

PART Efficiency Measure Conference Calls (October 17-19, 2006):

Guidelines for Evidence-based and Evidence Informed Programs and Practices

Questions and Answers

This is a summary of the questions and answers discussed during the call as well as follow-up questions that were asked after the calls. The Q&As have been grouped by topical areas. The answers were provided by Melissa Lim Brodowski, Federal Project Office for CBCAP.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS (FORMS, ETC)

Q: According to yesterday's conference call, should I add language regarding the four levels in my CBCAP Annual Report?

A: Yes, you will need to report on the amount of CBCAP funds that are going to support the programs at the four levels (i.e. Emerging, Promising, Supported and Well-supported) and also if you are funding any programs that do not meet the four levels (i.e. Programs Lacking Support or Positive Evidence)

Q: Is the "CBCAP Lead Agency PART Evidence-Based worksheet" a form that I need to use and submit for the Annual Report?

A: States can use this worksheet if they want – but it is NOT a mandatory form. States basically just need to report the information in a way that is easiest for them—as long as we can understand the data you provide and there are explanations about where the data are coming from.

Q: Do I also have to complete and submit "CBCAP Evidence-based and Evidence informed Checklist" on each CBCAP funded program?

A: The checklist is just meant as a tool for the Lead Agency – it is NOT a mandatory form that needs to be completed and it does not need to be submitted as part of the report.

Q: Looking at the worksheet where we fill out all the programs and check list levels, there is no assumption that this worksheet should total, our CBCAP Grant Award, is there? Because in our State, we don't use our CBCAP dollars solely to fund programs. We use a good portion of it for things that we wouldn't report on the worksheet. Is that ok?

A. Yes, that is absolutely correct

Q: What is the period we should be reporting about for this? What year grants do you want us to report on?

A: Anything within the past two years is acceptable. Some states said that it's easier for them to look at programs they are currently funding and looking at the evidence levels for those programs. For other States, since the upcoming CBCAP annual report is really about the past year's money, it is easier to report on the programs that were funded during that time period. This is up to the State's discretion because the difference between the two years is not going to matter that much for the baseline. States must make note which year the data they submit is referring to. States also need to keep in mind that whatever year they choose, that will be reporting subsequent year's data from the initial baseline.

Q: If we can go back further than just this past year to report the data, would that be okay? Do I need a separate worksheet for each year?

A: You don't have to go back beyond the last two years, but if you feel that it helps you to go back to whatever your grant cycle is, we're open to accepting the prior year's data from you. It is fine if the State wants to go further back on their reporting for their own purposes – however, this is NOT required. If you do this, you will need to make a note to specify what year/s of funding you are reporting on.

Q: Are these the final definitions we should use for the baseline?

A: Yes. If we update or refine them – the substantive meaning for each level will NOT significantly change.

Q: So the final category of Programs Lacking Support or Positive Evidence? It seemed like on an earlier call, you talked about making that a level 0. So, it's not going to have a level number?

A: You are correct, there will be no formal level number 0. But, you could call it a level 0 if it makes it easier for you to think about it that way. The forms will be revised to add a category for the Programs Lacking Support or Positive Evidence.

Q: I am confused about attachment B1 and B2. They look the same. Are those two examples of ways to collect the data?

A. Attachment B1 is meant to go to funded programs. The way that Texas envisions using this form is to give this form to their contractors to complete. In Texas' case, they fund the contractor to fund in many cases multiple activities and they plan to break the costs down by the program. This is one way of collecting data - I'm not saying you have to do it that way.

Attachment B2 is the form to be used at the lead agency level. States would be compiling all that information. Again, this is a voluntary data collection form.

Q: How often do you expect to collect this data? Will it be annual?

A: Yes, it will be annual to be submitted with the CBCAP Annual Report. We recognize that some states will have the very same data for two or three years because they still have the same group of grantees for that time period. That is okay. That will factor into whatever the national picture look like and however we decide to set the targets. We definitely plan to set very conservative targets. There will be negotiation back and forth with OMB regarding the final targets that get approved.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS AND HOW TO REPORT THEM

Q: I have 17 contracts that do the same thing, teach parenting education classes, can they be listed as one? Or do we need to explain what they do under CBCAP funding and then add more information about their other programs. For each of the contracted Parenting Partners, teaching parenting classes is only their part time employment, it is a very small portion of their individual programs.

A: It depends. Are they all using the same type of parenting curriculum? This is where the parenting program could vary in terms of the level of evidence the program might have. If they are just doing the same program, then you just need to figure out which level it fits and then report the total CBCAP funding that supports the program and report on the level.

There have been similar questions in the past from other States. They say that "We fund one program but they do multiple things with that money." States can choose to break it down into different activities if possible and it is useful for you; but you may also decide that the bulk of the money is really going for this so that is what I am going to count it towards. The important thing is to put in your explanation so that we understand what you are reporting.

Q: We have a large Nurse Family partnership program in OK which is not funded by CBCAP dollars. We do use CBCAP dollars to provide some of their training opportunities and such. Do we put that on here or do we not count that?

A: My question to you – Do you count some of that as match? Because with the CBCAP program, it is the federal dollars and at least a 20% state match or more. Many states put in more than 20% match in their budget. Whatever is put in your budget should be reflected in terms of the program.

Q: If there is money that is allocated, before the programs actually started the direct service delivery, you still want us to count it? Sometimes when we fund new programs, if there is some type of set up for replication or something that's required prior to the ability to actually implement services, they need time for planning or to put together a board or something like that, could we count that? We have nine months to put it in place. It is a service delivery program.

A: If the grantee is intending to implement that program, it should be counted even though they are not in full implementation mode yet.

Q: In GA, we fund a lot of Healthy Families. At one level, Healthy Families are listed as level two and the specific program in Healthy Families NY is listed as an example of a level three program. We're looking at the NY model to see which one we're closer to. If our implementation is very similar or exactly like theirs, we can piggyback on HFNY having done the randomizing study?

A: A lot of statewide programs have a lot of similarities and yet there has been individual evaluations of various state programs that meet the different level criteria. Healthy Families NY, I would definitely separate it out because I know they have this randomized control trial for that particular statewide program. If you think your GA program is similar in structure and nature to the HFNY program and you have the similar criteria that fit, then I could see that it would count at the higher level.

Q: We fund some national models such as Parent as Teachers and 2nd Step. We could go to some of the websites listing such as CA Clearinghouse and see what level those national models are? We'll be able to find those kinds of national models on some of these websites?

A: Yes, some are probably on the website already and if it is already on another national evidence-based website, that can be the documentation. Another suggestion is to go to the national office of the program you want to replicate and they should information about the evaluation data they have available. In addition, you could look at definitions, criteria use the checklist attachment where you can literally check the definitions and the different levels and put it on a checklist format where there is a yes or no. It will be helpful in helping you to determine where something fits. Most of the time, if their organization has a national office, they should be able to help you.

Q: We fund Parents as Teacher program. We may send someone for the training and maybe appoint five FTEs to an existing program. We're not really doing direct service. Would those programs be reported? We may send staff to a national model. When they come back, we may appoint five FTE in an existing program that an agency is running, we really can't pay. We're funding nurturing the nurturing program because what we did, we paid for somebody to be trained and their part we're paying for their staff position.

A: If a portion of that money going toward that program and that staff person is at that program, they are providing a direct service and it would be counted.

Q: Would this data collection be for programs that are funded directly out of our CBCAP grant or would you be looking at everything that the agency is doing through these funds?

A: We're focused on programs funded through CBCAP. I recognize in many states the money is blended and put together with other sources of funds. If you can tease out CBCAP funding alone, that would be ideal. If not, give us an estimate of the percentage of CBCAP funding that is supporting the program and we can extrapolate the number from the total.

Q: If you don't meet the program fidelity, then you're kicked back down to the 1st level?

A: A good question. It's not that strict. There has to be a program that has been thinking about the fidelity issues. There may not be formal ways to assess fidelity – but there is a working knowledge of the importance of the issues. In some programs, there are very sophisticated fidelity protocols that are part of replicating the program and the original program would have this information. But at a minimum, we want the Lead Agencies to be working with their grantees on which they can assess fidelity either formally or informally through their own grant monitoring activities.

GUIDELINES DOCUMENT GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: Give me an example of #2 the critical thinking analysis how we will help people to be more informed.

A. The guiding principle in critical thinking is to ask questions and be much more reflective and intentional in your decision making. The questions to ask are: Is it an appropriate program that you're looking at? When you're selecting the program, what are the critical components? What do you hope can be achieved? What are the needs in the community that point to this program? Is it appropriate for the population that I want to serve? This means that you take into consider all aspects of the program, the community, the culture and are willing to ask questions and engage in open and honest dialogue with the programs about this.

Q: Have you developed a shortened version of lay person's level of evidence program sheet - like a one page description?

A: There is the initial language we had on different levels and it is posted on the FRIENDS website. I will also share a short summary that we submitted to OMB for this efficiency measure.

Q: The pre and post test design of evaluation that you list as being acceptable, can it be one done at the end that says this is where I was when I came in and this is where I am now (i.e. retrospective pre-test)?

A: Yes. One example of this is the FRIENDS Family Support Outcome Survey which is a retrospective pre-test. The key to this is that there is an evaluation that has been done or is being done but there really is no comparison group.

Q: Do you believe that a lot of this feedback will narrow the prevention work that we do in the future years? Will this work refine the work that we should be doing? Can it direct the work that we're doing?

A: Yes, I think so. I'm hopeful that we can be more targeted in the types of programs that we fund. There is a piece of CBCAP that is universal and we definitely don't want to lose that. At the same time, we need to focus on building the evidence for what works and put more resources into those strategies. I definitely see a feedback loop at the national level to all of you. My intent would be to share all the information back with you once we get it. We will also have more discussions at the grantees so we can get feedback and learn from one another.

Q: Will the Regional office have to review this information that will be coming with the Annual report?

A: Yes, this information will be a part of the annual report. At this point, I don't have any expectation that the region would have to do anything else other than review the information. There will be information

that will be helpful to you as you work with the state and hopefully it serves other purposes. In terms of working with the data, we're going to do that and work with ACF around the waiting

CBCAP FUNDING- MATCH AND LEVERAGE FUNDS

Q: What's the difference between match and leverage funds?

A: Match is required in the application. To receive money, the states have to have 20% match of the federal funding. Leveraged funding is what the state spent the previous year on CBCAP related activities. In terms of the money, match are the funds for the current year and what you're looking at now. It gets confusing because for the next year's application, a State can claim what they had the match for next years leverage fund since by that time it was already spent in the previous year. For some States, sometimes this is the same amount because there is a working budget/ appropriation that you know the State is going to spend.