



WEBINAR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Conducting RWHAP Part A Planning Council / Planning Body Needs Assessments

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 | 1:00 p.m.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Do jurisdictions need Internal Review Board (IRB) approval for surveys or other types of primary data collection?

Some jurisdictions may require IRB approval, particularly if they are sampling within university health systems or other institutions that require IRB approval.

Houston does not require IRB approval for needs assessment or other planning council/planning body (PC/PB) data collection activities.

Small Transitional Grant Areas (TGAs) have the same requirements to conduct needs assessments as the large Eligible Metropolitan Areas (EMAs) without the same amount of budget and resources. Do you have low-cost or low-resource suggestions for conducting needs assessment activities?

Secure online surveys can be a good choice because they can be put together quickly and negate the need for data entry. If you choose this option, you will need to be mindful of data security. You should also ensure that your sampling methodology is sound.

Another option is to use interns for data collection or data entry tasks.

To minimize the resources associated with identifying and recruiting people living with HIV (PLWH) to participate in your needs assessment, you can conduct surveys on occasions when a large number of PLWH are expected to be present. These events can be associated with funded and non-funded providers of services (e.g. food pantry days, Community Advisory Board meetings, festivals).

What advice can you offer about conducting surveys to reach people at high risk for HIV in addition to PLWH, especially if the jurisdiction has an integrated planning body?

You can promote your survey through social media, at testing events, or other locations. Start with locations where prevention services are provided, and then expand beyond that to other areas that may be underserved. These areas will be revealed in your data.

How can planning councils/planning bodies receive summaries from CQM, monitoring, chart audits, etc., by service category, but not by provider?

The PC/PB can do this in advance by including an agreement in your MOU that specifies what data that the PC/PB will receive throughout the year, and what the data should look like by service category. One of the key data elements of the Needs Assessment is to review aggregate performance measures collected by the RWHAP Part A Recipient. A Quality Improvement Committee and the

PC/PB should review aggregate monitoring data by service category to avoid involvement with provider-level data, as provider monitoring is a responsibility of the RWHAP Part A Recipient.

How many PLWH should complete a needs assessment survey?

The number of PLWH you should expect to complete your survey will vary depending on the number of PLWH in your jurisdiction.

In Houston, we would like to see between 500-1000 PLWH complete the survey. This last year, slightly more than 500 PLWH completed the survey.

Has HRSA considered what a needs assessment should look like for integrated planning?

HRSA is providing individual support to TGAs and EMAs working on integrated planning. There is also a separate cooperative agreement dedicated to providing support for integrated planning activities.

Does the needs assessment cycle need to be adjusted from every three to every five years in order to inform the 2017-2021 Integrated Plan?

It is important to remember some type of needs assessment activities should be conducted every year. Each jurisdiction should make its own determinations as to how often to conduct their needs assessment activities and how to incorporate that information into the Integrated Plan.

The Houston Planning Council currently uses a 3-year needs assessment cycle to ensure that priority setting and resource allocation (PSRA) is responsive to the changing needs of the community (with some elements, such as the Epidemiological Profile conducted every year).

HOUSTON'S APPROACH TO DATA CLEANING AND ANALYSIS

How do you identify duplicate responses if there are no identifiers on your needs assessment survey?

The Houston Planning Council de-duplicates their data by looking for extremely similar answers made by people with similar demographic characteristics that are made at the same sites. Houston finds that duplicate responses are uncommon.

Do you disaggregate by demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc.?) to assess specific needs?

Houston reviews their data by service category and refers to the data to determine if specific populations find the services in that category to be beneficial or not. The Planning Council also puts together special demographic reports.

How do you ensure that the results of your annual survey are generalizable? Do you conduct random sampling?

Houston Planning Council uses convenience sampling. However, the Houston Planning Council weights the data by age, sex at birth, and race/ethnicity during the analysis phase to ensure scoring is more generalizable.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HOUSTON PLANNING COUNCIL

All products of the Houston Planning Council's needs assessment, including the needs assessment survey, can be found on the [Houston Planning Council website](#).

How many members does the Houston Planning Council Needs Assessment Group (NAG) have? What proportion of the council's members are PLWH?

There were 43 total members of the NAG. Eighteen members were self-disclosed PLWH, which is nearly half of the NAG members.

How many (paid) staff support the Houston NAG?

Houston RWPC Office of Support has four staff members. There are also interns who assist with data collection and data entry activities.

Are there areas that may not be RWHAP-funded agencies?

No, all jurisdictions are covered by RWHAP Part A and/or RWHAP Part B.

Is your community committee involved in the needs assessment process?

Yes, Houston's Community Committee is involved in each of the other committees, including each of the workgroups that comprise the NAG.

In Houston, does the NAG membership include a consumer advisory group? How does Houston maintain such a large membership; are they all PC members?

Not all participants are planning council members, but many serve on other CABs, task forces, etc. The Houston Planning Council shares similar missions and activities those groups, and since they also benefit from the needs assessment data, it is mutually beneficial for them to be involved.

MISCELLANEOUS

Was the Primer vetted with CDC?

The Primer was reviewed internally in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services protocol.