



# Introduction to Program Evaluation

**A/Prof Darryl Maybery &  
Dr. Andrea Reupert**



# 4 phases of program evaluation

(based on ACRN training materials and from the Kellogg Foundation)

## Evaluation planning

1. Develop/employ reference group
2. Define purpose and scope
3. Specify questions (as per Program Logic)

## Development of evaluation

4. What is the design of the evaluation?
5. Create a data collection action plan –time line



# 4 phases of program evaluation (cont)

(based on ACRN training materials)

## Implementation

6. Collect data
7. Analyze data
8. Write up findings

## Feedback

9. Disseminate findings
10. Feedback to program improvement



## Evaluation planning:

### **(1) Obtain/create/employ reference group**

- **Who will support you?**
- **Be political – but wise.**
- **Be strategic**
- **Keep informed/up to date.**
- **Difficult decisions – rely on group judgement.**
- **Someone external – independent.**
- **Consumer representatives.**



## Evaluation planning: (2) define purpose and scope

- **Why are you doing this?**
- **How large/extensive will be it?**
- **What resources (time, money personnel) do you have?**



## Evaluation planning: (3) What is your evaluation question/s

- **What is it that you want to know about your program?**
  - operationalize it (make it measurable)



**Do not move forward if you cannot answer this question.**



## Development of evaluation:

### 4. What is the design of the evaluation?

- Survey versus focus interview/group
- Here and now – a snapshot
- Comparison – group A vs group B
- Change – pre versus post - what happened as a result of the program
- Randomisation
- Longitudinal – what happens over an extended period of time



## Step 4 continued:

- **Who? (target of evaluation)**
- **When? (be specific)**
- **And who is doing it? (responsible for collecting, analysing it, writing it up).  
Should the person running the program be evaluating it?**
- **How will the data be analysed?**





# Development of evaluation

## 5. Data collection action plan –time line

### How will the program evaluation data be collected?

- Analysis of records (e.g. attendance records)
- Surveys (Off the shelf, reliable, valid, self developed)
- Interviewing individuals
- Interviewing groups
- Documentation (e.g. journals, records, statistics)

### Triangulation (combining options)



# Implementation

## 6. Collect data

- **How much will you need? From all participants? Or just some of them?**
- **If you evaluate only some participants, how will you ensure that these are representative?**
- **What will you do about participants who drop out of the program?**



# Implementation

## 7. Analyze data

- **Compile and analyse (make sense of the data)**
- **Can be very complex depending on the questions and the tools used**
- **Simple as frequency counts – through to statistical formulations. Qualitative findings need to be looked at thematically using quotes from participants**



# Implementation

## 8. Write up finding

- **Be objective**
- **Draw conclusions based on data**
- **Say if the data are limited**
- **What do the results say about your program?**
- **Beware of the positive spin**



## Step 8: documentation continued

1. Describe the program
2. Describe your evaluation question/s
3. Describe your evaluation design and tools
4. Response rate (how many participants filled out the evaluation)
5. How you analysed the evaluation data
6. Conclusions – as per evaluation question
7. General conclusions
8. Outline your next set of action plans
9. Recommendations for future program improvement



# Feedback

## 9. Disseminate findings

- **Dissemination methods will differ depending on your stakeholders**
  - Those involved in running the program
  - Those that funded the program
  - Program participants
  - Media
  - Researchers
  - Other program facilitators



## Step 9: Dissemination techniques

- **Reports**
- **Journal articles**
- **Conferences**
- **Newsletters**
- **Presentations**
- **Brochures**
- **Websites**
- **Media**



# Feedback

## 10. Feedback to program improvement

- **Consider adjustments to the program**





# Guiding principles of program evaluation

- 1. A logic based model – evaluation processes should be a direct extension of the logic model of the program;**
- 2. Needs to consider participant outcomes;**
- 3. Participants need to be clearly informed about the evaluation;**
- 4. Evaluation should target what you say it will target**
- 5. Evaluation findings need to be practical and useful to help improve your program;**



# Ethics involved in program evaluation

- **Be clear about your role (and stake) in evaluating the program;**
- **As an evaluator don't do something you don't feel competent doing;**
- **Be clear about how evaluation judgements and conclusions were reached;**
- **Respectful to participants involved in the evaluation, and be mindful of privacy and confidentiality issues**