Supporting Evidence-Based Home Visiting to Prevent Child Maltreatment

Cross-Site Evaluation Cost Study: Introduction to the Implementing Agency Staff Time Use Survey

EBHV Peer Learning Network Call
February 8, 2012

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Mathematica Policy Research
Overview

• Cross-site cost study questions and design
• Purpose and content of the time use survey
• How subcontractors and implementing agencies can promote the survey’s success
• Plans for analysis and reporting
Cost Study Research Questions

• The EBHV cross-site evaluation asks:
  – What are the overall annual costs of the home visiting programs to implementing agencies (IAs)?
  – What are the annual costs of individual program components?
  – What are the costs per participating family?
  – How do costs vary by program features and context?
Data Sources

• **Cost surveys**
  – Expenditure and resource survey
    • To estimate the total annual cost of providing home visiting programs
  – Time use survey
    • To allocate costs across program activities

• **Other data**
  – Fidelity
    • To estimate per-participant costs
  – Process and systems
    • To analyze variation in costs
What Is the Purpose of the Time Use Survey?

- To gather information on how staff members spend their time providing program services
- To support analysis of the allocation of costs across key program activities
- **Not** to audit staff or determine whether they are allocating time properly
How Was the Survey Developed?

- Specified program activities and definitions
- Reviewed existing time use instruments
- Drafted instrument for cross-site evaluation and solicited comments from work group
- Programmed and tested web-based survey
- Pretested instrument to assess clarity and user-friendliness
- Currently revising instrument based on feedback
Activities for Time Allocation

• **We aimed to:**
  – Identify activities relevant across program models
  – Keep the list to a manageable length
  – Link the cost study to other elements of the cross-site evaluation

• **17 activities divided into two categories**
  – Direct services to enrolled clients
  – Management and administration
Activities for Time Allocation: Direct Services to Enrolled Clients

- Initial screening and assessment
- Home visit preparation and delivery
- Case management and service linkage

- Services/activities other than home visits
- Case documentation
- Travel/transportation
Activities for Time Allocation: Management and Administration

- Outreach and recruitment
- Eligibility determination
- Staff recruitment
- Providing or attending training
- Staff supervision and consultation

- Fundraising
- Planning and collaboration
- External communication
- Continuous quality improvement
- General management and administration
- Evaluation
Who Is Being Surveyed?

• Implementing agencies providing participant-level fidelity data

• All staff who provide direct services or manage/administer the home visiting program
  – Home visitors and supervisors
  – Directors, managers, and support staff
  – Counselors or other specialized staff
How Will the Survey Operate?

- Web-based
- Approximately 20 minutes to complete
- Respondents will receive email invitations with unique user names and passwords
- Introduction describes the purpose of the survey and confidentiality of responses
- Option for contacting the Help Desk available on each page
- Calculation checks to help avoid errors
What Questions Will the Survey Ask?

• **Section A: Position and Working Hours**
  - Name of agency and job title
  - Number of hours scheduled to work each week
  - Whether respondent works hours in addition to those scheduled/paid
  - Whether respondent works only for the home visiting program or divides time
What Questions Will the Survey Ask?

• **Section B: Time Allocation**
  – Table of “Direct Services” and “Management and Administration” activities
  • “Think about how you used your time working on the home visiting program during a **typical or average week in the past month**. Enter in the table the number of hours per week you estimate that you spent on each activity.”
  – Time spent on training/professional development over the past **year**
B. TIME ALLOCATION

The table below lists 17 activities commonly performed when working in a home visiting program. The activities are divided into two groups: (1) direct services to enrolled clients and (2) management and administration.

Please review the activities and definitions listed in the table. (You may need to scroll down to view all activities.) Think about how you used your time working on the home visiting program during a typical or average week in the past month. Enter in the table the number of hours per week you estimate that you spent on each activity. Please round to the nearest full hour, do not use decimal points.

If you did not spend time on an activity during a typical or average week in the past month, enter 0. If you spent time on an activity in some weeks but not others during the past month, please enter your best estimate of the average amount of time spent per week. Not all activities are applicable to all staff roles.

The total number of hours you enter should equal the number of hours you spent working for the home visiting program in a typical or average week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B1. 40</th>
<th>Total hours worked in a typical week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total hours you have entered in items B2a-B2q below. (The survey automatically calculates this total)</td>
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DIRECT SERVICES TO ENROLLED CLIENTS

- **B2a. Initial Screening and Assessment**: Assessing clients’ needs, analyzing family situations, and collecting information needed to develop service delivery plans (includes any initial screening and assessment conducted in the client’s home).
- **B2b. Travel/Transportation**: Traveling to clients’ homes or other locations to provide services. Transporting clients to locations outside their home.
- **B2c. Home Visit Preparation and Delivery**: Preparing for future home visits, including developing service delivery plans and communicating with clients to schedule visits. Delivery of services to families and children through home visits, including providing counseling and support, demonstrating or modeling skills, conducting periodic screenings and assessments, and other activities during visits.
- **B2d. Case Management and Service Linkage**: Arranging and coordinating services on behalf of a family or child, including advocacy on behalf of the client, consultations with other staff and providers, and identifying appropriate resources.
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## Timeline for Conducting the Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January-February</td>
<td>Program and test survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 13</td>
<td>Target for completing sample accrual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of February 20</td>
<td>Begin fielding survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>End field period</td>
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What Can You Do to Help the Survey Be Successful?

• Work with us to promote a high response rate
  – Reduces the risk of sample bias and inaccurate estimates

• Let staff members know they will be asked to complete the survey, and explain its importance
  – We will provide a summary that explains purpose of the survey and answers FAQs

• No need to ask staff members to track time use or confer on responses
  – Survey asks for individual retrospective estimates

• Once invitations are sent, follow up with staff and encourage responses
How Will Survey Data Be Analyzed and Shared?

• For each IA, we will calculate percentage of total staff time spent on:
  – Each program activity
  – Direct services or management and administration
  – Key categories of infrastructure-building activities

• We expect to provide subcontractors a summary of time use results in summer 2012

• We will undertake further analysis and reporting after the expenditure survey
For More Information

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