Evaluating Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Programs: Methodological Approaches and Lessons Learned

JBS International, Inc.

Alliances for Quality Education, Inc.

Introduction of Presenters

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Conceptual Approaches and Issues in Conducting Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations

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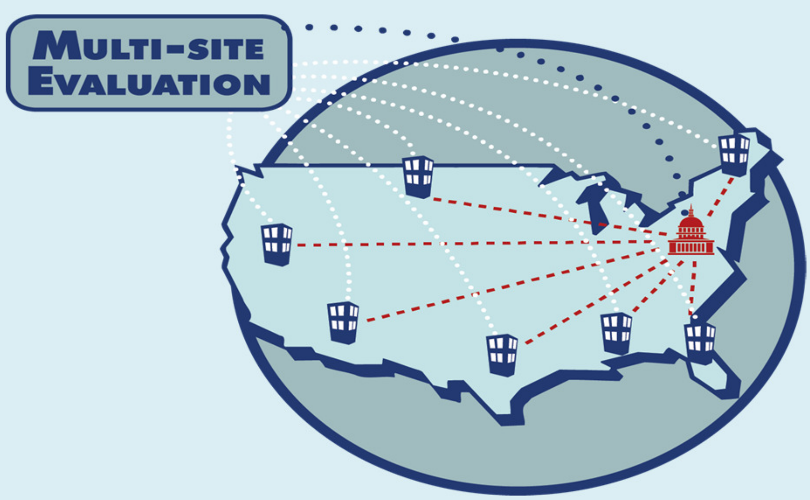
Context for Conducting Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations



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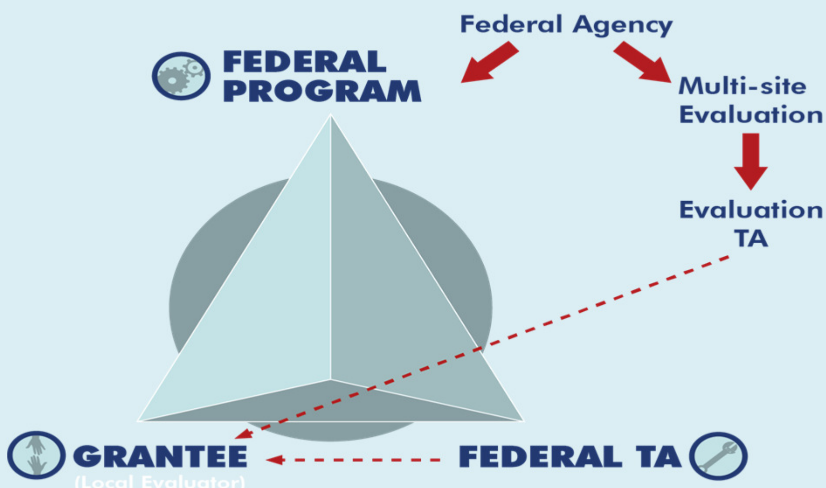
Context for Conducting Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations (cont'd)



Context for Conducting Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations (cont'd)

Local Evaluator

Getting to Know the Grantees

Areas of Interest
- Target population(s)
- Services
- EBPs/interventions
- Staffing

Sources
- Review existing documents
- Visit their Web sites
- Contact agencies / organizations for other documents

Example: Document Review
- Develop tool
- Extract key info
- Develop profile of agency
- Confirm info with program/agency

\+ Increased credibility with grantees
\+ Can serve as baseline data before "official" data collection begins

Engaging Stakeholders

Engaging Stakeholders

- Determine who stakeholders are
- Obtain input on evaluation design
- Develop expert panel groups
- Develop advisory groups

Considerations for Designing a Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluation

Contractual Considerations

- Contract requirements
- Subcontracting arrangements
- Timelines (e.g., 3 years, 5 years)

Climate Changes

- Economic changes
- Budget challenges
- Severable contracts

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Considerations for Designing a Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluation (cont'd)

Study Design

- Evaluation questions
- Design considerations
  - Process and/or outcome
  - Experimental, quasi-experimental, pre-post
  - Comparison groups, grantee heterogeneity
- Selection of instruments/tools
- Cultural considerations
- Clearances (OMB, IRB, HIPPA)

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Human Research Protections

- Ensure Institutional Review Board (IRB) clearances, if needed, are obtained
  - Internally
  - From grantee agencies
- Determine if a Certificate of Confidentiality is needed
- Explore if other clearances require consideration (e.g., HIPAA)

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Considerations

- OMB clearance requirements will shape the scope of most Federally-funded evaluations
- Ensure evaluation design is solid, defensible, and matches the requested burden amount
  - Use of secondary data sources such as Federal agency datasets can reduce information collection burden
- Assess timeline for obtaining OMB clearance and its impact on implementation of data collection

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Implementation and Data Collection in Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations

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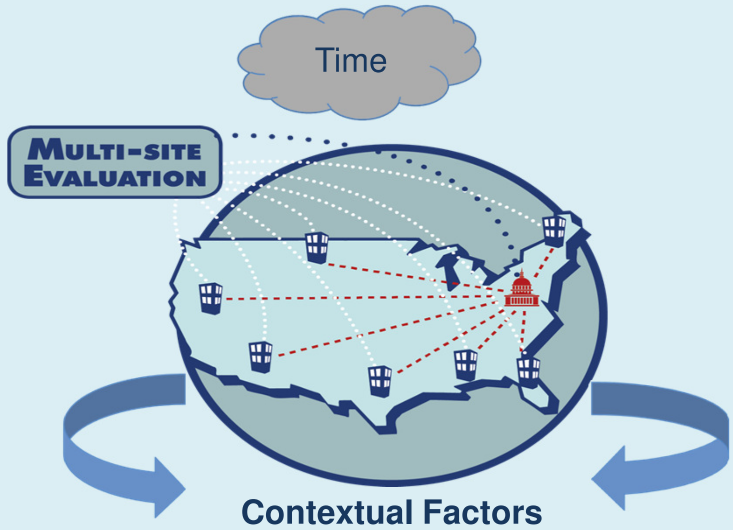
Implementing Federally Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations



Multi-Site Evaluation Implementation

What Gets You to the Field

Pre-Data Collection

- Managing relationship with grantees (scheduling, timing)
- Protocol Development
- Address Federal reporting requirements
- Managing data collection systems

What Goes on in the Field

Data Collection

- Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance
- Types of Data collection
- Quality Control

Pre-Data Collection: Manage Relationships with Grantees

- Build relationships with the grantees and re-affirm the nature of the evaluation as one that is participatory, which may facilitate buy-in
  - Learn as much as you can about each grantee's
  - Obtain information about the communities in which these programs operate and they serve
  - Factor preliminary field visits if budget permit
  - Provide grantee program staff overview of planned evaluation

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Pre-Data Collection: Protocols Development

Rationale for Various protocol

Ensure systematic and consistent procedures
Maximize data quality
Typically large evaluation team
Heterogeneity of grantees

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Pre-Data Collection: Survey Protocol

- **Evaluation Staff and Evaluation Participants**
  – Instructions for questionnaires, other instruments
  – User manuals for data collection systems
  – Instructions on data submission
  – Guidance on client retention
  – Client/Consumer incentives
  – Information on timing of data collection

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Pre-Data Collection: Field Visit Protocol

- **Evaluation Staff and Evaluation Participants**
  – Evaluation staff's roles and responsibilities
  – Frequency and timing of field visits
  – Scheduling procedures and materials
  – Field visit activities/agenda/schedule
  – Description of field visit participants
  – Logistical Information
  – Cultural competency and appropriateness
  – Recruitment procedures, instructions and materials

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Pre-Data Collection
Data Collection “Systems”:

Quantitative Data

Telephone
Mailed
Web-based/Online

Qualitative Data

Field Visits
Document Review

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Web-based/Online

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Most cost-efficient data collection and management for multi-site • Allows electronic submission of data (eliminates the need to mail data) • Permits real-time reviewing and editing of data • Greater data confidentiality	• Costly to develop • Grantee staff turnover may require repeated trainings • Grantees may lack “trained” staff • Technical problems sometimes occur in data collection or analysis • Keying and spelling issues

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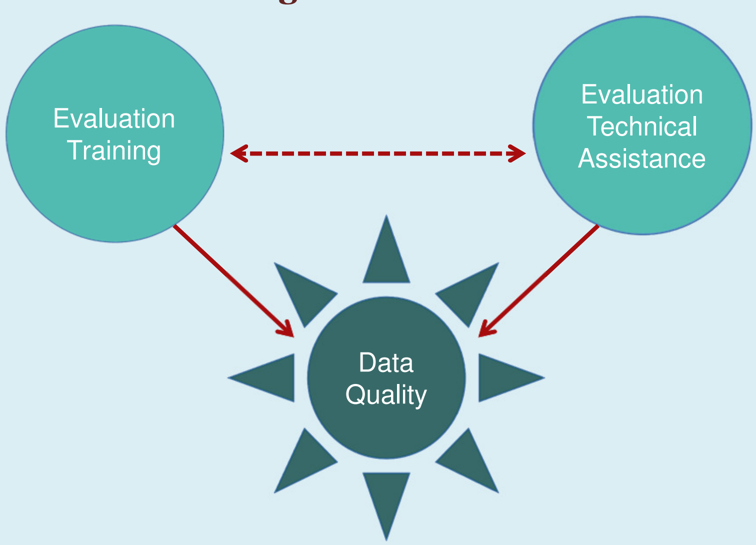
What Goes on In the Field
Data Collection

Data Collection:
Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance



Evaluation Training/TA

- Rationale
  - Minimize "frustration" with data collection
  - Ensure accurate and appropriate data collection
  - Maximize data quality
- Considerations
  - Will an TA needs assessment be conducted?
  - How will technical assistance be provided?
  - What are the grantee resources?
  - Frequency of training on evaluation and data collection instruments

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Examples of Technical Assistance

- Data submission
- Accessing and using online data collection system
- Following-up with clients
- Training of new staff on evaluation, data collection instruments or online system

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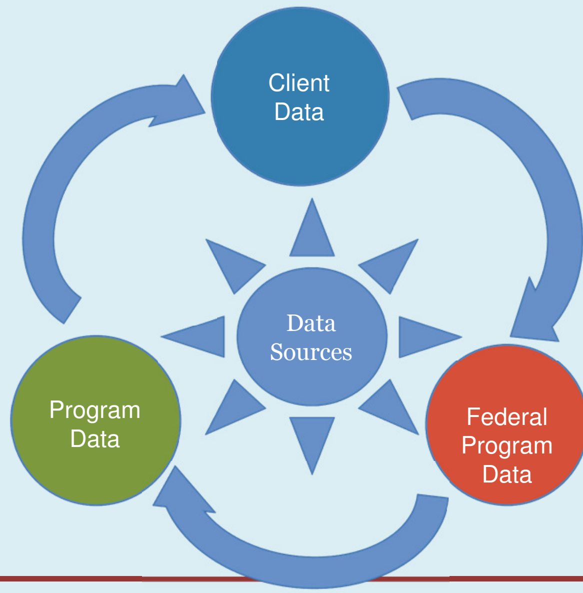
Managing Data Collection



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Managing Data Collection: Client/Consumer Data

- Access and clearance at grantee level
- Determining who collects, and how client/consumer data is collected
- Variability of program length for client/consumers across grantees and within programs
- Heterogeneous client/consumers across grantees and within programs
- Tracking program participants in longitudinal designs

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Managing Data Collection: Program Data

- Issues of access, clearance at the grantee level
- Program interpretation of questions on data collection instrument
- Varying services, programs, interventions, strategies with varying frequencies and intensities of dosage
- Differences in program goals/objectives
- Cultural considerations
- Factor differences in community where programs are located

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Managing Data Collection: Federal Program Data

- Issues of access and clearance
- Scope of data (individual, program versus community)
- Differences in variable measures
- Tracking/matching issues

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Managing Data Collection Field Visits, Cont.

Evaluation Teams

Pre-Site Visit
- Scheduling
- Logistics

On-Site
- Observations
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Debriefing

Post-Site Visit
- Debrief
- Follow-up
- Thank participants

- Clients
- Program Staff
- Grantee Partners
- Other Stakeholders

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Maintaining Integrity and Data Quality

- Security and confidentiality of data
- Periodic re-training of evaluation staff
- Routine review of data as part of data quality control
- Implementation of logic checks to highlight illogical or contradictory data
- Double recording of interviews or focus groups

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Data Management in Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations

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Data Management: Complexity of Data Collected

Multiple Methods
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Abstraction of information from program records

Multiple Respondent Types
- Program Staff
- Clients
- Other key stakeholders

Multiple Time Points
- Baseline
- Follow-up (e.g., discharge, program termination)

Across Multiple Sites

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Quantitative Data Management: Protocols

- Given complexity and volume of data from multiple sites, important to have detailed quantitative data management protocols in place
- Even with comprehensive protocols, may still encounter data quality issues
- Protocols should address:
  - Timelines for data quality checks
  - Identification of potential data quality issues
  - Solutions for data quality issues

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Quantitative Data Management: Data Quality Checks

Paper-and-Pencil

- Receive paper-and-pencil data on a regularly scheduled basis
- Review of data immediately upon receipt to identify any potential data quality issues and conduct additional reviews as data are entered

Electronic

- Built-in logic checks to aid data collection and quality
- Good practice to quality check data to ensure logic checks are functioning as intended

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Quantitative Data Management: Data Quality Issues

- Duplicate cases
  - Grantee staff "submitting" data multiple times (electronic data collection only)
  - Collection of data by grantee staff within sites with inconsistent protocol for Client ID#
  - Collection of data by grantee staff across sites with chance duplication of Client ID#
- Non-matching data
  - Can occur across instruments or across waves of data collection (longitudinal data collection only)
- Logical inconsistencies
  - Example: respondent endorses behavior (e.g., alcohol use) in one section of survey, but not another

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Quantitative Data Management: Data Quality Solutions

Typically requires contact with grantee

Grantee can check with respondent or review program records

May require additional grantee training to increase accuracy of data collection

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Qualitative Data Management: Transcription of Audio Files

- Systems for delivering qualitative interview data to transcriptionist while in the field
- Provide transcriptionist with project content information and/or grantee-level information to improve quality of transcript
- Engage bilingual transcriptionist if data are collected from grantees with non-English speaking clients and/or staff

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Qualitative Data Management: Transcript Cleaning/Certification

- Purpose of cleaning/certification
  - Initial preparation and content expert review before inclusion in qualitative data software
- Protocols for cleaning/certification
- Challenges/lessons learned
  - Helpful to have individual who participated in interview/focus group as cleaner/certifier
  - Use of one "tracker" to manage information from multiple grantees is critical

Qualitative Data Management: Coding

- Based on predefined set of codes or examining data for emerging themes
- Consensus coding exercises to provide guidance to coders on nuances of transcripts and codebook

Challenges	Lessons Learned
• Large-scale nature of Federally-funded multi-site evaluations makes it difficult for team members to be familiar with all sites • Original attendee may not be available to code given natural staff attrition over course of 3- to 5-year project	• To familiarize, materials include document review, grant application abstracts, grantee Web sites, etc. • Helpful to group coding assignments to increase consistency of coding (e.g., by interviewee type, site)

Qualitative Data Management: Response to Open-Ended Survey Questions

- "String" data often easier to transfer into Excel for content review
- Challenges/lessons learned
  - Similar data may present multiple times because of capitalization/spelling differences within and across grantees (e.g., Behavioral health, Behavioral Health, behavioral health)

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Data Management: Timelines

- Consider aligning evaluation data collection time points with Federal funder-required data collection time points
  - Decrease burden to grantees
  - Increase follow-up data collection rates
- Contractual reporting requirements will drive data collection end dates
  - Must stop data collection early enough to allow for cleaning, analysis, and write-up

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Data Analysis and Reporting in Federally-Funded Multi-Site Behavioral Health Evaluations

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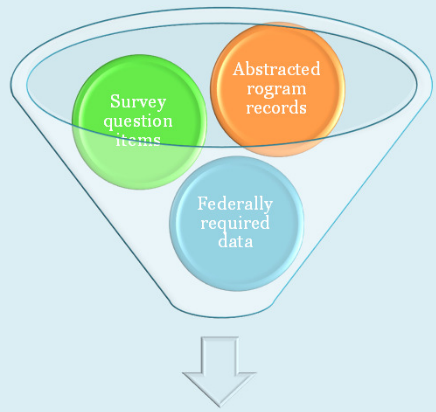
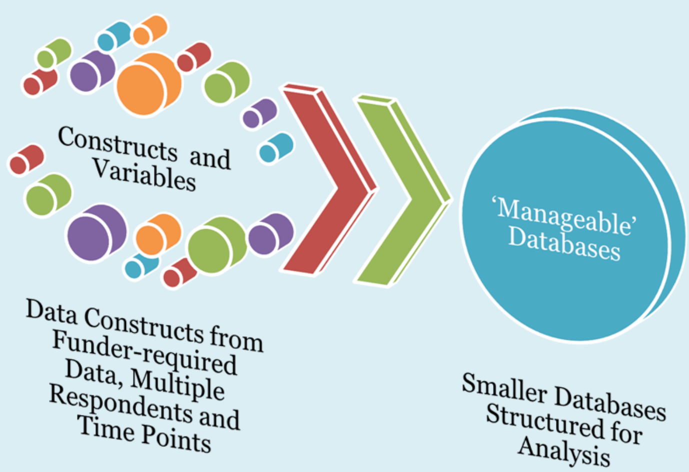
Quantitative Data Reduction – Managing Volumes of Data



Constructs for Data Analysis

Data Reduction – Creating 'Master' Databases



Quantitative Data Reduction – Creating 'Master' Databases

Client Database

- Client-level constructs
- Data analytic strategies inform organization of database:
  - *Survival analysis*: Multiple rows of data per client, with one row per time point
  - *Multivariate analysis*: One row of data contains all longitudinal data

Agency Database

- Agency-level constructs
- Each row of data can list data from agency obtained at different time points for longitudinal analyses

Master Database

- As clients are associated with a given agency, can link agency-level data with funder-required data from individual clients
- All key constructs listed in single row of data
- Each row of data contains select data constructs from all respondent types and data sources collected at different time points

Data Limitations – Secondary and Funder-Required Data Sources

Challenges

- Missing data from funder required data sources
- Data must be requested from Federal funder
- Inconsistent information across data sources
- Changes in question items during the evaluation (e.g., OMB)

Lessons Learned

- Consider use of fewer longitudinal data points to account for missing data over time
- Develop inclusion and exclusion criteria for data analysis
- Use multiple data sources for creation of constructs

Considerations for Analysis Of Qualitative Data

- Data reduction of qualitative interview data
  - Review of transcribed interviews across multiple respondents and time points
  - Development of codebooks to select quotes and identify key themes
- Development of themes relevant to Federal funder
  - Federal programs and initiatives outlined in RFA

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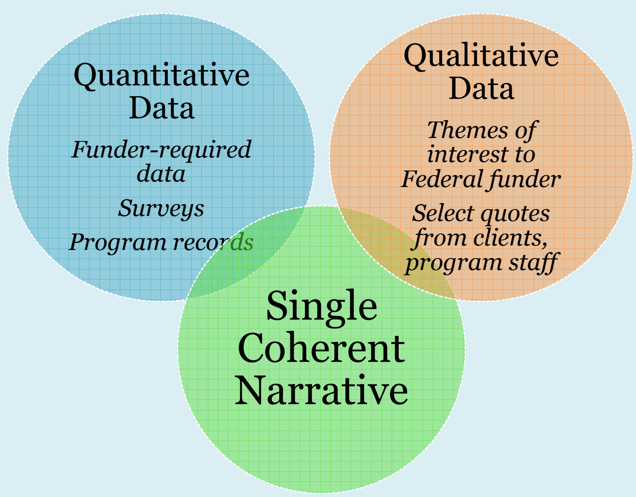
Integration of Results



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Integration of Results (cont'd)

Challenges	Lessons Learned
• Variation in results and perspectives of respondents across multiple sites • Inconsistent and/or contradictory results across funder-required quantitative data and qualitative data sources	• Regular meetings to share findings between quantitative and qualitative teams • Continued participatory involvement with Federally funded agencies • Perspectives of multiple respondents and methodological approaches can provide context for findings

Reporting Findings to Federal Funder

- Contractual requirements for reporting evaluation results
  - Periodic reporting to Federal funder
  - Timeline for submission of final report
- Soliciting preferences from Federal funder
  - Key evaluation questions of interest

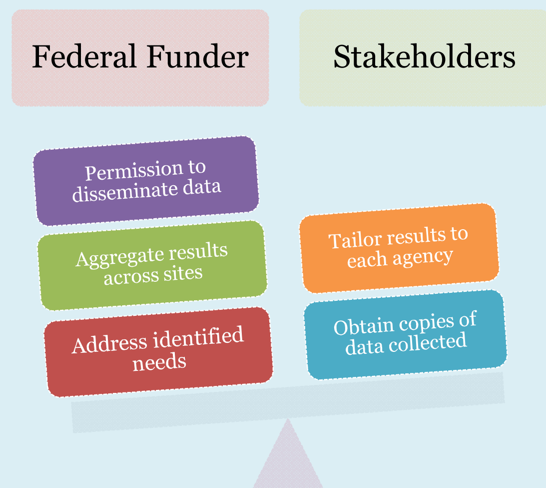
Presentation Of Findings To Stakeholders

- Participatory involvement from stakeholders in presentation of results from the evaluation
  - *What* evaluation findings are of most interest to stakeholders?
  - *How* to best present results of evaluation to stakeholders?
    - Webinar, Power Point presentation, fact sheets

Considerations for Presentation of Findings

- Simplifying complex analytic findings
  - Key descriptive statistics
  - Graphics and visual presentations
  - Translation of evaluation results into specific recommendations
  - Who is the target audience?
    - Federal funder
    - Stakeholders

Balancing Reporting Interests of Federal Funder and Stakeholders



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THANK YOU!

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Summary Points: Methodological Issues

- Consideration of Federal program goals and grantee-level contextual issues is key
- Rapid submission for OMB clearance to allow for early implementation of data collection activities
- Use time before OMB clearance to get to know grantees

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Summary Points: Data Collection

- Be mindful of time constraints and timing of data collection
- Carefully manage the relationship with the grantees
- Develop and use a of variety of different protocols
- Be prepared to provide repeated TA/Training

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Summary Points: Data Management

- Multiple methods, multiple respondent types, and multiple time points across multiple sites lead to a very large amount of data collected
- Use structured protocols to identify and solve potential quantitative data issues
- Familiarize self with grantees to increase efficiency and accuracy of qualitative coding

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Summary Points: Data Analysis and Reporting

- Strategies for data reduction are needed to create useful, meaningful databases for conducting analyses in large-scale multi-site evaluations
- Development of protocols for integrating results across quantitative and qualitative analyses is crucial for creating a coherent evaluation findings narrative
- Presenting evaluation findings often involves balancing contractual requirements from Federal funder and needs and interests of stakeholders

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Questions?

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