

Evaluation Committee Meeting: 2015-01-26

Monday, January 26, 2015 2:00 PM

Meeting Date: Monday, January 26, 2015 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Meeting Location: Conference Call
Phone Number: 877-273-4202
Room Number: 396-404-692

Meeting Participants

VTERB	Kate O'Neill, Brian Flynn, Alexi Potter
VDH	Rhonda Williams, Eoana Sturges
RTI	Nathan Mann, Suzanne Dolina

Meeting Notes

Independent Evaluation and Board Oversight

The governor's funding proposal calls for mostly level funding for tobacco control program components. There is a proposed cut to cessation of approximately \$45k. The proposal calls for the elimination of funding for VTERB, which would also result in the elimination of the program's external evaluation. VTERB would be replaced with an advisory committee to VDH.

The committee discussed the implications of this potential change along with some strategies for moving forward. Rhonda Williams mentioned that she thinks evaluation is important because it informs performance management and metrics. Brian Flynn mentioned that there are state requirements to have results based accountability for state funded programs. Brian stated that the tobacco control program is a model for results based accountability and that this terminology should be used when making a case for VTERB and evaluation.

Brian also cited RTI's previous work for Vermont where RTI showed an effect of the VTCP, independent of cigarette taxes and smoke-free indoor air laws, on cigarette consumption in Vermont. Nathan Mann mentioned that RTI has also published these findings from national models.

The Evaluation Committee would like for RTI to send copies of previous RTI reports along with citations and PDFs from published manuscripts on this topic.

- Nathan Mann will send the Evaluation Committee copies of previous RTI reports demonstrating the effect of the Vermont Tobacco Control Program on cigarette consumption as well as citations and PDFs for published manuscripts showing this effect nationally. (Due Date: Friday, January 30, 2015) [Responsible Person: Nathan Mann]

Nathan Mann mentioned smoking-attributable health care analyses that RTI has done for other states, particularly with respect to Medicaid expenditures that are paid directly by the state. Brian Flynn also brought up the California program study published by Lightwood and Glantz and asked if RTI has done similar studies. Nathan Mann replied that he is aware of the Lightwood and Glantz study for CA but RTI has not performed a similar study. Brian also stated that VT is in the middle of a rapidly changing environment and he couldn't see the usefulness of directing RTI to spend time and resources doing this type of study. Nathan Mann replied that the health care costs analyses he was referencing would only take him a couple of hours to complete for Vermont. Brian Flynn and Alexi Potter said they felt this data was already somewhat available and not particularly salient for their present needs since the proposed

changes do not represent a large cut in terms of dollar amounts. Later in the call, Brian Flynn and Alexi Potter both suggested that perhaps RTI should complete a smoking-related health care costs analysis since it can be done with just a few hours of RTI staff time. They asked Nathan Mann to move forward with it and to provide the Evaluation Committee with a summary of the findings.

- RTI will prepare a brief summary of the smoking-related health care costs for Vermont, with a specific focus on smoking-attributable health care costs for the Medicaid population. RTI will deliver this to the Evaluation Committee (**Due Date: Soon - specific date was not determined during the call**) [**Responsible Person: Nathan Mann**]

Data Presentation from VDH

Rhonda Williams presented some slides showing key data and measures from a variety of sources including BRFSS, cessation services program data, and Medicaid data from DVHA. Rhonda mentioned VDH's work with Medicaid, including getting the CPT codes for cessation counseling activated. VDH has data on this based on what providers are doing. VDH is also tracking what NRT use among Medicaid recipients looks like. DVHA was concerned about increased cost of providing NRT to Medicaid recipients but is interested in the types of NRT being used and how NRT is being used. VDH and DVHA are looking at this together to see if there are changes in this over time. VDH has realized that VT is underserving Medicaid population and has taken steps to address this. One effort was the rebranding of 802Quits. Rhonda presented data on cessation program utilization by Medicaid recipients. VDH wants providers to be talking about and treating tobacco with their clients. Over time, if providers do this better, there will likely be fewer referrals to quit services. But there will be population-level measures from the BRFSS that should show some increased positive outcomes associated with increased health care provider intervention and treatment of tobacco use. Rhonda also mentioned using some data from the Vermont Adult Tobacco Survey (ATS) to inform some of these questions. Rhonda also presented summary survey data on awareness of eligibility for assistance and measures of provider interaction and provider recommendations along with comparisons on differences between what providers are recommending and what tobacco users are using. Finally, Rhonda presented some demographic information (income and education).

Rhonda Williams also called attention to the completion of Vermont's first evaluation of the Down & Dirty campaign and presented some highlights of this evaluation. Evaluation was completed by RSCG on Facebook. Brian asked a question about how RSCG sampled / obtained their respondents and whether or not those people were pulled from the Down & Dirty Facebook members. Rhonda said she thought the same selection criteria was used but the respondents were pulled from a pool of Facebook members outside of the Down & Dirty group. However, she said she would confirm this and let Brian and the Evaluation Committee know. Initial results show high brand awareness and positive brand receptivity.

Kate O'Neill will attach a copy of Rhonda's presentation to the Evaluation Committee meeting minutes for this meeting.

Determine Scope of Work for RTI Contract

Alexi Potter said the rest of the call would be to review the topic of RTI's Scope of Work with a mind towards having the Evaluation Committee make recommendations to the full Board.

Kate O'Neill summarized that the intention behind this is to capitalize on the next 6 months of the evaluation and to plan in advance for the last 16 months of the evaluation. Opportunity to look at the current contract to look at what needs to be done in terms of evaluation and prioritize efforts and expertise. Kate is really wanting the program to think critically about what it wants RTI to do and provide VTCP with.

Alexi Potter mentioned one of the issues is how VTCP is starting to think about how to shift RTI's efforts towards providing context and feedback and other insights instead of just working with and representing numbers and data that the program either has already or can prepare somewhat easily.

Rhonda summarized a call that she and Matt Thomas had with Nathan Mann in December about the

topic of how to address not achieving 2020 goals and what the program should be doing instead. In VDH's most recent STAT presentation, Rhonda presented data on other states that are achieving lower prevalence and reasons that might account for that. Rhonda focused this on sustainability and showed how some other states (such as FL, CA, OK) that have sustainability built right into their program or budget. Rhonda said this is an issue she thinks RTI might be suited to help address for Vermont.

The group discussed the timing of RTI's annual report and raised the potential of delivering a the next annual report in June 2015. Kate O'Neill asked the group to think critically about what information and content would be most useful to have in such a document. Alexi mentioned perhaps framing it in terms of a forward looking perspective based around the 2020 Goals. Alexi raised the issue of ranking data or translating data into cost effectiveness or outcome effectiveness, etc. and whether that would be something that RTI can help with.

There were also discussions about perhaps using the next Annual Report as a basis for examining the program as a whole over time and present a retrospective summary.

Rhonda mentioned the possibility of pursuing publications and said she would view that as a higher priority than monthly calls, etc. Nathan agreed that publications would be an important area to pursue. Some folks didn't feel like this was the time to pursue publications. Rhonda agreed but said that it's hard to get something back once it goes away and perhaps VT should think about what would be a middle ground. Perhaps it would be a number of short issue briefs developed for each of the program areas.