

WYOMING HEALTHSTAT INITIATIVE

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Background/Introduction: The HealthStat Initiative is a performance improvement strategy for the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) inspired by the “PerformanceStat” movement: 1) use data to analyze a program’s past performance; 2) follow-upon previous decisions and commitments to improve performance; 3) establish its next performance objectives, and 4) examine the effectiveness of its overall performance strategies*. HealthStat incorporates operational performance reporting (e.g., Fiscal/budget reports, Human Resources reports) and program performance reporting with a series of regular and frequent meetings dedicated to the discussion of performance in the agency. Each Division determines which of its programs will present at these regular meetings on an annual basis. The regular meetings are called “PIT” meetings, because the team that participates in those discussions is call the Performance Improvement Team (PIT). The WIC Program has participated in this initiative since the inception 3 years ago.

Project Goals: The overall goal of the HealthStat Initiative is to manage program performance to increase data-driven decision making in health policy. HealthStat assists WDH programs in producing quality, data-based documents that can be used in conversations about program performance with many different types of stakeholders. Legislators, other state agencies, and the general public can benefit from the information that is gathered and updated regularly via the HealthStat process. It can also help when difficult conversations about budget cuts arise, in that a program’s effectiveness and efficiency can be demonstrated in a way that decision-makers can understand.

Methods: In order to assist with the implementation of the HealthStat process, the WDH established a Director’s Unit for Policy, Research, and Evaluation (DUPRE). Each Division in the WDH has an identified HealthStat liaison that is responsible for helping to coordinate the communication about the expectations of the HealthStat process to program managers from DUPRE and the Department Director. All programs in the WDH complete the HealthStat documents which include annual Program Snapshots and biannual Program Performance Reports as well as other operational reports. All programs began annual presentations to an executive-level PIT starting in SFY2012.

Results: HealthStat has resulted in an overall culture shift within the WDH that is now more focused on Quality Improvement and Performance Management. Executive-level leadership has greater knowledge and appreciation for the 200+ programs within the WDH, and is able to provide up-to-date, consistent information about all programs to policy makers.

Summary/Discussion: The WIC Program Snapshot and Program Performance Report will be shared during the discussion of this project.

*<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/thebehnreport/Behn,%207PerformanceStatErrors.pdf>