SILC-NET Presents…

Evaluating Your Outcomes-Focused SPIL:

Evaluating Consumer Satisfaction

January 11, 2011

Facilitated by:

Mike Hendricks, Ph.D.

Let's Remember Your Role in This

Tasks needed to evaluate a state's SPIL	Which IL partner might do which of these tasks			
	SILC	DSU(s)	CILs	Contractor
Convene all IL stakeholders interested in evaluating the SPIL	X			
Plan what will be done to evaluate implementation, progress on objectives, and consumer satisfaction	X	X	X	
Coordinate the information-gathering effort	X			
Gather the needed information	?	?	?	?
Compile and analyze the needed information	?	?	?	?
Discuss and interpret the findings	X	X	X	?
Decide what steps to take to improve any weaknesses found in the IL system	X	X	X	
Implement those improvements to the IL system	?	?	?	
Amend the SPIL if appropriate	X	X	X	

What Is Required?

- Section 364.38: "The State plan must establish a method for the periodic evaluation of … satisfaction by individuals with significant disabilities who have participated in the program."

- CIL Standards and Indicators #3: Each CIL's annual report needs to show that the CIL (a) gives consumers the chance to rate satisfaction and (b) gives the results to the SILC.

- So, your state *has* to measure CS, and your SILC *has* to be involved to some degree

Third Leg:
Consumer Satisfaction (CS)

- Required by RSA
- Every state is already doing this
- But in very different ways
- We did a little study of three states...

States *Survey* CS Differently

Key aspects	State		
	A	B	C
How is the survey administered?	Phone interviews	Mailed questionnaire	Mailed questionnaire
Who mails the survey?	Each CIL phones consumers	Each CIL	SILC
What percent of all consumers are surveyed?	Each, at different times	All at once	All closed cases, sample of open cases
How often are consumers contacted?	Varies by CIL	Every 3 years	Each year
Who develops the survey form?	Each CIL	All 3 partners	All 3 partners
Is an outside consultant used?	No	No	Yes – receives data, enters, analyzes, writes reports
How many questions are asked?	11-12 closed, 4 open = 16	12 closed, 1 open = 13	15 closed, 3 open = 18
Does it ask any demographic data?	No	Gender, age range, race, disability	Disability, type of program, living where want to live?
What are the open-ended questions?	Varies among CILs	"Comment"	How services have helped? Other services wanted? What can we do better?

States *Analyze* CS Data Differently

Key aspects	State		
	A	B	C
Who enters data from the surveys?	Each CIL	SILC, each CIL	Consultant
What is the overall response rate?	High, since phone interviews	13%	16%
Who analyzes the data?	Each CIL	Each CIL	Consultant
How is overall satisfaction calculated?	?	Average of 12 questions	% who Strongly Agree or Agree on each item
Are closed-ended questions cross-analyzed?	No	No	No
How are open-ended questions analyzed?	One CIL compiles the verbatim responses	Nothing for state-wide report	Compiled, sometimes divided into groupings
Are demographic data used in the analysis?	No	No	No
Who gets the state-wide report?	No state-wide report	SILC, DSU, CILs, SILC website, press release	SILC, DSU, CILs
How does the SILC use the findings?	?	?	?

We're Not Going to Try to Tell You How You "Should" Do This

- States are different – in lots of ways
- No *one* way to measure consumer satisfaction
- Do what works for your SILC, your IL partners, and your consumers
- However, we have some suggestions
- We ask you to consider them seriously

Three Key Questions To Think About

1. **Why** does your state need CS data?

2. What does your state **need to have in place** before you can actually use your CS data?

3. What **first steps** can your state take to move in this direction?

Why Does Your State Need CS Data?

- Not specified in writing (that we can find)
- Evaluators tend to gather data for 3 reasons:
    1. To advance general knowledge
    2. To provide accountability
    3. To improve program performance
- We think reasons #2 and #3 are the most relevant for our situation --- #3 is more useful to you

What Does Your State *Need to Have in Place* Before You Can Use CS Data?

- Two separate things:
  1. CS *data* you can believe in
  2. A *process* to get your CS data used
- Each is important – we'd say essential
- Let's talk in detail about each one

1. CS Data You Can Believe In – Survey Basics

Decide how you want to define "satisfaction"

- One overall satisfaction question ("Overall, how satisfied are you with the services you've received from this CIL?")

- Or, different dimensions of satisfaction:

  - Overall (same as above)

  - Different components ("How satisfied are you with the facility, staff, services, etc.?")

  - Personal recommendation ("Would you recommend this CIL to other persons in your situation?")

  - Plans to repeat ("If you could go back in time, would you use this CIL again?")

  - Etc.

Decide what else to ask each consumer

- Demographic and/or service-related information? (to help with management-useful analysis)
- Name? (anonymous vs. confidential)
- Other information? (most immediate needs)

Be consistent

- Have all CILs and agencies ask the same core questions
- Use exactly the same wording for a question (no tweaking by CILs)
- Include one open-ended question ("What can we do to serve you better in the future?")

But tailor as needed

- Use appropriate formats, languages for each consumer
- Let CILs add extra questions, but *after* the core ones

Decide whom to survey

- All consumers (census) or a sample?
- If a sample, decide what kind (simple random, stratified)
- If a sample, decide how many consumers to sample (depends on several factors)
- Decide how to select consumers randomly (maybe use www.random.org/sequences?)

Decide when to survey

- At the end of receiving service/exit from services
- At a certain time (annually?)
- Survey all consumers at same time, for consistency sake
- Survey on a regular basis, for longitudinal purposes

Decide how to measure satisfaction

- Mailed questionnaires
- Phone interviews
- Email
- Web surveys
- Mixed

Decide who will conduct the survey

- In-house (CIL, SILC) or contracted out (university, consultant)?
- Sent by the CIL, SILC, contractor, other?
- Analyzed by CIL, SILC, contractor?

Decide how to record consumer answers

- Smiley faces, 1-7 scales, pizzas, glasses of water, etc?

Pilot test the survey

- Use about 10 consumers
- Have them think aloud, debrief afterwards, do focus groups

Maximize the response rate

- IMPORTANT!! -- As high as possible (many think at least 50%)
- There are tested ways to reach this level
  - Consider surveying fewer consumers, but working harder to get each one to respond
  - Send a letter in advance; use personal salutation on letter
  - Send survey with transmittal letter on legitimate authority's official letterhead, again use personal salutation

Maximize the response rate

- – Tell why the survey is being done, who's doing it, how the information will be used
- – Thank the consumer in advance
- – Survey itself should be short and concise, easy to complete
- – Use color if possible
- – Stress the value of the survey to improve services
- – Include a plea: "It would really help us out"

Maximize the response rate

- End with a real signature
- Include a self-addressed stamped envelope, with a real stamp
- Send a reminder postcard after 1 week
- Send a second survey after 2 weeks
- If calling, call on different days, at different times
- Consider calling those who don't return written surveys (if those consumers can be tracked)

2. A Process to Get Your CS Data Used

- Involve all IL partners from very beginning
- Do all planning collaboratively
- Explicitly avoid CIL competition or "gotcha"
- Don't identify individual CILs in the analysis
- Give all findings to everyone – no secrets
- Plan specific steps to use the data:

    - Do we believe each finding?

    - What does each finding mean for our state?

    - What will we do to keep improving?

Online Resources to Learn More…

- "Surveying Clients About Outcomes" http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/310840_surveying_clients.pdf

- "Finding Out What Happens to Former Clients" http://www.urban.org/uploadedPDF/310815_former_clients.pdf

- American Association for Public Opinion Research www.aapor.com

- ILRU's needs assessment resource page – http://www.ilru.org/html/projects/silc-net/training/onsite/Operationalizing/ACN_index.html

First Steps Your State Can Take – Your Turn

Discuss each of our suggestions and talk about what you think makes sense to do in your own state. Be ready to report your ideas to the whole group.

SILC-NET

- Support for development of this presentation was provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration under grant number H132B070003-10. No official endorsement of the Department of Education should be inferred. Permission is granted for duplication of any portion of this PowerPoint presentation, providing that the following credit is given to the SILC-NET project: *Presented as part of the SILC-NET, a program of the IL NET, an ILRU/NCIL/APRIL National Training and Technical Assistance Project.*