Sustainability Guide: Documentation and Reporting of Impact

The *Sustainability Guide: Documentation and Reporting of Impact* is part of a collection of resources developed by the Center for School Mental Health for The SHAPE System that provides guidance to help comprehensive school mental health systems (CSMHSs) advance the quality and sustainability of their services and supports. This guide includes background information on CSMHS documentation and reporting of impact, possible action steps, and resources to help systems develop a long-term sustainability plan.

Background:

The *Documentation and Reporting of Impact* domain within the *School Mental Health Sustainability Assessment Survey* comprises four indicators to help determine a system's documentation and report on the impact of the system to a wide range of stakeholders who play a role in the system's sustainability. These activities also support advocacy for the system's maintenance, growth and change over time. These indicators include:

  (1) Documentation of academic impact of CSMHS
  (2) Documentation of emotional/behavioral impact of CSMHS
  (3) Documentation of the impact of CSMHS on sustainability factors
  (4) Reporting overall impact of CSMHS

Documentation and reporting of impact is the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of CSMHS effectiveness on academic and emotional/behavioral outcomes and sustainability factors to a wide range of stakeholders. Collecting and synthesizing data on CSMHS effectiveness on academic and emotional/behavioral outcomes and sustainability factors provides systems with the necessary data that can be shared with current and potentially new funders to demonstrate the value and potential cost effectiveness of CSMHS. Academic outcomes may include grades, attendance, office referrals/suspensions/expulsions, performance test scores, and achievement or benchmark test scores. Emotional/behavioral outcomes may include emotional/behavioral health screenings and assessments, behavioral observations, crisis incidents, and school climate data. Sustainability factors may include shared system collaboration, public policy impact, return on investment, and economic impact and system quality improvement.

> *Documentation and reporting of impact involves the collection, evaluation and dissemination of CSMHS effectiveness to a wide range of stakeholders.*

A clear system to collect and analyze these data allows systems to track CSMHS effectiveness over time. These data should then be shared regularly (e.g., quarterly or semi-annually) with key stakeholder groups including youth, families, school and community partners, and existing or potential funders.

Action Steps:
1. **Identify academic and emotional/behavioral outcomes.**
   o Many data sources exist as part of a CSMHS and may be utilized to document program impact.

- Consider collecting ongoing academic data such as grades, attendance, office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, performance test scores and achievement or benchmark test scores for students participating in CSMHS supports and services.
- Consider collecting ongoing emotional/behavioral data such as emotional/behavioral health screenings and assessments, behavioral observations, crisis incidents, and school climate data for students participating in CSMHS supports and services.
  - o If implementing new data collection, engage stakeholder groups to identify data that is useful for ongoing progress monitoring, in addition to program effectiveness.
  - o Create a plan for data collection and aggregation and consider use of electronic tracking for ease of collection, analysis, and dissemination.

2. **Identify sustainability factors.**
   - o Think creatively about ways to document the impact of your CSMHS within the school and community.
   - o Consider your innovative shared system collaboration advances and public policy impact.
   - o Work with an economist to document return on investment and other economic benefits of your CSMHS.
   - o Work with stakeholders to document system quality improvement such as additional service provision, use of evidence-based supports and services, and stakeholder satisfaction.

3. **Share CSMHS effectiveness data with a wide range of stakeholders.**
   - o Develop quarterly or semi-annual mechanisms such as reports or meetings to share CSMHS effectiveness data with funders.
   - o Share CSMHS effectiveness data with youth and families to promote communication and collaboration. Present data in useful and user-friendly terms.
   - o Share CSMHS effectiveness data with stakeholders who were integral in compiling data. For example, if teachers complete data on student progress, report findings back to teachers in regular intervals.
   - o Prepare a short "elevator" speech that highlights key CSMHS program impact to have readily available to share verbally or in writing with any and all stakeholders.

Resources:
Online Training Videos and Webinars
   - o Center for School Mental Health (2015) Module #13: School Behavioral Health Program Evaluation 101. Community-Partnered-School Behavioral Health Implementation Modules. https://mdbehavioralhealth.com/training. This module reviews the purpose, goals, and types of program evaluation, as well as applies this information to a tutorial on how school behavioral health programs can use existing and new data to report process and outcome evaluation questions.
Websites and Web-based Materials
   - o The Registry of Scales and Measures allows you to search among measures of mental health and illness, as well as general functioning: http://www.scalesandmeasures.net/search.php

- Non-Researcher's Guide to Evidence-Based Program Evaluation. (2012). SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices. Retrieved from http://www.eblcprograms.org/docs/pdfs/NREPP_Non-researchers_guide_to_eval.pdf
- A Framework for Program Evaluation. (2012). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Program Performance and Evaluation Office. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm
- Reporting to Stakeholders – International Finance Corporation. Retrieved from http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/35de848048855437b1ecf36a6515bb18/PartOne_Reportingtostakeholders.pdf?MOD=AJPERES
- *Ten Critical Factors to Advancing School Mental Health: What Early Adopters Say* Offers a variety of strategies based on school mental health programs nation-wide. http://csmh.umaryland.edu/media/SOM/Microsites/CSMH/docs/10criticalfactors.pdf