

Section 6 - Implementing a Health Service Integration Initiative (“GO” Phase)

Description

The “GO” phase is where the “rubber hits the road”, where you implement your health service integration initiative. If the planning in your “SET” phase has been comprehensive, then you’re ready to move forward with a successful implementation. Project management best practices and working effectively with change are the foundations of the “GO” phase.

Key Concepts:

1. Operational planning.

a. What elements should be in your annual plan?

An annual action sets out what needs to happen during the year to help achieve the overall health service integration initiative goals. In addition to describing the activities, the plan is clear as to who is responsible, what the timelines are, what resources are required, and what the performance indicators are for each activity.

2. Project management.

a. How do you know you are managing the project effectively?

The best way to do this is to consider the following elements in your project management activities and where possible, apply best practices:

- Project initiation
- Scope management
- Schedule management
- Cost management
- Quality management
- People management
- Communication
- Risk management
- Project procurement
- Project evaluation

b. How are you managing the change?

An effective change process requires significant attention to both the situation and the people. For example, people have to understand the need for the change, so become a “raging advocate” for the health service integration initiative. Demonstrate the value of the “new way of doing things”. Find and foster champions. In addition, consider how to make it easier for people to accept the change. Managing change in a good way is a blend of creating a positive environment and helping people deal with their fear of change.

c. How can you manage potential risks?

No new initiative comes risk-free, so it is necessary to understand and manage risks. Using a

risk analysis, understand which of the risks are significant and create a plan to monitor and control the major risks that could threaten your health service integration initiative.

- d. How are you communicating progress?

Communication is a vital factor in the success of your health service integration initiative, both in the initial phases and in implementation. Your communication plan will guide the process. And remember, if you don't tell people what's happening, they will fill in the blanks themselves. Tell your own story and keep all relevant stakeholders in the loop.

Key Activities

1. Create the annual plan.
 - a. Outline the objectives.
 - b. List the activities required to achieve the objectives.
 - c. Clarify who is responsible for each activity.
 - d. Attach a timeframe to each activity (start and finish, if relevant).
 - e. Note the resources required for each activity (include funding, human resources and infrastructure).
 - f. Identify the performance indicators for each activity.
2. Initiate the health service integration initiative.
 - a. Ensure all partners have all the key documents.
 - b. Be clear about the scope of the health service integration initiative; what it will address and what it won't.
 - c. Create a schedule based on the timelines in the annual plan.
 - d. Clarify roles and responsibilities and lines of accountability.
 - e. Ensure a focus on quality and ongoing quality improvement.
3. Focus on change management.
 - a. Understand that many people resist change. Find ways to help make it easier for them.
 - b. Be clear about the need for the health service integration initiative and how it will improve health services.
 - c. Use your champions to build awareness and support.
 - d. Have a clear vision of the desired outcome and share it often.
 - e. Remove barriers to the adoption of the health service integration initiative where possible.
 - f. Share the early successes; seek some "quick wins" so people can see the value of the health service integration initiative.
 - g. Focus on sustainability and long-term change.
4. Keep stakeholders engaged and informed.
 - a. Follow the communication plan.
 - b. Host regular update meetings where helpful.
 - c. Prepare quick communication "products" (e.g., pamphlet, newsletter, email, etc.) that you can use in different situations.
5. Manage risk.

- a. Create processes where issues can be quickly identified.
- b. Have regular “check-ins” during meetings to discuss potential risks.

Go Phase Helpful Tools

The following tools will be helpful in the “GO” phase; the implementation phase where your health service integration initiative hits the ground running. Following best practices in project management and change management will ensure a successful implementation process.

Creating an Annual Action Plan for a Health Service Integration Initiative

This tool outlines the critical elements that have to be considered when developing a performance based annual action plan. The tool provides directional steps for the development of an annual action plan and outlines who is responsible for implementation and meeting reporting requirements for stakeholders. It also provides the leadership group for the health service integration initiative with performance indicators to monitor progress as they move forward on their journey to achieving their strategies and outcomes.

Managing Health Service Integration Initiative Projects

This tool uses project management best practices to effectively manage your health service integration initiative. The key activities relate to planning, implementing and controlling to achieve the interim milestones and the final outcomes. Follow the steps to ensure your health service integration initiative progresses in an organized manner and helps ensure a successful outcome for your clients.

Resolving Differences between Health Service Integration Initiative Partners

Conflict in project management is inevitable. By its nature, the potential for differences in a health service integration initiative can be high because it involves individuals from different backgrounds and orientations working together to find a new way of working together. Use this tool to help understand how to manage differences and find resolutions.

These tools can be viewed in Section 8 starting on page 80.

What Would You Do?

The following exercise provides a scenario in which you have the opportunity to check your knowledge in this area and undertake a practical exercise that could lead to improvements in health services for your community.

“Implementing” Scenario Exercise

After working with your community and the nearby birthing unit, you are excited to be ready to implement a new initiative related to integrating cultural practices into the nearby birthing unit protocols. This has taken a full year to coordinate, including many meetings and working sessions.

The MOU is in place and all working group participants are keen. However, there is no work plan to guide the activities.

As Health Director, you know the importance of an annual plan that helps achieve the initiative goals. You'd like to help your working group and your coordinator create an annual plan, and in the process, empowers them with skills to do it themselves from now on.

Using the tools, what could you do to train your team and complete the annual plan?

If your organization is currently engaged in an integration activity, how could you improve your annual plan?