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## Measuring and Applying Program Outcomes

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The LEWIN GROUP

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## New and Continuing Era of Accountability

- ◆ Public, private sectors are looking for value from their investments
- ◆ Government continues to struggle to “Do More with Less,” heightening the push for accountability
- ◆ States engaging in benchmarking and performance contracting
- ◆ Private sector: Report Cards, HEDIS, NCQA efforts

## Why Evaluate Program Performance?

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- ◆ Identifies priority needs and customers
  - What should be done? For whom? What's most important?
- ◆ Identifies and justifies critical activities and resources to meet needs – and who's responsible
  - How do we know this is the best/right approach?
- ◆ Supports effective program management
  - Targets data collection efforts
  - Provides management levers to modify programs
  - Identifies inputs and describes processes
  - Demonstrates value by linking outputs to outcomes to impact

## Every program should know, understand, and articulate its unique, value-added “story”

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- ◆ What are we trying to accomplish? (Program mission and goals)
- ◆ Of all possible things we could do, what do we choose to do? (Identifying and prioritizing objectives)
- ◆ How do we accomplish these objectives? (Program design, implementation)
- ◆ What is important for us and stakeholders to know? (Routine monitoring & and in-depth evaluation)
- ◆ What is important for us to measure? (Performance & Impact)
  - What measures are most useful/feasible?
  - What data sources are available?

## Evaluating Program Performance

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➤ ***Performance Measurement:***

Quantification/tabulation of program results or achievements. Different types of measures include:

- ***Structure:*** measures the program's administrative, service delivery and other infrastructure, including staffing, facilities and equipment, financial resources, information systems, governance and administrative structures, etc.

## Evaluating Program Performance (cont.)

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- ***Process:*** measures the content and quality of activities, procedures, methods, and interventions that support the achievement of program and organizational outcomes
- ***Output indicators:*** Assess immediate results of policies, procedures, and services that can lead to achieving positive outcomes

## Evaluating Program Performance (cont.)

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- **Outcomes:** Measures the ultimate focus and whether the desired result of an intervention is achieved. Outcome measures can be immediate, intermediate or long-term.
  
- **Impact:** Measures the ultimate effect the program has on the problem or condition the intervention was supposed to influence. There may be unexpected or unintended impacts.