

2011 STAM – CCPRC Meeting  
Workshop C4  
November 16, 2011, 2:45-4:00 pm

## **Quality Rating and Improvement Systems through the Implementation Science Lens**

### **Description**

This workshop explored how implementation science (IS) can inform the implementation and evaluation of QRIS initiatives. Specifically, how can the IS perspective be applied to all aspects of a QRIS, including measuring and rating the quality of care, providing quality improvement services to practitioners, and disseminating quality ratings to the public? How do best practices within the field of IS provide guidelines for the successful scale-up of a QRIS initiative? Presenters discussed how IS can help inform QRIS design, service provision, and evaluation using multiple State examples.

### **Facilitator**

Tamara Halle, Child Trends

### **Presenters**

Kathryn Tout, Child Trends

Diane Paulsell, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Kelly Maxwell, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Deborah Swenson-Klatt, Minnesota Department of Human Services

### **Scribe**

Sheri Fischer, National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement

#### **1. Documents in Session Folder**

- “QRIS Through an Implementation Science Lens,” Diane Paulsell, Tamara Halle, Kelly Maxwell, Kathryn Tout and Deborah Swenson-Klatt
- “Illustrative Questions for Each Stage of Implementation, by QRIS Component” (Handout)

#### **2. Summary of Presentations**

- **Summary of Presentation #1:** Kathryn Tout
  - What is our vision for QRIS? It will be a dynamic system and continue to evolve as new evidence is available.
    - It has a data system in place to collect and manage key system data. Data requirements will change, evolving in the same way as QRIS.
    - Evaluations are used to inform implementation and continuous program improvement.
    - There is a lot of variation, which reflects context and needs of States. This will not change, but we will start to see more standard practices. How do we maintain the learning we can apply across States?
    - QRIS will include: evidence-based standards, tailored to the State context; a rating process that is validated and rating staff who are supported in their roles

through training, manuals and other supports; defined quality improvement strategies that include needs assessment, goal setting and matching of services to needs; evidence-based financial incentives that promote access and quality improvement; and marketing and communication (target parents at the moment of decision-making and data to track whether targets are met).

- **Summary of Presentation #2:** Diane Paulsell
  - Stages of Implementation (roadmap to the vision for QRIS).
    - Exploration: possibilities for constructing components. How do we do this? How will stakeholders react? Assessing fit and moving forward.
    - Installation: preparing for implementation. Are personnel trained, data systems in place, parents informed, and is there a plan for monitoring?
    - Initial Implementation: implementing a new intervention for the first time. Staff implementing as intended? Changes needed in data systems? Are providers doing what they need to do to get incentives? What lessons can be learned?
    - Full operation: implementation at a steady state. Is it moving along? System for periodic review? Monitoring fidelity? Evaluating impact on quality?
    - Innovation: this is not a separate stage; innovation can occur at any point. Adapting to community conditions. Does it work the same in rural communities? Are the needs of special populations being met?
    - Sustainability: important at all the stages to ensure the system will continue. Is the system for calculating incentives established? Are providers well educated about the incentives?
  - It takes 2–4 years to get to full operation. Stages do not occur in a linear fashion or in isolation from each other and may not occur simultaneously for all components.
  - Kathryn Tout: There are multiple interventions and activities in systems. We need to break out the pieces to focus on.
  
- **Summary of Presentation #3:** Kelly Maxwell
  - Possible next steps include:
    - Create an implementation team: people who are engaged in QRIS, and motivated to make change. Reach out to other agencies.
    - Set priorities and goals and think about what stage your QRIS is at. Think about one concept, one driver, and think about how it applies to your QRIS.
  - Develop and implement a work plan and timeline; get to a level of specificity about what you'll do. Have early wins and successes, something doable early. Then review what you did.
  - Educate stakeholders – developed shared understanding of IS stages and timeline.
  
- **Summary of Presentation #4:** Deborah Swenson-Klatt
  - Deborah indicated that they have just completed 4-year pilot of QRIS in Minnesota, and are in the midst of planning statewide expansion while keeping the pilot areas going. There are 400 rated programs with ratings posted for parents.
    - Their QRIS is a voluntary system that includes all program types – child care, Head Start, prek (but not school-age). Quality supports are offered by the CCR&R system.

- They are revising their approach and shifting from points to hybrid of blocks and points.
- Reflections on IS from a project management perspective.
  - IS can help us ramp up the fidelity of processes. We can take these tools and think about current stages. How can we structure regular times to think together about implementation and make sure we aren't missing aspects of the work?
  - She is somewhat skeptical about whether they can use IS in its purest form; it seems overwhelming in the context of the State which faces huge deadlines (Minnesota has to launch statewide on January 1).
  - But the State has tools in place that can move some of these concepts forward including work plans and timelines that reflect components of QRIS and a cross-partner planning and implementation team.

### 3. Summary of Discussion with Presenters and Participants

- Discussion questions: What are the most urgent areas to focus on? What are the priorities in your State? Where are you in stages of implementation of your QRIS? Does this dictate what your priorities should be in terms of content? How do we make next steps concrete?
  - West Virgin Islands. In the exploration and installation stage with our QRIS – working out steps to launch. Concerned about consumer education and community engagement – parents and the legislature (need them to invest).
  - Maine – consultant helping the State with QRIS
  - Advice for designing RFPs – include having someone come in who can help with implementation.
  - How do we sustain QRIS with the structural impediment of not paying the workforce very well?
    - System level issues are not “a quick win.” Can other drivers make an impact? For example, coaching has an impact. Collect data that show impact of increased pay. Look for ways to compensate for an issue.
    - Compensation can be built into a QRIS through incentives to programs and practitioners directly.
  - How do you manage the ghost, when you want to support the host? Things happen because people are doing the work and are passionate. Make things position dependent not person dependent. Understand where ghost systems are, do a “system as it is” analysis.
  - When a State is engaged in a pilot, it is at all of the stages. If a system is being revised, where does it fit? Parts of the system may be at different stages.