

Identifying, Monitoring, and Assessing Promising Innovation: Using Evaluation to Support Rapid Cycle Change

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Based on a paper by Gold, Helms, and Guterman for The Commonwealth Fund

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CMMI Strategy in Context of Paper

- **CMS current approach closely aligns with strategies discussed in paper and Roundtable convened in late 2010 to review evaluation challenges and opportunities within CMMI context**
- **Execution won't be easy or inexpensive.**
- **CMMI strategy demands research techniques attuned to formative and “scale up” goals. Research partnerships are important to identify and address challenges in rigorously measuring outcomes.**

Documenting and Learning from Innovation-I

- **What does the innovation seek to achieve and how? over what time frame?**
- **Logic models (theory of change and barriers), defined measures for “success”**
- **Tracking what was implemented and when versus what was planned**
- **Timely measurement and feedback to innovators—on metrics that matter to them.**
- **Guidance for replication, generalizability, assessing and interpreting impact**

Documenting and Learning from Innovation–II

- **Efficiency: investing in shared metrics and approaches for cross-site learning**
 - Characteristics of innovations
 - Characteristics of context
 - Common metrics of success
- **Realistic expectations: implementation always takes longer than expected and more so if the context is complex**
- **Minimize barriers that slow or drain momentum**

Measuring Outcomes

- **CMS interest in developing frequent and timely performance metrics encouraging if feasible.**
- **Comparison benchmarks will be a challenge.**
- **Time series analysis has potential but cross organizational analysis requires sufficient observations and data to account for relevant differences across organizations and markets as well as individuals.**
- **HHS can help by developing enhanced data on organizational and market characteristics.**

Ultimate Policy/Research Challenge

- **Trade-off between “rigor” and “rigor mortis”**
- **Avoid stifling innovation to improve system because “no data are good enough”**
- **Weighing Type 1 versus 2 error: how “good” are things now, how much certainty is desirable to spread or kill an intervention?**
- **Congressional history: Legislators have acted before evaluations are done. They have also failed to act despite evaluation results showing what was or was not successful.**

For More Information

- **Download Gold, Helms, and Guterman paper on "Identifying, Monitoring and Assessing Promising Innovation: Using Evaluation to Support Rapid Cycle Change" June 2011 at www.cmwf.org**
- **Marsha Gold at 202-484-4227 or mgold@mathematica-mpr.com**