Challenges in Collecting Data on Quality

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Federal and state governments may have some different goals for performance data

• Federal and state staff motivated to improve quality of care for CCDF-subsidized children and all children

• Federal government interested in:
  – Monitoring the use of CCDF funds
  – Drawing cross-state comparisons
  – Strengthening use of these funds as a lever for change

• States interested in:
  – Monitoring QI activities
  – Promoting QI goals
  – Identifying policies that may need to change
Cross-state Comparisons Require Standardization of Data

• Ideally, elements are defined so that data transcend state definitions
  – E.g., licensing standards vary widely: is percent of licensed programs in QRISs good enough?
  – E.g., criteria for star levels in QRISs very different; a “2-star” program in one state is equivalent to a “4-star” program in another

• Standardization may rely on more molecular data in some instances
  – E.g., deconstruct licensing
  – May not be possible for some indicators
Several Considerations Need to Guide Selection of Data Elements

• Feasibility
  – Cost of data collection
  – Frequency of data collection required

• Validity: does the element measure what it purports to measure?
  – E.g., given how difficult it is to get a degree and dependence on higher education infrastructure, should number of degrees granted represent a measure of quality?

• Reliability: are the data being collected and reported in a consistent way?
  – E.g., proportions require a denominator: are states using the same one?
  – Are data collection techniques, training, definitions the same?