

Memphis TGA

Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism

September 2015

PURPOSE

The Federal Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) requires that Part A Planning Groups conduct an Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism on a yearly basis. In accordance with the 2006 Ryan White Treatment Modernization Act (Section 2602), this process is to “assess the efficiency of the administrative mechanism in rapidly allocating funds to the areas of greatest need within the eligible area, and at the discretion of the Planning Group, assess the effectiveness, either directly or through contractual agreements of the services offered in meeting the identified needs.”

In June and July 2015, the Memphis Area Ryan White Planning Group conducted the Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism for FY14 and portions of FY15. The surveys were sent to the Ryan White Part A Service Providers and the HIV-Care and Prevention Group (H-CAP). Collaboration between the Grantee (Ryan White Part A Office/Shelby County Division of Community Services) and H-CAP is essential to the overall effectiveness of the administrative mechanism. Data and survey responses were gathered from both the Service Providers and the Planning Group to assess the following areas:

- Planning Process
- RFP and Procurement Process
- Distribution of Funds
- Contractor Monitoring
- Information and Reporting to the Planning Group
- Communication and Assistance

The results of the assessment process and recommendations of the Part A funded Providers and Planning Group are used in conjunction with the Grantee response as a section of the Part A grant application for FY2015.

METHODS

The Evaluation and Assessment Committee of H-CAP has the responsibility of ensuring that an Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism is completed each year. The Planning Group Manager worked with the committee to implement the survey, gather and analyze the data requested from the Service Providers and Planning Group members. The Evaluation and Assessment Committee selected Survey Monkey as the tool to gather anonymous responses from recipients on how they perceive the effectiveness and efficiency of the Part A program and rate the Administrative Mechanism in the six areas. Survey Monkey, an Internet tool, was used to as one part of assessing the Administrative Mechanism since FY 2008. The Evaluation and Assessment Committee reviewed the survey and minor changes were made to the questions from previous surveys. The Committee felt that the questions were relevant and focused on the six areas for feedback. The survey was sent to 42 Planning Group Members and up to two representatives at the 17 Service Providers for FY2013. The total number of participants to complete the survey was twenty-three (23) Planning Group members and fifteen (15) Service Providers representing each funded agency. The Evaluation and Assessment Committee was given an aggregate summary of the results and an overall summary of the Survey Monkey findings which are included as part of this report (see Appendix B and C). In addition to the surveys, documents outlining the RFP and contracting procedures and timeline, financial reports, as well as Planning Group minutes and relevant documents were used to prepare this report.

PLANNING GROUP SURVEY RESULTS

The report is summarized according to the six (6) identified focus areas of the assessment. Data provided by the Planning Group members and general knowledge of various processes within the Part A system are all used to develop this section.

Planning Process:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/rarely	Not at all/never	N/A/ Don't Know
FY08	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY10	66.34%	29.63%	3.01%	0.25%	0.75%
FY11	69.69%	25.30%	1.50%	2.03%	1.50%
FY12	69.63%	28.13%	2.25%	0.00%	0.00%
FY13	66.00%	26.34%	4.75%	0.00%	2.86%
FY14	71.20%	23.65%	0.48%	0.00%	3.80%
FY15	88.20%	11.18%	0.62%	0.00%	0.00%

*NR=Not Reported in previous reports

Questions about the planning process were sent to Full and Alternate members of the Planning Group. Twenty-seven members completed questions relative to the Grantee and Planning Group interactions with directing and understanding services as well as community participation. Results from previous years show steady improvements in the planning process, however, FY15 shows the most marked improvements. Overall, 88.20% of the members “fully/always” agreed that specific required elements are included within the planning process between the Grantee and the Planning Group. In spite of this overall improvement, there were several comments which indicate a common belief that there is significant room for improvement in engagement of PLWHA in the planning process. One specific anonymous comment “Consumers are not fully engaged in the process [because] of their lack of understanding..” is representative of both a challenge and opportunity for both the Planning Group and Grantee to ensure that consumers are equipped with the necessary foundational information to be able to meaningfully participate in the process. Based on review of Planning Group documents from the past year, the Planning Group has some challenges in maintaining overall membership, although the group was able to recruit new consumers to the membership. Because of some changes in Planning Group and Grantee staff leadership, orientation and individual assessment of new members’ needs in understanding the work of the Planning Council was less structured than anticipated.

Information and Reporting to Planning Group:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/rarely	Not at all/never	N/A/ Don't Know
FY08	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY10	69.40%	26.94%	2.44%	0.40%	0.80%
FY11	67.40%	30.00%	1.70%	0.00%	0.90%
FY12	86.40%	11.40%	0.70%	0.00%	1.40%
FY13	83.60%	11.92%	3.72%	0.00%	0.74%
FY14	90.28%	5.98%	0.00%	0.00%	3.73%
FY15	89.57%	9.56%	0.87%	0.00%	0.00%

*NR=Not Reported in previous reports

The survey asked the Planning Group about the Grantee’s responsiveness during the past year to service utilization, expenditures and other data needed in the decision-making process. Overall, the Planning Group stated that 89.57% of the information reported or requested is “fully/always” given in a timely manner. Results show that 100% “fully/always” agreed the Grantee has made efforts to have at least one representative, including the Planning Group Support Staff, at the Planning Group and committee meetings to answer questions, give updates, etc. Members were asked about the overall responsiveness of the Grantee to the Planning Group, as well as what they felt that the Grantee did the best and could improve on in future years. There were several comments regarding the Grantee’s efforts to be inclusive of all stakeholders and increased communication as strengths. Surveys indicate that opportunities for growth include outreach into new areas of the TGA, increase in new providers and effective communication with PLWHA. Recommendations for improvements are listed in the *Summary of Recommendation* section of the report.

SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY RESULTS

The RFP and Procurement Process:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/Rarely	Not At All/Never	Not Applicable Don't Know
FY08	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY10	50.62%	24.05%	3.70%	0.62%	20.97%
FY11	68.17%	21.23%	0.00%	0.00%	10.62%
FY12	73.35%	10.00%	2.22%	0.00%	14.45%
FY13	73.70%	6.48%	1.75%	0.00%	18.07%
FY14	75.00%	6.06%	0.00%	0.76%	18.18%
FY15	69.98%	6.83%	1.11%	2.22%	20.16%

*NR=Not Reported in previous reports

There were six (6) questions directed at the RFP and procurement process for Service Providers to answer in the survey. While the overall response of Service Providers completing the survey mentioned responses relative to the Procurement process improved since FY10, there was a decrease from FY14 to FY15. The most marked areas where this dip is evident were around the questions of whether new providers have been identified and whether feedback is provided to each respondent to the RFP. Based on review of records from the Grantee, while there was one new provider identified in FY15, the providers of care have remained relatively the same since 2008. Also, there is no evidence based on records that respondents to the RFP are given written feedback related to the quality of proposals other than whether or not they were selected.

Distribution of Funds

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/Rarely	Not At All/Never	Not Applicable Don't Know
FY08	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY10	23.84%	42.32%	12.30%	7.68%	13.86%
FY11	46.56%	33.28%	7.28%	1.82%	11.10%
FY12	69.34%	26.66%	1.34%	0.00%	2.66%
FY13	71.00%	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%
FY14	84.00%	12.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%

FY15	77.90%	13.91%	4.00%	0.00%	4.19%
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*NR=Not Reported in previous reports

The Grantee has made great progress in addressing concerns on reporting and reimbursements over the year. Responses continue to improve since FY08, although the number of respondents who are “fully/always” satisfied with the process has decreased slightly from FY14 to FY15. When asked specifically about the Grantee’s ability to process invoices within two weeks of submission, 57.14% of Service Providers stated this was “fully/always” done, there has been a significant drop compared to the 80.00% in FY13. Based on records from the Grantee, this trend could be based on factors that include submission of invoices with questionable charges, as well as slowdowns based on Shelby County external processing systems within Purchasing and Finance.

Contract Monitoring:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/Rarely	Not At All/Never	Not Applicable Don’t Know
FY08	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY10	61.50%	15.40%	5.10%	1.27%	16.67%
FY11	78.17%	18.50%	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%
FY12	88.90%	8.90%	0.00%	0.00%	2.23%
FY13	88.17%	6.77%	0.00%	0.00%	5.10%
FY14	93.33%	3.33%	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%
FY15	95.55%	2.22%	0.00%	0.00%	2.22%

*NR=Not Reported in previous reports

Service Providers see a consistent response satisfaction in contract monitoring from FY10-FY15. The rising response of “fully/always”, from 61.50% to 95.55%, over past years demonstrates approval with the monitoring process. More specifically, results show 100.00% agreed that the Grantee “fully/always” conducted site visits. 93.33% of services providers “fully/always” agreed that the Grantee use a standardized review processes and gives advance notice of various documentations to have on hand for a site visit.

Communication and Assistance:

	Fully/Always	Partly/Usually	Slightly/Rarely	Not At All/Never	Not Applicable Don’t Know
FY08	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
FY10	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%
FY11	50.00%	40.95%	9.10%	0.00%	0.00%
FY12	73.30%	26.70%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
FY13	72.50%	22.50%	0.00%	2.50%	2.50%
FY14	85.00%	10.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%
FY15	93.33%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

*NR=Not Reported in previous reports

Service Providers remain pleased with the continued improvement in the area of communication and assistance from FY10-FY15. 85.00% noted that the Grantee continues to do a great job in fostering communication, technical assistance and responding to request in order to assist with providing quality services to clients.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Based on the information provided through review of the surveys and supporting documentation for the Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism, there are four categories of recommendations for system improvements for the Memphis TGA Ryan White Part A Program. These categories include PLWHA Engagement, Capacity Building for New Service Providers, Planning Group Membership and Training and Service Provider Training and Technical Assistance.

PLWHA Engagement

- Increase opportunities for trainings related to fundamental concepts necessary to understand the Ryan White system
- Dedicate resources to regular ongoing training for PLWHA at frequent intervals throughout the year
- Increased training for Grantee and Planning Council staff related to PLWHA engagement

Capacity Building for New Service Providers

- Identify existing community based organizations currently providing related services and encourage participation in RFP process, especially in rural Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas counties
- Identify opportunities for creating easier systems for RFP process, contracting and reimbursement that could encourage participation of new, smaller organizations
- Provide written feedback for all respondents to RFP, including those unsuccessful responses, to encourage future applications

Planning Group Membership and Training

- Increased recruitment of Planning Group members to ensure required membership
- Development of structured orientation and training schedule for all Planning Group members
- Increased training for Planning Group sand Grantee staff related to Planning Council requirements
- Ongoing specialized training and technical assistance for consumer membership of Planning Group

Service Provider Training and Technical Assistance

- Increase opportunities for individualized training and technical assistance for service providers in multiple forms (in person, webinar, telephone)
- Identify potential service expansion opportunities for providers throughout the year in preparation of RFP

APPENDIX A. PLANNING GROUP AND PROVIDER AND 2015 SURVEY RESULTS

Summary of Survey Monkey Results - 2015								
Planning Group Members								
Question #	Planning Process	N=	Response Rate R=42 R=42	Fully/ always	Partly/ usually	Slightly/rarely	Not at all/never	N/A - Don't Know
1	PG & Grantee - assess unmet need & service gaps	23	54.76%	91.30%	4.35%	4.35%	0.00%	0.00%
2	Assessment & Planning process - opportunity for gen community participation	23	54.76%	82.61%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
3	High level of PLWHA participation	23	54.76%	95.65%	4.35%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
5	clear directives on how to meet the priorities & other factors to consider in procurement	23	54.76%	82.61%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
6	clear direction on when & how to reallocate funds to avoid carryover	23	54.76%	82.61%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
7	Clear allocations and directives for use of carryover funds	23	54.76%	82.61%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
8	PG & Grantee - develop & refine Stds of Care	23	54.76%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
		23	54.76%	88.20%	11.18%	0.62%	0.00%	0.00%
Information and Reporting to Planning Council								
9	Grantee provides PG - summary data reports and financial info within 60 days	23	54.76%	82.61%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
10	Monthly reports on service utilization and expenditures by service category	23	54.76%	82.61%	17.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
11	year-end summary of expenditures, utilization, unit cost/demograph by service category	23	54.76%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
12	other info and analysis for decision making	23	54.76%	82.61%	13.04%	4.35%	0.00%	0.00%
13	Grantee has somebody at each meeting (not PG staff)	23	54.76%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
				89.57%	9.56%	0.87%	0.00%	0.00%
Providers								
	Procurement Process	N=		Fully/ always	Partly/ usually	Slightly/rarely	Not at all/never	N/A - Don't Know
1	Grantee conducts an open and competitive procurement process	15	100.0%	80.00%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	13.33%
2	RFP clear re expectations, HRSA P&P, Stds of Care, expected performance measures, rptg requirements	15	100.0%	71.43%	14.29%	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%
3	disseminates info widely re availability of funds	15	100.0%	86.67%	0.00%	6.67%	0.00%	6.67%
4	opportunities to identify new providers and enhance capacity for RFP *	15	100.0%	60.00%	13.33%	0.00%	6.67%	20.00%
5	selection criteria provide reasonable consideration to new providers	15	100.0%	73.33%	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	20.00%
6	Grantee provides feedback to each bidder	15	100.0%	46.67%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	46.67%
				69.68%	6.83%	1.11%	2.22%	20.16%
Distribution of Funds								
7	Contracts - clear definition for each funded service category	15	100.0%	86.67%	0.00%	13.33%	0.00%	0.00%
8	Contracts - initiated & signed prior to new service period - reasonable grace period	15	100.0%	86.67%	6.67%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%
9	Payments - within 45 days of submission of complete, accurate invoices	15	100.0%	85.71%	14.29%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
10	Grantee processes invoices within 2 weeks of submission	15	100.0%	57.14%	28.57%	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%
11	Grantee modified existing systems to respond to needs of service providers	15	100.0%	73.33%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%
				77.90%	13.91%	4.00%	0.00%	4.19%
Contract Monitoring								
12	Site visits --Grantee conducts at least 1x/year to assess contractor performance	15	100.0%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
13	Grantee uses standardized review process and info gathering tools	15	100.0%	93.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%
14	Providers get 2 week advance notice and advised about documentation to have on hand	15	100.0%	93.33%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
				95.55%	2.22%	0.00%	0.00%	2.22%
Communication and Assistance								
16	Grantee responds within 5 days to requests for info or assistance	15	100.0%	93.33%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
				93.33%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%