
Guide to the Use of Data for Planning: A Toolkit

Data Infrastructure Grant Meeting
December, 2003

Who responded to the survey?

State Planners	30
Planning Advisory Council Members	20
IT, Data or Evaluation Specialist	24
Other	4

Has anyone ever provided training to your planning or advisory council in the use of:

Data 36%

Surveys 24%

Performance Indicators 39%

How often does your Planning or Advisory Council receive and review data, survey or performance indicator reports or presentations?

Never	4%
Once	1.3%
Quarterly	38%
More Often	9%
Annually	37%

Of all the data, survey and performance indicator reports that you receive, which do you find the most useful?

Financial	25%
Survey Reports	45%
Service Utilization	60%
Performance Indicators	54%
Block Grant	45%
Uniform Reporting Data	36%
Other	7%

Is there a special curriculum that is used to provide training in the use of data for planning?

Yes

5% (2 states)

Examples of how data has been used previously Planners:

- Block Grant Development/Monitoring (9)
- Performance Measurement (5)
- Advocacy/Making recommendations
for funding (4)
- Monitoring programs/service utilization (6)
- Review/Information (3)
- Id need for new services/recommendations
for service development (2)
- Strategic Planning (1)
- Technical Assistance to Providers (1)
- Other/Unknown (3)

Examples of how data has been used previously:
Planning Council Members:

Block grant (3)

Education/Information (2)

Performance Measurement (2)

Monitor/Review Service Utilization (2)

Estimate Prevalence (1)

Quality Improvement (1)

No information received/haven't used (4)

Limited use (1)

Examples of how data has been used previously:
IT, Data or Evaluation Specialist:

Service Planning (3)

Education/Informational Review (3)

Quality Improvement/Planning (2)

Provider Performance Measurement (1)

Block Grant (1)

System Monitoring (1)

Don't know (2)

Infrequent/limited use/not used (4)

Use of Data for Planning Toolkit

- I. Purpose of the toolkit
 - A. Why a toolkit
 - B. Goals
 - C. Target audience

- II. Data for Planning?
 - A. The planning process
 - B. How does data “fit” with planning?
 - C. What can data do?
 - D. What data can't do

III. Advocating for the use of data

A. Role of the planner

B. Role of the planning Council

C. Planner as a change agent

D. Barriers to the use of data

IV. Data Overview

A. Why data when decisions can be made so many other ways?

B. How do you know what data is needed?

1. Framing questions

2. How do you know when you've got the data that you need?

3. What happens when you can't get the data that you want?

- D. New data versus data on hand
 - E. Data costs
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V. Data Basics

- A. Common data presentations
- B. What does it mean? Interpreting data
- C. Using data as information
 - 1. Units of analysis
 - 2. Indicators and performance measures
- D. Determining what data tells us (or what it doesn't tell us)

VI. Examples of how data has been used for planning

VII. Case studies and practice in using data for planning