Dear Fellow Evaluators:

Now that most of you have your evaluation roadmap for the next four years—your strategic evaluation plan—it’s time to move on to planning the individual evaluations. Whether your program has its evaluation processes and procedures solidly in place, or you’re anticipating writing your first-ever evaluation plan, we hope you’ll take a moment to review the planning guidance provided in Learning and Growing.

* Chapter 3 describes the individual evaluation planning process;
* Appendix F provides an outline for an individual evaluation plan;
* Definitions and descriptions of the various teams engaged in planning and implementing evaluations for the state asthma program are provided in the “Introduction and Overview” of Module 2, which was recently released in draft format through the asthma state evaluator list-serve. (If you signed on to the list after this was distributed, just ask your ETA for a copy. At the moment, we’re having a little trouble accessing the list archives.)

Several state evaluators have asked for additional details about the differences between the strategic evaluation planning team you’ve worked with over the past year as compared to the evaluation planning teams that will be formed to develop your individual evaluation plans.

Regarding **composition of the teams**, one critical difference between two types of teams will be the perspectives of the stakeholders. For the S**trategic Evaluation Planning Team**:

* The stakeholders you engage should be the people who “think big picture” and are able to contribute in a meaningful way to discuss why a state asthma program is needed.
* This team may include representatives of key partner and constituent groups, and members of this group may be involved with crafting the state plan and making decisions regarding the overall approach to addressing asthma in your state.
* The **primary** **product** of the work conducted by this team is the Strategic Evaluation Plan as well as any updates to this plan.

**For the Individual Evaluation Planning Teams**:

* Include people directly engaged with the process/activity/product that is the focus of the evaluation. This team should be chosen to reflect the specific program knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to design a *specific* evaluation.
* This team may, but does not need, to include one or more members of your strategic evaluation planning team.
* These stakeholders should include those directly involved in operations or day-to-day administration and may also include recipients of the service or product. It is important to have one or more individuals on this team who are in the position to make enhancements or improvements, if indicated by the evaluation findings.
* The **primary product** of this team is an Individual Evaluation Plan that refines and builds upon the general information provided in the evaluation profiles included in the Strategic Evaluation Plan. Some individuals on the evaluation planning team may also participate in implementing parts of the evaluation (e.g., collecting data, analyzing data, interpreting and sharing findings).

As the evaluator, you will **manage the feedback loop** between the strategic evaluation plan and the individual evaluation plans. You will oversee how the strategic evaluation plan is implemented via the individual evaluation plans as well as how information from the individual evaluation planning process and the findings from those evaluations are used to revise the strategic evaluation plan. For example, based on their perspectives and information needs, the individual evaluation teams may try to steer the evaluation in a direction that would not meet the longer-term needs identified by the strategic planning group. In this instance, you may have to work with both teams to reconcile their visions for the evaluation. Similarly, the individual evaluations may identify new big-picture evaluation questions that the strategic evaluation planning team should consider.

**Providing frequent updates** to all of your evaluation stakeholders, particularly those on the planning teams, will ensure that others can help you in your role as evaluation facilitator and negotiator. These updates need not always be formal or detailed; they merely need to keep stakeholders who are contributing their time and expertise “in the loop”. Updates also serve as an opportunity to acknowledge and thank participants for their contributions.

If you would like additional clarification, please contact your ETA or post a question to the list.