

Empowering men,
women, and children
with diverse needs
to end their home-
lessness through
emergency shelter
and supportive
services.

CASS

Maricopa HMIS

Central Arizona Shelter Service (CASS), the largest shelter and service center for homeless people in Arizona, annually provides for over 6,000 men, women and children. Founded in 1984 as an emergency shelter, CASS realized the homeless crisis only represents a symptom of a larger problem and expanded their services, which embrace all issues related to homelessness. Each client, once established in a CASS shelter, strategizes a "stabilize and get-off-the street" plan with a case manager, who orients, screens and assesses the client's needs and refers the client to appropriate social services (educational programs, free legal assistance, food stamps, medical and counseling aid). The emergency shelters provide showers and laundry facilities, hygiene items, clothing, rest beds for those with medical needs, and food from St. Vincent de Paul, André House, and St. Mary's Food Bank. In addition to basic needs (food, shelter and clothing) clients may receive employment help through Project HELP; supervised, developmental child care for preschool children at Vista Colina child-care; and basic dental care. CASS strives to facilitate each individual in gaining the skills and health to attain and keep permanent housing.

The Maricopa **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** project grew from a congressional mandate to a community-wide collaborative. In 2001, HUD* released funding to their housing planning branch, Continuum of Care (CoC), to develop regional HMIS programs, which capture data related to homeless people. The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), on behalf of the CoC, joined with Community Information & Referral, Inc. (CI&R), and private/ public representatives to design the Maricopa HMIS structure. This group looked beyond the HUD requirements and established broader desired benefits for their clients, participating providing agencies, the Continuum of Care, fund providers and the general community. They established a **vision: Information empowers people experiencing homelessness, providers and policymakers; a mission statement: The HMIS provides quality, timely, accurate, essential information to improve service delivery for homelessness people;** and community-wide goals and objectives. The Maricopa HMIS project aspires to capitalize on modern technology in coordinating public and private sectors to fund, plan, and develop viable solutions for homeless persons.

From its inception, **Robert Duvall, Finance and IT Director at CASS**, took a lead role in the HMIS project. After a day of training in early February 2003, CASS became the first agency to enter clients into SERVICEPOINT's automated shelter reservation system. Robert commented, "Our staff used it almost immediately....The new technology is extremely easy to use... you simply need to be on the Internet." Over time, CASS integrated more of SERVICEPOINT's features: client assessments, case management and reports. Robert found that "...the technology allows for the case managers to ask clients more questions in a shorter amount of time..." In addition to basic training, various CASS staff members participate in biweekly User Group meetings and Advanced Training (case management), where they glean fruitful information from other HMIS participants. When asked about his agency's HMIS implementation, Robert commented, "I can't believe how well this is going."

*The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

What can you do to help the Homeless?

Volunteer your time or services.

Call (602) 256-6945, ext. 3055 to learn more about volunteer opportunities at CASS.

Donate household items, clean, gently used clothing, hygiene products or a tax-deductible monetary contribution.

Contact our Development Office at (602) 256-6945, ext. 3020.

Are you a Homeless Provider and have questions about participating in the HMIS project?

If so, please visit the project website at www.cirs.org/hmis

or contact the HMIS Project Manager:

**Scott Rich
Symmetric Solutions, Inc.
(602) 369-2480**

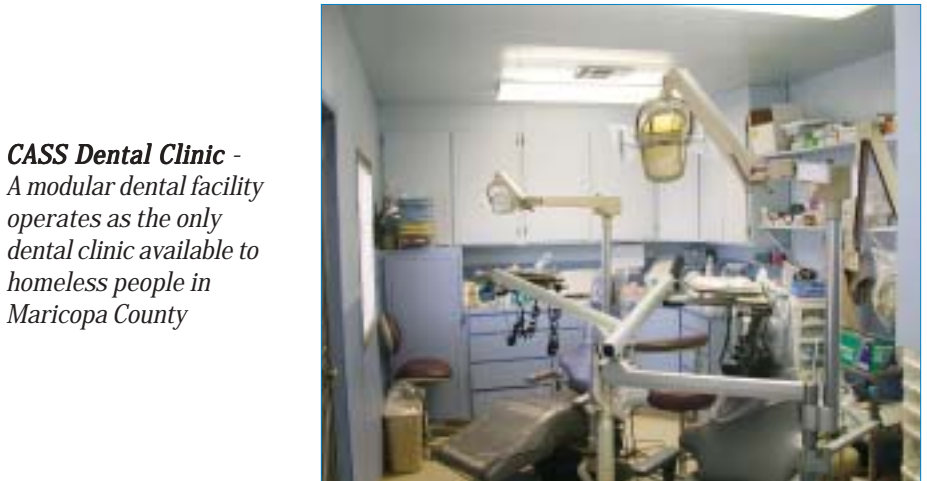
hmissupport@cox.net

Or call 800.509.2477

**Central Arizona
Shelter Services
1209 West Madison
Phoenix, AZ 85007-9974
Tel: (602) 256-6945
Fax: (602) 256-6401
www.cass-az.org**



Main Shelter -
The largest shelter and service center for homeless people in Arizona



CASS Dental Clinic -
A modular dental facility operates as the only dental clinic available to homeless people in Maricopa County



Facilities-
Emergency shelter, permanent housing and a variety of social services.