



A Framework for Evidence-Based Decision Making in Local Criminal Justice Systems

Starter Kit

8a: Building a Plan for Implementation

Navigating the Roadmap

Activity 8: Develop a strategic action plan for implementation.

Introduction

During the EBDM Initiative, your policy team has undertaken a number of preparation activities for implementing the Framework. These activities include

- building a collaborative, multidisciplinary policy team;
- preparing the team members' individual agencies for change;
- understanding current practice within each agency and across the system;
- understanding and increasing your jurisdiction's capacity to implement evidence-based practices;
- developing logic models;
- establishing common harm and risk reduction outcomes and performance measures (and displaying them on a system scorecard); and
- developing plans for engaging broader support for the Initiative.

The culmination of these preparations leads your team to this final, but critically important, step: to develop a strategic action plan for implementation.

Purpose

To create a clear, specific, measurable plan for implementing the policy and practice changes that the policy team agrees will advance evidence-based decision making in your jurisdiction and that will support the achievement of the justice system's vision and goals.

Participants

All policy team members should be involved to some extent in the development of your implementation plan, particularly in the development of harm reduction goals and objectives. After these decisions have been reached, staff internal to the agency(ies)—usually with some background in conceptualizing, planning, and implementing policy or program initiatives—and/or outside experts can assist in the development of the implementation plan, with guidance and input from the policy team.

Instructions

A number of preparation and self-assessment activities must occur simultaneously to lay the groundwork for implementing the EBDM Framework in a jurisdiction. These activities include developing harm reduction goals, objectives, and action steps; developing a systemwide logic model;

drafting a communications strategy for gaining the buy-in of a broader set of stakeholders or the public; and creating a systemwide scorecard.¹ While every team will not develop its plan in the same way, the following steps are important to developing a comprehensive implementation plan:

- Discuss and agree upon your team’s harm reduction goals, if your team has not come to some agreement on this already.²
- Develop logic model(s). At a minimum, the team should develop a systemwide logic model that clearly outlines the path to achieving the team’s top harm reduction goals.³ This activity will assist the team in developing many of the pieces of its implementation plan.
- Develop objectives (which should be represented as outcomes in your logic model). Remember, while goals represent the desired end results of the system, objectives define the short-term indicators that demonstrate progress toward goal attainment and describe who or what will change, by how much, and over what period of time.
- Define the action steps that will be necessary to achieve your harm reduction goals. (The major action steps can be found in the activities section of the logic model.)
 - Determine who from your jurisdiction will take the lead and who will need to be involved in these steps.
 - Determine the timing and sequence of these steps.
- Consider any potential barriers to your work plan and strategize about how your team will overcome them. Barriers can be determined by considering the contextual conditions (i.e., the environment in which the local justice system operates, including political, economic, social, and cultural factors) that your team identified in your logic model.
- Discuss how your team would like to engage a broader set of stakeholders and/or the public in EBDM, if you have not done so already.⁴ Ensure that any agreements regarding this strategy are reflected in your work plan; these may encompass goals, objectives, and/or action steps, as appropriate.

Considerations for Developing Harm Reduction Goals and Objectives

- How will the jurisdiction benefit as a whole (i.e., what are the intended harm reduction outcomes)?
- How will the criminal justice system benefit from movement to an EBDM-based system?
- What is an EBDM system intended to achieve or produce?
- What significant changes do you expect from the implementation of EBDM in terms of system operation?
 - How will the costs to operate the system change?
 - How will case processing change at point of entry into the system, during the adjudication process, post-adjudication, and/or at point of release?
 - How will those in the system (i.e., victims, witnesses, and defendants) view the process?
- How will EBDM impact those working in the system?
- What types of information will convince you and others (including the public and funders) that the system is operating at an optimum level?
- What types of information will convince you and others that the system is achieving what it is intended to achieve?

For more information, see 6a: Measuring Your Performance.

¹ See 6b: Developing a Systemwide Scorecard.

² For more detailed information on this process, see the first step in 6a: Measuring Your Performance.

³ See 5a: Building Logic Models.

⁴ See 7a: Developing a Communications Strategy.

The chart below displays these steps and indicates how these multiple activities might fit together.

Possible Steps to Developing an Implementation Work Plan	
Step 1: Develop Harm Reduction Goals	<p>Develop the long-term harm reduction goals your team seeks to achieve.</p> <p><i>Your harm reduction goals are recorded on your system scorecard.</i> <i>Your harm reduction goals are the impacts on your logic model.</i> <i>Your harm reduction goals are the “goals” on your work plan.</i></p> <p><i>Harm Reduction Goal Example: Increasing the success rate of individuals who become involved in the justice system from the 2010 rate of x% to y% by 2014</i></p>
Step 2: Develop a Logic Model	<p>After recording your harm reduction goals as the impacts on the logic model, follow 5a: Building Logic Models in order to determine the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short-term outcomes; • outputs; • activities; • inputs/resources; and • contextual conditions. <p><i>Once your logic model is complete, you can use the information it contains to build the rest of your work plan and scorecard.</i></p>
Step 3: Develop Objectives	<p>Objectives define the short-term indicators that demonstrate progress toward attaining your harm reduction goals and describe who or what will change, by how much, and over what period of time.</p> <p><i>Your objectives are the short-term outcomes on your logic model.</i> <i>Your objectives are recorded as such on your work plan.</i></p> <p><i>Objective Example: Decrease of X% in low risk defendants held in jail awaiting adjudication within X months</i></p>
Step 4: Develop Action Steps	<p>Action steps are the “activities” on the logic model—the steps that must be taken to reach the objectives that will lead to your harm reduction goal. Since only major activities are likely included on the logic model, expand these—if and as needed—on your work plan to reflect all of the planned action steps.</p> <p>Include as an action step on the work plan the development of agency-level logic models for all agencies significantly involved in the achievement of the objectives.</p> <p><i>Actions Step Example: Train pretrial staff on use of assessment tool.</i></p>
Step 5: Determine Who Is Responsible/ Involved	<p>Determine the person(s) responsible for accomplishing each action item, the person(s) responsible for decision making, needs related to resource allocation, and coordination with other entities. Record these assignments on the work plan.</p>
Step 6: Determine Timing and Sequencing	<p>Define the timing and sequencing of the action steps. Record this information on the work plan.</p>

Step 7: Recognize Potential Barriers to Implementation	Consider the contextual conditions in your logic model and describe the potential barriers to implementation and strategies for addressing these barriers. Record these on the work plan.
Step 8: Develop a Communications Strategy	If one or more harm reduction goals in your work plan do not include engaging new stakeholders, increasing support and engagement from the community, or communicating the jurisdiction’s harm reduction goals to the public, develop a strategy for doing so. Include it as an objective with action steps on the work plan. <i>Refer to 7a: Developing a Communications Strategy.</i>

A template of a work plan is provided in the Appendix. It illustrates how the multiple elements of the work plan might be displayed in chart form.

Tips

- It may not be possible to forecast the very specific steps for activities that will be accomplished in the later months; try to develop in more detail the more immediate tasks (i.e., 3–4 months) that need to be accomplished.
- Teams may find that creating a visual timeline, separate from the work plan, is helpful in organizing the many anticipated tasks. An example of a timeline is provided.
- If certain baseline data is not available, make sure to include in your work plan the anticipated steps your team will need to take to collect it.
- Teams should revisit their implementation plans regularly to make revisions and adjustments as needed.

Example: Mesa County, Colorado, Work Plan for Implementation (Excerpt from Full Document)

Arrest Decision						
Harm Reduction Goal	By 2015, 75% of all offenders successfully completing sentences will not recidivate.					
Objective 1	75% of staff trained will demonstrate a 50% increase from pretest to post test in knowledge and understanding of EBDM and Proxy Tool use.					
Objective 2	Within 6 months of implementation, 95% of all arrest cases originating out of the Mesa County Sheriff's Office will have a Proxy risk score in the narrative or on the summons.					
Objective 3	For all arrestees who are assessed using the Proxy Tool by the Mesa County Sheriff's Office, less than 20% of low risk offenders will be put in jail.					
		Date of Completion	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resource Needs	Partner Coordination
Action Step 1	Incorporate C.R.S. 16-5-207(2) into existing Arrest Standards	August 1, 2011	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Captain Steve Farlow, MCSO	Staff time	
Action Step 2	Publish and implement new standards	Upon completion. Law in effect.	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Captain Steve Farlow	Staff time	Grand Jct PD Fruita PD Palisade PD Colorado State Patrol
Action Step 3	Develop training syllabus for patrol officers on EBDM and use of Proxy Tool	November 1, 2011	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Bert Nieslanik	Staff time	
Action Step 4	Develop Pocket Tool Proxy Instrument to be used by Patrol Officers	November 1, 2011	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Bert Nieslanik	\$ and staff time	
Action Step 5	Develop Pre and Post Test on EBDM and Proxy use for Patrol Officer training	November 1, 2011	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Bert Nieslanik, Jennifer Sheetz	Staff time	
Action Step 6	Develop policy for Mesa County Sheriff's Office to use Proxy Tool and produce score on all summons and arrest documents and cases	December 1, 2011	Sheriff Stan Hilkey		Staff time	
Action Step 7 (Measurement)	Training, including pre and post testing, for all Patrol Staff in Mesa County Sheriff's Office on EBDM, use of Proxy Tool, Proxy Tool Pocket Guide, new MCSO policy, and implementation. Track #of Deputies trained	January 1, 2012–March 31, 2012	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Bert Nieslanik	Staff time	
Action Step 8	Implement use of Proxy Tool, as trained, by all Sheriff's Office Patrol Staff	April 1, 2012	Sheriff Stan Hilkey		Staff time	

Action Step 9	Develop training program for all newly hired MCSO staff and ongoing in-service training on EBDM and Proxy Tool use	April 1, 2012 and ongoing as needed	Sheriff Stan Hilkey		Staff time	Field Training Officers
Action Step 10 (Measurement)	Audit compliance and use of Proxy Tool by MCSO Patrol Deputies, produce data regarding % of summonses and arrest reports containing Proxy score	3, 6, & 12 months from implementation date	MCSO Compliance Officer Susan Redmond	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Staff time and access to records	
Action Step 11	Track # of defendants arrested, # of defendants issued summonses, # of deviations from risk results, # of defendants with new charges post arrest, and # of defendants with new charges post summons	April 1, 2012 and ongoing	Pretrial Services		Staff time and tracking tools	County Court, Sheriff's Office
Action Step 12	For use of all other local law enforcement agencies, incorporate Proxy Tool use and scoring procedures into Mesa County Arrest Standards DRAFT document	October 1, 2012	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Bert Nieslanik	Staff time	
Action Step 13	Training of all Mesa County Patrol Officers from all agencies, including pre and post testing, on EBDM, use of Proxy Tool, Proxy Tool Pocket Guide, recommended policy guidelines, and implementation. Track #of Officers trained	January 1, 2013–June 30, 2013	Sheriff Stan Hilkey and Staff	Bert Nieslanik	Staff time	Grand Junction Police, Fruita Police, Palisade Police, and Colorado State Patrol
Action Step 14	Implement new arrest standards with Proxy Tool use for all Mesa County Law Enforcement	July 1, 2013	All agencies			
Action Step 15	Development of agency/case-level logic model	August 1, 2011	Sheriff Stan Hilkey	Executive Committee		
Potential Barriers	Culture change of understanding EBDM and successful offender management post-arrest					
Strategies to Address Barriers	Training, education, data collection					

Pre-Sentence Investigations Report

Harm Reduction Goal	By 2015, 75% of all offenders successfully completing sentences will not recidivate.					
Objective 1	Reduce the risk for future harm to members of our community by designing and implementing a PSIR that addresses criminogenic needs, thereby allowing informed sentencing decisions, reducing the likelihood of future offending.					
		Date of Completion	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resource Needs	Partner Coordination
Action Step 1	Build in temporary compliance with HB 1180 to address criminogenic factors in the PSIR	Aug 1, 2011	Susan Gilbert	Janelle Carstens/Probation Supervisor	Staff/ Consultation time	DPS
Action Step 2	Develop and implement a training program to enhance awareness of HB 1180 and how the LSI is administered, scored, and incorporated into the temporary PSIR. This training will include a survey of stakeholders' feedback on content preferences.	Aug 11, 2011	Probation	CJSD	Outside agency consultant	DCJ, NIC, DPS
Action Step 3	Implement temporary changes to PSIR	Aug 11, 2011	Probation			
Action Step 4	Identify and establish a PSIR design workgroup	Aug 15, 2011	Susan Gilbert/ Probation	DA, bench, PD, CJSD, ADC, private defense bar	Consultation	DPS-SCAO
Action Step 5	Research and evaluate statute, HB 1180, Colorado Probation Standards, and survey feedback and define target population for PSIR	Sept 15, 2011	Chair of PSIR Design Group	Judges, DA, PD, Defense bar, Community Corrections, Probation	Consultation	DPS-SCAO
Action Step 6	Develop a draft of proposed changes to PSIR	Nov 1, 2011	PSIR Design Group	Local and State	Consultation	DPS-SCAO
Action Step 7	Present to stakeholders for feedback/approval	Nov 1, 2011	Susan Gilbert/Bert N./D.A.			N/a
Action Step 8	Update final version of PSIR	Dec 1, 2011	PSIR Design Group		Consultation	DPS-SCAO
Action Step 9	Train stakeholder staff on redesigned PSIR and how it can be applied to sentencing decisions	Feb 15, 2012	PSIR Design Group			
Action Step 10	Implement pilot in Judge Bottger's court for 6 months	Mar 1, 2012	Judge Bottger			
Action Step 11	Develop	August 1,	Susan Gilbert	Executive		

	agency/case-level logic model	2011		Committee		
Potential Barriers	The content of the PSIR is set by statute, although recent statute requires that the PSIR include criminogenic needs effective 8/10/2011. In addition, State probation has a standardized format that is currently being written into the new database for electronic dissemination. Getting approval by all stakeholders of the content will be a challenge as all parties have strong opinions regarding content based on their roles in the system. Lack of exposure and awareness of the LSI content, coupled with how it is completed, could be a significant barrier to constructive conversations regarding the content and acceptance of a revised PSIR and/or summary page. Another barrier is limited resources (manpower) to dedicate to meetings. Knowledge of an offender's risk level needs to be available for the court to determine who should receive a comprehensive risk/needs assessment and a PSIR.					
Strategies to Address Barriers	Work with the Colorado Department of Probation Services to address any concerns with the format or the pilot court in an effort to develop a format that will be implemented statewide. Encourage representation and participation of all PSIR stakeholders in the design of the PSIR so it is perceived by all stakeholders as a useful tool for making informed decisions. Training regarding the LSI will be essential in getting buy-in. Continue to include defense bar and DA in conversations, trainings, and work groups to build confidence in the LSI tool and in the content of the PSIR.					

Pilot Courtroom						
Harm Reduction Goal	By 2015, 75% of all offenders successfully completing sentences will not recidivate.					
Objective 1	50% reduction in defendants appearing in pilot division who spend more than 7 days in pretrial custody within six months of implementation of CISPR pretrial assessment tool					
		Date of Completion	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resource Needs	Partner Coordination
Action Step 1	Begin to consider results of CISPR pretrial assessment tool adopted via pretrial work plan in making release decisions	3/1/12	Bottger	DA, PD, ADC, private defense bar	Approved tool, agency to administer	CJSD (administering agency)
Action Step 2	Gather 2006 baseline data (pilot judge division) on time spent in pretrial custody, FTA, and reoffense rate for those released	5/1/12	Sheetz, Casselberry	Jail staff, court staff	Time	
Action Step 3	Develop and implement plan to gather current data from pilot division on time spent by defendants in pretrial custody, FTA, and reoffense rate of those released	5/1/12	Sheetz, Casselberry	Jail staff, court staff	Time	
Action Step 4	Compare results to baseline	7/1/12	Sheetz			

Action Step 5	Consider results and implications, including changing tool and changing court practices	8/1/12	Bottger	DA, PD, ADC, private defense bar, CJSD, SO		
Action Step 6	Develop agency/case-level logic model	8/1/11	Judge Bottger	Executive Committee		
Potential Barriers	<p>1) If the CISPR Tool is not available by March 1, 2012, this could require us to either delay use of a risk assessment tool or start with one tool and then switch to the Colorado tool when it is available, complicating outcome measurement.</p> <p>2) We will need to overcome any reluctance on the part of defendants and their attorneys to submit to a pre-disposition assessment of any kind, even if it does not expressly call for incriminating information.</p> <p>3) Timing of administration is critical. If administered before the defendant first appears in county court for video arraignment, the county court judge will have the benefit of the results. This will not only allow for earlier release, it will reduce the likelihood that the district court will significantly change the bond or bond conditions. Although such a change is not harmful per se, it could create the impression that the district court was critical of the county court's bond decision.</p> <p>4) A more liberal bond philosophy may result in fewer people entering substance abuse treatment as a bond condition.</p>					
Strategies to Address Barriers	<p>1) Identify key players in CISPR development. See if district can help move along in any manner, including volunteering as a pilot district.</p> <p>2) As CISPR has not been finalized, it is unknown what questions it will ask. Regardless, we will likely gain the confidence of the defense bar only through experience.</p> <p>3) One solution is to get a commitment from the county court judges to follow EBDM principles in setting bond for felony defendants.</p> <p>4) Monitor participation in "fast-track" meth treatment program.</p>					
Communications Strategy	<p>Create an "interested players and parties" distribution list and send weekly short, yet informative, emails. Utilize mesacourt.org website to post updates for parties to access. Hold brown bag lunches to generally discuss pilot and ongoing results.</p>					
Objective 2						
Objective 2	Within 12 months of implementation of sentencing guide, at least 30% of defendants sentenced to probation or community corrections will show a 10 point reduction in LSI score from sentencing to end of sentence					
		Date of Completion	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resource Needs	Partner Coordination
Action Step 1	Encourage defendants and attorneys from the bench to have a completed LSI for every defendant before sentencing in pilot division	Ongoing	Bottger	Probation, defendants, defense counsel, DA's	LSI, trained personnel to administer (already in place)	
Action Step 2	Use results of LSI, including new summary sheet, to inform sentencing decisions (get low risk people out of system, impose conditions to address 1-2 greatest needs of rest)	Ongoing	Bottger	DA's, defense counsel, defendants		
Action Step 3	Use motivational interviewing techniques at sentencing	Ongoing	Bottger	PO's trained in MI to monitor and suggest improvements	PO's trained in MI (already in place); periodic judge training	
Action Step 4	Gather research	8/1/11	Bottger	Modley	Current	

	on value of periodic in-court reviews, including whom to include and how often				research	
Action Step 5	Conduct periodic in-court reviews of medium and high risk offenders, if supported by research	Ongoing	Bottger	DA's, defense counsel, probation, CJSD	Time	
Action Step 6	Re-administer LSI to offenders near end of sentence	Ongoing	Probation	Defendants, defense counsel	Trained PO's (already in place)	
Action Step 7	Gather baseline data on offenders sentenced in 2006	2/1/14	Casselberry, probation		Statistician	
Action Step 8	Gather data on risk/needs of offenders sentenced during pilot project	2/1/14	Casselberry, probation		Statistician	
Action Step 9	Compare data	4/1/14	Bottger	Casselberry, probation	Statistician	
Potential Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Because some members of the defense bar believe the LSI is biased and that results of any risk/needs assessment may portray some defendants in a less favorable light, some defendants will refuse to submit to an LSI or participate in the PSI process entirely. 2) Changing the format of the PSI is problematic because it has been standardized statewide. 3) Plea agreements that impose requirements inconsistent with LSI results 4) Lack of experience in MI techniques 5) We do not have a precise or measurable way to determine whether a sentence follows EBDM principles. 6) Outgoing risk/needs scores may be unavailable for some defendants sentenced in 2006. 					
Strategies to Address Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue to meet with all parties to develop trust with one another on how the risk/needs information will be used. The courts should encourage participation in the PSI process and demonstrate how this information will be used in sentencing, proving that sentences will be imposed that match the risk/needs of the defendant. In addition, probation department will offer training to defense bar on LSI. 2) An acceptable alternative is to attach a face sheet to each PSI which gives the defendant's risk level (low, medium, high) and identifies his or her top two to four criminogenic needs. 3) Persuading counsel and defendants to make open-ended plea agreements; rejecting agreements that impose conditions inconsistent with LSI results 4) Experience and training 5) Monitor research to see if anyone develops a way to determine whether a sentence follows EBDM principles. 6) Recognize limitations of data. 					
Communications Strategy	Distribute results as compiled to DA, PD, ADC, private defense bar, probation, CJSD, members of Executive Board, and Criminal Justice Leadership Council. Consider public distribution.					

Additional Resources/Readings

CSOM. (2007). *Enhancing the management of adult and juvenile sex offenders: A handbook for policymakers and practitioners*. Retrieved from http://www.csom.org/pubs/CSOM_handbook.pdf

CEPP. (2005). *Collaboration: A training curriculum to enhance the effectiveness of criminal justice teams*. Retrieved from www.collaborativejustice.org/docs/2005_Collaboration_Curriculum.pdf

McGarry, P., & Ney, B. (2006). *Getting it right: Collaborative problem solving for criminal justice*. (NIC Accession No. 019834). Retrieved from <http://nicic.gov/Downloads/PDF/Library/019834.pdf>

Appendix: Work Plan Template

Phase III Work Plan to Achieve Harm Reduction Goals						
Harm Reduction Goal						
Objective 1						
		Date of Completion	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resource Needs	Partner Coordination
Action Step 1						
Action Step 2						
Action Step 3						
Potential Barriers						
Strategies to Address Barriers						
Objective 2						
		Date of Completion	Lead Person	Others Responsible	Resource Needs	Partner Coordination
Action Step 1						
Action Step 2						
Action Step 3						
Potential Barriers						
Strategies to Address Barriers						