

## *OUTCOME EVALUATION: A Powerful Tool for Strengthening Your Program*

OPA/OFP HIV Prevention Project  
Annual Technical Support Conference  
3/31/08-4/2/08

Kristin Bradley-Bull, MPH  
New Perspectives Consulting Group  
[www.newperspectivesinc.org](http://www.newperspectivesinc.org)  
with Kelly Morrison Opdyke, MPH, Cicatelli Associates Inc.

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## *Evaluation Definitions*

*A systematic assessment of a program and a program's impact on an issue a program seeks to address.*

*A "diligent investigation of a program's characteristics and merits." (Fink)*

*Basically: A WAY OF DETERMINING IF (AND HOW)  
YOUR PROGRAM IS "WORKING."*

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## *Benefits*

1. *"Prove"* your program.
2. *Improve* your program.
3. Compare different types of programs.
4. Attract funding/fulfill funder requirements.
5. Provide info. on the program to key stakeholders.
6. Give staff/volunteers/board feedback so they know what they are accomplishing.
7. Help you make resource decisions related to the program.
8. Offer you, others key learning.

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## Developing Evaluation Questions

- Articulate what the program intends to accomplish and how
- Develop a few essential questions that the evaluation will answer

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## Evaluation Types

- **Process Evaluation:** documenting/tracking program implementation (*not measuring change in participants, etc.*)

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## Evaluation Types continued ...

- **Impact/Short-term Outcome Evaluation:** measuring short-term change in/maintenance of participants' knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors...
- **Long-Term Outcome Evaluation:** measuring long-term change in/maintenance of participants' behavior, health status, etc.

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## *Evaluation Types continued ...*

Other outcomes may be related to changes in:

- organizations
- systems
- policies
- laws/regulations
- family norms
- community norms
- etc.

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## *Outcome Evaluation Challenges*

- Having a “deep” enough intervention to merit outcome measurement
- Limited \$
- Program overload
- Staff inexperience with conducting evaluations
- Timeframe incompatibility
- Ethics

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## *Design Features*

- Utility
- Feasibility
- Propriety
- Accuracy

(CDC's Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health)

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## *Design Considerations*

- Data needed? (quantitative, qualitative ...)
- Control group?
- All participants or a sample?
- What else to measure beyond people?
- When to measure?
- Triangulation?

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## *Approach Considerations*

- Which data collection methods?
- Already-existing instruments or new?
- Confidentiality/anonymity needs?

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## *Data Collection Methods*

- Written Survey
- Interview
- Records Review
- Observation
- Test (achievement)
- Test (physical)

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## *Analysis Considerations*

How to:

- Crunch quantitative data
- Code qualitative data
- Analyze all data to draw conclusions
- Answer evaluation questions
- Decide whether to include recommendations

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## *Evaluation Interpretation Purposes*

- Make the obvious obvious
- Make the obvious dubious
- Make the hidden obvious

(Patton)

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## *Why Don't Programs Accomplish their Outcomes?*

- Theory underlying program incorrect
- Inadequate resources
- Incomplete implementation
- Unrealistic objectives

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## *Feeding Learnings Back into Program Planning*

- What's going well?
- What can be improved or changed?
- Should program continue? (*If yes:*)
- Does program need a different level or type of resources or focus?
- What else have we learned about our population, health issue, agency, etc. that can help us improve health and well-being?
- How can the evaluation be improved for next time?

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