language. County names, months, and a few additional words such as “quarter” have also been removed since they are basic descriptors and did not lend particular value or insight into the response groupings. Words were also “lemmatized” which consists of reducing words to
a shared root; lemmatizing is similar to text stemming but less aggressive. As an example, consider the words “addressing,” and “addressed;” these would both be transformed to “address.” These are imperfect processes to be sure - for example, should “victim” and “victimization” be equated? Point is, the word clouds below are presented as a simple means to assess the content of Egrants responses in a quantitative fashion. These could be created for each question, each subgrantee, each quarter, etc.

Figure 1. Word cloud of words appearing at least ten times in subgrantees’ description of their activities the previous quarter.

Word clouds can also be created using frequently occurring word pairs. These are called n-grams where “n” is the number of words in the set; in this case n=2 but we could also look at the most frequently occurring 3 or even 4 word phrases. These can be presented as a table instead of a word cloud as well. The word cloud below represents the most frequently occurring pairs of words in the responses to the “activities” question - the same content used for the previous cloud. To preserve the phrases, words were not lemmatized however pairs where one or both words were stop words have been removed.
Examples are pairs such as “I will,” “have been,” “they are,” “assisted her,” “being able,” etc. Pairs where one word was a county name were also removed.

Word clouds or tables could be created for each Egrants question or for each subgrantee’s complete quarterly report. However, the focus of this report is not on the content of subgrantee responses but on the quality, quantity, consistency, and comparability of those responses. Consequently, any such thematic analysis of Egrants data is outside the scope of this report but is something that OCVS may wish to consider in the future. The remainder of this section is devoted to quantitative metrics to assess who had a lot to say, who had little to say, who tended to repeat themselves from one quarter to the next, and which questions tended to elicit either very long or very short responses. The goal is twofold. First, the current Egrants data should be examined to identify potential changes, additions, or deletions to the program report questions and frequency. To this end, questions should be assessed to identify...
those that are perhaps inviting overly long responses (i.e. ambiguity) or overly short responses or redundancy/recycling of responses. Subgrantees and OCVS would also benefit from a basic understanding of what typical responses look like. This information can be used to encourage consistency in reporting across subgrantees which means a consistent burden both on those entering the reports as well as on the OCVS staff reviewing them. A secondary goal is to provide OCVS with some sample metrics that might be used to assist them in program review going forward such as the subgrantee’s verbosity and propensity to recycle responses.

Recall that the Egrants data covered in this report consists of eight questions reported by subgrantees on a quarterly basis. Because these questions changed in the 2017-2018 year there are only two quarters of comparable data to work with at the time of this writing. To begin, we examine response length using an empirical cumulative density plot as seen above. The y axis indicates the percent of subgrantees whose response is no longer than the word length indicated on the x axis. What this plot illustrates is that 75 percent of subgrantee responses were 250 words or less and about 90 percent of subgrantee responses were 500 words or less. Some responses, however, were much longer - the longest response was 4,142 words, more than 17 times longer than the average response. In this plot, responses to all eight questions are lumped together. Next, we examine response length separately by question.

Figure 3. Empirical cumulative density plot of word count for all responses in Q1 and Q2 of 2017-2018.
Figure 4. Boxplot of word count for Grants responses in Q1 and Q2 of the 2017-2018 year. Median at horizontal line, top and bottom of box indicate the 75th and 25th percentiles, whiskers extend to 1.5 times the interquartile range, dots indicate extreme outliers.
Figure 4 clearly illustrates the extensive numbers of extreme outliers, that is, extremely long responses to the Egrants program reporting questions. The abbreviated text of each question is provided on the right for reference; the questions are listed in the order asked. The gray boxes indicate mean response length while the horizontal bar indicates the median. For each question the mean box is well above the median bar which indicates that the distribution of responses to each question is positively skewed by the extreme outliers. Comparisons of the boxes themselves is complicated by the impact of the outliers on the y axis which tends to compress the plot by stretching the axis. Figure 4a provides a closer look at the boxes.

Figure 4a. Close up of Figure 2 with additional horizontal lines to indicate overall mean and median. Notches added around median to indicate 95% confidence interval; non-overlapping notches indicate median word counts are statistically different from another at p=.05.
Question 5, which asks about changes to the project, receives the shortest responses on average but questions about internal challenges (Q4) and lessons learned for service delivery (Q7) also receive rather short responses. The median response to Q3, which asks about external challenges, is significantly longer than responses to Q4 which indicates subgrantees generally have more to say about external challenges than internal ones. Q2 had the most extreme outliers with Q1 and Q8 not far behind. These questions are less specific and directed and thereby invite excessively long and possibly rambling responses from subgrantees. There is some redundancy between Q1 and Q8 which both ask about subgrantee activities this quarter. However, Q8 does specifically seek to limit responses to activities that support subgrantees’ VOCA priority areas. Q1 is a default Egrants question and while it is unlikely to be modified or removed, OCVS could provide guidance to subgrantees on how to properly answer this question and avoid redundancy with Q8. Q2 should be examined for potential wording revisions to increase specificity, perhaps by clarifying exactly what constitutes a “meaningful update” on project goals and objectives. Q2 also directs subgrantees to include “qualitative information” that illustrates progress on project goals. These are likely to be long story-driven narratives which should not be mixed with the quantitative data that subgrantees are expected to report on project goals. Simply put, OCVS may wish to break Q2 into two questions - a qualitative one and a quantitative one. The former should include clear directions on what constitutes qualitative data and examples of appropriate responses. The latter should be structured in a way that permits easy exporting of the data for analytical purposes. As the question is currently structured, the quantitative data reported is unfortunately inaccessible for any sort of analysis.

Figure 5, below, indicates that most subgrantees answer Egrants questions in fewer than three hundred words on average. Eighty percent of subgrantees had a mean response under 320 words, and a median response length under 180 words. The mean agency response length skewed to the right because many agencies had a single response that was considerably longer than the norm for that agency (and the mean is, of course, sensitive to these outliers while the median is not). As figure 2 demonstrates, those unusually long responses were typically in response to questions 1 and 2 which, as noted previously, are perhaps unnecessarily broad.
Figure 5. Empirical cumulative density plot of subgrantees’ mean and median response length. Note that in contrast to figure 1 which was based on the full set of responses available, this plot is based on the average and median response length for each of the 112 subgrantees who reported to Egrants during this time.

Figure 6 provides a closer look at those subgrantees with unusually long responses - those whose median response or longest response was in the top ten percent of subgrantees. Dots indicate the subgrantee’s score on each metric, red dots signify subgrantees with the longest responses according to the metric presented in the respective column. For example, a red dot in the shortest response column means that of all subgrantees’ shortest responses, that subgrantee’s response was one of the longest. Subgrantees are sorted by median response length, those toward the bottom of the plot had median response lengths that were approximately typical but had a single or handful or responses that were excessively and perhaps unnecessarily long. Wisconsin Department of Corrections and Hope House of South Central Wisconsin exemplify this pattern. Those toward the top of the chart had a typical response length that was excessive, suggesting a general proclivity for verbosity in responses to all or most questions. Family Advocates, Embrace Services, and Passages stand out as having median response lengths, max response lengths, and minimum response lengths that are all in the top ten percent of longest responses within their respective categories.
Figure 6. Plot of median response length, longest response, and shortest response for the most verbose subgrantees. Subgrantees were selected if either their longest response or median response was in the top 10% of responses.
Exceedingly short responses can also be problematic and uninformative. As was evident from figure 4a, Q5 received the shortest responses on average but Q4 and Q7 also tended to receive fairly short responses. To more closely examine response length by question we created a heat map of the shortest responses. This heat map is presented in figure 7, below. The heat map is limited to only those response that were 150 words or less. For reference purposes, recall that the median response length was 114 words and the mean was 241 words. Color on this plot indicates the number of responses that fall into the word length interval described on the y axis; dark blue indicates intervals with more responses and light yellow indicates intervals with fewer.

Contrary to expectations based on figure 4a, Q3 had a number of very short responses (20 responses were ten words or less in length) while Q7, which had fairly short responses on average, had just 5 responses that were ten words or less in length. As expected, short responses are concentrated in Q5.
which had 46 responses ten words or less in length and another 44 responses consisting of 11-20 words. Question 4 also had several short responses - 18 that were ten or fewer words in length and 16 that were 11-20 words long. In general, OCVS should explore the possibility of moving those questions where respondents apparently have very little to say (i.e. Q5), to the final annual report rather than asking them each quarter. Also noteworthy in this plot is the lack of short responses to question 2 in particular and question 8 as well. Recall that these were also the questions exhibiting a great number of extremely lengthy outlier responses.

Figure 8 provides a closer look at response length for the least verbose agencies. These subgrantees were selected if their longest response or median response length was in the bottom ten percent of subgrantees. As with figure 6, subgrantees are sorted in descending order by median response length. Red dots indicate a subgrantee with a score in the bottom ten percent of subgrantees (i.e. exceedingly short responses). Subgrantees toward the top of the chart have median response lengths that are nearly typical in length but appear in this table because their longest response is among the shortest of all subgrantees - a pattern that is not particularly worrisome.

Those subgrantees toward the bottom of the chart are those whose typical response length is excessively short, relative to other subgrantee responses. There are two issues here, the first is exhibited by agencies such as St. Croix Valley SART, Milwaukee Center for Children and Youth, Wisconsin DOJ, Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI), Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups, and Children’s Hospital. These subgrantees have unusually short responses on average, as indicated by a red dot in the “Median Response” panel, but also have some of the single longest responses of all subgrantees. The Children’s Hospital had such an extremely long response that the data point was condensing the panel axis and had to be removed. These subgrantees may be concentrating their reporting in response to a single question without fully considering if the some details might be more appropriately used in response to other questions. The second, simpler issue is exemplified by subgrantees such as ARC Community Services, Menominee Indian Tribe, Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and Lakeshore CAP. These subgrantees have some of the single shortest responses as well as a general propensity for brevity as evidenced by their exceedingly short median and maximum responses. The concern with these subgrantees is simply that they consistently have very little to report at least across the two quarters that were examined for this report.
Figure 8. Plot of median response length, longest response, and shortest response for the least verbose subgrantees. Subgrantees were selected if either their longest response or median response was in the bottom 10% of responses.
Subgrantee responses were also examined for similarity from the first to the second quarter. Scores range from one to one hundred with higher scores indicating greater similarity. Scores are calculated in pairwise fashion, that is, the score compares each subgrantee’s response in Q4 2017 with their own response to the same question in Q1 2018. The scores were calculated using the Jaccard method. The math is simple and can be described as follows:

1. Count the number of words appearing in both quarters (i.e. shared words)
2. Lump both quarters together and count the total number of unique words (i.e. each word counts only once).
3. Divide (1) by (2) and multiply result by 100

The Jaccard similarity coefficient described above is a widely used and simple method of quantifying the similarity of text responses (i.e. duplicate detection). It does have two important limitations. First, it does not consider the sequence of the words. Second, very short responses can create problems.

Consider “none” and “nothing to report” - these are substantively identical responses but the similarity score comparing them will be zero because no words are shared. If “none” were instead changed to “nothing” the score would jump to 30 which indicates a modest degree of similarity but still fails to capture the true equivalence of these responses. Putting these concerns aside, figure 9 presents the distribution of subgrantee similarity scores by question.

A peak on the left side of the plot with a thin right-side tail (e.g. Q4 or Q7) indicates a large number of subgrantees with low similarity scores for that question and a handful of higher-similarity responses. A flatter peak with a thicker right-side tail (e.g. Q1, Q2) indicates a greater number of high-similarity responses to the question. Mean similarity scores for each question are indicated by the vertical lines but are also provided in table 1 for convenience. Y axis values (density) is not shown but all plots share common or fixed axes; this means that distribution heights are comparable across plots.
What figure 9 and table 1 demonstrate is that Q1 and Q2 exhibit a modest degree of response recycling. Subgrantees may be recycling some or all of their responses to these questions from one quarter to the next. Unlike Q2, Q1 also has a sizeable peak at 100 which indicates a number of identical responses to this question from one quarter to the next; other questions with a large number of perfectly recycled responses across quarters are Q3, Q5, and Q7. The spike on the right tail is largely absent in Q2, Q6, and Q8 which indicates that there are few perfectly recycled responses to these questions.
Recall that Q1 asks simply for subgrantees to report their activities this quarter. Given that most agencies do not radically change from one quarter to the next, it should not be surprising that reported activities are fairly similar across the two quarters being compared. What is interesting is that Q2 and Q8, which round out the top three questions for response recycling, also have comparably high similarity scores - these were also questions that tended to elicit unusually long responses. Subgrantees may in fact be recycling large portions of those lengthy responses. Given that OCVS staff read each quarterly program report, redundancy in responses is particularly unfortunate if it occurs in the longest responses.

Table 1. Average subgrantee response similarity scores for each Egrants question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>MEAN SIMILARITY</th>
<th>MEDIAN SIMILARITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>18.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>17.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10 employs a simple generalized additive model (GAM) to examine the conjecture that high similarity responses tend to be long by virtue of subgrantees recycling large portions of text from one quarter to the next. Unlike linear regression, the GAM does not impose an assumption of linearity between the predictor and response variables. The Y axis has been square rooted to prevent the pairs of extremely long responses from excessively stretching the axis; this impacts the display of the model, not the estimation. The plot indicates that, fortunately, the relationship between response similarity and length is trivial at best. Response length peaks as similarity approaches 40, but after this point increasing similarity (i.e. a greater degree of response recycling) actually corresponds to small reductions in average response length. Put differently, the longest responses tend to have similarity scores of about .25 to .5. There are exceptions to this trend; dots in the upper right quadrant of the plot indicate pairs of responses that are both lengthy on average and exhibit a high degree of similarity. There are also a
number of perfectly similar responses of about 250 words or less that deserve closer inspection. Table 2 presents a list of those subgrantee responses that were perfect matches across quarter sorted by response length.

Figure 10. Average response length over the two quarters by similarity of responses. Line fitted by generalized additive model (GAM) Note: Y axis values are square rooted to reduce stretching of the axis caused by extremely long responses.

There are 49 responses that are an exact match across quarters while 109 have similarity scores greater than or equal to 75. Of those 109, 19 had an average response length in excess of 250 words and 4 were in excess of 500 words. The perfect matches are presented below in table 2 and a longer list consisting of all responses that were at least 75 percent similar is provided in Appendix D.
Table 2. Egrants responses that were 100 percent similar across quarters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRANT ID</th>
<th>SUBGRANTEE</th>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>SIMILARITY</th>
<th>AVERAGE WORDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12353</td>
<td>Canopy Center, Inc.</td>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12324</td>
<td>The Women’s Community, Inc.</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12412</td>
<td>Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, Inc.</td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12429</td>
<td>Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.</td>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12364</td>
<td>Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin - Racine</td>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12363</td>
<td>Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin - Kenosha</td>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12413</td>
<td>CASA of the Fox Cities</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12373</td>
<td>Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin - Wausau</td>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12408</td>
<td>Women &amp; Children’s Horizons, Inc.</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12420</td>
<td>Deaf Unity</td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12413</td>
<td>CASA of the Fox Cities</td>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12344</td>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Office of Crime Victim Services</td>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12378</td>
<td>Green Haven Family Advocates, Inc.</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12415</td>
<td>La Crosse Police Department</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12373</td>
<td>Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin - Wausau</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>12404</td>
<td>Turningpoint for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, Inc.</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>12437</td>
<td>Dunn County District Attorney’s Office</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>76</td>
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<tr>
<td>12344</td>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Office of Crime Victim Services</td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>12422</td>
<td>Family Services of Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois</td>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Division of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>Q7</td>
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<td>Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>12331</td>
<td>Forest County Potawatomi Community</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>12377</td>
<td>Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. - Milwaukee</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>12351</td>
<td>Lutheran Social Services</td>
<td>Q1</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>12447</td>
<td>Safe Harbor of Sheboygan County Inc.</td>
<td>Q1</td>
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<td>Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin - Kenosha</td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>12364</td>
<td>Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin - Racine</td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>12468</td>
<td>Milwaukee Center for Children and Youth, Inc.</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>12365</td>
<td>Marshfield Clinic - Child Advocacy Center</td>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>12380</td>
<td>St. Croix County Victim Witness Assistance Program</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>12459</td>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Division of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>12333</td>
<td>Monroe County Sheltercare Inc. - Brighter Tomorrows</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>12419</td>
<td>Racine County Victim Witness Assistance Program</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>12396</td>
<td>Violence Intervention Project, Inc.</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12459</td>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Division of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12333</td>
<td>Monroe County Sheltercare Inc. - Brighter Tomorrows</td>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12328</td>
<td>Family Support Center</td>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12419</td>
<td>Racine County Victim Witness Assistance Program</td>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12415</td>
<td>La Crosse Police Department</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>12371</td>
<td>Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin - Fox Valley Child Advocacy Center</td>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12363</td>
<td>Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin - Kenosha</td>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These similarity scores can also be averaged for each subgrantee to create an overall indicator of the degree to which a subgrantee is recycling responses across quarters. Figure 11 presents the distribution of these average subgrantee similarity scores. Recall that similarity scores compare subgrantee responses to the same question across quarters and do not capture any recycling of responses to different questions either in the same quarter or across quarters. What figure 11 indicates is that most subgrantees have a modest degree of similarity in their responses. This should be neither surprising nor alarming since subgrantees would surely use many of the same words to answer these questions each quarter. The handful of subgrantees with very high average similarity scores, however, are worth examining more closely.
Figure 11. Distribution of average subgrantee similarity scores.

The distribution of average agency similarity scores presented in figure 11 shows a sharp drop in subgrantees after about 50 percent similarity which suggests a natural cut point to identify subgrantees with unusual and perhaps excessive response recycling. This 50 percent threshold also works on an intuitive level; it is the point at which subgrantees are, on average, recycling more than half of their responses from one quarter to the next. Table 3 presents a list of subgrantees with average response similarity of 50 or more; there were 17 such subgrantees.

Table 3. Subgrantees with mean similarity scores of 50 or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBGRANTEE</th>
<th>MEAN SIMILARITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La Crosse Police Department</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Division of Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin - Racine</td>
<td>75.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin - Wausau</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Justice - Office of Crime Victim Services</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin - Kenosha</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran Social Services</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASA of the Fox Cities</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The take-away here is that OCVS should provide subgrantees with guidance about appropriate levels of variation and expectations regarding recycling of narrative responses across quarters and questions. In addition, OCVS should consider potential changes to questions to reduce reporting burden on subgrantees so that they do not feel obligated to devise unique responses to questions asking about things that have not changed since last quarter. Whatever position OCVS takes on this issue, there should be clear guidelines to ensure reporting burden on subgrantees is comparable and to ensure that either the reports are not redundant or there is clarity about where redundancy is acceptable.

**Egrants: Conclusions and Recommendations**

A few simple revisions to Egrants could substantially improve the quality of the information reported while also reducing subgrantee frustration and confusion with the qualitative program reporting structure. While complete recommendations for the Egrants program monitoring system are outside the scope of this document there are still conclusions to be drawn; these are briefly summarized as follows:

1. **Provide subgrantees additional guidance on appropriate program reporting.** This may include reference to what appears to be typical or average reporting across subgrantees or reference to normative standards that OCVS develops in light of the information contained in this report.
   
   Guidelines should address, at a minimum, the following:
   
   - Appropriate response length
   - Appropriate content: This includes both the content necessary to answer the question as well as content that is likely to be irrelevant, redundant, or better suited for a different question.
Guidance on response recycling: Is this an acceptable practice? How much is too much? How much is typical? Should guidance be specific to each question? Subgrantees should not feel obligated to devise unique responses to questions asking about things that have not changed since the previous quarter. OCVS staff should likewise not be made to re-read the same or highly similar content from one quarter to the next.

2. Revise Egrants questions. As a counterpart to better guidance on appropriate responses, the questions themselves could be modified to elicit responses that are both more useful as well as more consistent across subgrantees.
   - Questions 1, 2, and 8 seemed to invite excessively long responses and could be revised to promote concise responses.
   - Q2, in particular, should be separated into two questions to ensure the quantitative data is collected in a way that is accessible for analysis and not intermingled with the qualitative/narrative responses.

3. Re-examine program reporting frequency. Egrants functionality is limited but OCVS should explore all options to ensure the data reported is useful, not excessively or unnecessarily voluminous, and not redundant. Varying questions from one quarter to the next may reduce redundancy while increasing the total amount of useful information reported, however this functionality may be beyond the capabilities of Egrants. The frequency of reporting could be modified or some questions could be shifted to the ‘final’ report which would reduce their frequency to annual.

**US Department of Justice Subgrant Award Report (SAR)**

While subgrantee budgets are tracked in the Egrants system, the USDOJ also tracks subgrantee spending in various crime categories and by crime victim type. Upon receiving the award, the subgrantee completes a worksheet and this is then entered into the PMT system by OCVS staff. This information can be exported in spreadsheet form and provides useful statewide data on how funding is allocated to various types of victims, or categories of crimes. The data export is structured such that each row indicates a subaward as identified by its unique SAR_ID. Multi-year projects typically receive a new subaward and corresponding SAR_ID each year. Specific columns exported in the SAR report are listed in Appendix B.

Projects are assigned a start and end date that typically corresponds to the federal fiscal year, although in previous years some projects were on a state calendar that differed slightly from the federal fiscal
year. To complicate matters further, project years do not correspond to grant years. OCVS is not obligated to expend all grant year funds in a particular year, instead these funds might be spread across multiple fiscal/project years. Consequently, grant years might be better thought of as fund reserves. A given project might be funded out of one or more of these grant year reserves. At present, no project is funded out of more than two federal grant years but this need not necessarily be the case in the future. OVC does require that funds from a given grant year be allocated such that at least ten percent fall into each of the four priority/underserved areas. This does not necessarily need to be true for a particular fiscal/project year because, again, projects might be funded out of multiple grant years.

The SAR data export does list the grant years with funds allocated to the project; this allows for easy identification of projects funded out of more than one grant year. However, the SAR data export does not include the funding split for those projects funded out of multiple grant years. This is a particular challenge because OVC requires OCVS to expend at least ten percent of each grant year’s funds in each of the four categories. The SAR data export cannot be used for these budgetary projections without considerable manual data entry - the funding splits must be pulled by hand from the PMT system for each project that is funded out of multiple grant years. Presented here are select screen captures of the interactive dashboards created for OCVS as part of this project to better understand and monitor the fiscal data contained in the SAR report. These were developed based on an export of the SAR data that was then prepared for use in this type of interactive reporting format. Dashboards that are not useful or insightful for the purposes of this report have been omitted for brevity.

The first thing to note about this dashboard is that OCVS is allocating at least ten percent of grant-year funds to each of the four categories. The numbers for 2013 and 2014 have been hidden from view because they are based on incomplete data, however. This is because the PMT system went live in 2015 and a given grant-year fund can be used for a period of years. Simply put, 2013 grant-year funds awarded after the PMT went live in calendar year 2015 (federal fiscal year 2016) are contained in the PMT/SAR, but are incomplete.
Figure 12. Overall spending table by grant year.

An area of concern is the row for the “remainder” funds. Subgrantees are assigned an award amount - this is reported in the SAR. They also enter total funds expected to be spent in each of the four different categories and subcategories as appropriate. The PMT does apparently have validations in place to ensure that the subcategories add to the total for the category. However, there appears to be no validation to ensure that the sum of the categories equals the total funds awarded. In short, when constructing this table the row labeled “remainder” was created to account for the difference between the sum of the planned expenditures in the four categories and the total award amount. These funds appear to be left-over or unaccounted in the subgrantees’ planned expenditures. OCVS has been notified of this issue and has consulted OVC for guidance.

The dashboard also contains various visuals allowing the user to see at a glance the trends in either the dollars expended or the dollars as a percent of the total (user selectable parameter), as well as
corresponding breakdowns of the underserved category. While informative from a program management perspective, these visuals are not useful for data quality purposes and have been omitted from this report.

As part of the SAR, the subgrantees are classified by “designation.” There are four broad categories – government agencies, non-profits, tribal governments or agencies, and campus organizations. There are subcategories within each category and these subcategories are not necessarily unique to each category. As an example, both government and campus organizations can have law enforcement agencies. These fields represent an opportunity to better understand and track the allocation of grant funds but only if the categories are meaningfully distinguished and applied consistently across agencies. For example, the distinction between an agency by or for an underserved community has much potential overlap with agencies by or for underserved victims of crime. The second largest funding total goes to agencies designated as “multiservice” - a catchall category. The largest funding total goes to “domestic violence and sexual assault services” which is not clearly distinguished from the “sexual assault services organization” designation. These categories deserve to be revisited and, there should be clearer guidelines for classifying agencies by designation. A sample of the dashboard by designation is shown in Figure 13.
The SAR also contains information on both where an agency is located and the counties served by the agency. Figure 14 presents a map of agency locations - larger circles indicate more agencies located in a respective city. In the interactive version of the map, clicking on a city filters the agency contact info table on the right side to the agencies located in that city. Figure 15 presents a similar map, but this one is color coded by county and is based on the number of agencies that report serving a particular county.

There are two data quality concerns related to these data. First, the only way to track the geographic allocation of funds is to parse funds out by agency location. The problem with this is it will tend to overstate funds allocated to Madison and Milwaukee because statewide agencies will tend to be headquartered in the state capital or other large cities such as Milwaukee. This approach also ignores any sharing of services across county lines.
Alternatively, funds could be parsed out according to the counties actually served by each agency. This would be the more accurate approach but there is currently no way to determine the distribution of a subgrantee’s funds across the counties served by each subgrantee. A more fundamental and pressing concern is that there appears to be a lack of clarity about what it means for an agency to serve a county. For example, many subgrantees indicate serving all counties in the state, however, several such subgrantees are not state agencies but are, instead, smaller local agencies located in rural areas which are largely isolated from the rest of the state. Therefore, some subgrantees may interpret this question as asking if they would serve a crime victim from that county, not necessarily if they have actually done so or do so on a routine basis. An ostensibly simple solution is to require that the agency actually serve victims who reside in a particular county in order to list that county as being within the agency’s service area. However, this is not as straightforward as it seems. For example, if a single service recipient is from a particular county, is this sufficient for the agency to claim that they serve that county in any meaningful sense? What about state agencies who would seem, by definition, to serve all counties but who may not actually have any service recipients in the less populous areas of the state? A further complexity arises from hotline calls that may come from anywhere and whose origination may be totally unknown. There are no easy answers to these questions, but OCVS should develop definitions that at
least create consistency in how subgrantees are answering this question. If reliable, these data could prove quite useful for examining gaps and disparities in both services and funding in various geographic areas across the state.

Subgrant Award Report (SAR): Conclusions and Recommendations

The SAR could be made much more useful with some additional data fields, validations, and definitions. While modifications to the SAR may be outside the scope of OCVS’ responsibilities, definitions are not. Clarifying definitions are something that OCVS can and should work on in the short term while also petitioning OVC for substantive changes in the SAR and improvements in the data export functionality. Specific recommendations are as follows:

1. Provide subgrantees with definitions and guidelines to encourage consistent and accurate SAR data. Guidelines should address, at a minimum, the following:
Refine/clarify agency designation: Provide definitions that enable agencies to self-sort into the proper agency designation. If these categories can be edited by OCVS then this is an option that should be explored.

Clarify agency service area: Subgrantees need clear direction on what constitutes an agency’s service area. Guidelines should be sensitive to the distinction between state and local agencies and specifically address the issue of hotline calls or other anonymous contacts where the recipient’s location or residence is unknown.

2. Petition OVC for additional data fields and validations to include the following:

- Add a field for subgrantees to report the approximate breakdown of funds across counties served and include clear and simple guidance for this calculation.

- Add a data validation to ensure the total funds allocated matches the sum of the totals recorded in each of the four service areas. Related to this, work with OVC to identify the source of any inconsistencies in present data. The SAR is completed at the outset of the grant and is updated at the conclusion of the project year. Inconsistencies may originate from either or both of these data entry points.

- Improve data export functionality to ensure that projects funded out of more than one grant year have funding totals listed by grant year on the SAR data export. This addition will enable OCVS to easily and quickly determine if at least ten percent of a grant-year’s funds have been spent on each service area.

**US Department of Justice Performance Measurement Tool (PMT)**

On October 1, 2015 Wisconsin VOCA subgrantees began collecting the Office of Crime Victim Services Performance Measure Tool (OVC PMT) data, which was a departure from the data previously collected by the subgrantees. OVC PMT data is collected quarterly and includes aggregate data on victim demographics, victimization type, and services provided. OCVS has reviewed OVC PMT data for program monitoring purposes but has not carefully analyzed it to assess data quality, completeness, and usefulness. OCVS does not currently require any additional quantitative data beyond what is included in OVC PMT reporting. Data entered by subgrantees into the PMT can be exported in spreadsheet format with each row representing a subgrantee; each quarter is exported in a separate sheet. Specific columns/fields included in the data export are listed in Appendix C.
Presented below are select screen captures of dashboards created through this project for OCVS using PMT quarterly data; only dashboards germane to this report have been included. Of note, PMT subgrantee-level detailed data can only be exported by quarter. This means that all quarters must first be exported and then combined into a single file. Variations in the export files makes this a complex process - among other small variations there were some more consequential changes in how anonymous contacts were recorded starting in June of 2017.
Figure 16. Highlight table of growth and decline in subgrantees' total service recipients relative to the previous quarter.
Figure 16, above, presents a dashboard intended to highlight unusual growth or decline in the total number of service recipients served by subgrantees. Growth is calculated compared to the previous quarter. The threshold for unusual growth or decline is user selectable and is currently set at 150% for growth and 50% for decline. Subgrantees are sorted according to the average number of service recipients they serve in a quarter; for brevity, the screen capture presented here includes only 13 subgrantees but the full table includes calculations for all subgrantees. Blue indicates growth while red indicates decline; darker shades indicate growth or decline in excess of the selected thresholds. Figure 17, below, presents the subgrantees’ total service recipients by quarter but color codes the outlier quarters relative to the subgrantees’ median quarter. As with the previous table, the thresholds are user selectable. Blue indicates a quarter where the total number of service recipients is unusually large compared to the median quarter while red indicates the opposite. For example, in Q2 and Q3 of 2016 Solutions Center reported more than 150% more total service recipients than they did in their median quarter - these cells are highlighted in blue. These tables are intended to enable OCVS to identify reporting irregularities in the number of service recipients. Another way to detect these anomalies is to look at the range of service recipients and figures 16 and 17 provide examples of dashboards that fulfill this purpose.
Figure 17. Highlight table of subgrantees’ total service recipients compared to their own median quarter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgrantee</th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
<th>FY 2016</th>
<th>FY 2015</th>
<th>FY 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRIENDS Inc.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions Center</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocates of Change</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope House</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and Children’s Horizon</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Community Growth</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Horizons Shelter and Outreach</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Action of Wisconsin</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden House</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI 001 Victim Resource Center</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Crosse Police Department</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racine County DHS Office</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-%</td>
<td>-%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Service Recipients by Subgrantee Compared to Median Quarter (PMT)
Figure 18 presents a simple range chart of the total service recipients by subgrantee. The bar indicates the range while the circles indicate the quarters. In the interactive version of the table, hovering over a circle provides the quarter, year, and precise number served. For example, the outlying quarter for Sojourner Family Peace Center corresponds to 3,496 individuals served in Q3 of 2017. Subgrantees are grouped into sets to permit simple selection of subgrantees who may have unusual variation in total individuals served. The set currently displayed consists of the subgrantees with the largest ranges. While intuitive, the proper interpretation of the raw range depends on the number of individuals an agency typically serves. To illustrate, a range of 100 would be very large for an agency that typically serves about 200 people. Conversely, for an agency that typically serves around 1,000 individuals in a quarter, a range of 100 would be negligible and would indicate remarkable consistency in the number served.

From a statistical standpoint, the variability, typically represented by the standard deviation, is often scaled by dividing it by the mean. This is known as the coefficient of variation or relative standard deviation. The ratio of the variance to the mean is sometimes used to identify the distribution underlying the observed data; Poisson distributions, for example, are assumed to have a variance equal to the mean. These data are counts of individuals served; count data typically follows a Poisson or negative binomial distribution. What this means is that we should expect variability in these data to increase as the central value - the mean or median - increases. The takeaway is that in these data, variability should properly be understood relative to central tendency and the raw range fails in this regard. While there are not sufficient data points to permit calculation of the coefficient of variation for each subgrantee, we can approximate the coefficient of variation by dividing the range by the median.

Figure 19 presents a dual axis bar chart where the blue bar indicates the raw, unadjusted range, and the orange bar indicates the range divided by the median - the preferred measure which approximates the coefficient of variation. Longer bars indicate more variability. The set of subgrantees displayed are those whose range relative to the median (i.e. the orange bar) is among the largest. These subgrantees report an unusual amount of variability in the number served from one quarter to the next as indicated by the orange bars.
Figure 18. Plot of variability in total service recipients using the unadjusted range.
A final concern with these data was the reporting of new service recipients in the first quarter of each federal fiscal year (i.e., December). OVC has instructed that all service recipients should be entered as new service recipients in the first quarter of each year. Focus group discussions clearly indicated that Figure 19. Plot of variability in total service recipients using the ratio of the range to the median.
subgrantees struggled with this reporting requirement. To confirm that the requirement was being properly met we examined the data. There were two expectations. First, in the first quarter the total new service recipients should match the total number of service recipients reported. The PMT may have a data validation in place to enforce this requirement. Second, there should be a spike in the number of new service recipients in the first quarter because all service recipients are to be counted as new service recipients.

Figure 20 on the following page presents a dot plot of the number of new service recipients by subgrantee for each quarter. Unlike the range plot in figure 17, the identity of the specific quarter is critical - for this reason, the dots are ordered vertically within each subgrantee and the first quarter is highlighted in color. Green indicates that the total new service recipients matches the total service recipients while red indicates that it does not. Quarters other than the first are presented in gray. The chart currently displayed consists of the subgrantees who served more than 515 individuals each quarter on average, but this pattern is applicable to most subgrantees regardless of size. The filter based on the number served on average was necessary to preserve gradation in the y axis. Mixing subgrantees who serve a thousand or more individuals with those who typically serve less than a hundred results in a stretched y axis that lacks sufficient gradation for subgrantees who serve only a handful of people each quarter. There were no subgrantees whose total new service recipients did not match the total service recipients in the first quarter; this is probably a result of a PMT data validation. There is not, however, a clear pattern of spikes in the number of new subgrantees in the first quarter. This requirement that all service recipients be treated as new in the first quarter should be revisited by OCVS to determine if subgrantees are properly meeting this requirement or if they are, for example, undercounting by omitting some or all existing service recipients in the first quarter.
OCVS also requested subgrantee specific dashboards. While interesting and useful from a program management perspective, these are not generally intended to analyze the quality of the PMT data as a whole because they are subgrantee specific. However, in building these dashboards there are subgrantee specific irregularities that stand out. Going forward, these dashboards may be useful to identify and correct subgrantee specific data entry errors. Figure 21 presents the full demographic dashboard for a subgrantee. The area plot for race has an unusual spike in the number of Pacific Islanders served in Q4 of 2016. There is also a corresponding sharp drop in the number of white service recipients at this point in time. This suggests a data entry mistake where white service recipients were potentially misclassified as Pacific Islander. The red circle highlights the questionable data point.
Figure 21. Suspect quarterly demographic data from a VOCA subgrantee.
Figure 22 presents a similar situation with data entered by another agency which provides services to domestic abuse victims. For brevity, only the “sex” portion of the dashboard is displayed; note the number of men served in Q1 of 2018. In the suspect quarter the sex ratio is essentially inverted from that seen in other quarters; this anomaly coupled with the fact that women constitute the overwhelming majority of domestic abuse victims suggests that these data may be the result of a data entry mistake. There are additional examples from other agencies that are not shown here for space considerations.

Another suspect data pattern that emerged in the demographic data involved the use of the “not tracked” and “not reported” response categories. Figure 23 illustrates an interesting cyclical pattern in the use of these categories seen in data from a subgrantee. Note how all three demographic variables show coordinated spikes in “not reported” followed by spikes in “not tracked.” In the age plot this is evidenced by the alternating yellow and purple spikes; the spikes are pink and brown in the race plot, and teal and green in the sex plot. This is an unusual pattern that is not likely to occur by chance but may instead have occurred as a result of different individuals entering the agency’s data from one quarter to the next. There may be confusion or disagreement between those entering the data about what exactly distinguishes “not tracked” from “not reported” data elements.

In general, there are other subgrantees with unusual patterns in the data such as sudden spikes in the use of the not tracked or not reported categories which may indicate data tracking problems or a transitional period between records systems. Other subgrantees have noteworthy cyclical surges in the number of services recipients. There is not sufficient space to examine each subgrantee’s data in this document, but the intent is to illustrate how these dashboards might be used to do subgrantee-specific data quality checks.
Figure 23. Cyclical pattern in use for a VOCA subgrantee “not reported” and “not tracked” categories in data from a VOCA subgrantee.
Dashboards were also created to track the types of victims, and counts of services provided, as well as the number of recipients receiving services in each category. Suspicious data also turn up in these visualizations but conclusions are not as intuitive or easily drawn as they are in the demographic data because we have few prior beliefs about what the data should look like (for comparison, think back to the inverted counts of men and women served by a domestic violence victim service provider). To illustrate, consider figure 24 which plots the number of services provided by a subgrantee. The data clearly show a spike in the number of emotional support or safety services provided between 2017 and 2018. If we make the assumption that something is amiss, there is no clear way to determine if services provided are being over-reported during this time or under-reported at other times. The pattern however, does suggest that further investigation may be beneficial to understand if there is a potential reporting issue.

![Figure 24. Trends in emotional support services reported by a VOCA subgrantee.](image.png)

**Performance Measurement Tool (PMT): Conclusions and Recommendations**

The PMT contains useful information on the activities of subgrantees and the needs of victims. As with the SAR, additional data validations, export functionality, and revised data structure would further improve these data. In the bigger picture, these data are fundamentally limited in several ways. First,
the aggregate data are not linked across fields. The number of women and men are reported only in aggregate and not by specific age or race categories. This is a limitation on the utility of this data as it is currently collected. To illustrate, suppose a subgrantee provides services for 100 people in a quarter. The PMT may report 70 of these recipients are female and 50 are under age 25. While we may be inclined to say that this is an agency that serves young women, the numbers cannot be interpreted this way. This is because PMT reporting does not request age-specific counts of men and women. Suppose the 30 men served by the agency are all under 25, while only 20 of the 70 female service recipients are under 25. In other words, the under 25 age group in this hypothetical example may have 1.5 times as many men in it as women despite the agency serving 1.4 times more women than men. Not only does this data limitation greatly constrain the utility of the data for analytical purposes, it also invites the sort of mistaken inferences outlined above.

Subgrantees have also been critical of the data collected in the PMT on the grounds that counting services provided or people served fails to account for the intensity, complexity, or duration of services. These are important facets of the services rendered that are not likely to be comparable across victim type or across service area. This makes it difficult to do meaningful comparisons across agencies and service areas. The data collected in the PMT consist almost exclusively of outputs; there are no measures of outcomes or impacts which are important markers for agency effectiveness; this is the core issue underlying subgrantee discontent with simply counting services rendered and people served. As a final critique, subgrantees themselves see little value in the PMT data because, for most agencies, the PMT data captures only a fraction of what they do as an agency. Since they report only on VOCA funded activities, the PMT data do not reflect outputs, impacts, or outcomes that were supported by other funding sources. The data are therefore limited for fundraising, outreach, or even performance monitoring purposes at the agency level. Addressing these data limitations requires a fundamental rethinking of the PMT and is thus outside the scope of this project. However, these limitations bear mentioning in any discussion of the quality and utility of subgrantee data captured in the PMT and point to the need to consider alternative ways of collecting data on individuals served and services provided that could provide a wider array of options for the analysis of the information both for VOCA-funded programs specifically, as well as overall agency activities and outcomes.

Putting aside system-level changes to the PMT, specific short term recommendations are as follows:

1. Provide subgrantees with improved definitions and guidelines to encourage consistent and accurate PMT data.
– Work with subgrantees to address specific data entry mistakes as they become evident in the dashboards (e.g. confusion over “not tracked” and “not reported”) and clarify definitions as necessary to prevent similar mistakes in the future.

2. Petition OVC for an additional data export format that includes all quarters of data tracked at the subgrantee-quarter level (i.e. not aggregated across subgrantees or over quarters) to make it easier to utilize and analyze the PMT data.

3. Petition OVC for additional data fields that capture outcomes or impacts. While a longer-term goal, this is something that could still be collected in aggregate and thus implemented in the existing PMT data structure. Alternatively, this is something that could possibly be reported in Egrants.

4. OCVS should maintain the dashboards created for this project and utilize them for site visits, monitoring, analysis of trends, and data quality reviews.

– A particular issue worth exploring further is the requirement that all service recipients be entered as “new” service recipients in the first quarter. The data suggest that many subgrantees may be under-counting service recipients in the first quarter as a result of this requirement.

5. Disseminate these data back to subgrantees using these or other dashboards, infographics, reports, newsletters, etc.

– During focus group discussions subgrantees expressed a desire to see their data put to work. An intuitive visual presentation of these data will also encourage subgrantees to make use of it themselves and this, in turn, has the potential to motivate subgrantees to input maximally reliable data in the PMT.

Appendix A: Listing of Egrants Data Fields

1. Various Dates: Period covered by report, due date, submitted date, and date last updated.

2. Project on-schedule: a yes/no close ended question requiring subgrantee to indicate if the project is on schedule. A “no” response results in a required narrative explanation.

3. Activities: A text box where subgrantee is expected to outline the agency activities this quarter that were supported by VOCA funds.

4. Performance Measures: A table of 11 priority areas identified by OCVS. Subgrantees select target areas from this list and set a target funding amount for each selected area. They then report on the actual funds expended in each selected priority area from project start date to present.
– Target areas:
  1. Underserved Assault
  2. Underserved Robbery
  3. Adult Sexual Assault
  4. Child Physical Abuse
  5. Child Sexual Abuse
  6. Domestic/Family Violence
  7. Underserved Adults Molested as Children
  8. Underserved DUI
  9. Underserved Elder Abuse
  10. Underserved Homicide Survivors
  11. Underserved Other Violent Crime

5. Provide a meaningful update on your VOCA project Goals & Objectives. In addition to the quantitative information you need to provide, please provide qualitative information in your answer as well. Please do not just cut and paste your Goals & Objectives into this section.

6. Describe any external (outside your agency) challenges encountered during the reporting period that hindered the VOCA project achieving its Goals & Objectives (ex. community challenges, challenges with partners or stakeholders, etc.).

7. Describe any internal challenges within your VOCA project that hindered the VOCA project during the reporting period (ex. staff vacancies, different client needs, lack of training, etc.).

8. Have there been any changes to the VOCA project (such as activity or services changes, personnel changes or vacancies)? If so, please explain the changes. As a reminder, some changes may require a modification.

9. Consider the data that your agency submitted in the OVC PMT system for the VOCA project for this reporting period. Please explain what you have learned about your VOCA project services through the OVC PMT data. For example, explain a profile of a “typical” victim served, explain any gaps in services, notable trends, or emerging issues, etc.

10. How will what you have learned from your answer to the previous question impact your service delivery?
11. Describe any activities performed by the VOCA project during the reporting period that support the VOCA priority areas that were identified in your application.

12. VOCA Crime Type [funding] allocation: A table of funding categories corresponding to the SAR report where subgrantees enter the “Amount of Federal VOCA funds that were allocated to each crime type”
   - Categories:
     1. Child Physical Abuse
     2. Child Sexual Abuse
     3. Domestic and Family Violence
     4. Adult Sexual Assault
     5. DUI/DWI crashes
     6. Assault
     7. Adults Molested as Children
     8. Elder Abuse
     9. Robbery
    10. Survivors of Homicide
    11. Other Violent Crime
    12. If other violent crimes, please describe: This field is a narrative text box
    13. Other non-violent crimes
    14. If other non-violent crimes, please describe: This field is a narrative text box
    15. Total (should equal total amount of Federal VOCA funds actually spent)

Appendix B: Listing of Subgrantee Award Report (SAR) Data Fields
1. SAR_ID: A unique identifier for each project – project year combination.
2. SUB ORG NAME: Subgrantee name
3. FEDERAL AWARD: While projects are restricted to a single year, funds supporting that year of activity can be drawn from multiple federal grants. A 2016 project, for example, could be funded from 2015 and 2016 federal grants. In this column the grants supporting the project are listed in CSV format.
4. $DISTRIBUTION: No Data/Blank
5. A-CHILD ABUSE: No Data/Blank
6. B-DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE: No Data/Blank
7. C-ADULT SEXUAL ASSAULT: No Data/Blank
8. D-UNDERSERVED: No Data/Blank
9. ADDRESS: Subgrantee address
10. CITY: Subgrantee city
11. ZIPCODE: Subgrantee zip code
12. POCNAME: Point of contact
13. POCEMAIL: Point of contact email
14. POCPHONE: Point of contact phone
15. SUBGRANTEE ORGANIZATION TYPE: Subgrantees are categorized into four broad categories which each contain a number of subcategories. The broad category appears in this field while the specific subcategory appears in the “DESIGNATION” field.
   1. Federally Recognized Tribal Governments, Agencies, and Organizations Only
   2. Government Agencies Only
   3. Nonprofit Organization Only
   4. Campus Organizations Only
16. DESIGNATION: Subgrantees are further categorized into one of the following subcategories. Subcategories are not necessarily unique to each “ORGANIZATION TYPE.” In other words, some subcategories appear in more than one “ORGANIZATION TYPE.”
   1. Campus-based victims services
   2. Child abuse service organization (e.g. child advocacy center)
   3. Coalition (e.g. state domestic violence or sexual assault coalition)
   4. Corrections
   5. courts
   6. Domestic and family violence organization
   7. Faith-based organization
   8. Juvenile justice
   9. Law enforcement
   10. Multiservice agency
11. Organization by and/or for a specific traditionally underserved community
12. Organization by and/or for underserved victims of crime (e.g. drug driving, homicide, elder abuse)
13. Organization provides domestic and family violence and sexual assault services
14. Other
15. Other agency that is NOT justice-based (e.g. human services, health, education)
16. Other government agency
17. Other justice-based agency
18. Other type of nonprofit organization serving victims of crime
19. Physical or mental health service program
20. Prosecutor
21. Sexual assault services organization (e.g. rape crisis center)

17. SUBGRANTEE ORGANIZATION OTHER TYPE: Those selecting “Other” agency designation are classified as follows:
   1. Department of Health and Human Services
   2. Human Service Agency – Child Protective Services
   3. Department of Corrections
   4. Department of Justice
   5. Hospital based violence intervention program
   6. Disability Service Provider Agency
   7. Serving persons of transgender experience
   8. Civil Legal Services Law Firm

18. SERVICE AREA(S): Subgrantees list the counties served by their agency. Multiple counties are listed in CSV format. Those serving the entire state are listed as “All counties”

19. OTHER SERVICE AREAS: Subgrantees near state borders list counties served in other states such as Minnesota or Illinois

20. VICTIM ASSISTANCE FUNDS AWARD: Total funds awarded

21. STATE-ASSIGNED AWARD NUMBER: State assigned project identifier

22. PROJECT START DATE: Project start date, most projects start on October 1.

23. PROJECT END DATE: Project end date, most projects end on September 30
24. **SUBAWARD PURPOSE:** Purpose for subaward – multiple options can be selected from the list below, all selected options listed in CSV format.

1. Continue a VOCA-funded victim project funded in a previous year
2. Expand or enhance an existing project not funded by VOCA in the previous year
3. Start up a new victim services project
4. Start up a new Native American victim services project
5. Expand or enhance an existing Native American project

25. **Subgrantees total expenditures in the following categories.** Some categories contain subcategories; subgrantees are not required to break expenditures out across subcategories but if they do, they must match the total for the category.

   a. **CHILD ABUSE**
      1. CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE/NEGLIGENCE
      2. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

   b. **DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE**

   c. **ADULT SEXUAL ASSAULT**
      1. CHILD SEXUAL ASSAULT
      2. ADULT SEXUAL ASSAULT

   d. **UNDERSERVED**
      1. DUI/DWI CRASHES
      2. ASSAULT
      3. ADULTS MOLESTED AS CHILDREN
      4. ELDER ABUSE
      5. ROBBERY
      6. SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS
      7. OTHER VIOLENT CRIMES
      8. OTHER VIOLENT CRIMES: text field where subgrantees can list specific offenses funded in the corresponding category.
      9. NON-VIOLENT CRIMES
      10. NON-VIOLENT CRIMES (EXPLANATION): text field where subgrantees can list specific offenses funded in the corresponding category.
11. EXPLAIN UNDERSERVED: A static field auto populated with Wisconsin’s list of “underserved” categories.

26. SUBGRANT MATCH (VALUE OF IN-KIND MATCH): Dollar total of in-kind match

27. SUBGRANT MATCH (CASH MATCH): Dollar total of cash match

28. SUBGRANT MATCH (TOTAL MATCH): Dollar total of all match funds. This field should be the sum of the cash match and the in-kind match. VOCA grants require a 20% match unless a match waiver is granted; Tribal Organization match may be 0%. The 20% match is calculated by dividing the total award by .8 and then subtracting the total award from the resulting figure.

29. MATCH WAIVER: Yes/no field indicating if match requirement was waived

30. USE OF VOCA AND MATCH FUNDS: Subgrantees select categories where funds will be spent; these categories correspond to the PMT direct service categories and subcategories A through E. The exact categories are listed in the PMT section and omitted here for brevity. The categories selected by the subgrantee are listed in the field in CSV format.

31. BUDGET AND STAFFING (FISCAL YEAR): Beginning and ending months of agency’s fiscal calendar.

32. BUDGET AND STAFFING (TOTAL BUDGET): Subgrantee total budget devoted to victim services programs.

33. BUDGET AND STAFFING (ANNUAL FUND - STATE): Total state funds subgrantee allocated to victim services programs.

34. BUDGET AND STAFFING (ANNUAL FUND - LOCAL): Total local funds subgrantee allocated to victim services programs.

35. BUDGET AND STAFFING (ANNUAL FUND - OTHER FEDERAL): Federal funds subgrantee allocated to victim services programs EXCLUDING the VOCA subaward.

36. BUDGET AND STAFFING (ANNUAL FUND - OTHER NON FEDERAL): Other non-federal funds subgrantee allocated to victim services programs.

37. BUDGET AND STAFFING (TOTAL STAFF): Total paid staff for victim services programs. Full and part time staff both count as ‘1’. The total should be a whole number, not pro-rated by FTE.

38. BUDGET AND STAFFING (FTE): Total count of hours to work by all staff supporting the work of the VOCA subaward plus match.

39. BUDGET AND STAFFING (VOLUNTEER HOURS): Total count of hours to work by all volunteers supporting the work of the VOCA subaward plus match.
40. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Any additional information that may help further explain subgrantee data.

41. COMPLETE: Yes/no indicating if SAR is complete

42. COMPLETE BY: Text field indicating OCVS staff member inputting subgrantee data

43. COMPLETE DATE: Date SAR completed

44. APPROVED: Date SAR approved

45. APPROVED BY: Text field indicating OCVS staff member who approved SAR

46. APPROVED DATE: Date SAR approved

47. LAST MODIFIED DATE: Date SAR last modified

Appendix C: Listing of Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) Data Fields

1. Subgrantee

2. State

3. Date of Data: Date quarterly data submitted to the PMT.

4. TOTAL number of individuals who received services during the reporting period: Simple count of the number of individuals served. This should include anonymous contacts such as hotline calls.

5. TOTAL number of anonymous contacts received during the reporting period: Total number of anonymous contacts such as hotline calls.

6. Is your agency able to track individuals throughout the Federal fiscal year?: Yes/No dichotomous variable indicating if subgrantee is capable of tracking service recipients.

7. Of the number of individuals entered in question 1, how many were NEW individuals who received services from your agency for the first time during the reporting period?

8. Is your agency able to identify “new” individuals who did not receive services from your agency during the previous reporting period?

9. Number of NEW individuals who received services from your agency for the first time during the reporting period.

10. Race is tracked using 11 separate columns consisting of counts of the number of service recipients falling into each category. Hispanic is included as a racial category

   1. American Indian or Alaska Native
2. Asian
3. Black or African American
4. Hispanic or Latino
5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
6. White Non-Latino or Caucasian
7. Some Other Race
8. Multiple Races
9. Not Reported: Race not reported.
11. Race/Ethnicity Total: Totals for the race columns should sum to the number reported in this column.

11. Sex is tracked using seven columns – six consisting of counts and a seventh text field where “other sex” is explained.
   1. Male
   2. Female
   3. Other: Simple count of service recipients who identify as “other” sex.
   4. Other: Text field where “other sex” is explained.
   5. Not Reported: Sex not reported.
   7. Gender Total: Totals for the sex columns should sum to the number reported in this column.

12. Age is tracked using eight separate columns consisting of counts of service recipients in each.
   1. Age 0-12
   2. Age 13-17
   3. Age 18-24
   4. Age 25-59
   5. Age 60 and Older
   6. Not Reported: Age not reported.
   7. Not Tracked: Age not tracked by subgrantee.
   8. Age Total: Totals for the age columns should sum to the number reported in this column.
13. PMT requires subgrantees to enter counts of victims falling into each of 29 separate categories. A victim who has suffered multiple victimizations may be counted more than once, thus counts for each category should not be summed to arrive at a total count of victims. The number of victims who have suffered multiple victimizations is entered in the final field.

1. Adult Physical Assault (Includes Aggravated and Simple Assault)
2. Adult Sexual Assault
3. Adults Sexually Abused/Assaulted as Children
4. Arson
5. Bullying (Verbal Cyber or Physical)
6. Burglary
7. Child Physical Abuse or Neglect
8. Child Pornography
9. Child Sexual Abuse/Assault
10. Domestic and/or Family Violence
11. DUI/DWI Incidents
12. Elder Abuse or Neglect
13. Hate Crime: Racial/Religious/Gender/ Sexual Orientation/Other (Explanation Required)
14. Human Trafficking: Labor
15. Human Trafficking: Sex
16. Identity Theft/Fraud/Financial Crime
17. Kidnapping (non-custodial)
18. Kidnapping (custodial)
19. Mass Violence (Domestic/International)
20. Other Vehicular Victimization (e.g. Hit and Run)
21. Robbery
22. Stalking/Harassment
23. Survivors of Homicide Victims
24. Teen Dating Victimization
25. Terrorism (Domestic/International)
26. Violation of a Court (Protective) Order
27. Other

28. If other please explain: A text field where “other” victim types is explained.

29. Enter Number: In this field subgrantees enter the number of victims who suffered multiple victimizations.

14. Special victim categories: Special victim classifications. As with the victimization types, the numbers reported in this field cannot be summed because a single victim may fall into multiple categories (e.g. a homeless and disabled veteran or an immigrant with limited English proficiency).

1. Deaf/Hard of Hearing
2. Homeless
3. Immigrants/Refugees/Asylum Seekers
4. LGBTQ
5. Veterans
6. Victims with Disabilities: Cognitive/Physical/Mental
7. Victims with Limited English Proficiency
8. Other
9. If other please explain:

15. Number of individuals assisted with a victim compensation application during the reporting period.

16. Subgrantees identify which services are offered/funded under VOCA. There are four categories (A-E), a “1” signifies that the service is offered. For those services that are offered, subgrantees will report on the number of service recipients in the next series of questions.

a. Type of service provided: A. Information & Referral
b. Type of service provided: B. Personal Advocacy/ Accompaniment
c. Type of service provided: C. Emotional Support or Safety Services
d. Type of service provided: D. Shelter/ Housing Services
e. Type of service provided: E. Criminal/ Civil Justice System Assistance

17. Category A – Information and referral

a. Enter the number of individuals who received services in this category
   1. Information about the criminal justice process
   2. Information about victim rights, how to obtain notifications, etc.
   3. Referral to other victim service programs
4. Referral to other services, supports, and resources (includes legal medical faith-based organizations address confidentiality programs etc.)

18. Category B – Personal Advocacy/ Accompaniment
   b. Enter the number of individuals who received services in this category
   1. Victim advocacy/accompaniment to emergency medical care
   2. Victim advocacy/accompaniment to medical forensic exam
   3. Law enforcement interview advocacy/accompaniment
   4. Individual advocacy (e.g. assistance in applying for public benefits return of personal property or effects)
   5. Performance of medical or nonmedical forensic exam or interview or medical evidence collection
   6. Immigration assistance (e.g. special visas continued presence application and other immigration relief)
   7. Intervention with employer creditor landlord or academic institution
   8. Child or dependent care assistance (includes coordination of services)
   9. Transportation assistance (includes coordination of services)
   10. Interpreter services

19. Category C – Emotional Support or Safety Services
   c. Enter the number of individuals who received services in this category
   1. Crisis intervention (in-person includes safety planning etc.)
   2. Hotline/crisis line counseling
   3. On-scene crisis response (e.g. community crisis response)
   4. Individual counseling
   5. Support groups (facilitated or peer)
   6. Other Therapy (traditional cultural or alternative healing; art writing or play therapy etc.)
   7. Emergency financial assistance

20. Category D – Shelter/ Housing Services
   d. Enter the number of individuals who received services in this category
   1. Emergency shelter or safe house
   2. Transitional housing
3. Relocation assistance (includes assistance with obtaining housing)

21. Category E – Criminal/ Civil Justice System Assistance
   e. Enter the number of individuals who received services in this category
      1. Notification of criminal justice events
      2. Victim impact statement assistance
      3. Assistance with restitution
      4. Civil legal assistance in obtaining protection or restraining order
      5. Civil legal assistance with family law issues
      6. Other emergency justice-related assistance
      7. Immigration assistance
      8. Prosecution interview advocacy/accompaniment
      9. Law enforcement interview advocacy/accompaniment
      10. Criminal advocacy/accompaniment
      11. Other legal advice and/or counsel

22. Additional Comments: A text field where subgrantees can enter any remarks necessary to clarify their quarterly report.

Appendix D: List of Highly Similar Egrants Responses
Egrants responses that were at least 75 percent similar across quarters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRANT ID</th>
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<th>AVERAGE WORDS</th>
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Appendix E: VOCA SAR Infographic
The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant is a federal grant administered by the state to support direct victim services. In Wisconsin, the 117 agencies receiving the grant are required to report on victim populations served and the services provided. Wisconsin Department of Justice's Office of Crime Victim Services and Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis are undertaking a joint project to better understand and improve the VOCA data collected by the state.

**VOCA Anticipated Funding Allocation by Victim Population**

*Not all agencies report or track victim demographic information and many victims receive services anonymously over the phone. All figures reported below are based on the total of victims served with known demographics. Callout boxes are not to scale.*

- **71%** of victims served were female
- **54%** of victims served were aged 25-59
- **16%** of victims served were aged 12 and under
- **8%** of victims served were aged 60 or older
- **58%** of victims served were white
- **26%** of victims served were black/African American
- **9%** of victims served were Hispanic
- **9%** of total service recipients were of unknown sex.
- **8%** of total service recipients were of unknown age.
- **17%** of total service recipients were of unknown race.
Appendix F: SAC Recommendations for OCVS
WI VOCA-SAC Project: Understanding VOCA Data and Building Partnerships

Recommendations for OCVS
Wisconsin Department of Justice
Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis
Wisconsin Statistical Analysis Center (SAC)
August 2018
Preface

The WI VOCA-SAC project consists of a review of Wisconsin’s existing data collection and reporting process for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, along with an analysis of VOCA data reported by subgrantees. Project activities also include review of the Office for Victims of Crime Performance Measurement Tool (OVC PMT), Egrants, the electronic system used to manage grants within the Wisconsin Department of Justice (WI DOJ), and comparable systems in other states, as well as focus groups with VOCA subgrantees. The end goals are to improve the data collected on programs receiving VOCA funds, create a framework for rigorous analysis of that data, and ultimately to build capacity for evidence-based decision making surrounding the use of the VOCA funds and associated outcomes for serving victims in Wisconsin. One of the project deliverables is a compilation of recommendations from the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), which falls under the Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis (BJIA) within WI DOJ. These recommendations were to be presented to the VOCA administering agency, which is the Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS), within the WIDOJ, regarding how VOCA data collection and utilization could improve in Wisconsin. The recommendations follow.

Egrants

Egrants is the web-based grants management system utilized by the WI DOJ to track both federal and state grants. OCVS utilizes Egrants to manage the fiscal and programmatic aspects of the approximately 117 VOCA subgrants. OCVS collects qualitative data from subgrantees in the form of open-ended, narrative questions on a quarterly basis. In addition, OCVS tracks the amount of funds expended and whether the federal requirement where ten percent of the grant should be allocated to particular categories of victims is attained.

Revisit Egrants Program Report Questions

OCVS staff should consider revisiting current Egrants questions in order to improve clarity and eliminate redundancy. Not only does BJIA staff have recommended revisions, but subgrantees also provided feedback about Egrants questions during focus groups. Revisions could improve the quality of responses and in turn improve OCVS’ ability to use the responses in a meaningful way.

Many subgrantees said they feel answering the same Egrants questions from one quarter to the next leads them to entering repetitive responses each quarter. Perhaps some questions could be moved to the final report instead of being reported on quarterly. Quarterly questions could also be varied or could rotate. Egrants is currently unable to do this, but developing this functionality should be explored. Another option is to reword some questions to increase specificity while reducing the similarity of answers from one quarter to the next. Modifications would result in less onerous reporting requirements for subgrantees. Moreover, if some subgrantees are recycling some responses from one quarter to the next, then these modifications would result in less redundant information for OCVS staff to wade through each quarter. Specific suggested question revisions can be found in Appendix A and OCVS and BJIA can work together to make changes to the current
questions. In addition, the data quality report specifically addresses subgrantee recycling of Egrants program reporting narratives.

**Subgrantee Guidance**

Subgrantees may lack clear guidance on what an appropriate Egrants program report looks like. Subgrantees would benefit from direction on appropriate response content and length. Some subgrantee responses are nearly 20 or 30 times longer than the typical (median) response. OCVS staff could distribute examples of responses they feel meet their expectations as a guide and/or discuss expectations either electronically or at in-person subgrantee meetings or trainings. In addition, OCVS staff should provide instruction on the appropriate calculation to determine funding allocated to each selected priority area or remove this question from the Egrants report(s). Many subgrantees requested assistance in this area and it is clear this is not being calculated consistently across agencies. Providing further guidance to agencies would improve their reporting experience and allow for more consistency and higher quality responses.

**OVC PMT Interface**

OVCs staff are interested in having Egrants ‘talk’ or electronically share data with the OVC PMT so that subgrantees have only one quarterly report to enter. Whether Egrants could include this functionality is something that could be examined in consultation with Information Technology (IT) staff in the Bureau of Computing Services (BCS). The OVC PMT should be examined to determine if it could receive a data upload from Egrants, if electronic data were submitted to Egrants, which could then interface with OVC PMT. Current understanding is that this may not be existing functionality, but this option may be available through OVC PMT in the future.

**OVC PMT**

**Quarterly Reporting**

While many aspects of the OVC PMT are out of the control of OCVS, OCVS staff should consider editing and expanding the OVC PMT definitions to provide clarity for subgrantees. Many categories are unclear as to what the category is or what fits in it and it is also unclear how to report or count victims or services in the categories. Subgrantees vocalized these issues during focus groups and provided specific areas of common confusion – see the focus group report for additional details. Staff could also develop a “cheat sheet” or frequently asked questions document to address common issues related to OVC PMT reporting. Creating documentation of these guides and definitions should be done in consultation with OVC.

Another way to improve the quality of data reported via the OVC PMT is to review the spreadsheet used by several subgrantees for basic tracking of the data that then gets entered into the OVC PMT. Staff should explore where validations or dropdowns could be implemented. This could be done for both the quarterly reports and the annual report.
Annual Reporting (Subgrantee Annual Report [SAR])

The Subgrantee Annual Report (SAR) should be examined both for improvements in the workflow used to enter data and for clarifications or additions to the data fields entered. The data entry workflow begins with a worksheet that subgrantees complete within 90 days of the start of the grant year. OCVS staff then enter this data into the PMT system. While OVC requires that OCVS create an entry for each subgrantee and enter, at a minimum, the subgrantees allocation of funds to each of the four priority/underserved areas, OCVS chooses to enter the entirety of the front-end SAR data on behalf of subgrantees. While this workflow may be inefficient it does position OCVS to exert strict quality control on the data reported. OCVS recognizes that sections related to subaward match (8) and budget and staffing (11) are reported inconsistently by subgrantees. Additional definitions and sample calculations, as well as training, should be developed as necessary to improve data quality in these areas.

The section pertaining to the subgrantee use of VOCA funds (9) presents ongoing issues despite the existence of a definitions list. OCVS may wish to revisit the list of definitions and provide additional clarifying remarks or examples. In two instances ambiguities stem not only from similarities in the categories, but from similarly named categories. Law enforcement interview advocacy/accompaniment appears twice in the list (B3 and E9) and differs only in the timing of services; E9 apparently includes only interactions occurring after referral to the prosecutor’s office, while B3 presumably captures all other interactions. The definition sheet does expressly state that the B3 and E9 categories are not interchangeable but provides limited guidance for distinguishing them. “Immigration assistance” also appears twice in the list of service categories (B6 and E7). Category B6 refers to advocacy or accompaniment related to immigration while E7 refers to assistance with forms. To complicate matters further, referral for services related to immigration belongs in the referrals to other services category (A4). While OCVS should examine all service category definitions for clarity and to determine if categories are meaningfully different, these categories deserve special attention. OCVS should develop additional examples, provide subgrantee training, and/or consider revision (if possible) of ambiguous or problematic service categories.

The SAR worksheet also requires subgrantees to allocate grand funds to VOCA priority areas and traditionally underserved victims of crime (section 6). There are four categories – child abuse, domestic and family violence, sexual assault, and underserved which are labeled as categories A, B, C, and D, respectively. Some categories also have subcategories, only some of which are actually used. In addition to creating confusion and inviting data entry mistakes, this reporting structure prevents a precise count of the funds actually allocated to child sexual abuse and child physical abuse/neglect. The issue is thus – subgrantees must report funds allocated to “child abuse” (category A), but they are not required to report in the A subcategories (child physical abuse/neglect and child sexual abuse). This effectively renders the subcategories useless for any sort of comparative analytical purposes because the allocation of funds to the subcategories is not known for all agencies allocating funds to the child abuse main category. Related to this, category C, “sexual assault,” has two subcategories – adult sexual assault and child sexual assault. Since Wisconsin reports child sexual assault funding allocation in the A category under child sexual abuse, the C subcategory should not be used. However,
some subgrantees do show funding allocated to the C child sexual assault subcategory; this is a probable data entry mistake. This is an area where some additional training and possibly simple modifications to the worksheet (e.g. remove the C subcategories or make them mandatory for all agencies) would improve the quality of the data in the SAR across subgrantees.

Another issue identified with the SAR funding allocation data reported in section 6 is that the total funds allocated to the four priority/underserved areas do not necessarily add up to the total award amount reported in section 4 although the PMT system has a data quality check in place that ostensibly requires the totals to match. Thus, some funds appear uncounted; the sums are largest for the more recent grant years (4.7%, 1.4%, and .3% out of the 2016, 2015, and 2014 grants are unallocated to any priority areas). These funds may be allocated to other non-violent crimes (category D9) – another optional reporting subcategory. OVCVS is currently exploring this issue with OVC and, upon resolution, should implement a reform to ensure all grant funds are fully allocated for future reports.

The SAR worksheet also requires agencies to identify an agency type or “designation” (section 3). There are four broad categories – government agencies, non-profits, tribal governments or agencies, and campus organizations. Within each category there are subcategories and subcategories are not necessarily unique to each category. As an example, both government and campus organizations can have law enforcement agencies. OVCVS should work with subgrantees to develop definitions and guidelines for sorting agencies into the appropriate organization types. These fields represent a useful means to understand the allocation of grant funds but only if the categories are meaningfully distinguished and applied consistently across agencies.

The SAR data presents an opportunity to understand the geographic distribution of VOCA funds. Section 7 requests that subgrantees “select the counties that cover the service area affected by the VOCA-funded program or project.” While this sounds simple, OVCVS should develop clear definitions about service area. Should service area be based on the actual physical location of staff/facilities or the location of service recipients? How should call centers, whose recipients could be anywhere and whose location may be unknown, be handled? Absent answers to basic question such as these, the geographic data reported in section 7 cannot be reliably used to determine the geographic allocation of VOCA funds.

A final issue with the SAR data is the format of the data export. Projects may be funded out of multiple grant years; each federal grant year is essentially a pool of funds that can be used to fund projects over several years. Thus, a project funded from 2017-2018 may be funded out of FFY 2015 and FFY 2016 VOCA grants. The SAR data export does include a field that indicates if the project is funded out of multiple federal grant years. However, the export does not indicate the proportion of funds drawn from each of the grants used to support the project. In order to correctly track the allocation of grant funds in each of the priority/underserved areas and to ensure that a minimum of ten percent of each federal grant year is spent in each, this information is critical and should be embedded in the SAR data export. This is outside of OVCVS’ control, but OVCVS should consider petitioning OVC to enhance the functionality of the SAR data export.
Data Collection and Dissemination

Data accessibility

Subgrantees want to see their data put to use. In general, VOCA data reported through the SAR and PMT is of little interest to subgrantees as it currently is reported because they include only on VOCA-funded activities. Given that the agency may do much more, currently collected VOCA data paint an incomplete picture and are therefore not useful for the typical data purposes (e.g. public dissemination, reports to the board, fundraising, grant writing). We foresee a number of ways to make better use of existing VOCA data both for OCVS and subgrantees:

1. BJIA has created VOCA dashboards based on SAR/PMT data. These should be maintained and enhanced according to OCVS’ needs going forward and provide a different view of the SAR/PMT data that may provide insight into programs based on what is currently reported.

2. Design a subgrantee specific report using PMT quarterly data to display subgrantee performance across time. This report could also use all agencies as a comparison group so the subgrantee has a basis for comparison across space as well.

3. Develop reports that enable OCVS to make funding decisions on the basis of quantitative analysis of program outcomes. OCVS should work with subgrantees to identify metrics that they would be comfortable using for this purpose. These could be reported in Egrants – in a quantitative format – or integrated in a new statewide reporting system as described below.

4. Absent a new data collections system, or as a stopgap until a new system is deployed, OCVS could explore the development of an expanded data entry worksheet that, while fulfilling VOCA/PMT requirements, is more inclusive and allows subgrantees to track a broader range of services provided. This would include a matching dashboard, report, or set of visualizations to enable subgrantees to visualize their complete data. This would require additional reporting by the subgrantees, but this may be beneficial given their interest in being able to better track VOCA data as part of their overall service delivery.

Statewide data collection and reporting system

OCVS staff should consider implementing a statewide data collection and reporting system for use by victim services agencies to enter client data. Currently, OCVS does not receive individual-level data and there is not a common system in use across subgrantees. Doing so would increase the capability to enhance evidence-based decision making at the state and local level, and would have several other benefits as discussed below. System creation and implementation would be a separate project to include support from BCS, a needs assessment, input from subgrantees, procurement or development of a system and likely, additional grant funding.
A statewide system would allow collection of higher quality data across agencies. A new system could have built-in validations and dropdown lists, and OCVS staff could provide help documentation and in-person trainings or webinars. The results would have the potential to be more consistent and high-quality data, less confusion for subgrantees surrounding data entry, and clarity on what their reports actually show about their clients and services delivered.

A web-based statewide system would be less burdensome for subgrantees in the long-run. It could be funded by OCVS and be a system with no direct cost for subgrantees, including no or minimal need for technical support on their end. There would be reduced need for customizations and less time investment for subgrantees than managing current reporting and case management options. It would also allow them to have fewer places where they enter data, something many subgrantees expressed during the focus groups.

The system should have built-in, user friendly reports that are more readily accessible than their current capabilities to retrieve agency data. These can be used for grant management, performance measurement and management, grant writing, dissemination/presentation to stakeholders, public relations purposes, outreach, and education. In addition, it would be useful to have a flag for whether victims entered are VOCA-funded so if users choose, all clients could be entered and subgrantees could run reports for all clients or just VOCA clients. Currently, many subgrantees do not use just their VOCA data for anything other than VOCA grant reporting purposes, so having reports they could run for just VOCA reporting and also reports they could run for all clients would be a vast improvement. There are systems similar to this in a few other states and these could serve as a model for the development of a new statewide system in Wisconsin.

**Additional Data**

OCVS should consider collecting quantitative information on outcomes and impacts for the various VOCA-funded programs. To some extent this is collected in the Egrants quarterly report questions, but it is not collected in a manner that is consistent or accessible for quantitative analyses or program evaluation. Similarly, OVC PMT data consists primarily of output related information (e.g. X number of people receive Y services). Capturing outcomes and impacts could be part of a larger performance measure creation initiative, as discussed in the next section, or could be their own addition. Capturing these additional elements would allow subgrantees and OCVS to be able to more thoroughly assess progress on the VOCA goals. This cannot be done given the data elements that are currently reported. This richer collection would additionally aid grant management and VOCA data dissemination to multiple stakeholders. This type of information is often useful in helping agencies receive donations and funding.

In addition, there was overwhelming feedback from the focus group participants about collecting data on the intensity and duration of victim services. Given that subgrantees widely recognize that current reporting fails to capture the duration or intensity of services provided, there could be good buy-in from subgrantees for additional data collection if it “filled in” these holes in the current reporting.
Client surveys could be used as a part of outcome data collection. A service recipient survey could be created for subgrantees and/or OCVS to use. If they are implemented in a consistent format and centrally housed, the data could be used by OCVS for comparative purposes, evaluation purposes, and needs/gaps assessment. Another, less optimal option, could be to suggest or require subgrantees conduct surveys but not provide it or mandate collection at a state level. OCVS could provide a model survey template for subgrantees to use or modify as they see fit, but this may open up more variation across subgrantees in how this information is collected.

Potential data elements to consider adding to either Egrants, a new system, or other data collection enhancement:

1. Number of requests for service that were unmet and type unmet requests
2. Number persons turned away completely
3. Reason for service gap and agency response
4. Major issue(s) in subgrantee service area that enables (or prevents) victims from receiving assistance
5. Number of client surveys distributed
6. Number of completed client surveys received
7. Description of any outreach or education activities
8. Description of earned media coverage
9. Coordinated responses/services and how agency promoted coordination
10. Description of staff retention issues
11. Whether the program is over or under anticipated quantitative goals and why
12. Actions that have been taken to address inability to meet objective(s)

Statewide Performance Measures for Victim Services

In addition to potential data to be collected, OCVS should consider working with subgrantees to develop agreed upon performance measures related to outputs, impacts, and outcomes. These could vary by region or by agency type (i.e. SAR agency designation – once that is addressed as discussed earlier). OCVS and BJIA should work with subgrantees and subject matter experts to define these measures/data elements in a collaborative and inclusive way to ensure buy-in and data quality. These would be reported via Egrants or integrated in a new data collection system.

These performance metrics should enable OCVS and subgrantees to determine the following:
1. How the program is doing overall
2. How the clients are doing in the program(s)
3. What could be improved
4. Comparison to performance benchmarks
5. To monitor trends over time
6. Progress toward identified goals and objectives

Training

Subgrantee Training

OCVS staff should provide subgrantees with additional training on data collection and data entry in the OVC PMT and in Egrants, to instill the basic importance of data collection and its appropriate use. A mixed method of training (in person and webinars) would be beneficial. In-person trainings or meetings would allow subgrantees to provide immediate feedback and allow them to ask questions. It also would provide the opportunity for subgrantees to interact with other subgrantees, a dynamic which would not exist with a webinar format. Webinars are a good choice as they can be recorded and disseminated broadly. They are also useful given staff turnover. OCVS staff should consider doing webinars about basic reporting expectations, as well as webinars about common issues. Follow-up surveys could be given following in-person trainings or webinars to develop an understanding of whether the trainings were useful to subgrantees and to find out what types of trainings they feel they need. Having speaking spots at various state conferences could also be a good platform to increase the message of data importance to victim service providers.

Internal OCVS Training

OCVS staff could also benefit from training. Knowing the ins and outs of the OVC PMT would allow OCVS staff to better assist subgrantees and do more with the data collected. All staff members should be on the same page regarding definitions and counting methodology. More familiarity with Egrants would also allow OCVS staff to enhance assistance to subgrantees, as well as allow staff to know what adjustments can and cannot be made to the system. Basic Tableau training for some OCVS staff would increase capacity to use VOCA data in decision making and for stakeholder outreach.

Support and Enhance OCVS

OCVS should consider adding additional VOCA staff and clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of all VOCA staff. OCVS would benefit from having the capacity to thoroughly review programmatic reports and data. With more attention on what is being reported, staff could identify common issues and in turn enhance technical
assistance to subgrantees and receive improved reports. Additional capacity would also enable OCVS to use both the qualitative and quantitative data collected for grant decision making, such as making funding decisions. Using the information reported by subgrantees to support decisions is consistent with an evidence-based approach to policy and funding decisions.

Additional staff or restructuring could allow for the creation of report templates. These reports could be disseminated to subgrantees, stakeholders, and also internally. Many subgrantees expressed a desire to see that what they report is being used or they at least want access to meaningful reports generated using their own data. The more information they have about their programs the better they are set up to make any adjustments necessary. Also, if subgrantees know their data is being used and disseminated, there may be more incentive to report in an accurate and timely manner. Stakeholder involvement is important for victim services. Many different agencies work together and act as resources to others. Increasing stakeholder involvement and interest by providing them clear and simple information about outcomes could foster more inter-agency coordination. Once the existing data is made more available there may be areas where certain stakeholders need to get involved more than others based on the story the data tell.

During focus group discussions, subgrantees indicated that they especially want feedback about their qualitative reporting in Egrants. More in depth review of subgrantee reports and follow-up may increase the quality of reports and also bring out common problem areas to shape technical assistance and training efforts. Feedback should so be provided on any performance metrics used to make funding decisions.

Lastly, enhanced OCVS support should also result in subgrantee trainings. Once reports are looked at more thoroughly the areas requiring additional training will be more readily identified. OCVS staff could also directly ask subgrantees what areas they would addressed via training. Data collection and utility should be included in trainings to improve data quality and use. For more information about training subgrantees, see the training section of this document. Increasing subgrantee interactions with OCVS staff through trainings and conference spots could improve relations and result in increased quality of programs and reporting.

**Appendix A: Egrants Quarterly Question Review**

1) Briefly list activities conducted during this period. Redundant with 8?

2) Provide a meaningful update on your VOCA project Goals & Objectives. In addition to the quantitative information you need to provide, please provide qualitative information in your answer as well. Please do not just cut and paste your Goals & Objectives into this section. Be more specific. Break into 2 questions- quantitative and qualitative piece so that the quantitative information is accessible. The phrase “meaningful update” also deserves some clarification and, perhaps, some examples.
3) Describe any external (outside your agency) challenges encountered during the reporting period that hindered the VOCA project achieving its Goals & Objectives (ex. community challenges, challenges with partners or stakeholders, etc.).

4) Describe any internal challenges within your VOCA project that hindered the VOCA project during the reporting period (ex. staff vacancies, different client needs, lack of training, etc.).

5) Have there been any changes to the VOCA project (such as activity or services changes, personnel changes or vacancies)? If so, please explain the changes. As a reminder, some changes may require a grant or budget modification.

6) Consider the data that your agency submitted in the OVC PMT system for the VOCA project for this reporting period. Please explain what you have learned about your VOCA project services through the OVC PMT data. For example, explain a profile of a "typical" victim served, explain any gaps in services, notable trends, or emerging issues, etc. Reword, but good question. Change the example so does not seem so repetitive to agencies each quarter.

7) How will what you have learned from your answer to the previous question impact your service delivery? Reword.

8) Describe any activities performed by the VOCA project during the reporting period that support the VOCA priority areas that were identified in your application. Redundant with 1?
Appendix G: OCVS Post Project Plan
WI VOCA-SAC Project: Understanding VOCA Data and Building Partnerships

Post-Project Plan
Wisconsin Department of Justice
Office of Crime Victim Services
December 2018
Preface

The WI VOCA-SAC project consists of a review of Wisconsin’s existing data collection and reporting process for the VOCA grant, along with an analysis of VOCA data reported by subgrantees. Project activities also include review of the Office for Victims of Crime Performance Measurement Tool (OVC PMT), Egrants, and comparable systems in other states, as well as focus groups with VOCA subgrantees. The end goals are to improve the data collected on programs receiving VOCA funds, create a framework for rigorous analysis of that data, and ultimately to build capacity for evidence-based decision making surrounding the use of the VOCA funds and associated outcomes for serving victims in Wisconsin. Based on the compilation of recommendations from the SAC (Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis or BJIA) for the VOCA administering agency (Office of Crime Victim Services or OCVS) regarding how VOCA data collection and utilization could improve in Wisconsin, OCVS has developed a post project plan.

OCVS had regular meetings with BJIA and the Bureau of Computing Services (BCS), and created action items and a timeline for some of the IT needs relating to data collection and analysis. Requirements include simple and complex changes to the Egrants system, implementing better qualitative informational questions, validating quantitative data for the Subgrant Award Reports (SARs), trainings focused on victim services and reporting definitions, and creating requirements for a statewide data collection system. A timeline is also included, which covers a nine-month period.

Egrants

OCVS plans to make changes to Egrants to better collect data from subgrantees including qualitative report data, view information by agency instead of by Grant ID, and streamline the way that Egrants collects and provides information. Current action items include:

- View grant information by Agency – this will allow OCVS to view all agency information over the course of several grant years, rather than by the annual Grant ID number assigned when agencies submit applications through Egrants. OCVS will be able to view an agency’s grants by program area, total grant
funds awarded, inventory reports, monitoring activities, and program and fiscal reports, over the length of time that an agency has a grant by OCVS.

- Produce reports in Egrants that compile information from the subgrantees’ quarterly program reports – this report can be very useful in gathering information on victim services during the reporting period, and measuring the qualitative data responses, either by agency or by time period for all agencies. This will make the federal reporting more efficient, as the final report questions from OVC are the same questions that the grant recipients respond to.

- Revise program report questions with BJIA – revising report questions will help reduce confusion, repetition of answers, and will eliminate double-barreled questions. Many agencies do not submit full responses to the questions when more than one question is asked. Also, the length of responses vary greatly, and revising the program report questions will allow for better data collection. Lastly, the questions will be revised based on what OCVS plans to do with the information provided.

- Freestyle Questionnaire for SAR data: provide written instruction on the appropriate calculations

- Allow subrecipients to upload excel spreadsheets with information and data from Osnium or other Records Management System (RMS) into Egrants. Osnium is a case management system currently being used by a majority of the VOCA subrecipients to track victim services and information. This information could be also uploaded into Tableau for use in dashboard.

Ultimately, OCVS would like to make changes in Egrants to be able to collect OVC PMT statistics in addition to other points discussed during the focus groups such as length of service and complexity of service. Additionally, we also need to be able to capture unmet needs of clients to understand how to better allocate OCVS funding to meet those needs.

Egrants could also assist OCVS and programs by having combined program reports, as well as combined monitoring reports that are associated with the agency rather than the subgrant ID.
If reports are submitted directly into Egrants for PMT, it would be helpful to have the definitions for victim type and services contained directly in Egrants. Agencies would be able to access those definitions as well as methods to calculate SAR numbers; or have Egrants do the SAR computations for agencies. Egrants would have the ability to export statistical information into a format for OCVS and/or grant recipients that would allow for monthly or annual reflection. The exported data would also be used for dashboards and information using Tableau.

**OVC PMT**

OCVS staff is planning on editing and expanding the OVC PMT definitions again to provide clarity for subgrantees. Many categories in the original Wisconsin OVC PMT definitions document are still unclear to subgrantees. Subgrantees report that they are still confused as to what OVC PMT category their particular victim services fit into, and how to count victims or services in the categories.

OCVS plans to revisit, refine and expand OVC PMT definitions; and do this on a continual basis or as needed. Trainings on PMT for staff and for grant recipients will also be conducted so that everyone receives the same information. Further clarification and trainings on agency designation (type of agency and service area (counties that subgrantees are actively serving) will be provided to subgrantees to ensure consistency in reporting. Currently agencies struggle on understanding what portions of the SAR are specific to VOCA project (services to be provided and victimization types served) and what is agency wide (budget section).

OCVS would also like to have a way to better validate the information in the SARs in PMT; a fillable form used to capture information would be helpful, and the information could be validated and uploaded into PMT where further validation can occur. The SAR also will need clear instructions, definitions and sample calculations, making the process streamlined and understandable. Lastly, OCVS would like to have this information be in an exportable format to capture multiple years of OVC funding.

Beyond that OCVS would like another method for reporting both the Subgrantee Award Report (SAR) form and OVC PMT quarterly statistical data than reporting directly in the system. OCVS notices both human and system
error from having to either copy information into the OVC PMT system from paper or from Egrants. Additionally, due to the lack of clear direction from OCVS and OVC PMT, many subgrantees report incorrect information (notably on the SAR). If this information could be taken from subgrantees in a more efficient and effective manner, everyone would benefit for higher quality data. Currently, OVC PMT does not have a report feature or mechanism to view a subgrantee’s quarterly statistical data by year. If OCVS could utilize Tableau to view agency data by year this would be helpful not only for agencies but also for OCVS. It would also assist OCVS when updating SARs at the end of the year to have one consistent calculation for project allocations that OCVS could complete for the agency based on total number of victimizations per year, total amount of funds expended, and total amount spent per victimization.

**Data Collection and Dissemination**

OCVS should be able to share data collected through Egrants, OVC PMT, or another method back to subgrantees and with community stakeholders. OCVS would need additional training on Tableau to be able to show subgrantees on site or send to subgrantees overviews or dashboards of the agency’s data as well as the state as a whole. OCVS plans to determine what data is most important with respect to understanding how VOCA funds are being used, what types of victims are being served, where the gaps exist in funding and service area, and agency trends in types of victims being served. OCVS and BJIA met to review the potential dashboards that are possible with the information collected. Once OCVS narrows down the types of dashboards and information that can be most relevant to our work and the activities of the subrecipients, we will work with BJIA on further refining the dashboards and data in Tableau.

**Additional Data**

OCVS would like to implement changes similar to Washington D.C. where there are set outcomes for each service provided and measures of success. These standardized performance outcomes were decided on via focus groups and Wisconsin would like to use the same process. Currently, subgrantees individually determine
project goals and objectives, which makes it difficult for OCVS to compare performance across subgrantees, assess the services provided and their impact, and ultimately makes it challenging to show the impact of funding. OCVS should explore not only implementation of set outcomes for VOCA subgrantees but for other OCVS subgrantees as well.

Additionally, it would be useful to confer with other victim services funders in the state to determine if efforts can be combined and if there is a greater interest in a combined statewide reporting system similar to Washington State or Illinois. Through these systems subgrantees report individual client information, including demographics and services received, rather than aggregate information. OCVS will explore these systems, including CORE (DOJ) to gauge the complexity of a statewide system.

As we explore the possibility of a combined data reporting system, we will also develop additional performance measures, utilizing input from stakeholders, subrecipients and focus groups.

Training

OCVS has determined that both internal and subgrant trainings are needed in a variety of areas. Training is needed for OCVS staff on Tableau. This is a new tool for OCVS, and we see the value in understanding how to utilize data and explain it to our subrecipients. An internal training is also needed for the OVC PMTs and SARs. This will allow us to not only learn how to use the system more efficiently, but also to identify areas as a team that would enable us to make recommendations on efficiency of entering information as well as identifying errors or making corrections in a consistent approach. Externally, ongoing trainings will need to occur to further clarify definitions of victim types and services provided, as subrecipients continue to be confused on these. This would allow more accurate and consistent reporting in OVC PMT. Trainings would mainly occur in-person at our OCVS Regional Meetings or other specific meetings. However, due to the large number of subgrantees, traveling around the state for multiple trainings several times per year might not be feasible. In order to better train both our own staff and our subgrantees, OCVS needs a training platform, such as GoToWebinar to provide training remotely. Additionally, OCVS staff may need additional equipment to effectively utilize webinar
trainings. OCVS will research options for training platforms and develop in-person trainings in the meantime or as needed. OCVS also plans to schedule internal trainings on Tableau, OVC PMTs and SARs.

**Timeline**

- **December 2018/January 2019**
  - Tableau training for OCVS staff
  - OCVS internal meeting on expanding dashboards
  - Work with BJIA to incorporate data from SAVS and VAWA into Dashboards

- **January 2019**
  - Revise program report questions with BJIA
  - Provide written instructions on the appropriate calculations for SAR
  - Define counties/areas served
  - Validate data (in Egrants and with PMT)
  - Utilize SAR Tableau dashboards to identify SARS with “Remainders” (remaining, unallocated funds)
  - Work with BJIA to refine dashboard for SAR validation

- **February 2019**
  - Egrants workgroup begin to meet monthly to work on the following (and further refining timelines)
  - View grant information by agency
  - Export SAR information in Excel, which would allow for easier validation and identification of inconsistencies
  - Upload Osnium/RMS information into Egrants as an excel document to have the records in our system
  - Develop Reports in Egrants that pull program report questions/answers for qualitative data collection

- **March** – Research options for training platforms for remote training

- **May/June** –
  - Refine and expand OVC PMT definitions (if we have a workgroup with stakeholders, consider timing of VOCA competitive application)
  - Provide internal training to OCVS users on Training Platform such as GoToWebinar

- **June**
  - Explore Illinois InfoNet (onsite visit?)
  - Explore the Comprehensive Outcome, Research, and Evaluation (CORE) Reporting System
  - Explore grant funding opportunities for developing a statewide system
  - Internal OCVS meetings to discuss development of statewide performance measures (similar to Washington, D.C. process)
• August/September –
  o Provide trainings on PMT
    ▪ SAR
    ▪ Expanded/Revised Definitions
    ▪ Data entry
  o Implement new training platform for August PMT/SAR trainings
  o Develop detailed requirements for new data system
  o Design dashboard reports for subrecipients
  o Organize Focus Groups to discuss statewide performance measures with stakeholders
  o Incorporate statewide performance measures into VOCA subgrants starting October and roll out for other OCVS grants with new subgrants starting January 1