

DISSEMINATION PLANNING

“Effective dissemination requires a plan to get the right knowledge to the right people at the right time,” write the authors of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report, *Evaluation Reporting: A Guide to Help Ensure Use of Evaluation Findings*.¹ Addressing racial disparities and disproportionality through culturally appropriate support and education, multidisciplinary programs, and collaborative approaches is critical for maximizing the program’s impact and sustainability. Vital aspects of the dissemination plan include:²:

- **Dissemination for understanding.** Identifying key audiences is important for disseminating information that is most applicable and useful to the audience(s). For example, audiences interested in the welfare of American Indian families often emphasize cultural healing through traditional ceremonies, medicines, and reflection based on tribal needs, values, and culture. Some key audiences may need more clinical and technical information (which can be provided through reports), while others may need information that is accessible and easy to read (i.e. social-media posts). Other groups may need a blend of technical and accessible information.
- **Dissemination for awareness.** Creating awareness is essential to the evaluation process and for keeping key audiences aware of activities and outcomes. The Bright Beginnings Recovery Support Project at the Minneapolis American Indian Center was featured in the Spring 2018 issue of *CW360*, an annual publication of the University of Minnesota’s Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare.³ When dissemination for awareness works well, it fuels word-of-mouth dissemination that is essential for getting the word out beyond the targeted audiences.
- **Dissemination for action.** An evaluation plan has key findings that can help identify “key actions” or “key changes” that audiences will want to take away. Action steps also lays the foundation for sustainability so that once the evaluation is finished, action can continue to expand and make an impact. An annual evaluation report will highlight key findings for this aspect of the dissemination plan.

Long-term outcome. Identifying an outcome or an overall goal helps to focus the dissemination for each product.⁴ This long-term outcome provides a framework for developing key messages for each dissemination product.

Audience of the dissemination plan. Defining target audiences for each product is important for creating buy-in and encouraging the development of action plans based on findings.⁵ Dissemination partners are individuals, organizations, and/or networks that may assist with reaching identified audiences. Key audiences often include:

- Funding leaders, staff, and key stakeholders;
- Staff and key stakeholders of each grantee, school, or organization;

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Evaluation Reporting: A Guide to Help Ensure Use of Evaluation Findings*. Retrieved on March 27, 2018, from https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/evaluation_reporting_guide.pdf, 13.

² Harmsworth, S., Turpin, S., TQEF National Co-ordination Team. (2000). *Creating an Effective Dissemination Strategy*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from <http://www.innovations.ac.uk/btg/resources/publications/dissemination.pdf>. Bristol, Higher Education Funding Council for England, and Yale Center for Clinical Investigation. (2009). *Beyond Scientific Publication: Strategies for Disseminating Research Findings*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from https://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/CARE_Dissemination_Strategies_FINAL_eversion.pdf

³ Newton, L., Morgan, K., Day-Castro, C., & Zaffiro-Day, T., interviewed by Walthour, K., and Barry, K. (2018). Mending cultural fibers: Resilience of American Indian mothers caught between two systems. *CW360*, 26. Retrieved on April 24, 2018, from https://casew.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CW360_Spring2018_WebTemp.pdf

⁴ Canadian Health Services Research Foundation. (n.d.) *Developing a Dissemination Plan*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from http://www.queensu.ca/urs/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.urswww/files/files/dissemination_plan_CHSRF.pdf

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Evaluation Reporting: A Guide to Help Ensure Use of Evaluation Findings*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/evaluation_reporting_guide.pdf

- Children and families served;
- Policymakers, members of the Minnesota Legislature, and legislative committees; and
- The general public

Channels. Once key audiences have been named, it's helpful to examine different information channels to disseminate information.⁶ Channels include anything from a printed report to a digital communication and from face-to-face meetings to telephone contacts. Channels may include mailings, website postings, community forums, media (television, radio, newspaper, magazine), personal contacts, listservs, and social-media posts. Understanding the effectiveness of each type of channel is key for disseminating information. In addition, specific audiences respond to different types of channels, based on their interest, knowledge, and comfort with using the channel. What's key, however, is that the audiences know about the evaluation findings. "If consumers do not know about public reports, they will never see them," says a report by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "If they never see them, they will never use them. And if they do not use them, there is no return on those investments."⁷

Report modes. Report modes are the methods for disseminating evaluation findings. Researchers examined four report modes to see which were most effective:

- Print reports only;
- Print reports and website postings;
- Print reports and workshops; and
- Print reports, website postings, and workshops.⁸

Researchers discovered that those who use the four modes above are more likely to share the results with others.⁹ "The most successful dissemination strategies will be those that actively engage users and deliver what the users both want and need," write the authors of *Creating an Effective Dissemination Strategy*.¹⁰ The CDC categorizes products into three key areas¹¹:

- **Written products.** These include annual reports, semi-annual reports, legislative reports, success stories, dashboard or graphical reports, policy briefs, journal articles, press releases, etc. Table 1 identifies two written products, and Table 2 has one.
- **Verbal products.** These range from informal meetings to community forums. They may also include workshops, conference events, and presentations to specific groups. Tables 1 and 2 each include two verbal products.
- **Electronic products.** With many people spending a lot of time on the Internet, electronic products have increased potential to reach large groups of people and can also be shared easily. These include websites, social-media posts, webinars, videos, and podcasts. Table 2 lists two electronic products.

⁶ Edwards, L. A. (n.d.) Using Knowledge and Technology to Improve the Quality of life of People Who Have Disabilities. Chapter V: Information channels & dissemination strategies. Retrieved on March 27, 2018, from http://codi.tamucc.edu/archives/pubs/articles/_edwards/_chap5.htm

⁷ Sofaer, S., and Hibbard, J. (2010). Best practices in public reporting no. 3: How to maximize public awareness and use of comparative quality reports through effective promotion and dissemination strategies. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved on April 26, 2018, from: <https://archive.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/pubrptguide3/pubrptguide3.pdf>

⁸ Mueller, N. B., Burke, R. C., Luke, D. A., and Harris, J.K. (2008). Getting the word out: Multiple methods for disseminating evaluation findings. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, 14(2), 170-6. doi: 10.1097/01.PHH.0000311896.65454.77.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Harmsworth, S., Turpin, S., TQEF National Co-ordination Team. (2000). *Creating an Effective Dissemination Strategy*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from <http://www.innovations.ac.uk/btg/resources/publications/dissemination.pdf>

¹¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Evaluation Reporting: A Guide to Help Ensure Use of Evaluation Findings*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/evaluation_reporting_guide.pdf, 8.

Table 1 outlines the proposed dissemination plan.¹²

Table 1. Dissemination Plan

Product	Target Date	Audience	Lead Contributors	Status	Notes
Written: Annual Report	June 30, 2018 ¹³	funder staff, Legislature, stakeholders, grantees	ACET, funder, grantees	In progress	Contracted date
Written: Legislative Report	June 30, 2018 ¹⁸	funder staff, Legislature, stakeholders, grantees	ACET, funder, grantees	In progress	Data continues to be gathered
Presentation: PowerPoint created for the funder (summary)	June 30, 2018 ¹⁸	Internal funder staff, other stakeholders	ACET, funder	Planning stage	Grantee short-term outcome data analyzed for to present
Presentation: The funder and ACET partner to present to grantees	June 30, 2018 ¹⁸	Grantees, children and families served by grantees, other stakeholders	ACET, funder	Planning stage: Determine day and time for Meeting #4	Presentation at Meeting #4

Other recommended additional products to consider. Because the deliverables in Table 1 include only written and verbal products, Table 2 lists a number of additional products that the funder could also consider as part of the dissemination plan in order to reach more audiences and employ more channels for a larger impact.

Whichever additional products the funder deems important, consider the audience for each product and develop information that’s culturally appropriate and appealing. As stated by the CDC, “effective and efficient dissemination can help build meaning and understanding, develop support, and generate learning opportunities.”¹⁴ By defining target audiences, strategic dissemination will illustrate the success of the program and ultimately help to achieve the long-term outcome of the program.

¹² The dissemination plan is based on the template from the Centers for Disease Control. See: Centers for Disease Control. (2015). CDC Evaluation Coffee Break: creating an effective dissemination plan. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/pubs/docs/cb_oct2015.pdf

¹³ The expected completion date is based on data availability.

¹⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Evaluation Reporting: A Guide to Help Ensure Use of Evaluation Findings*. Retrieved on March 26, 2018, from https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/docs/evaluation_reporting_guide.pdf, 13.

Table 2. Additional Dissemination Products to Consider

Product	Target Date	Audience	Lead Contributors	Status	Notes
Reports available on the funder's website	Fall 2018	funder staff, grantees, children and families served by grantees, Legislature, stakeholders, general public	funder in conjunction with the funder's webmaster	Planning stage	Imbed reports into the funder's website for transparency and for easy access
Press releases	Fall 2018	funder staff, grantees, children and families served by grantees, Legislature, stakeholders, general public	funder in conjunction with the funder's Communications Department	Planning stage	Identify key aspects to create targeted press releases
Social-media posts	Fall 2018	funder staff, grantees, children and families served by grantees, Legislature, stakeholders, general public	funder in conjunction with the funder's Social-Media Department	Planning stage	Identify short, catchy pieces of information for posts
Community forums	Fall 2018	funder staff, grantees, children and families served by grantees, Legislature, stakeholders, general public	funder	Planning stage	Engage stakeholders and the public