



Step 1

Initiate or Strengthen Stakeholder Collaboration

The checklist below on stakeholder collaboration is the first in the series of eight and is designed to assist jurisdictions in building or maintaining collaborative groups that identify, build support for, and oversee the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs). The **interagency workgroup** referenced in the checklist is the larger group of people in the county that has a vested interest in a given EBP, such as a criminal justice and behavioral health council or advisory council, and the workgroup oversees implementation of an EBP. The **implementation team** designs and develops the initiative. This team solves problems during each step of implementation and ensures that any challenges are addressed. Sometimes the implementation team can be a subcommittee of the interagency workgroup, and sometimes this team must be developed for the specific purpose of planning and implementing EBPs.

Identify or convene the interagency workgroup.

1. Is there a representative group (interagency workgroup) of criminal justice and behavioral health stakeholders from leadership levels of agencies in the jurisdiction?

- Identify leaders and key staff for the workgroup.
- Identify stakeholders with decision-making authority from each agency involved in implementing the EBP.
- Identify people with lived experience in the justice system and/or people with mental illnesses and/or co-occurring substance use disorders for participation in the interagency workgroup.

Obtain leadership commitment.

2. Is our leadership committed to implementing EBPs?

- Specify resources, such as staffing, budget, etc., from each participating agency to support successful implementation of the EBP.
- Identify possible funding sources necessary for implementing the EBP, such as federal grants, state grants, Medicaid, private foundation funding, and state or county funding.
- Identify the political support needed for agency leadership to engage in implementation.
- Solidify agency leadership's support by having them sign an MOU (memorandum of understanding).

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Identify or convene the implementation team.

3. Is there an implementation team composed of people from criminal justice and behavioral health agencies who have decision-making authority and experience implementing EBPs?

- Identify who should be on the implementation team, ensuring that team members include agency leaders, staff from the agency who have “on-the-ground” experience, and vested stakeholders.
- Ensure that the team has the support of the participating agencies.
- Identify a facilitator for the implementation team.
- Establish a timeframe for the implementation team’s work.
- Determine the reporting structure for the implementation team.

Designate a project coordinator.

4. Is there a project coordinator who works across agencies to manage the planning and implementation process?

- Identify a project coordinator (who may also be the facilitator of the implementation team).
- Ensure that the project coordinator can work across agencies, including managing work on the identified action steps (see item 5) for implementation efforts.
- Ensure that the project coordinator has the authority to meet with each workgroup member and gain consensus on identified items.
- Ensure that the person is a subject-matter expert on EBPs for behavioral health and criminal justice.

Establish action steps for the implementation team.

5. Does the implementation team have a list of steps to address in the planning or implementation stage?

- Create an action plan template to guide the EBP selection and implementation process.
- List the tasks to be completed in the action plan template.
- Designate people to be assigned to each task as well as other staff who might support the task.
- Identify a timeline for EBP selection and implementation that includes benchmarks.
- Share the action plan regularly with every member of the implementation team to ensure that everyone is aware of the timeline and progress made.

Resources

Behavioral Health Diversion Interventions: Moving from Individual Programs to a Systems-Wide Strategy [↗](#) provides a conceptual framework for creating a continuum of diversion opportunities that span a community’s criminal justice system.

Engaging Stakeholders in Your Project [↗](#) identifies 13 strategies for engaging the community.

Getting It Right: Collaborative Problem Solving for Criminal Justice [↗](#) is a systematic planning and problem-solving guide to make sure the system can deliver on its promises of safety, justice, and accountability.

Strengthening Collaboration between the Behavioral Health and Juvenile Justice Systems to Improve Reentry Outcomes [↗](#) is a webinar that discusses strategies for effective collaboration to connect youth returning home from confinement to behavioral health services in their communities.



The Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence [↗](#)