

# Evaluating the UCEDD Core Grant

**Facilitator: Dan Zhang**

Participants introduced themselves and stated the types of evaluation they're involved in currently. Types of evaluation included technical assistance, indicator data, CQL measures, Part C, Positive Behavioral Supports, health promotion, and children's medical services.

## Evaluation Challenges for the Core Grant and Strategies

UCEDD staff member offered that they are evaluating projects, not the overall Center. Also noted that a challenge is that it can be difficult to convince PIs to include impact indicators and then convince the funders to include it so the data can be used in the UCEDD core grant evaluation.

A UCEDD Director spoke about the need to leverage core dollars and their strategy is to match every dollar with other grants.

A UCEDD Director discussed how their Center is smaller and they have not done a lot of evaluation and looks at the five year plan as a way to incorporate more evaluation. The Center conducted a needs assessment to design a strategic plan that is being matched to the needs of the state and that is allowing them to bring in more grants and opportunities for evaluation.

Facilitator discussed AIDD plan to streamline the process of the FOA with the supporting criteria and the Tier 2 evaluation tool that evaluates the grant proposals, and that according to evaluation it needs to be objective. Grant proposals need to be objective based. Regardless of size of project, the stated objective and timeline needs to be followed. Academically, objective based evaluation is a good approach. UCEDDs can all follow the four core functions and have similar models for evaluation.

A UCEDD staff member has standardized all the surveys and that has been helpful in evaluation.

A UCEDD director pointed out that evaluation is not the same as research.

Dawn discussed the QRS workgroup that is comprised of AIDD, three UCEDDs and AUUCD URC staff. The workgroup is working on the five year report. AIDD wants an individualized and standardized report. The logic model is standardized, and the PPR is the individualized method. Next steps of the workgroup are to send out the recommended changes to the UCEDD Directors for feedback, finalize the changes, and submit to AIDD.

The facilitator, who is also on the QRS workgroup, reiterated that the workgroup understands the concerns of the UCEDDs and have recommended a streamline, simplified report, as well as using NIRS to get data.

A few UCEDD Directors expressed concerns around this citing lots of confusion around evaluation and research and the difficulty in simplifying different classifications of evaluation, performance measurements versus how and why. Another UCEDD director said that one of the struggles with evaluation is the core versus the infrastructure and how that is evaluated.

The next part of the discussion focused on how are the core functions getting done and how can the community help UCEDDS determine what are the big questions to answer and how to answer. Thoughts on this included coming up with a measure for each of the cores, previous attempts have looked at tying evaluation across the entire DD Network, to include UCEDDs, P &A, and DD Councils.

There are two different evaluation methods that are being discussed, the first being to pick a project and evaluate it and report the findings and the second is evaluating the overall UCEDD.

Karen- for example, we do try to use NIRS to inform the outcomes and also have an objective measure to use a team to how likely would this be to have happened without us? We do have a state foundation that gives money to disability orgs and they have a set of criteria for evaluation and we use that framework

There are limits to UCEDDs, as one director discussed having a small faculty, and that can hinder being as responsive as they want to be due to being a smaller UCEDD.

A UCEDD Director suggested being responsive by thinking how their Center can develop research projects and leverage their knowledge to develop ideas and strategies to meet the values and needs of people with disabilities and their families, not just be a research institute.

It was reiterated that the proposed changes from the QRS workgroup are being sent out to the UCEDD Directors for review and changes will not happen until 2020 when members of the workgroup will pilot it.