Assessing fidelity

The table below provides an example of the type of indicators and data that you may consider collecting to assess structural and dynamic fidelity of implementation. The table also provides suggestions for when data should be collected and which tools may be used.

Before collecting this data, it is important to clearly describe the ideal values for each indicator. The closer the data you collect is to the ideal value, the higher the level of fidelity. Take, for example, the first indicator, ‘Organizational structure’. If you were aiming to deliver a nutritional education programme through maternal and child health centres, then your ideal values for the organizational structure may be ‘A maternal and child health centre that is (i) well established in the community – e.g. has been in existence for at least five years and has three permanent staff; (ii) receives ongoing funding and (iii) delivers health promotion programmes in addition to a core maternal and child health programme. The definition of the ideal values should, as far as possible, be guided by evidence (e.g. there may be evidence for the ideal organizational context within which to deliver a nutritional programme). It may not always be feasible to engage the ideal implementers, however collecting data about these values prior to beginning delivery of an intervention will provide invaluable information for the analysis of fidelity, effectiveness and moderators of effectiveness.

**STRUCTURAL FIDELITY**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **INDICATORS** | **TIMING** | **TOOL** |
| **Implementer level – Descriptive data** |  |  |
| Organizational structure of implementer (e.g. school, hospital, community organization, etc.) | Baseline | Implementer profile form |
| Primary funding source of implementer | Baseline | Implementer profile form |
| Usual health focus of implementer | Baseline | Implementer profile form |
| **Implementer level – Demographic characteristics of staff** | | |
| Gender | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Age | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Date of hire | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Date of certification or completion of model-specific training | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Role | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Education | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Prior experience in implementing similar policies or interventions | Baseline | Implementer staff demographics form |
| Termination date | Monthly (as needed) | Implementer – staff demographics form |
| Implementer level – Intervention/policy delivery data |  |  |
| Implementer delivery load derived from:   * e.g. number of individuals who receive an intervention from a staff at a community-based organization * e.g. employment time fraction of staff at a community-based organization | Monthly (as needed) | Intervention session forms |
| Training sessions dosage – derived from:   * training sessions completed * duration of training sessions completed | Monthly (as needed) | Training records |
| Consumer level – Intervention/policy delivery data |  |  |
| Dosage – derived from:   * intervention sessions completed * duration of intervention sessions | Monthly (as needed) | Intervention session forms |
| Duration of intervention – derived from:   * date of commencement of intervention * date of completion of intervention | Monthly (as needed) | Intervention session forms |

###### DYNAMIC FIDELITY

**(Collected regularly – e.g. once every six weeks)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **INDICATORS** | **RESPONSE** |
| **Process** | |
| *These questions should seek to understand* | – Strongly disagree |
| *whether the implementers followed the appropriate processes when implementing a policy or intervention.* | * Disagree * Neither * Agree |
| E.g. The community health worker told us | – Strongly Agree |
| about the intervention, what they would do |  |
| and what we need to do in a way that I understood |  |
|  |  |
| **Principles** | |
| *These questions should seek to understand* | – Strongly disagree |
| *whether the implementers followed the appropriate principles when implementing the policy or intervention* | * Disagree * Neither * Agree |
| E.g. The community health worker showed | – Strongly Agree |
| respect for my culture |  |
| **Outcomes** | |
| *These questions should seek to understand* | – Strongly disagree |
| *whether the consumers feel that the policy or interventions are helping them achieve the intended outcome(s).* | * Disagree * Neither * Agree |
| E.g. The skills I have learnt from the intervention | – Strongly Agree |
| are helping me manage my hypertension |  |
|  |  |