

Evaluation Plan



The overall purpose of the evaluation plan is to measure the extent to which goals and objectives of the 10-year plan are met. The evaluation plan is designed to inform and provide evidence to stakeholders and funding agencies about progress being made in New Mexico on nutrition and physical activity behaviors and environmental supports, as well as obesity, overweight, and related chronic diseases. The evaluation plan will be carried out through the use of surveillance systems and routine monitoring, measurement, and assessment of interventions and activities that support the plan.

The strategic plan and accompanying logic model, upon which the evaluation plan is based, are products of the organized input of multiple partners, and were developed using evidence-based practice and the collective knowledge of state health program officials and experts from the community. The logic model is included at the end of this section to illustrate the relationship between partner activities and their intended effects.

The evaluation plan is guided by what partners and stakeholders want to know, within the limits of resources available to conduct evaluation and data already collected as part of the regular state surveillance system. Like the overall state plan, the evaluation plan will be refined and improved as New Mexico partners gain experience in this new collaborative endeavor to impact the obesity epidemic in New Mexico.

The New Mexico Department of Health with guidance from the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council will oversee the implementation of the evaluation plan using a combination of Departmental epidemiology and evaluation resources plus partners' evaluation resources. The University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center has extensive experience in evaluation, and has been identified as the lead agency to provide technical assistance and tools to carry out the evaluation plan. A representative from the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center will participate on the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council Executive Committee and will consult with Executive Committee members about collecting and analyzing information, drawing conclusions and results, and developing reports for dissemination.

Members of the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council will contribute to the New Mexico Healthier Weight Plan Annual Progress Monitoring Reports as a condition of Council membership, and will routinely review these reports so they may assess the progress and impact of

collaborative efforts and strategies contained within the plan, and adjust them as needed. A Council evaluation workgroup will be formed to determine the best method(s) to collect accurate evaluation information from partners. As the plan is implemented, the intent is to identify and secure additional funding to build upon the accomplishments of the 10-year plan, using evaluation data to support applications for new or continued funding. An important outcome of the evaluation plan is to contribute to the evidence base of successful interventions addressing overweight and obesity by testing and further refining strategies to improve nutrition and physical activity behaviors and reducing health-related disparities in New Mexico.

Surveillance and Evaluation of Long-term Objectives (10 years)

Surveillance is “the continuous monitoring of routine data collection on various factors over a regular interval of time” (US DHHS, 2005). These evaluation efforts will rely heavily on surveillance strategies led by the New Mexico Department of Health Office of Epidemiology in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Department of Health surveillance systems will monitor obesity and overweight trends, as well as provide data to assess other long-term objectives associated with implementation of the multi-level, comprehensive approach to promote physical activity and nutrition for healthier weight. The Department of Health will explore opportunities to include new questions in these surveys as identified by the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council.

The Department of Health currently uses the following surveillance systems and survey data to track targeted behaviors, obesity, overweight, arthritis, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and other information related to the plan’s statewide long-term objectives:

- New Mexico Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System (NM BRFSS)
- New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey (NM YRRS)
- New Mexico Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (NM PRAMS)
- University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center New Mexico Tumor Registry
- New Mexico Vital Statistics
- Health Policy Commission Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data (HPC HIDD)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System (CDC PedNSS)

- CDC Wide-ranging OnLine Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER)
- National Cancer Institute Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER)
- U.S. Census

Evaluation of Intermediate Objectives (5 years)

Intermediate objectives contained within the New Mexico plan are designed to promote and achieve sustainable changes in policies, regulations, environmental and social norms, and physical activity and nutrition behaviors. Three to five objectives were developed for each of the six settings plus one overarching intermediate objective to unify partner efforts. Intervention reports from partners will contribute to monitoring progress towards achieving the nutrition and physical activity intermediate objectives since state surveillance data is not designed to measure community-specific data.

The Department of Health currently uses the following data sources to track policies, regulations, and other information related to the intermediate objectives:

- New Mexico Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
- New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey (NM YRRS)
- New Mexico Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (NM PRAMS)
- New Mexico Health Policy Commission
- New Mexico Legislature
- New Mexico Municipal League
- National Conference of State Legislators
- CDC Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity

Evaluation of Short-term Objectives (1-2 years)

By December 2007 the Department of Health will develop a system (The New Mexico Healthier Weight Plan Annual Progress Monitoring Report) to collect primary data for the short-term objectives, with input from the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council. Short-term objectives for each setting focus on knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Assessment of these short-term objectives, including the development of indicators, is very specific and not typically available from state-level data sources. The evaluation of short-term objectives will rely heavily on intervention-specific data, e.g., pre- and post tests or surveys, and on information from partners.

In spring 2006 the Department of Health will conduct a statewide survey among adults about their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs toward physical activity, nutrition, determinants of obesity, readiness to change behaviors, and other related issues. Results of the survey will inform future planning efforts, and may provide baseline data for certain objectives.

Process Evaluation

Process evaluation objectively describes implementation progress and assesses challenges and barriers to implementation in order to inform future plans. In the New Mexico plan, it will be used to document and analyze partner activities and provide information to improve ongoing implementation efforts. The Department of Health and the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council will work together to obtain process evaluation data from partners on an annual or semi-annual basis. The University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center is working with Department of Health staff to pilot a process evaluation tool in spring 2006 with at least 25 partners. Several partners provided input to determine the most effective approaches to collecting data and evaluating the plan's activities. Process evaluation data collection will be organized by the plan settings and strategic goals. Examples of information that will be collected include program activities, information on people served (e.g., number and demographic information) and resources used (including staffing and materials).

The evaluation plan also includes training for partners to improve their capacity to conduct evaluation activities. The evaluation training timeline will be determined by the results of a Department of Health training needs assessment among partners.

Finally, when planning participants identified major elements of the New Mexico plan, they emphasized the need to continue building inter-organizational capacity to contribute to successful implementation of nutrition, physical activity, and healthier weight efforts. As a result, the evaluation plan contains elements to assess the quality and strength of the collaborative network that has evolved from the planning process. The University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center will conduct an annual assessment of the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council to evaluate partner satisfaction with the plan implementation process, the benefits of council membership, and partner participation, commitment, and contribution of resources (including staffing and technical resources) to achieving state plan objectives.

NM HEALTHIER WEIGHT PLAN LOGIC MODEL



