

Appendix 10: Targeted Evaluation Project (TEP)

Funded recipients will be required to complete one in-depth evaluation of navigation activities implemented during the cooperative agreement. This in-depth evaluation—called a targeted evaluation project (TEP)— is a program evaluation task that will provide a greater understanding of these navigation activities and will guide program improvement. Specifically, it will require an in-depth evaluation of navigation for linkage to care and linkage to harm reduction services.

Why TEPs?

- Provides recipients and CDC with a substantially greater understanding of facilitators and barriers to implementing navigation activities across settings with different types of navigators:
 - Navigators can include peer navigators, certified peer recovery specialists, peer support specialists, case managers, patient navigators, community health workers, persons with lived experience, and other individuals who link PWUD to care and harm reduction resources.
 - These are individuals familiar with the local public health landscape and who work directly with individuals with OUD and/or StUD to ensure they have the tools to address barriers to seeking care and who support people accessing treatment and supporting their retention (and reengagement if necessary) in SUD treatment and care, as well as support access to other services, such as harm reduction and social supports.
 - CDC defines linkage using navigators as: 1) linkage to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders- to include MOUD and other treatment (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy, contingency management) and 2) linkage to harm reduction services.
- Provides each recipient with an opportunity for in-depth investigation, learning, and sharing with local partners and among the community of NOFO recipients; this shared understanding will help strengthen and tailor navigation activities within and across jurisdictions and inform progress on achieving the aim of establishing linkages for different populations of focus.
- Promotes sharing of progress on developing and conducting TEPs within a community of practice to exchange lessons learned and guidance across jurisdictions.

Summary of TEP Requirements

NOFO applicants should describe their general approach to conduct their TEP over the period of performance, including:

- Their process for addressing navigation activities they will evaluate through the TEP.
- Any contextual or organizational factors that may affect their approach and capacity to completing TEP (e.g., an agency-wide quality improvement program in which the applicant will participate, and which would shape its targeted evaluation work).
- A brief description of their proposed TEP, including:
 - Evaluation design and key evaluation questions
 - Methods, scale, and scope of the evaluation
 - Plan for conducting TEP, including approximate duration and timeline

Post award TEP Expectations:

- Recipients will determine the methods, scale, scope, and duration of their TEP, based on their capacity and program needs, in consultation with CDC.

- Recipients will be required to share resulting products from their TEP with CDC and other recipients to promote inter-program learning.

Over the course of the period of performance, recipients will:

- Engage people with lived experience and others with a vested interest in the program, who participate in and could be affected by the program, and that collaborate as supporters and partners for the operation of the program to plan their TEP.
- Develop TEP using a culturally responsive evaluation framework,¹ accounting for cultural context and seeking to address issues related to social determinants of health (e.g., a focus on the inclusion of health equity and identifying the needs of populations of focus and people with lived experience, provider biases).
- Submit proposed targeted evaluation project to CDC.
- Conduct the evaluations outlined in the targeted evaluation project.
- Provide routine updates to CDC on the TEP.
- Share and present findings and insights from the TEP with CDC and other OD2A-funded recipients (e.g., during OD2A Evaluation Day webinars, community of practice).
- Disseminate findings among partners and tailor dissemination to appropriate audiences (e.g., internal health department, community-based organizations, and people with lived experience who participate and contribute to the evaluation of overdose prevention efforts).
- Describe barriers, facilitators, and program improvements associated with the project.
- Respond to any feedback provided by CDC on the proposed TEP submitted, on implementation, and on dissemination and use of the findings from their project.

CDC Support for TEPs

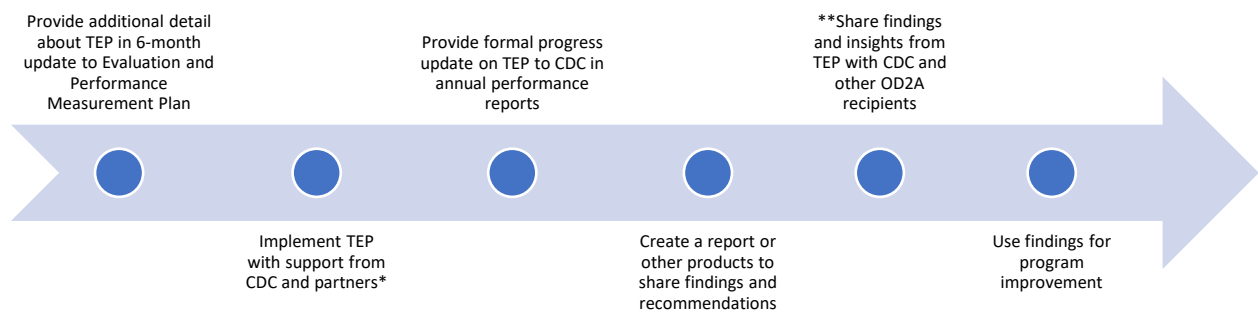
For its part, CDC will monitor and support recipients in their implementation of their TEPs, including:

- Reviewing and providing feedback on the strength of proposed TEPs and evaluation methods selected for the TEP.
- Monitoring how many recipients produced findings from their TEPs and how findings are disseminated, locally and across recipients.
- Assessing the main barriers and facilitators that recipients encountered when planning and implementing these TEPs and provide technical assistance to recipients as needed to address barriers.
- Examining the extent to which recipients demonstrate that their TEPs contribute towards meaningful program change or improvement.
- Working with recipients to identify dissemination methods that adhere to clear communication standards with tailored approaches for various audiences.
- Providing a template, guidance, and technical assistance to develop proposed TEPs and support implementation of TEPs.
- Reviewing and providing feedback on proposed TEPs, methods, and final reports (and other products).
- Facilitating opportunities for dissemination and sharing.

¹ "Culturally responsive evaluation honors the cultural context in which an evaluation takes place and requires evaluators to critically examine culturally relevant but often neglected variables across the entire evaluation process." In: Thomas, V. G., & Campbell, P. B. (2021). *Evaluation in today's world: Respecting diversity, improving quality, and promoting usability*. Sage Publications.

Targeted Evaluation Project Timeline

CDC expects recipients to work on their TEP across the duration of the cooperative agreement, and CDC will review and provide feedback on proposed TEPs including methods and final products. Recipients will be encouraged to share updates on their TEP progress routinely with CDC (e.g., during routine calls and in other ad hoc communication), and recipients will be required to report progress on their TEP in annual performance reporting (APR). Recipients will be required to share their TEP products with CDC in Year 4 of the cooperative agreement; therefore, recipients should account for any internal review and clearance processes needed before sharing TEP products with CDC and other recipients. Once received, TEP products will be reviewed by CDC, and CDC may provide feedback and require feedback to be addressed in final TEP products.



* The individuals and organizations with a vested interest in the program, who participate in and could be affected by the program, and that collaborate as supporters and partners for the operation of the program.

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