

Determining the Feasibility of a Health Service Integration Initiative

Description:

This tool provides an overview of the value of determining feasibility and an assessment chart.

How it can be used:

Feasibility assessments are used to determine whether a process, program, service or intervention is appropriate and relevant. It will help your organization assess whether the health service integration initiative you are considering will benefit your clients and if it is sustainable.

A feasibility study will help in the early phase of your health service integration initiative to assess whether the proposed project will produce positive and sustainable results in terms of better access to health care or improved quality of care for your clients. Those outcomes are weighed against the risks – which must be both understood and manageable.

In this context, a feasibility assessment involves examining relevant factors in both health service integration initiative participants (you and potential partners), as well as from the perspective of clients.

Conducting a feasibility assessment is a good idea when:

- Partnerships need to be established, increased, or sustained;
- There is no information available on potential initiatives;
- Prior studies were not relevant for your clients or potential partnerships;
- Previous initiatives were not successful and you are considering adjustments that could lead to more positive outcomes.

Using the chart below, assess the feasibility of your health service integration initiative. Obviously the data and results have to make sense for your organization. The advantages must outweigh the challenges.

It takes time to gather all the information needed to make a thorough and rigorous examination; but it is time well spent in order to come to an accurate assessment. Only then can you determine whether or not it is feasible to proceed.

Area of focus	The feasibility assessment might ask...	Where to find the information
Needs	What are the top priorities of our clients? Does this support our strategic goals? Do the needs of the health service integration initiative partners align? <i>To what extent will this new idea, process, program, or service respond to the needs or health services recipients?</i>	Needs assessments Evaluation reports Health Plans Focus groups Interviews Surveys

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Potential Impact	<p>How is this likely to improve services for our clients?</p> <p>Is the potential impact of value to the clients?</p> <p>Has sustainability been established?</p> <p><i>To what extent will this health service integration initiative support sustainable change?</i></p>	<p>Client interviews</p> <p>Partner interviews</p> <p>Best practices</p> <p>Benchmarking</p>
Resources/ Investment	<p>What resources are required to enter into this health service integration initiative?</p> <p>(Consider funding, human resources, relationships and infrastructure)</p> <p><i>To what extent do we have the necessary resources to enter into this health service integration initiative?</i></p>	<p>Program funding</p> <p>Initiative funding</p> <p>Provincial initiatives</p> <p>Technology plans</p> <p>Human resource plans</p>
Quality	<p>How can we improve the quality of health services our clients receive?</p> <p>Do our potential partners hold the same expectation of health service quality?</p> <p>What role does culture play in health service quality?</p> <p><i>To what extent will this health service integration initiative improve the quality of services for our clients?</i></p>	<p>Client satisfaction</p> <p>Adverse events</p> <p>Accreditation results</p> <p>Standards and guidelines</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p>
Access	<p>How do our clients currently access services?</p> <p>What needs to be improved to enhance the continuum of care for our clients?</p> <p><i>To what extent will partnering through this health service integration initiative improve access to health services for our clients?</i></p>	<p>Health Services Access Chart</p> <p>Client charts and records</p> <p>Provincial records</p> <p>Client experiences</p> <p>Adverse events</p>
Risks	<p>What are the risks of pursuing this project?</p> <p>What barriers and challenges have already been faced?</p> <p><i>To what extent are the risks of the health service integration initiative manageable?</i></p>	<p>Risk assessments</p> <p>Health plans</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Audits</p> <p>Lessons learned from other organizations</p>