



Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Evaluation

February 2012

The Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP), funded under the Affordable Care Act of 2010, is a key element of a multipronged federal strategy to reduce teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). PREP provides grants to states to replicate, or substantially incorporate elements of, programs that have been shown to be effective at delaying sexual initiation, reducing pregnancy, and increasing contraceptive use among sexually active youth. The selected programs must educate youth on both abstinence and contraception. Another aspect of the PREP program is that grantees must incorporate lessons on at least three of the following adulthood preparation subjects: adolescent development, healthy relationships, healthy life skills, parent-child communications, educational and career success, and financial literacy. Forty-five states, Micronesia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia have been awarded PREP grants.

Upon authorizing the PREP program, Congress required that it be evaluated. The evaluation will help the federal government, states, and local service providers learn more about program design, implementation, and outcomes. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research to document and assess this large-scale replication effort.

The PREP evaluation has three main components. First, the PREP evaluation will document grantee program design decisions and implementation experiences. Second, in four or five selected sites—entire states or selected sub-awardees—the evaluation team will conduct an in-depth study of program impacts and implementation. Third, across all grantees, the evaluation will collect and analyze performance measures.

PREP Performance Measures

The primary purpose of the PREP performance measures (PREP-PM) is to collect information from all grantees on the extent to which the PREP objectives are being met and to contribute to lessons learned from scaling up the replication of evidence-based programs. PREP-PM can also create a foundation for program improvement efforts, prompted by federal, grantee, and sub-awardee examination of the data.

PREP-PM will not be used to measure program effectiveness, which will be estimated in only the four or five sites participating in the impact and implementation study.

PREP-PM is designed to collect information about two broad topics: *program structure* and *program delivery*.

Program structure refers to how the grant funds are being used, the program models selected, the ways in which grantees and sub-awardees support program implementation, and the characteristics of the youth served.

Program delivery refers to the extent to which the intended program dosage was delivered, youths' attendance and retention, youths' perceptions of program effectiveness and their experiences in the programs, and challenges experienced implementing the programs.

Timeline for PREP-PM Roll Out

April 2012

Grantees will receive draft performance measure items, followed by a two-week period for providing comments.

Summer 2012

Training and technical assistance webinars will describe the final performance measures, explain expectations for data collection, provide tools to support data collection, and train grantees in the use of the online submission system.

Fall 2012

Grantees will provide limited data on PREP program structure and delivery for the September 2011 to August 2012 grant period, such as grantee organization, program models, and resource use.¹

Fall 2013

Grantees will provide full data on PREP program structure and delivery for the September 2012 to August 2013 grant period, including participant characteristics and attendance.



PREP-PM: Sources of Information

The flow of information for PREP-PM reflects the multiple layers that will support program delivery. For example, some state agencies or sub-awardees may directly implement the programs. In other arrangements, state agencies or sub-awardees may deliver programs through partner agencies. Under both scenarios, multiple implementation sites could be used to reach youth in their communities.

For some performance measures, grantees will provide data about activities or decisions that they undertake directly at the grantee level. For other measures, data will come from the sub-awardees to the grantee because sub-awardees oversee the activities to be documented. In many situations, however, sub-awardees might first have to gather data from their partner organizations that work directly with the youth.

In addition, some data will come from the youth themselves, who will be asked to complete questionnaires.

Ultimately, the grantees will be responsible for reporting all measures to ACF. Grantees will directly report the items pertaining to grantee-level organization for PREP. Grantees will also pass on to ACF separate statistics for each sub-awardee. Some performance measures will pertain to each program model being implemented by state agencies or their sub-awardees, resulting in some data provided separately by program model, such as results from the participant questionnaires. Neither grantees nor their sub-awardees will be asked to provide data to ACF for individual youth. Participant data will be submitted only in the aggregate.

PREP-PM: What Information Will Be Collected?

To understand PREP *program structure*, PREP-PM will collect the following:

- Amount of grant allocated for various activities, including direct service provision
- Approach to staffing PREP at the grantee level
- Grantee provision of training, technical assistance, and program monitoring
- Number of sub-awardees, their funding, program models, populations, settings, and coverage of adulthood preparation subjects
- Number of program facilitators, their training on the program model, and the extent to which they are monitored to ensure program quality
- Characteristics of the youth entering the PREP programs

To understand PREP *program delivery*, PREP-PM will collect the following:

- Number of completed program hours
- Number of youth who ever attended a PREP program, overall and for subpopulations (such as youth in foster care or the juvenile justice system)
- Youths' attendance and retention
- Youths' perceptions of program effectiveness and program experiences
- Challenges providers face implementing their programs

¹ The first round of PREP-PM data collection in fall 2012 will not request characteristics of the individual youth served; youths' perceptions of program effectiveness and program experiences; or any data that require a detailed recording of enrollment, attendance, retention, and delivered program hours. Grantees will implement data collection for these measures during the 2012–2013 program year, and report them in fall 2013. The evaluation team will develop and disseminate tools to support the collection of these measures, followed by training on their use.

