

Brief #4: Designing an Evaluation Plan for the Acute Care Transitions Advisory Council

April 30, 2024

Purpose of this Brief

This brief describes how an evaluation plan will help the council confirm the core questions being asked and link data gathered to each question. The term evaluation refers to a process that is used to better understand a project, service, or system. An evaluation plan will be used to systematically assess the barriers that are occurring for people who are unable to transition into the community after an acute care stay in the emergency room and/or hospital. This evaluation plan will be used to make recommendations to the legislature that include potential solutions for moving forward.

Goals of the Acute Care Transition Advisory Council

The major goals of the ACTAC Council evaluation involve creating recommendations that will advise the state on strategies for:

1. Improving regional capacity for acute care transitions,
2. Providing recommendations that will result in a measurement and evaluation system using implementation science, and
3. Creating statewide strategies for addressing geographic, racial and ethnic disparities in addressing acute care transitions.

What is an Evaluation Plan?

A strong evaluation plan helps engage community partners who will participate in shaping the evaluation questions and assisting in the gathering information. The steps involved in creating an evaluation plan include:

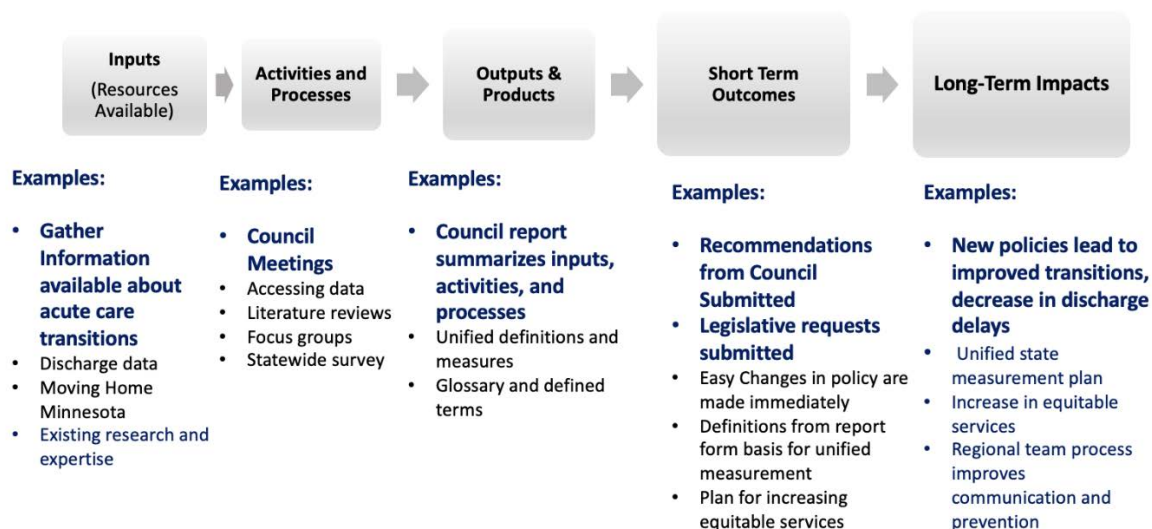
- Engaging community partners in the process,
- Describing the acute care transition barriers and challenges,
- Designing the evaluation plan and creating a timeline for moving forward,
- Gathering evidence to answer each question, and
- Justifying conclusions and making recommendations.

How Can a Logic Model Help the Council Create a Report with Recommendations for the State?

A logic model provides a visual picture describing the activities and resources that will be used to bring about change. The visual in this figure describes an evaluation pathway starting with the resources and

people that go into assessing acute care barriers to effective transitions back into the community. The activities and process box below describes what will be done as part of the evaluation and the outputs and products that are used to conduct the acute care assessment. Short-term and long-term impacts are the anticipated results that occur based on the actions taken by the council.

Creating a Logic Model to Address Barriers to Acute Care Transitions



Evaluating Different Sources of Data

Evaluation systems are meant to help gather different types of information that come in different formats. Some data are gathered by organizations to understand the acute care discharge delays that are occurring in hospitals, while other types of data focus on the transition plan itself, or on the implementation of evidence-based practices in community settings. Interviews, focus groups, and other qualitative data help evaluators understand the details and context of the acute care barriers encountered. Surveys, pilot studies, review of billing or service data, are examples of quantitative data. Evaluation involves triangulating the major messages that are gathered across different data sources based on each evaluation question that is being explored. Themes that are showing up across one or more data sources help confirm its importance.

Evaluation Resources

The following websites include more information about evaluation:

[Community Toolbox](#) – Evaluation Chapters

[Program Development and Evaluation](#) – University of Wisconsin-Madison

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Framework for Program Evaluation](#)