Evaluation Planning

**Vermont Department of Health
Division of Substance Use Programs**

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VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The following slides provide information on program evaluation and evaluation plans:

- What is evaluation?
- Why evaluate?
- Types of evaluation
- Components of an evaluation plan
- Step-by-step review of an evaluation plan template
- Resources and support for developing your evaluation plan

Learning Objectives

- Gain an understanding of evaluation, why we evaluate, and how evaluation can benefit your program
- Know how to access the necessary tools to develop an evaluation plan for your program

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Framework for program evaluation in public health.

What is evaluation?

Evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using data to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and, as importantly, to contribute to *continuous program improvement*.

Evaluation…

involves systematic collection of information about a program's <u>activities</u>, <u>characteristics</u>, and <u>outcomes</u>

Allows you to understand:
- If your program is working
- What parts of your program work well
- What to change so that the program will work better
- Provide evidence to others that your program works

Why evaluate?

- Systemically document and describe program activities
- Meet the diverse information needs of stakeholders, including funders
- Continuously improve your programs and practices
- Demonstrate the impact of your program
- Identify what works and what does not

Types of Evaluation

This training will focus on <u>two</u> types of evaluation:

Process Evaluation

"Did we do what we said we would do?"

Outcome Evaluation

"Did the program make a difference and if so, what changed?"

Process evaluation determines whether program activities have been implemented as intended

When to use

- As soon as program implementation begins
- During operation of an existing program

What it shows

- If the program is implemented as planned
- How well the program is working
- If the program is acceptable and accessible to target population
- Challenges/successes

Why it's useful

- Provides early warning for any problems that may occur
- Monitors how well the program is working

Resource: CDC, "Types of Evaluation."
https://www.cdc.gov/std/Program/pupestd/Types%20of%20Evaluation.pdf

Outcome evaluation measures the direct effects of a program or practice following implementation

When to use	What it shows	Why it's useful
• Once an intervention has begun	• Degree to which the program is affecting behaviors, knowledge, attitudes, process, actions, etc.	• Whether program is effective

Resource: CDC, "Types of Evaluation."
https://www.cdc.gov/std/Program/pupestd/Types%20of%20Evaluation.pdf

When evaluating outcomes, it's important to assess the process as well as the outcomes, as results don't always narrate the whole story. Examining how a program was implemented can shed light on disappointing outcome evaluation results and help to explain positive or negative evaluation results.

An evaluation plan template is available for DSU grantees

Evaluation Plan Template for DSU Grantees

- An [evaluation plan template](#) is available on the [VDH Alcohol and Drugs Reporting Forms and Guidance Documents](#) page under the "Evaluation Training & Templates" section

- You are **<u>not required</u>** to use this evaluation plan template. It is available as a resource when creating an evaluation plan for your programs.

- Feel free to add or remove sections of the template, depending on what is applicable to your program and evaluation.

Components of the Evaluation Plan

The following slides walk through each section included in the DSU grantee evaluation plan template

Overview: Briefly describe the <u>program</u> being evaluated, highlighting the overall program goal and objectives.

Evaluation lead contact and team: Who is involved in completing the evaluation?

Purpose and scope: Describe the purpose and scope of the <u>evaluation.</u>

Logic model (optional): Visual representation of your program.

Evaluation questions and indicators: Develop clear and measurable evaluation questions related to program goals and objectives.

Data collection and analysis: Outline the information you need to collect based on the indicators you selected. Briefly explain how data will be collected and analyzed.

Use: How will you use your evaluation findings?

Limitations: Identify any limitations of your evaluation.

Communication plan: How will you communicate with your team and stakeholders/partners during the evaluation?

Goals and timeline: Create a realistic timeline for evaluation activities.

Dissemination: How will you share your evaluation results?

Intro and Overview

- **Briefly describe your program and include your goals and objectives. Overall, this section should outline what your program <u>and</u> evaluation are trying to achieve.**

*Italic text is included to guide your evaluation plan and <u>should not</u> be included in your final plan. If you have any questions while completing this evaluation plan, **please contact your grant manager**.*

Evaluation Plan for *Program Name*: (years covered)

Prepared by:

(name(s) and affiliation)

Overview

Briefly describe the program being evaluated including your program goals and objectives.

What is your program and this evaluation trying to achieve?

Lead Evaluation Contact and Evaluation Team

- Identify a lead evaluator within your organization. This person will be responsible for coordinating the evaluation, overseeing data collection, and writing the final evaluation report.
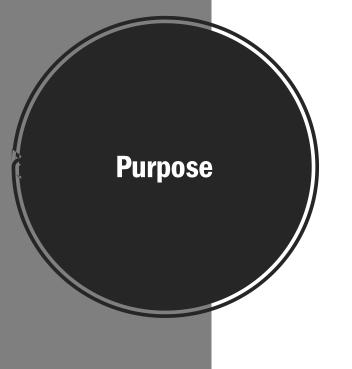- This section also includes a table in which you will identify additional evaluation team members. This can include program staff, members, outside partners - whoever will be involved in developing and executing your evaluation. This section may also include your DSU Grant Manager if this evaluation is a grant requirement, as they will be responsible for receiving, reviewing, and approving the evaluation plan and final evaluation report (if required).

Lead Evaluation Contact: *(name, role, affiliation)*

Evaluation Team

Complete the table below and add additional rows to include evaluation team members as needed:

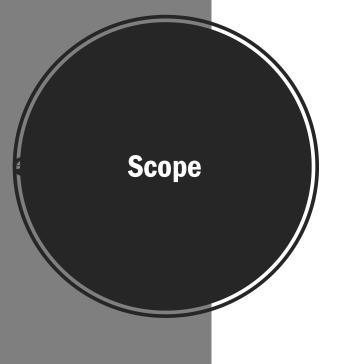| Name	Role/Organization	Responsibilities
E.g., Lead evaluator name	Lead evaluator's job title/Your organization here	Coordinate evaluation, oversee data collection, write evaluation report
E.g., Program staff name	Program staff's job title/Your organization here	Data collection, data entry, etc.
E.g., DSU Grant Manager	Grant Manager/DSU	Receive, review, and approve evaluation plan and final report

Purpose

- In the purpose section you will describe <u>why</u> the evaluation is being done and what the findings of your evaluation will inform.

Purpose

Why is the evaluation being done?

What will the findings of this evaluation inform?

Scope

- The scope of your evaluation will include information and data collected during the grant period.
- In this section you will also expand upon the focus of the evaluation and include any additional information on the specific activities you are evaluating.

Scope

What is the focus of the evaluation (i.e., what programs/activities are you evaluating)?

- *Outline program goal(s) and activities and specify the timeline of program implementation/data collection.*

- *Is the evaluation focused on program implementation (process evaluation), on the program outcomes (outcomes evaluation), or both? What outcome(s) are your program trying to achieve?*

- *What do you want to learn from the evaluation?*

Logic Model (this section is optional, but useful!)

- The logic model section of the plan is an optional addition, but logic models are a very useful tool when developing your evaluation.
- This section includes links to information on the VDH Alcohol and Drugs Reporting Forms and Guidance Documents webpage including a logic model overview and additional logic model templates.

Logic Model *(optional)*

*Insert your logic model here. While logic models are not always a grant requirement, they can be a very useful tool when developing an evaluation plan. **If you have questions as to if a logic model is required in your evaluation plan, please contact your grant manager.***

A logic model provides a visual representation of the program and is a succinct way of describing what was/will be done. The logic model outlines the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of your program.

- *Logic model overview*
- *Logic model templates*

Evaluation Questions and Indicators

Get specific when developing your plan, adding additional indicators to help you answer these questions or adding additional evaluation questions/indicators for a specific strategy or activity you are implementing.

Evaluation Questions and Indicators

When coming up with your evaluation questions, use the following criteria:

- It is important to staff and stakeholders
- It reflects program goals
- It can provide information that can lead to program improvement
- It can be answered using available resources

The following table outlines example evaluation questions and indicators. Feel free to edit these questions and indicators and add rows for additional questions.

Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Type	Indicators Indictors are how you will measure success. What are some of the measurements or observable elements that can help you answer your question? Note: there may be more than one indicator for each evaluation question
e.g., Is the program implemented as intended?	Process	• Percent of workplan tasks completed • Number of unique individuals served/reached • Program successes and challenges
e.g., Did the program produce positive outcomes?	Outcome	• Improve skills or knowledge • Increase in positive behavior or attitudes • Comparison of outcomes between program participants and non-participants

Data Collection

When adding data to support your indicators, try to use data you already have access to.

Data

What data will you collect to inform the indicators listed above? Please attach any data collection tools/surveys created to the end of this plan.

The following table outlines example data. Remove, edit, or add rows for your data/information needs.

Data or information need	Data source	Why is it needed?	How is it collected/calculated?	When will this data be available?
e.g., Percent of implementation plan tasks completed	Implementation plan	To understand how well the program was implemented	Number of implementation tasks completed divided by total number of implementation tasks	
e.g., Number of unique individuals served	Intake records	To understand how many individuals were served	Cumulative number of unduplicated individuals served	
e.g., Program successes/challenges	Staff survey	To understand strengths and limitations of program implementation	Summary of staff-reported program successes and challenges	

Data Analysis

- Use this section to explain in more detail how data will be collected.
- You will also use this section to briefly explain how collected data will be analyzed and used to answer your evaluation questions. This can be a simple explanation!

Analysis Plan

Briefly explain how collected data will be analyzed and used to answer your evaluation questions. This doesn't need to be complex.

What is your plan for collecting the data above and reporting the results of the indicators?

Who is involved in interpreting and justifying conclusions?

Use & Limitations

- **What will your evaluation findings inform?**
- **Identify potential limitations to your evaluation.**

Use

What are your plans for using evaluation findings?

How will your findings be communicated with DSU?

Limitations

What are the limitations of this evaluation? May include:

- Available resources
- Available staff
- Time constraints
- Data collection limitations

Communication Plan

- **Outline how you will communicate with your evaluation team and stakeholders/partners during the evaluation.**

It is recommended to have regular meetings with your evaluation team to monitor progress and stay on track.

Communication Plan

During the evaluation period, the following communications are expected to occur between the evaluation team members and stakeholders/partners (including DSU):

The following table outlines example communications. Remove, edit, or add rows for your needs.

Purpose	How often	Who to include
e.g., Evaluation team meeting to monitor progress	Monthly	Evaluation lead and additional program staff involved in evaluation processes.
e.g., Report evaluation progress to DSU grant manager	Quarterly	Evaluation lead and DSU grant manager

Goals and Timeline

- **Evaluation goals and timeline is a section to outline intended evaluation activities and identify deadlines and responsible parties for completing each activity.**

Evaluation Goals and Timeline

When will _evaluation_ activities occur?

Use the table below to describe the timeline of evaluation activities. Remove, edit, or add rows for your needs.

Date	Goals	Who is responsible?
e.g., July 2024	Submit draft of evaluation plan to DSU	Lead evaluator
e.g., August 2024	Submit final evaluation plan to DSU	Lead evaluator
e.g., September 2024	Start data collection	Evaluation team
e.g., May 2024	Draft and review report	Lead evaluator and evaluation team
e.g., June 2025	Report finalized and submitted to DSU	Lead Evaluator

Dissemination

- The dissemination section outlines how the results of your evaluation will be shared.
- Who is the primary audience, what method/medium will you use to disseminate the information, and who is the responsible party?

Dissemination

How will the results of this evaluation be shared?

Use the table below to describe how the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders/partners. Remove, edit, or add rows for your needs.

Audience Who is/are the target audience(s)?	Dissemination Plan What method/medium will you use to disseminate evaluation findings to your audience(s)?	Responsible person Who is responsible for sharing information?
e.g., DSU	Final evaluation report	Lead evaluator
e.g., Internal staff	Final evaluation report	Lead evaluator
e.g., Local community/media	Data highlights from program	Lead evaluator

Your evaluation plan…

Guides you through each step of the evaluation

Helps you decide what sort of information you and your stakeholders/partners really need

Keeps you from wasting time gathering information that isn't needed

Helps you identify the best possible methods and strategies for getting the needed information

Helps you create a reasonable and realistic timeline for evaluation

Key Takeaways

- It is important to have a carefully considered and formed evaluation plan so you can get actionable information from your evaluation.

- A well-executed evaluation will help you improve your programs and activities!

- You are not required to use the provided template when creating an evaluation plan for your program. The purpose of this presentation and accompanying evaluation plan template is to provide you with the skills and tools to complete your own evaluations for your programs in the future.

Resources and Support

- Evaluation trainings and templates can be found on the VDH Alcohol & Drugs Reporting Forms and Guidance Documents page

- Evaluation Plan Template

- CDC: Types of Evaluation

- Program Evaluation Home – CDC

Additional questions about evaluation plans/need logic model assistance? Please contact your grant manager or ask the DSU Program Evaluator, Danielle Schwartz

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Thank you!

Questions?

Ask your grant manager or the DSU Program Evaluator