

# Foundations for Comprehensive Partnerships

## Harnessing Technology and Data Standardization for Housing Counseling

### Next Steps

It became crystal-clear that there is a lot of work to do and to accomplish it will require **collaboration, prioritization, communication and action**. At the same time, it will require leadership from the counseling industry to coordinate the various partners and ensure results, and a multiyear commitment by the counseling sector and our industry partners to complete this work. The next steps that arose from the discussion represent both short and long-term endeavors, and call for the counseling sector to:

- ✓ **Develop a strategic plan for the counseling industry** around the Vision statement that was issued at the Technology Convening that identifies priorities over the next several years, including:
  - Further build out and testing of the fee-for service cost framework;
  - Develop a collaborative business and resource strategy to support a multi-year vision, which includes CMS efforts around MISMO compliance and ongoing system support;
  - Explore development of a branding strategy as well as explore strategies for the counseling sector to secure connectivity and relevance with clients/customers through a life cycle of customer financial needs and stresses, in partnership with GSEs and lenders; and
  - Form a working group with representatives from the Coalition of HUD Intermediaries and other counseling entities with CMS participation to explore the development of a sector wide data analytics and data exchange processes.
- ✓ **Continue to identify the data fields necessary for the counseling industry** and understand the level of effort required by CMS providers to achieve data standardization. Complete the next phase of the counseling data field requirements fact-finding, including sharing the gap analysis tool with CMSs spearheaded by NHRC and led by David Young. Working with MISMO, bring CMS, counseling leaders and industry partners together to advance counseling data standards.
- ✓ **Engage with Lenders and GSEs to identify opportunities to move the counseling sector forward**, including supporting strategic planning and business development through participation in working groups or other collaborative efforts.
- ✓ **Work with MBA and MISMO on data standardization and lender engagement efforts** to explore recruitment of lender partners on how to inform future iterations of MISMO and explore the opportunities and challenges associated with a platform to pass data back and forth, including the build out of customer referral channels – counselor to lender, lender to counselor and servicer to counselor.
- ✓ **Engage with HUD** to ensure alignment with HUD counseling program requirements and identify opportunities presented by the FHA technology transformation.
- ✓ **Plan a follow up meeting** and expand the discussion to include other industry partners, including lenders.