# PROGRAM EVALUATION 101

- What is program evaluation and why is it important

- How to approach program evaluation

- Important components of evaluation: Goals & Objectives

## WHAT IS PROGRAM EVALUATION?

**Program evaluation** is part of the Ten Essential Public Health Services (essential service #9) and a necessary step to assess the output and outcomes of a given program. This helps us to gauge what is working, so we can make decisions on how to allocate our resources wisely. It allows us to determine a program's quality, effectiveness, and impact, ultimately providing the feedback necessary for continued improvement.

## WHY IS PROGRAM EVALUATION IMPORTANT?

**Program evaluation is necessary to**
1. Assess and improve quality
2. Determine effectiveness

Without this we cannot determine whether or not our program is working towards our goals, or achieving our intended objectives.

## PROCESS VS OUTCOME EVALUATION

**Process evaluation** focuses on the quality of program performance and delivery - what are the products.

**Outcome evaluation** focuses on the ultimate results or impact of a program.

# Goals and Objectives

- Goals and objectives **provide the basis for program evaluation;** is our program advancing our goals and objectives like we intended?
- Goals are more **general, long-term,** and not always measurable
- Objectives **should always** be measurable and timely

## GOALS

Describes long-range intent in clear and concise terms. Provides guidance for the program and is supported by objectives.

## OBJECTIVES

Small steps intended to advance program goal(s). Program benchmarks that are measurable - monitors specific change.

## SMART OBJECTIVES

**Program objectives should be SMART**

- **Specific** - does this objective target a specific change/outcome for the priority population?
- **Measurable** - Are we able to measure the products/outcomes from this objective?
- **Attainable** - Is this objective actually attainable; can we achieve what we set out to do?
- **Realistic** - Is achieving this objective within the realm of what is realistic in terms of timeline, capacity, etc?
- **Timely** - Does this objective contain a set time for when we expect to see results?

## Further Resources

- CDC Program Performance and Evaluation Office - Evaluation Framework
- CDC Division for Hearth Disease and Stroke Prevention - Evaluation Reporting Guide