

Evaluability assessments in public health

A summary of

Leviton, L.C., Khan, L.K., Rog, D., Dawkins, N., & Cotton, D. (2010). Evaluability assessment to improve public health policies, programs, and practices. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 31:213–233.



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Categories:

Method, Evaluate, KT evaluation

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Method

Relevance For Public Health

Evaluation is one of the public health competencies. This method helps public health professionals conduct evaluations of programs, policies or practices.

Description

This article provides readers with an understanding and history of evaluability assessments and how they can be helpful in the field of public health. It lists the benefits of conducting an evaluability assessment, including cost-effectiveness.

Evaluability assessments are completed before an evaluation and are designed to maximize the chances that a subsequent evaluation will result in useful information. They can also be called exploratory evaluations and are meant to identify programs that show promise or those that are unlikely to be effective in their current form. Evaluability assessments point the way to evaluations that have the best chance of revealing important information. They are able to do the following:

- Shed light on disagreements among stakeholders.
- Describe the logic of a program.
- Indicate the need for adjustments in activities and resources.
- Inform stakeholders about options for evaluation and their potential usefulness.
- Reveal problems before decision makers commit to a formal evaluation.

Implementing the Tool

Who is Involved?

Public health professionals who are interested in evaluation of programs, policies or practices will find this method useful.

Steps for Using Tool

Evaluability assessments are described as cyclical, iterative processes that build an understanding of the program design, the underlying program logic model or theory of change, and the opportunities for useful evaluation and potential program improvement. The steps to an evaluability assessment include the following:

1. Involvement with potential evaluation users
2. Review of program documents (including mission statements, goals and objectives)
3. Conducting stakeholder interviews
4. Creation of a logic model or theory of change
5. Interviewing staff or clients
6. Revision of logic model or theory of change
7. Creation of a report on the program's plausibility to achieve desired goals, areas for further program improvement, feasibility of conducting a full evaluation and options for evaluation design

The article provides a history of evaluability assessments followed by a description of how users can conduct

These summaries are written by the [NCCMT](#) to condense and to provide an overview of the resources listed in the [Registry of Methods and Tools](#) and to give suggestions for their use in a public health context. For more information on individual methods and tools included in the review, please consult the authors/developers of the original resources.

an evaluability assessment. The paper goes on to describe logic models and theories of change, which are central to conducting an evaluability assessment. Two examples are provided that help readers understand evaluability assessments in practice.

This paper suggests that evaluability assessments can be beneficial for public health in five ways:

1. Serving the core public health functions of planning and assurance
2. Building evaluation capacity
3. Navigating federal performance measurement requirement
4. Translating evidence-based research models into practice
5. Translating practice into research by identifying promising practices

Conditions for Use

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Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

Evaluation

Information not available

Validity

Not applicable

Reliability

Not applicable

Methodological Rating



Not applicable

Tool Development

Developers

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Method of Development

None.

Release Date

2010

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Resources

Title of Primary Resource	Evaluability assessment to improve public health policies, programs, and practices
File Attachment	None
Web-link	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20235852
Reference	Leviton, L.C., Khan, L.K., Rog, D., Dawkins, N., & Cotton, D. (2010). Evaluability assessment to improve public health policies, programs, and practices. <i>Annual Review of Public Health</i> , 31:213-233.
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