PHASE → Purpose | How | Action Plan | Support | EXAMINE

A Roadmap to Implementation

The Importance of EXAMINE

Evaluating whether a program, policy, or practice achieves its intended outcomes requires waiting until it is fully implemented; however, **examining how implementation is going can provide valuable insights throughout the implementation process.** Examination occurs multiple times with various data types and sources and starts early in the implementation process. Through intentional data collection and information sharing, implementation teams can identify opportunities to celebrate progress or refine their approach.

Elements of EXAMINE

Plans to examine implementation should include the following components:

1. **Decide early on what data are necessary to collect.** Consider what types of information will help objectively measure progress on implementation. This may include tracking task completion, measuring anticipated changes in beliefs or attitudes, counting events like meetings or hearings, or gathering feedback from those impacted by the change. Resist the temptation to measure everything – only commit to measuring information that will be useful.

2. **Identify where useful information can be found.** For each piece of important data, determine where it is currently kept or, if it is not collected, at what point it could be. Recognize that not all information is kept in a case management system; be open to qualitative data from interviews and focus groups. Create a table that describes the information to be collected, its source, who is responsible for collecting it, and at which points it should be collected and analyzed.

3. **Share information on fidelity early and often.** Acclimate the team to using data to describe how programs, policies, or practices are being implemented from the very beginning. Make time for the team to discuss quantitative and qualitative data and identify what is going well with implementation, what barriers exist, and to inform decisions about the process or plan.

Connecting the Dots

The components of the PHASE framework are interrelated and interdependent. While each component can be focused on in isolation, decisions and efforts in one area affect and inform the others. **Examination focuses on using data to support implementation monitoring and improvements.**

▷ **Purpose:** Continuous monitoring of implementation helps determine if the program, policy, or practice is achieving its purpose.

▷ **How:** Measuring how aspects of readiness change over time helps identify areas needing additional support or reinforcement to ensure implementation goes as planned.

▷ **Action Plan:** An action plan with specific and measurable objectives helps to objectively examine implementation progress.

▷ **Support:** Monitoring implementation helps to pinpoint areas that would benefit from further training and coaching.

Considerations for Courts

▷ Do not let perfect be the enemy of the good. It may be tempting to put off data collection until there is an ideal process or high-quality data, but data completeness and quality only improve when the data are used.

▷ Keep a timeline of changes made to the implementation plan either due to unplanned events or based on knowledge gained from monitoring implementation. This timeline may help to describe patterns in the data later.

▷ Include a data expert on the implementation team. Their valuable understanding of where to find the information and the limitations of the data helps ensure the data collection plan is reasonable and feasible.

For more information or for assistance applying these principles to implement a new policy, practice, or program in your court, visit www.ncsc.org/phase.