

HRSA Network Planning Grant – FY 2018

Network Organizational Assessment



Network Member Name: Jefferson Rural Mental Health Development Network, Jefferson County, Washington State

| <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging</p> <p>Evidence that our network is aware of the importance of the item and beginning to address</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Proficient</p> <p>Evidence that our network can perform the item with guidance and support</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Excelling</p> <p>Evidence that our network currently excels at this item and has built adaptive capacity</p> |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Be specific; enter examples/information in appropriate column</i> | | |
| | <p>Network members have been consistently meeting around this issue for months, and our completed and signed MOU demonstrates a common understanding of our shared vision, values and mission. While we are building on decade-long relationships between local partners, and our members can clearly articulate our vision and mission, we may not all have a calibrated way to communicate the value we seek to create and how we plan to do so. However, the work that we are doing to create our Network Statement is addressing this.</p> | |

1. Our Network members have a *shared* vision and mission that clearly define our reason for existence and reflect our values; all *members can articulate* what value we seek to create, why and how.

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| 2. Our Network's intent is to respond to both the immediate and emerging needs of our community; our purpose extends beyond the mere implementation of projects. | | <p>Our plan not only address the "now" of community needs, but includes future sustainability that extends beyond project implementation. Our broader focus around mental health and co-occurring substance use disorder (through linking social work navigators with first responders), together with our specific focus around developing a proposal for the location of a mental health short-term triage facility (to divert people with mental illness events that come to the attention of law enforcement/first responders from the jail or emergency room), demonstrates our commitment to improving both the short-term and long-term mental health crisis response system in Jefferson County.</p> <p>Because this project has been embedded into our CHIP team and process, this group is especially flexible in addressing community needs. We all agree there are issues to address in the community, and that there is still some work to be completed to get us all on the same page and to get everyone who needs to be included into the Network. We are doing that work now.</p> | |
| 3. Our current and planned strategies are in alignment with our Network's mission and goals. | | <p>Current and planned strategies are re-visited and evaluated on a periodic basis. We carefully adhere to ongoing alignment with our Network Mission and goals, and are currently in the process of redefining these. There is work to be done, but we are on the path.</p> | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| 4. Our Network benefits from the diverse perspectives, and meaningful engagement of our members, front-line staff, community partners and those we seek to serve. | | <p>We continue to exhibit a high-level of synergy and have lots of opinions and perspectives from everyone across the continuum, including citizen voices. This has created diverse perspectives and members engaged in solving problems.</p> <p>While we have meaningful engagement separately and with other groups, as our focus adjusts our members need to have true, frank and meaningful discussions within the collective Network.</p> <p>Participating stakeholders represent a significant cross-section of our Network community. However, the Network needs to extend membership to include Local Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and the local Medicaid substance use provider, Safe Haven, and we are working on including them. The addition of these partners will call for foundational work to be accomplished with new members.</p> | |
| 5. Our Network members have the authority to make decisions on behalf of their individual organizations and constituencies. | | <p>While each Network member is required and empowered to make decisions and represent their respective agencies on a regular and routine basis, the bureaucracy of member organizations slows down the approval and signature process for formal agreements. We have also not had the benefit of the consistent presence of these particular decision makers at the table for every meeting. We have identified where we are not totally aligned on this, see it as an opportunity for improvement, and are working on it.</p> | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| 6. Our Network structure and processes ensure that everyone feels accountable and shares responsibility for the organization's success. | | Our MOU includes a commitment from each organization, including shared responsibility and accountability, and we continue to improve stakeholder accountability and feelings of inclusive success. However, while members are clear about attendance and participation requirements, our Network is still at the early stages, and our members are sometimes overwhelmed by the work involved that adds to their own sizeable workloads. | |
| 7. Network leaders effectively facilitate our members in understanding and solving complex problems. | | <p><i>This question appears to anticipate an organization that has an executive committee and officers, which ours does not. For the purposes of this question, the Network decided that this referred to the Network staff.</i></p> <p>Network leaders and staff ensure that all appropriate research is done and shared with members – particularly related to evidence-based or innovative approaches to problem solving. While understanding and solving complex problems associated with our Mission and Vision is an ongoing, highly supported process, some members feel that this might be a second or third generation role of this group.</p> | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| 8. Our Network is able to move from ideas into action and can secure the necessary resources and commitments from partners to execute strategies. | | The group has been successful in moving from ideas to actions and getting commitments from partners. Discussions include not only resources to develop and strategies to implement, but also sustainability options to ensure long term success. However, we have yet to secure the additional resources necessary to move forward. That is the next step. | |
| 9. Members have made long-term commitments to the Network because they see progress and receive benefits from their participation. | | <p>From the beginning, network members have embraced a long-term commitment to achieving success, and continue to attend planning meetings and engage in implementation discussions. Our community as a whole is really supportive of some type of long-term solution for dealing with mental health and chemical dependency, and they're going to at least consider whatever solution we come up with.</p> <p>Although this is a planning grant and never intended to get us through implementation, some of the deliverables (e.g, Resource Map) have been a huge help to members and will be a great resource for the community.</p> | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| <p>10. We apply lessons learned and build on our successes to magnify Network impacts.</p> | <p>We have learned some lessons through outreach to other community groups and through knitting together what we've learned with what the Network is doing. Outreach efforts have been noted by community organizations as effectively communicating insights gained, in-progress lesson learning, milestones attained, and ongoing impacts. We may not have a lot of lessons learned, but the group is organic and flexible enough to incorporate different ideas into its process.</p> <p>While we do talk within our respective organizations about the efficacy of the work and work proposals, broader outreach and awareness efforts will be necessary to develop long-term community support and continued engagement.</p> | | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| <p>11. Our Network members have a level of trust that enables them to have difficult conversations, resolve conflict, and take risks together.</p> | <p>Although we are still a new Network whose composition and focus has changed a number of times, most members believe that there is a high level of trust among Network members, that conversations are open and honest, and that members embrace all levels of conflict resolution and communication.</p> <p>However, while we are definitely building trust, there is still lots of work to do on how to be a highly functioning Network that is capable of frank and productive conversations and of resolving difficult conflicts. This may be an opportunity for Network Member training.</p> | | |
| <p>12. Our Network embraces the idea that change is inevitable; we have systematic processes in place to continually assess needs and stay abreast of local, state and national trends that impact our vision and mission.</p> | | <p>This group, with a foundational and shared belief system, defines “community health” in a very inclusive way – as including much more than healthcare and behavioral healthcare access, but also the social determinants of health that include the social impact of mental illness and substance use disorder. The Network is great at embracing change, and consistently stays up to date on local/state/national trends, and the community has stepped up to conduct periodic community health assessments and a continuously updated Community Health Improvement Plan.</p> <p>However, even though processes are in place to support change and survey local, state and national trends, we are not sure if the group is fully “systematic” about this, and we are concerned that our processes have a lag time that could be improved.</p> | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| 13. Our Network members understand that finding new solutions for improving health and health care often means experimenting with new ideas; we eagerly accept lessons learned from “failing forward”. | | <p>We have done well here, particularly with responding to community input and embracing new solutions to the real needs of the community—our Network has eagerly and comprehensively integrated these “failing forward” opportunities into our amended Workplan.</p> <p>This is a group of people who are not afraid to jump in and do the work necessary to make something happen, to embrace new ideas. However, we are also careful to do our due diligence to research effective programs (evidence-based, best practice, or innovative programs) designed to address problems. If we find that such programs do not exist, I believe we will be very willing to develop and try something intended to positively impact the problems.</p> <p>So far, we have not had enough time to do much other “failing forward.”</p> | |
| 14. Our Network has a comprehensive, integrated system for measuring both the performance of our organization and the outcomes of our programs; adjustments and improvements are made based on performance data. | | <p>Given that this is a planning grant, there are no real outcomes of programs to be evaluated. However, any program undertaken will include metrics to measure both performance and outcomes.</p> <p>Data-driven decision making is central to the work we do in each of our organizations and in the Network. (For example, as a result of community input, we have adjusted our focus, so some of the foundational data contained in the original Work Plan is no longer relevant. We are in the process of revisioning this.) The outcomes of the community health assessment and the work of the Community Health Improvement Plan will inform decision-making and prioritization of ongoing work.</p> <p>However, this is an ongoing process and yet to be fully actualized.</p> | |

| | Emerging | Proficient | Excelling |
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| <p>15. We consistently communicate the value of our Network and share lessons learned to support the success of others.</p> | <p>While we have successfully presented on our project to a wide variety of organizations who have responded positively to our input, from health to criminal justice to community groups, there is so much more we need to do in this area. We are restricted by not yet having the resources to create a stabilization facility, and thus cannot communicate this intent to the general public. We expect that some residents may become concerned about the facility and resist where it might be located, so we need to have a clear plan before we outreach more broadly. We see the value and importance of this element and will develop a communication and outreach plan to address it.</p> | | |

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Network Organizational Assessment: SUMMARY

Part 1. Process:

Write a paragraph describing your process for completing the Network Organizational Assessment – i.e., timing, who completed the individual assessments, who participated in the larger discussion of the implications, etc. Where were areas of agreement and disagreement?

Five Network partners independently completed the Organizational Assessment, came together to discuss their findings, and reached agreement on where the Network landed in terms of Emerging, Proficient and Excelling.

There were only two questions where the group had consensus: #2 and #12. The gap was widest in #5, where half the people rated the Network as Excelling, while the other half rated it as Emerging. In all other questions, the votes spanned the spectrum of options. Consequently, dialogue was robust and complex, resulting in debates around the nuances of interpretation that made us really examine what we are doing in the Network. While individual organizations completing the forms and grading the Network was useful, the exciting discussions that ensued made the process extremely productive for this Network.

Part 2. Strengths & Implications:

In your own words (please do not repeat the specific statements in the Network Organizational Assessment table), describe the primary organizational strengths of your Network as well as the implications for your Network's growth and sustainability.

The Network has an MOU, which has helped significantly in clarifying commitment from the group members. The Network has also done a good job of responding to community input and embracing solutions to the real needs of the community, and is flexible enough to be able to incorporate these outcomes into their workplan. This allows the Network to anticipate sustainable longer-term solutions that extend beyond project implementation, and to work towards addressing the short- and long-term mental health and substance abuse crisis in Jefferson County.

Part 3. Weaknesses & Implications:

In your own words (please do not repeat the specific statements in the Network Organizational Assessment table), describe your Network's primary areas of organizational weakness and the implications for your growth and sustainability if these issues are not addressed.

There were a few areas identified as in need of improvement. The bureaucratic nature of the organizations that comprise the Network sometimes slows down the approval/signature process for formal agreements, and we have not always had the presence of higher-level decision makers at every meeting. Members are also sometimes overwhelmed by the work involved in the Network that adds to their own substantial workloads. The staff tries to mitigate against this by ensuring that all processes are as smooth as possible when presented to Network members, and through encouraging safe but difficult discussions around issues. Still, while we feel there is still lots of work to do on creating a highly functioning Network capable of frank and meaningful discussions, this Organizational Assessment process has both clarified and helped with that and we now see this area as an opportunity for improvement.