Division of Services Improvement, Clinical Technical Assistance Project
Technology-Assisted Care
The Centers, Inc.
Evaluation Guidance
May 27, 2014 • 2:00 pm ET

Submitted to: Jeff Feller, Alma Rosario, and Kate Wetherby
Date of Submission: May 30, 2014

<u>Attendees</u>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Kate Wetherby
The Centers, Inc.: Jeff Feller and Alma Rosario
JBS International (JBS): Dave Wanser and Leslie McElligott

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Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the call was to expound upon the following evaluation questions posed by The Centers' evaluator, Jeff Feller, in an email to Dave Wanser (JBS) on April 29, 2014:

- **Question 5**
  As you may recall, some of the ideas that we had for evaluation were very complex and in depth and may have been more appropriate for the year 3 or project's end outcome evaluation and I think you suggested we back off a bit and evaluate client and staff readiness and implementation processes. What do you think is the appropriate focus for each year of the grant (i.e. Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3) based on the aims and desires of the projects from SAMHSA's perspective?

- **Question 8**
  Has the unofficial evaluation work group suggested how or identified how the GPRA database could or should be used in the evaluation context (rather than the program management or reporting context...not that they are not linked with the evaluation context)?

Discussion

- Successful program implementation is guided by specific and time-sensitive stages. Dave Wanser (JBS) recommended conducting an organizational readiness assessment to help staff develop an organized and systematic approach to implementing health information technologies. It should be assumed that any organization will require a menu of different technologies within the next few years. Advance planning is critical.

- Staff should assess the organization's awareness of and preparedness to accept technology's role in the emerging healthcare landscape to help determine a meaningful implementation strategy.

- Think about the program evaluation as a longitudinal process that can help inform the project's implementation and ongoing management. Baseline surveys and/or focus groups within the

organization and among clients will help to pinpoint specific technology adoption challenges and training needs and shape program implementation. Be sure to ask questions that will help staff identify future training needs and further encourage technology adoption.

- Post-intervention measurements will help to determine how perspectives have changed as a result of implementing certain strategies (e.g. trainings).

- Develop an ongoing process to share information about issues that are emerging in the project with the evaluator and determine how data can be collected to support decisionmaking.

- SAMHSA uses the Government Performance and Result Act (GPRA) tool as a high-level gauge of program accomplishments across Federally-funded grant portfolios; it is more output verses outcome focused. Because the GPRA tool does not extract program-specific measures, each program can explore the inclusion of other data elements at their own discretion.

- The Centers will likely adapt their GPRA intake numbers in the near feature to represent a more realistic client target.

- Kate Wetherby (SAMHSA) recommended that The Centers' avail themselves of the information available from HRSA's Regional Telehealth Resource Centers and SAMHSA's Addiction Technology Transfer Centers. SAMHSA and HRSA collaborate on a number of projects (notably SAMHSA's work with HRSA's Office of Rural Health) and often pool resources.

- JBS encouraged The Centers to contact them should they have additional questions.