Applying Program Evaluation to Improve TB Program Practices in the Pacific Islands

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Why do we do it and why is it important?
“My question is: Are we making an impact?”
What is Program Evaluation?

- Systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs
- Used to make judgements about the program, improve program effectiveness, and inform decisions about future program development
Program Evaluation helps to

- Demonstrate accountability to stakeholders
- Measure program achievement
- Manage program resources
- Document and improve program operations
CDC Recommended Framework for Program Evaluation

- Engage stakeholders
- Describe the program
- Focus the evaluation design
- Gather credible evidence
- Conclusions
- Ensure use and share lessons learned
- Utility
- Feasibility
- Propriety
- Accuracy
Identify TB Stakeholders

Those involved with, affected by, or making decisions related to TB control efforts

- Patients
- Clinic staff
  - Nurses
  - Physicians
  - Aids
  - Administrative staff
- Laboratory staff
- Partner organizations
  - CDC
  - Community based organizations
How can Stakeholders help with evaluation?

- **Identify areas in need of evaluation**
  - May know areas that may need improvement
- **Provide input into evaluation methods**
- **Ways to engage stakeholders**
  - Brainstorming sessions
  - Interviews
  - Join Evaluation Team
  - Advisory Board, Coalitions
Example: Identifying stakeholders

Example Program Evaluation Topic:
Factors associated with completing treatment among patients with LTBI

- **Stakeholders include:**
  - Patients
  - Clinic Staff
  - Health Department
  - Community-based organizations
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Describe the Program

"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."
Describe the program to be evaluated

- Characterize the *needs* addressed by the program
  - What is the problem or issue the program will address?
- List *expected effects* of the program
  - What must the program accomplish to be considered successful?
- Explain relationships between *program activities* and expected outcomes
  - What is the program doing to impact the problem?
Example: Describe Program

Example Program Evaluation Topic:
Factors associated with completing treatment among patients with LTBI

Describe Program:
- **Describe activities and people involved**
  - identification of persons with LTBI,
  - treatment initiation,
  - treatment process,
  - completion of treatment for LTBI
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Utility
Feasibility
Propriety
Accuracy
Develop Program Evaluation Objectives

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-bound
Example **SMART Objectives**: Factors associated with completing treatment among patients with LTBI

Between January - May 2018

- Identify facilitators/barriers expressed by patients in complying with treatment for LTBI
- Identify facilitators/barriers expressed by nursing staff in promoting compliance with treatment for LTBI
- Determine patient characteristics associated with succeeding/failing to comply with treatment
- Determine public health system factors associated with patients succeeding/failing to comply with treatment
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Gathering Credible Evidence

“Not everything that counts can be counted; and not everything that can be counted counts.”

— Albert Einstein
Sources of Evidence

- **Existing information**
  - Surveillance data
  - NTIP Indicators
  - Patient records

- **People**
  - Staff
  - Patients
  - General public
  - Key informants

- **Pictures and situations**
  - Meetings, events, activities
Ways to Gather Evidence

- Written survey
- Personal interview
  - individual, group
  - structured, semi-structured, conversational
- Observation
- Document analysis
- Case study
- Group assessment
  - brainstorming, focus
- Role play, dramatization
- Expert or peer review
- Hypothetical scenarios
- Geographical mapping
- Debriefing sessions
- Cost accounting
- Photography, drawing, videography
- Diaries/journals
- Logs, activity forms, registries
Example

Gathering Evidence: Factors associated with completing treatment among patients with LTBI

- Questionnaire for patients to identify facilitators and barriers to complying with treatment
- Group meeting of nurses treating patients with LTBI
- Review of charts of LTBI patients for selected variables (example: age, foreign born, residence)
  - Analyze by succeeding or failing to complete treatment for LTBI
- Structured meeting with all clinic staff
  - Brainstorm about health system factors related to completing treatment among LTBI patients
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- Utility
- Feasibility
- Propriety
- Accuracy
Conclusions

- Keep purpose in mind
- Use existing standards or benchmarks
  - Example: 2020 TB Targets
- Address alternative explanations for conclusions
- Consider limitations
- Determine successes
- Identify opportunities for change
Justify Conclusions

“Don’t accept your dog’s admiration as conclusive proof that you are wonderful.”

— Ann Landers
Example **Conclusions:** Factors associated with completing treatment among patients with LTBI

- **Patients** said that being given a bus pass so that they could travel to the clinic facilitated compliance
  - Logical: most patients had no vehicle
  - Demonstrates success – continue program of providing bus passes

- **Nurses identified lack of alternative patient contact information to find missing patients as a barrier**
  - Opportunity for change – develop a format to collect additional contact information for LTBI patients

- **Chart review showed higher proportion of LTBI patients from Community X failed to comply with treatment**
  - Opportunity to change – meet with community leaders, develop outreach strategies
CDC Recommended Framework for Program Evaluation

1. Gather credible evidence
2. Focus the evaluation design
3. Describe the program
4. Engage stakeholders
5. Conclude

Steps:
- Ensure use and share lessons learned
- Describe the program
- Engage stakeholders
- Gather credible evidence
- Conclude
Sharing Results and Lessons Learned

- **Share results with stakeholders**
  - Explain evaluation focus and methods
  - Present clear and succinct results
  - Identify strengths/weaknesses of the evaluation
  - Describe conclusions

- **Develop recommendations**

- **Develop Next Steps to carry out recommendations**
TB Program Evaluation
Resources
Your CDC Team

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Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health
What is TB PEN?

Goal:
- Build capacity for TB program evaluation activities in state and local TB programs, and
- increase the number of programs that are evaluating their program activities through
  - Engaging TB control professionals to monitor and evaluate TB control activities
  - Providing expertise and technical assistance for conducting TB program evaluation
  - Identifying and sharing effective program evaluation strategies

For more information: tbpen@cdc.gov
Any Questions?