

Memphis TGA
Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism
July 2011

Purpose:

HRSA requires that Part A Planning Councils conduct an annual Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism. Questions were formulated to assess the efficiency of the grantee's administrative processes in rapidly allocating funds to the TGA's areas of greatest need and to assess the effectiveness of the services offered in meeting the identified needs.

Methodology:

1. The Evaluation Committee elected to again use an internet tool, Survey Monkey, to survey both Planning Council members and up to three administrative staff at provider agencies. The Committee elected to use the same survey questions as used in past annual surveys. The returned surveys were collated by Survey Monkey so that no committee member has access to any individual responses. Summary results were provided to the Committee.
2. An overall summary of the Survey Monkey findings is included as part of this report.
3. The report is organized according to the general categories provided from the above tools. Free text comments were categorized and paraphrased; but the number, type, and general content is an accurate representation of the original.

The categories are:

- Assessment and Planning Process
- Information and Reporting to the Planning Council
- Procurement Process
- Contracting and Distribution of Funds
- Contractor Monitoring
- Communication and Assistance

Assessment and Planning Process:

Questions were sent only to members of the Planning Council and all alternates; there were 23-25 responses to the questions. In general, the ratings were very good, i.e., either "fully/always" or "partly/usually." Regarding the High Level of PLWHA Participation, there were 4% who rated this "slightly/rarely, another 4% rated it "not at all/never," and another 4% did not know. Regarding "clear directives on how to meet priorities and other factors to consider in procurement," 4.2% rated "not at all/never." Regarding "clear allocations and directives for use of carryover funds," 4% rated "slightly/rarely," and another 4% did not know. Regarding Standards of Care, 4% rated "not at all/never."

Information and Reporting to the Planning Council:

Questions were sent only to members of the Planning Council and all alternates; there were 23-24 responses to the questions. In general, the ratings were very good, i.e., either "fully/always" or "partly/usually." Regarding whether the Grantee provides the Planning Council with summary data reports and financial information within 60 days, 4.3% rated "slightly/rarely."

Regarding whether the Grantee has a representative (not PC staff) at each meeting, 4.3% rated “slightly/rarely” and another 4.3% didn’t know.

Procurement Process:

These 6 questions were sent only to providers. Most responses showed that providers were fully/always or partly/usually satisfied, which shows improvement from last year, and shows marked improvement from FY08 when 37.5% were “not at all satisfied.” In 2011, there were only 11 responses to these questions, and it is significant that 18.2% of respondents did not know if reasonable consideration was given to new providers, and 45.5% did not know if the Grantee provided feedback to all applicants. Of course, it would increase the validity of the survey if there had been more respondents, but perhaps the low response rate is a “non-verbal comment” about the increase in satisfaction with the Grantee’s performance.

Contracting and Distribution of Funds:

The Providers were asked 5 questions. The Providers were >80% satisfied with clear definitions of service categories. They were less satisfied with the contracting (36.4% very satisfied) and payment (27.3% very satisfied) processes. There was a significant percentage (27.3%) who stated that they were slightly/rarely paid within 45 days of invoice submission – and 9.1% who didn’t know – which is really amazing. Correlating with this are the 36.4% of respondents who didn’t know if the grantee processed invoices within 2 weeks of submission, and the 10% who didn’t know whether the grantee modified existing systems to respond to service providers’ needs.

Contractor Monitoring:

Three questions were asked to Providers, and the questions were only about site visits. There was high satisfaction that there was a standard review process; 10% did not know if the grantee used established information gathering tools. There was substantial satisfaction about getting adequate notice about the site visits and the necessary documentation to have available.

Communications and Assistance:

Two questions were asked to the Providers. All responses were fully/always or partly/usually except for 9.1% for both questions, who answered slightly/rarely. A prompt response was defined as “within 5 working days.”

Overall Summary of Survey Questions: (Detail responses are provided on two last page)

Providers:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/Rarely	Not At All/Never	N/A Don’t Know
RFP & Procurement Process	68.2%	21.2%	0%	0%	10.6%
Distribution of Funds	46.5%	33.3%	7.3%	1.6%	11.1%
Contract Monitoring	78.2%	18.5%	0%	0%	3.3%
Communications and Assistance	50%	40.9%	9.1%	0%	0%

How Satisfied Were Providers With:

	Very	Moderately	A Little	Not al All	Rating Average
RFP and Procurement process	36.4%	63.6%	0%	0%	3.36
Reporting	36.4%	63.6%	0%	0%	3.36
Reimbursements	45.5%	54.5%	0%	0%	3.45
Contract Monitoring	72.7%	27.3%	0%	0%	3.73
Communication with Providers	70%	3%	0%	0%	3.7
TA to Providers	72.7%	27.3%	0%	0%	3.73

Planning Council:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/Rarely	Not At All/Never	N/A Don't Know
Planning Process	69.7%	25.3%	1.5%	2%	1.5%
Information and Reporting to the Planning Council	67.4%	30%	1.7%	0%	0.9%

Summary of Comments:

Comments could be categorized into 3 areas below; and although comments have been paraphrased, they are an accurate account of the original comment.

- Accountability and Reporting
- Communication
- Education

Accountability and Reporting

1. The Grantee should assure accuracy of data at the time of presentation and work to provide answers to all reasonable questions.
2. The Grantee should continue being flexible and helping providers work within the County's limitations.
3. The Grantee should continue its improvement in turn around time for reimbursements.
4. The Grantee should continue giving TA to providers (multiple mentions), giving constructive feedback during audits, and keep Lisa Krull as the contracts manager.
5. The Grantee should attempt to work with one county attorney, which could help to speed up the yearly contracting process (multiple mentions).

Communication

1. The Grantee should provide updated rosters with contact information whenever members join/leave the Planning Council.
2. The Grantee should continue to be responsive and provide recommendations.
3. The Planning Council should stop allowing members to use the PC meetings for their personal agendas.
4. The Grantee should consider including PC officers on calls to HRSA.
5. The Grantee should work with the Membership Committee to ensure that those who are recommended for membership are prepared to serve on the PC.
6. The Grantee should provide minutes/feedback from Providers' Meetings for those who could not be there.
7. The Grantee should improve data reporting to the Planning Council.

Education

1. The Planning Council members should continue to learn, take their roles seriously; and they need to learn more about data and its importance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Grantee should continue collaborative, interactive Provider meetings on at least a monthly basis, and have additional meetings specifically for technical assistance. Minutes should be distributed via E-mail.
2. The Grantee should continue to improve the timeliness of reimbursement and incorporating contract provisions from previous years.
3. The Grantee should continue to give the Planning Council a monthly written report on the status of Part A spending by service category. The report should come to Planning Council members a week in advance of the Planning Council meetings.
4. The Grantee should continue to educate members of the Planning Council regarding the organizational structure of the Grantee, the reporting structure, the job duties of each position, and contact information for each position. They should also educate PC members about the duties of the Planning Council and the expectations of PC members, especially about attendance and participation in meetings.
5. At the beginning of the grant year and quarterly, the Grantee should continue to provide information to the Case Management Committee on all providers by service category for inclusion in their electronic directory. This will assist in the community-wide provision of services by increasing communication and collaboration.
6. Planning Council members should learn more about validity and reliability of data and increase their knowledge about fiscal matters.
7. Planning Council members should refrain from using PC meetings to discuss personal matters.
8. The Grantee should consider adding language to provider contracts to improve provider participation in the Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism.

