

Policy Analysis for Project Officers

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HWTAC Webinar Series

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The Center for Health Workforce Studies at the University at Albany, SUNY

- Established in 1996
- Based at the University at Albany School of Public Health
- Committed to collecting and analyzing data to understand workforce dynamics and trends
- Goal is to inform public policies, the health and education sectors, and the public
- Broad array of funders in support of health workforce research

Today's Presentation

- What is health policy?
- Setting the stage
- Understanding the issue
- Identifying the options
- Creating a process
- Communicating changes
- Developing an evaluation
- Understanding the implementation risks

What is Health Policy?

Health policies are:

- Public policies that pertain to or influence the pursuit of health
- The aggregate of principles that distribute resources, services, and political influences that impact the health of the population
- Regulatory tools used by government to prescribe and control the behavior of a target group by monitoring the group and imposing sanctions if it fails to comply

What is Health Policy?

Different Forms of Health Policies:

- Health policies can affect
 - groups or classes of individuals, such as physicians, the poor, elderly, and children
 - types of organizations, such as medical schools, HMOs, nursing homes, medical technology producers, and employers

What is Health Policy?

Allocative Tools:

- Involve the direct provision of income, services, or goods to a group of individuals or organization

Two main types:

- Distributive—policies spread benefits throughout society
- Redistributive—takes money or power from one group and gives it to another

As a result of allocative tools, health policy can be politically charged.

What is Health Policy?

From your perspective:

- A “big” policy change could be developing programs to increase the use of NPs and PAs in mental health
- A “small” policy change could be changing the process for approving NHSC sites

Setting the Stage

Think about:

- Your question or issue
- Your end game
- Your audience
- Stakeholder influence and involvement

Understanding the Issue

- What is your question or issue?
- What is the value and by whom?
- What are you trying to accomplish?
- How does it fit within your job?
- How does it fit within the mission of the organization?

Who is the Audience?

- Who is your audience and what is their role within your organization?
- Do they have power to influence change?
- Is the issue within their scope of power?

Who Are the Stakeholders?

- Who are the stakeholders?
 - How are they involved?
 - Who are the winners and losers?
- Stakeholders include:
 - Federal government
 - State and local government
 - Interest groups
 - The media
 - Experts and researchers

Understanding the Issue

- Literature Review:
 - Library databases
 - Search terms
- Considering the data:
 - Primary data collection and analysis
 - Secondary data analysis

What to Look For with Data

- Who collected it?
- What was the purpose?
- How was it collected?
 - Surveys
 - Interviews
 - Focus groups
- Has it been cleaned?
- How does it relate to your question?

Proposing a Solution

- Has the proposed solution been done before?
- Was the proposed solution successful?
- Can the proposed solution be replicated?
- What is the cost of the proposed solution?
- What is the cost of doing nothing?
- What are the pluses and minuses of implementing the proposed solution?
- Consider the alternatives.

Implementing a Work Plan

- Identifying objectives
 - Are they measureable?
- Creating a task list
- Creating a time line
 - Small victories
- Identifying the individual(s) responsible
- Identifying resources
 - Funds
 - Staff
 - Other experts and resources
 - Don't forget stakeholder involvement

Communicating the Changes

- Provide leadership and direction
- Develop communication strategies
 - Organizational leadership
 - Internal staff
 - External stakeholders
 - The press
- 30 second elevator speech

Methods for Communicating the Changes

- Hold meetings
 - Town hall meetings
 - Open houses
- Make use of technology
 - Emails
 - Webinars
- Use your staff
 - Identifying champions
 - Let them do the talking
- Build on success
 - Focus on the small victories

Developing an Evaluation

- As part of the implementation plan
 - Identify an evaluation method and strategy
 - Ensure the objectives selected can be measured
 - Identify the data needed to measure the objectives
- Ensure the evaluation plan is part of the process from the beginning

Setting Up to Succeed

- Both shared and individual responsibility for implementation
- Leadership at multiple levels
 - Formal and informal leaders
- Ensuring common language is used
- Expectations are managed
- Planning and feedback is continuous
- Orientations prospective, not retrospective

What Makes Implementation Risky?

- Many well-planned policies fail during implementation:
 - Lack of provider buy-in
 - Lack of top management support
 - Lack of patience by politicians
 - Insufficient resources
 - Insufficient attention to implementation
- Policy implementation may fail due to poor planning

What Makes Implementation Risky?

- Unclear objectives and deliverables
- Failure to identify responsible individuals
- Unrealistic schedules
- Shortages of key resources
- Lack of infrastructure and support
 - Management
 - Backroom function
- Lack of internal management capacity

Questions?

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- Visit us on:

