



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.



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Step 2

Identify the Problem and Select an Evidence- Based Practice

The checklist below on identifying the problem and selecting an evidence-based practice (EBP) is the second checklist in the series of eight and is designed to help agencies identify the problem to solve, examine the need for the EBP(s), and ensure that they consider several EBPs before selecting and implementing one (or more). Following these steps can help determine whether the EBP is a good fit in the agency and whether it will address the identified problem(s).

Identify the problem to be addressed by the EBP(s).

1. Has a gap analysis, service and process inventory, or similar analysis of resources been conducted to determine the need for the EBP?

- Conduct a survey or analysis to determine the need for the EBP in terms of the problem(s) to be solved.
- Determine which agency or agencies have resources to support the EBP.
- Identify new funding sources (i.e., grants, state or local funding, etc.).

Evaluate potential EBPs to tackle the problem(s).

2. Have several EBPs that could be used to address the problem(s) been identified?

- Identify EBPs that could be used to address the problem(s).
- Consider the pros and cons of each solution.
- Solicit support for each solution among key partners (e.g., judges, probation officers, jail commanders, behavioral health providers).
- Assess the impact of each EBP in terms of return on investment.

Select an EBP.

3. Is the identified EBP consistent with existing efforts to address criminogenic risk and/or behavioral health needs?

- Identify why the EBP is needed and ensure that it is aligned with your goals and other initiatives in place.
- Develop educational materials (e.g., memo, presentation) to share how the selected EBP will complement existing efforts and the benefits to implementing the EBP for each agency involved and the people each agency serves.

Ensure that the selected EBP addresses criminogenic risk and behavioral health needs.

4. Is the EBP designed to address criminogenic risks and behavioral health needs?

- Use results from criminogenic risk, substance use disorder, and mental illness screening tools to assign individuals to appropriate programs and services.
- Ensure that the EBP has components that address dynamic risk factors.
- Prioritize people for a program based on their criminogenic needs as well as life needs.

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Identify champions for the implementation initiative.

5. Have champions been identified in each participating agency who can be counted on to highlight the EBP with agency staff and external stakeholders? (Champions are designated individuals who are considered subject-matter experts or opinion leaders.)

- Identify potential champions from each agency involved in the project.
- Identify how the champions will be used (e.g., presenting to staff, sending a memo, writing policy, etc.).
- Create a committee of champions to work on cross-system messaging.

Resources

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Step 3

Prepare for Implementation

The checklist below on preparing for implementation is the third checklist in the series of eight and is designed to help jurisdictions ensure that they have identified their target population for the evidence-based practice (EBP) and that the selected EBP(s) will address these individuals' criminogenic risk factors and behavioral health needs. Communities should start by having screening and assessment practices in place to identify a target population based on mental illness, substance use disorders, and/or criminogenic risk and needs (using post-adjudication risk assessments). If your jurisdiction already has screening and assessment in place using valid instruments, skip questions 2–4, but ensure that your screening and assessment practices are accurately identifying your target population for the selected EBP. You can use the other steps to prepare to implement your selected EBP.

Identify core features of the desired EBP.

1. Has the implementation team determined implementation time, staffing, selection of eligible participants, type of interventions or treatments, and any other features of the EBP that could impact implementation?

- Review research that describes how to effectively implement the EBP to identify additional issues to consider.
- Identify the core features of the EBP, such as therapies.
- Identify staffing requirements for the EBP.
- Determine duration of EBP intervention and necessary training.
- Review service requirements.
- Identify the types of participants that are suited for the EBP.
- Determine how the EBP will address the needs identified through screening and assessment, such as behavioral health needs, criminogenic needs, or both.

Select a validated instrument to measure static and dynamic criminogenic risk factors.

2. Has a validated criminogenic risk assessment instrument that can be used for a specific population, such as women, been selected?

- Consider a range of criminogenic risk assessments that are available by reviewing the list of resources below about criminogenic risk assessments.
- Identify how the criminogenic risk assessment tools under consideration have been validated on your population.
- Ensure that the instruments have reliable measures of static and dynamic risk factors.
- Contact others who have used the risk assessment tools under consideration to learn about their experience using them.
- Weigh the advantages, limitations, and feasibility of using the specific validated risk assessments under consideration.
- Select the risk assessment tool.

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Select validated instruments to screen and assess for mental illnesses.

3. Are validated screening and assessment instruments used to identify people who may have mental illnesses?

- Consider a range of mental illness screens and assessments that are available by reviewing the list of resources below.
- Contact others who have used the screening and assessment tools under consideration to learn about their experience using them.
- Weigh the advantages, limitations, and feasibility of using the specific validated screening and assessment tools under consideration.
- Select the screening and assessment tools.

Select validated instruments to screen and assess for substance use disorders.

4. Are validated screening and assessment instruments used to identify people who may have substance use disorders?

- Consider a range of substance use disorder screens and assessments that are available by reviewing the list of resources below.
- Contact others who have used the screening and assessment tools under consideration to learn about their experience using them.
- Weigh the advantages, limitations, and feasibility of using the specific validated screening and assessment tools under consideration.
- Select the screening and assessment tools.

Gather research to support implementation of the EBP(s).

5. Has information been gathered to support the knowledge gaps among agency staff to determine areas for training on the EBP?

- Identify at least two research articles on the EBP implementation successes and challenges.
- Connect with personnel who have implemented the EBP to learn from their experience using the practice.
- Identify areas that the implementation team needs to work on further, based on the research review.
- Train agency staff on key skills needed to implement the EBP identified in the literature.
- Contact other agencies to learn about the design and implementation of the EBP.

Develop a program logic model to support implementation.

6. Has a program logic model been developed to map out how the selected EBP will be implemented and the desired outcomes?

- Identify key inputs and resources needed for the EBP.
- Identify key processes that define the EBP design.
- Identify key outputs (short-term proximal outcomes).
- Identify key long-term outcomes.
- Ensure that the components are sequenced across the different phases of the logic model.
- Review the logic model with the full implementation team.
- Refine the logic model based on feedback from the implementation team.
- Identify key performance measures for the program.

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Train staff on risk, need, and responsivity (RNR model), including how the RNR model relates to mental illnesses, substance use disorders, and co-occurring disorders.

7. Are staff trained on principles of risk, need, and responsivity, including mental illnesses and substance use disorders?

- Identify resources such as curricula, webinars, or publications focused on risk, need, responsivity, and mental illnesses and substance use disorders.
- Develop protocols for training staff on risk, need, responsivity, and mental illnesses and substance use disorders.
- Develop a training schedule.

Prepare direct line supervisors and middle management to coach staff on implementing the EBP.

8. Are supervisors equipped to coach staff on implementing the EBP?

- Develop protocols to support coaching staff on skills.
- Ensure that staff coaching occurs on a regular basis.
- Ensure that supervisors/middle management have the skills to coach staff.

Resources

A Five-Level Risk and Needs System: Maximizing Assessment Results in Corrections through the Development of a Common Language

examines and improves the standardization of the terminology associated with risk and needs levels and the interpretation and application of risk and needs assessment results in correctional settings.

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature

summarizes the research literature on implementation across fields.

Implementation Science Toolkit: Equipping Justice Agencies with the Tools to Facilitate the Change Process

provides strategies to help practitioners learn to adopt and adapt evidence-based practices and treatments into their agency and ultimately improve agency outcomes.

Risk Assessment Instruments Validated and Implemented in Correctional Settings in the United States

is a report designed to provide foundational knowledge and a working framework of risk assessment instruments for criminal justice and social service agencies, practitioners, and policymakers.

Screening and Assessment of Co-Occurring Disorders in the Justice System

provides evidence-based practices for screening and assessment of adults in the justice system with mental illness, substance use disorders, or both.

What Strategies Are Used to Build Practitioners' Capacity to Implement Community-Based Interventions and Are They Effective?: A Systematic Review

is a framework to guide research and thereby strengthen the evidence base for building practitioners' capacity.



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Step 4

Measure Implementation Fidelity

The checklist below on measuring implementation fidelity is the fourth checklist in the series of eight and is designed to support jurisdictions in determining how well they are implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs). Fidelity, or the extent to which the EBP is implemented according to its original research-based model, is critical for effective implementation because the best outcomes are achieved if the EBP is implemented as intended. Measuring implementation fidelity allows agencies to monitor how interventions are carried out and modify them, as needed, to align with the original model. Many EBPs have their own tools for monitoring and measuring fidelity, and some agencies develop their own fidelity tools as part of quality assurance. Examples of fidelity tools may include direct observation, review of videotaped sessions, or scored evaluations.

Identify the inputs and processes of the EBP (e.g., training, materials, staff time to perform the EBP, etc.) to measure for fidelity.

(Note: it is important to differentiate core components from current practice so it is clear which components to measure for fidelity.)

1. Are the necessary inputs and processes for implementing the EBP clear from the logic model?

- Revisit the research on implementing the EBP to update your logic model so that it reflects the necessary and appropriate inputs and processes.
- Compare the inputs and processes to the studied EBP. Identify gaps in how core components are handled.
- Identify the resources needed to implement the core components.

Identify a fidelity tool for the EBP.

2. Is there an available fidelity tool that is relevant to your setting and to the population that you plan to serve?

- Select a fidelity tool that is appropriate for your setting (jail, prison, probation/parole office, treatment clinic, etc.) and population (people with mental illnesses, women, etc.).
- Select an intervention tool that is appropriate for the EBP, such as motivational enhancement approaches, cognitive behavioral interventions, focused deterrence, peer support services, etc. Refer to the resource list below for some public domain tools.

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Train staff on how to use the fidelity tool(s).

3. Is there a staff member or team identified to conduct assessments using the fidelity tool?

- Identify staff to administer the fidelity tool(s).
- Train staff on how to use the fidelity tool(s) to monitor implementation.
- Have a procedure for certifying trainers (many EBPs have “train the trainer” protocols that should be followed).
- Ensure that the training is consistent with the procedures used for fidelity assessment (see item 4).

Identify procedures for measuring fidelity.

4. Are there procedures to assess staff implementation of the EBP?

- Identify the frequency of quality assurance procedures.
- Identify how data will be collected (i.e., via videoconferencing, surveys, audio recordings, etc.).
- Identify how the data will be shared with staff and/or teams.
- Identify how the fidelity assessments will be used by the agency.

Identify how discrepancies in fidelity will be addressed.

5. Are there procedures to address differences between the actual performance of the EBP compared to the expected performance?

- Review how the core components of the EBP are being implemented.
- Identify gaps that occur in what is implemented compared to what should be implemented.
- Assess the impact of these discrepancies on the quality of the EBP implementation.

Identify resources for improving implementation fidelity.

6. Are there resources to address performance issues that affect EBP fidelity?

- Identify resources needed to address the gaps between your agency’s implementation of the EBP and the ideal implementation of the EBP.
- Identify funding sources for the resources (e.g., federal, state or local government funds, Medicaid, or foundation funding).
- Establish a plan that specifies short and long-term priorities for improvement (e.g., short-term: enhance data collection, long-term: present the EBP to the county commission to seek funding).

Develop coaching opportunities to support staff in implementing the EBP.

7. Will coaching be provided to the team and/or individual staff?

- Prioritize coaching for staff who desire it or need skill development.
- Select the coaches or train staff to be coaches.
- Ensure that coaching is not used only in annual performance evaluations but rather on a regular basis.

Develop process and performance measures for implementing the EBP.

8. Are there progress benchmarks for implementing the EBP?

- Identify a core set of process and performance measures or progress benchmarks for the EBP.
- Compare these benchmarks and relevant outcome measures (e.g., Interface Process Measures in the resources section below) to ensure that the measures are appropriate for gauging fidelity.
- Identify the distribution list for the benchmarks.
- Ensure that the benchmarks are shared with staff and stakeholders.
- Identify how the benchmarks will be produced and in what timeframe.

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Develop an action plan for measuring quality.

9. Is there an action plan to ensure that agency staff are making progress and adhering to quality?

- Designate one person to be responsible for an action plan to improve fidelity and implement the fidelity assessment plan.
- Update the action plan quarterly.
- Identify unmet needs at least once a year.

Update the implementation team and larger interagency workgroup on EBP implementation progress.

10. Is there a staff member who is responsible for reporting on the progress of the EBP?

- Identify what information will be shared with leadership, staff, and stakeholders.
- Ensure that constructive feedback to staff implementing the EBP includes action steps to improve the practice.
- Ensure that staff who are implementing the EBP are aware of any positive feedback from colleagues and who gave this feedback.

Resources

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature [↗](#) summarizes the research literature on implementation across fields.

Implementation Science Toolkit: Equipping Justice Agencies with the Tools to Facilitate the Change Process [↗](#) provides strategies to help practitioners learn to adopt and adapt evidence-based practices and treatments for their agency and ultimately improve agency outcomes.

Process Measures at the Interface Between the Justice and Behavioral Health Systems [↗](#) develops guiding principles and process measures that can help guide cross-systems delivery of service.

Solving Puzzling Probation Problems with PDSA [↗](#) provides the background and evidence supporting the use of “Plan Do Study Act” (PDSA) and uses community corrections examples to translate ideas for the justice field.

What Strategies Are Used to Build Practitioners’ Capacity to Implement Community-Based Interventions and Are They Effective?: A Systematic Review [↗](#) contributes to further development of the Evidence-Based System of Innovation Support (EBSIS) by systematically reviewing empirical studies of capacity-building interventions to identify (1) the range of strategies used, (2) variations in the way they were structured, and (3) evidence for their effectiveness at increasing practitioners’ capacity to use evidence-based prevention interventions.



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Step 5

Sustain the Evidence-Based Practice

The checklist below on sustainability is the fifth checklist in the series of eight and is designed to help agencies sustain their implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs) over time. It is important for agencies to continue implementing EBPs so that they can achieve the outcomes they want to see, such as reduced recidivism and behavioral health recovery.

Monitor implementation benchmarks for the EBP.

1. Has the EBP been performing as expected within the past year?

- Design benchmarks (process measures, outputs and short-term outcomes) for the implementation of the EBP.
- Identify roadblocks to successful implementation.
- Identify any patterns in uneven delivery of the EBP and patterns where implementation of the EBP is meeting its expected process and outcome measures.

Identify features of the EBP that produce positive outcomes and areas for continued improvement.

2. Has a process and/or outcome study been conducted to show whether the EBP had a positive impact on participants?

- Conduct a process and/or outcome study using measures as described in the Step 4 checklist to examine how well participants responded to the EBP and how well staff embraced and implemented it.
- Use the results of the outcome study to identify areas of implementation that need to be strengthened.
- Compare the study results to the foundational EBP literature to identify what was not included in the EBP.
- Discuss with stakeholders whether the EBP has addressed the original problem based on the outcome study.

Identify resources needed to fully implement the EBP.

3. Have resources, space, and/or staffing been identified to implement the EBP at the optimum level?

- List any limitations in resources and how these limitations can be overcome.
- Discuss these gaps and how they affect the EBP.
- Examine various sources of funding for the EBP so that the agency or agencies involved in implementing the practice can continue implementation.

Revisit the logic model.

4. Are changes to the logic model necessary based on lessons learned from implementing the EBP?

- Update the logic model (see the Step 3 checklist) to align with implementation of the EBP.
- Identify resources that are not available and how these resources, if procured, can be applied to support implementation of the EBP.
- Focus on how the EBP was adapted and what changes in inputs and processes occurred.

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Refine the process for implementing the EBP.

5. Are there changes that should be made to strengthen implementation of the EBP?

- Identify the changes that should occur to improve implementation of the EBP.
- Establish a timeline for the modifications.
- Refine implementation of the EBP, as needed, to ensure that its core components are being incorporated.

Reassess process and performance measures, particularly outputs and outcomes.

6. Are adjustments in the process and performance measures needed to align better with the EBP?

- Review and realign the process and performance measures (see the Step 4 checklist), as needed, based on how well the EBP has been implemented. If there are specific implementation issues that are arising, ensure that there are metrics in place to monitor and solve any implementation challenges.
- Message major changes in the process for implementing the EBP to staff and stakeholders.
- Reassess implementation of the EBP based on these refined measures.

Resources

Developing a Comprehensive Definition of Sustainability [↗](#) provides five conceptual definitions of sustainability.

Evidence-Based Intervention Sustainability Strategies: a Systematic Review [↗](#) identifies the factors that either help or limit the sustainability of EBPs.

Implementation Science: Moving from Theory to Sustainability [↗](#) provides approaches to strengthen quality improvement and sustainability of EBPs.

Navigating the Sustainability Landscape: A Systematic Review of Sustainability Approaches in Healthcare [↗](#) reviews several approaches to promote the sustainability of EBPs in health care settings.

Sustaining Evidence-Based Interventions and Policies: Recent Innovations and Future Directions in Implementation Science [↗](#) provides six recommendations to promote best practices for sustaining EBPs.



Step 6

Master the Core Competencies

The checklist below on mastering the core competencies is the sixth in the series of eight and is designed to support agencies in ensuring that staff have the proper skills and knowledge to implement the evidence-based practices (EBPs) effectively. Staff training on carrying out the core competencies, such as initial training, opportunities for skill-building and role-play, and real-time feedback and coaching, should be ongoing. By mastering the core competencies, staff can help ensure the EBPs achieve the desired outcomes.

Identify the knowledge and skills (the core competencies) that staff and administrators need to implement the EBP and build knowledge and skills among staff and managers.

1. What specific skills do staff and managers need to implement the EBP?

- For each feature of the EBP, identify the core competencies.
- Identify skills that are needed that are unique to the EBP.
- Identify factors that affect the agency's culture and readiness for the EBP.
- Address organizational readiness issues.

2. Have key knowledge areas related to implementing the EBP been identified?

- Develop a knowledge test for staff implementing the EBP and administer the test at least once a year to assess for quality assurance.
- Evaluate staff on applying their knowledge of the EBP through the use of scenarios, role-play, or observation of programming groups.

3. Have key skills related to implementing the EBP been identified?

- Develop a skills test to assess staff's ability to effectively deliver the EBP and administer the test at least once a year to assess for quality assurance.
- Evaluate staff on their skills in implementing the EBP through the use of scenarios, role-play, or observation of programming groups, ensuring that these testing scenarios reflect realistic but challenging real-life scenarios.

Use coaching to enhance staff skills.

4. Is there skill coaching for staff using the fidelity approaches (see the Step 4 checklist)?

- After assessing staff/managers, establish a plan for delivering coaching services to address remaining skill deficits.
- Ensure that the coaching services are offered in real time to be responsive to needs.
- Ensure that coaching services are provided by instructors who can effectively model the skills.

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Assess whether the agency environment is conducive to participant-centered strategies and whether staff are able to implement these strategies to support the EBP.

5. Does the agency environment support participant-centered practices, such as staff-participant working alliances and procedural justice?

- Establish how staff can cultivate a working alliance with participants and how this will be measured.
- Establish how to measure procedural justice (how agency decisions are made and policies related to the EBP are established), if necessary, for the selected EBP.
- Establish client-centered policies and practices.
- Train staff and administrators on policies related to working alliances, procedural justice, and participant-centered policies and practices.
- Evaluate the culture of the agency to ensure that staff are comfortable taking risks and working on challenging issues.

Determine how the agency is supporting implementation of the EBP.

6. Has an analysis been conducted to examine the agency's role in implementing the EBPs?

- Ensure that the EBP meets quality standards set by the agency and by the developer of the EBP, if applicable.
- Use tools to identify areas where the EBP (as opposed to individuals) is not meeting its goals. Available tools include Correctional Program Checklist, the RNR Simulation Tool, Community Supervision Assessment. (These tools measure how agencies support the implementation of EBPs in addition to measuring staff implementation of EBPs.)
- Assess the administration of the EBP to ensure that services are being delivered in a way that is respectful, participant centered, confidential, etc.

Resources

Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment: A Review and Discussion for Corrections Professionals [↗](#) provides an overview of cognitive behavioral treatment and how it is used in correctional facilities across the country.

Collaborative Comprehensive Case Plans [↗](#) provides resources to justice, behavioral health, and social service professionals who develop and oversee case plans so they can better integrate behavioral health and criminogenic risk and needs information into case plans and so that case plans reflect a balanced and collaborative partnership between criminal justice, behavioral health, and social service systems.

Evidence-Based Adult Corrections Program: What Works and What Does Not [↗](#) provides a thorough review of EBPs for adults in the justice system.

Relapse Prevention Plans [↗](#) provides resources for building relapse prevention plans as part of Collaborative Comprehensive Case Plans for reentry, to help reduce the chances of recidivism and relapse for people who have an addiction and to ensure coordination and linkages among all of the entities involved in their care.



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Step 7

Implement Continuous Quality Improvement Processes

The checklist below on implementing continuous quality improvement processes is the seventh of eight and is designed to help agencies engage in continuous quality improvement (CQI), the process of systematically monitoring evidence-based practice (EBP) fidelity and progress toward desired outcomes as well as improving outcomes on an ongoing basis. A CQI plan should be implemented alongside EBP implementation to address areas where improvement will enhance outcomes. The CQI plan integrates and builds on the work conducted through this and previous checklists (i.e., fidelity, performance measures, etc.) but allows agencies to focus on the area(s) that are underperforming or not achieving the desired outcomes. The CQI plan can be used to align and improve work processes to support implementation of the EBP.

Use quality assurance procedures to identify areas where more attention is needed to enhance the implementation of the EBP.

1. Are there areas that are not performing as well as expected? These areas can be identified through team processes, information from the process/outcome evaluation(s), quality assurance procedures, and general workflow.

- List the areas of EBP implementation that are underperforming, keeping in mind that addressing micro-level implementation issues (small, manageable items) can help the agency achieve the best outcomes. Remember to narrow the problem so that solving it is doable.
- Convene a small group (8 to 10 people) of staff (of all levels), stakeholders, and program participants (clients) to review and discuss how well the initiative is doing.
- Identify potential areas where improvements might be needed; small or micro-level issues are often easiest to test.

Use the “Plan Do Study Act” (CQI) format to identify work process issues.

2. Is there a neutral facilitator (internal or external) to conduct the CQI meetings?

- Identify a neutral facilitator for the team-based CQI process. In some cases, if there is a program evaluator, this person can also serve as the facilitator, if everyone agrees they should be the facilitator.
- Ensure that the facilitator is knowledgeable about research findings, EBPs, and implementation science.

3. Has a CQI plan been developed and implemented?

- Use the “Plan Do Study Act” CQI format to identify work process issues: Plan: Review the micro-level problem areas; brainstorm ideas. Do: Develop an action plan to adjust how the EBP operates. Study: Ensure the review provides proximal measures; collect the experiences of those involved to make sure improvements are occurring. Act: Decide the course of action based on data and the input and experiences of staff.
- Recognize staff for participating in the CQI process. Ensure that staff feel valued in the process.

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4. Since implementing the CQI process, have benchmarks to assess progress on quality improvement been reviewed on a regular basis?

- Have the implementation team review areas of improvement.
- Brainstorm what can be improved and how, focusing on micro-level issues.
- Collect data about the problem and verify that the “causes” exist in the data and not just in subjective impressions of the problem.
- Refine the problem to reflect the data and the narratives from staff, administrators, and stakeholders.

5. Have options for improving implementation of the EBP been identified?

- After refining the problem, refine the solutions. Ensure that the solutions can be implemented within three to six months and with existing resources.
- Ensure that the solutions are targeted to that problem.
- Pilot the identified solution for improving EBP implementation and monitor benchmarks to see if progress has been made.
- Identify champions who can promote the change in EBP implementation among staff, administrators, and stakeholders.

6. Is there a plan for reviewing any adjustments or refinements made to how the EBP is implemented?

- Review the fidelity and quality assurance measures (benchmarks) to ascertain whether they are useful to define proximal measures.
- Select measures that are easy to obtain, measure short-term outputs, and track them over time.
- Identify a timeline of 6 to 18 months to study the impact and see if improvements have occurred.

7. Has the team identified what worked well and what did not?

- Using the study findings (see the Step 2 checklist), refine the EBP implementation processes.
- Identify features that produced short-term improvements (benchmarks) and those that garnered support from others.
- Refine the agency’s policies and procedures.
- Determine what barriers exist to effective practice now that the identified problem has been addressed.
- Repeat the “Plan Do Study Act” process, if necessary, for another EBP implementation challenge.

Ensure that the CQI groups are sharing results.

8. Are the results of the CQI process being shared among the implementation team and with the interagency workgroup?

- Ensure that the “Plan Do Study Act” process and activities are shared. This helps alert the agency and stakeholders to the process and garners support.
- Communicate with stakeholders about how the system can change based on the results of “Plan Do Study Act.”

Resources

Continuous Quality Improvement [↗](#) is part of a series of coaching packets and provides information on how to ensure quality in the implementation of EBPs to improve outcomes among people in the criminal justice system.

Easy and Powerful Process Improvement for Behavioral Health [↗](#) has several activity sheets, case studies, and materials on process improvement strategies.

Implementation Science Toolkit: Equipping Justice Agencies with the Tools to Facilitate the Change Process [↗](#) provides strategies to help practitioners learn to adopt and adapt evidence-based practices and treatments for their agency and ultimately improve agency outcomes.

Institute for Healthcare Improvement [↗](#) has several courses and other materials for more information about CQI processes in health care settings.

Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts [↗](#) is part of a series of coaching packets and provides information on how to gauge the effectiveness of EBP implementation to improve outcomes among people in the criminal justice system.

Process Measures at the Interface Between the Justice and Behavioral Health Systems [↗](#) provides a set of principles and process measures that can help guide delivery of service between the behavioral health and criminal justice systems.

Solving Puzzling Probation Problems with PDSA [↗](#) provides background and evidence supporting the use of “Plan Do Study Act” (PDSA) and uses community corrections examples to translate ideas for the justice field.



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Step 8

Assess Organizational Readiness for Maintaining Evidence-Based Practices

The checklist below on assessing organizational readiness for maintaining evidence-based practices (EBPs) is the final one in the series of eight and is designed to help agencies determine whether they can support and maintain use of EBPs. Agencies (or organizations) that support staff taking risks, being innovative, and identifying solutions to work processes are known as “learning organizations.” These kinds of agencies are best suited for supporting and sustaining implementation of an EBP.

Create a learning culture within the agency.

1. Do open discussions about EBP implementation occur?

- Has leadership developed internal change teams that include members from across the agency? The teams will focus on various topics to implement continuous quality improvement processes (see the Step 7 checklist).
- Develop a plan for continually examining new research in the field and gathering additional information about implementation challenges/successes from staff.
- Determine how to incorporate these findings into training and coaching protocols, as well as how to share with the field more broadly, such as in feedback loops with the developers of EBPs.

Determine whether structural supports are necessary to further the use of EBPs within the agency.

2. Have necessary processes been identified to build the infrastructure of the agency so that it can support EBP implementation? Such processes include training, the distribution of work, useful paperwork, clear direction, and staff evaluation support.

- Provide training and coaching to staff on implementation of the EBP.
- Review the distribution of work to ensure that workloads for staff implementing the EBP(s) are balanced.
- Review existing policies and procedures and determine if any modifications are necessary to ensure they support implementation of the EBP.
- Ensure that performance evaluations cover staff implementation of the EBP.
- Ensure that process and performance data about the EBP are available in a timely manner and used to improve staff performance.
- Create staff development plans related to implementation of the EBP.

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Align recruitment, hiring, and promotional processes with core competencies necessary for implementing the EBP.

3. Are recruitment, hiring, and promotion practices skill and competency based?

- Align the criteria for implementing the EBP with job descriptions to ensure that staff are capable of handling the new job requirements.
- Modify the staffing structure of the agency, if necessary, to support implementation of the EBP. This may require changes to supervision structures within the agency.
- Ensure that the agency supports staff growth and development so that staff feel supported in implementing EBPs.

Use data to improve EBP implementation.

4. Is data and information being used effectively to monitor the progress of the agency in implementing the EBP?

- Assess the capability of the management information system to generate relevant data to support decision-making.
- Improve the management information system to ensure that data can be generated for each decision point of the EBP.
- Train staff on how to use data to make decisions.
- Ensure that data is presented clearly.
- Work with other agencies to create data linkages to examine how individuals use services in various agencies.
- Allow staff to design reports for different work processes related to the EBP.

Develop action research partnerships.

5. Have research partnerships been identified and leveraged to support improvements to implementation of the EBP?

- Identify how research partnerships can be used throughout the agency.
- Develop action research partnerships with local research entities to identify challenges or limitations in the EBP and design solutions to swiftly address these challenges.
- Ensure that research partnerships are sufficiently funded to illustrate a commitment to such partnerships and improve transparency to both the public and officials in the jurisdiction.
- Widely disseminate research findings, including with agency staff, the implementation team, and the interagency workgroup.

Establish stakeholder panels to obtain feedback on the implementation progress of the EBP.

6. Does leadership engage internal and external stakeholders to provide feedback on the implementation team efforts?

- Create internal and external stakeholder panels to support the feedback process.
- Ensure the panels include staff and stakeholders with varied perspectives, including individuals with lived experience either with the criminal justice system and/or with mental illness or substance use disorders.
- Disseminate findings from stakeholder panels to staff.
- Use stakeholder panel findings to modify existing action plans to improve the implementation quality of the EBPs.

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Resources

Developing Sustainability, Success Stories from the Field [↗](#) discusses how funding streams other than federal grants can be leveraged, and partnerships developed, to help sustain a program.

Implementation Science Toolkit: Equipping Justice Agencies with the Tools to Facilitate the Change Process [↗](#) provides strategies to help practitioners learn to adopt and adapt evidence-based practices and treatments for their agency and ultimately improve agency outcomes.

Implementing Evidence-Based Practices [↗](#) provides an overview of the core features of how EBPs can be delivered effectively.

Strengthening Correctional Culture: Eight Ways Corrections Leaders Can Support Their Staff to Reduce Recidivism [↗](#) highlights eight ways corrections leaders can set their staff up for success in implementing approaches that have been shown to reduce recidivism, including examples of how grantees of the Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Program have applied these strategies in practice.



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