**Key Elements of Data Quality**

*This job aid presents five key elements of data quality and questions you may consider as you reflect on the strength of your data in accordance with each element.*

1. **Validity** indicates whether the data collected and reported by grantees appears to measure the approved performance measure or program goal.
   - Is the data relevant?
   - Are your reported items consistent with the approved goals of the current grant and/or program?
   - Are you measuring what you intended to measure?

2. **Completeness** indicates whether there is enough information to draw a conclusion about the data and whether enough individuals responded to it to ensure representativeness.
   - Does the reported data contain enough information to represent performance measure activities?
   - Did the reported data come from all stations and/or a random sampling of volunteers/service recipients?

3. **Consistency** considers the extent to which data is collected using the same process and procedures by everyone doing the collecting and in all locations over time.
   - Do you clearly document your data collection methods?
   - Do you have policies and procedures which direct your data collection process?
   - Do you use the same data collection methods for all sites? Across the lifespan of the grant/award? Across all volunteers and service recipients?
   - Do you train data collectors?
   - Do you define “jargon” and other terminology used in data collection tools?
   - Have you taken steps to eliminate bias?

4. **Accuracy** indicates whether the data is free from significant errors and whether the numbers seem to make sense.
   - First, do you have a plan or procedure to collect and review data?
   - Second, do you have documentation showing that you followed your data collection and review plan?
   - Third, does the data vary significantly in unexpected ways?

5. **Verifiability** considers the extent to which grantees have ways to verify that data was collected and reported according to plans and procedures.
   - Did the grantee double check that the data collected follows the plans and procedures for data collection?
   - Did the grantee use controls throughout the data collection and management process?
   - Does the grantee regularly review and update its data quality control procedures?