Meeting Guide for Phase V

Evaluating PATCH

Meeting Guide for Phase V: Evaluating PATCH

Introduction to phase V meeting guide

Evaluation is an integral part of PATCH. As discussed in Chapter 2 of the Concept Guide, you need to plan for evaluation from the beginning of PATCH. Some communities find it helpful to establish an evaluation working group early in the PATCH process (page CG2-20). Other communities give these responsibilities to the steering committee and intervention working groups.

The evaluation process serves two major purposes. First, it will help you to monitor and assess progress during the five phases of PATCH. Is progress being made toward assessing needs, setting priorities, and carrying out interventions? In Chapter 6 of the Concept Guide, the section on Monitoring the Phases of PATCH includes examples of evaluation issues to be considered for each phase. A tool to help monitor progress during the phases is the PATCH Assessment and Tracking tool (PAT), which is located as Appendix 1 in the Concept Guide.

You will also want to determine if the group process used is working well. Is the group process for the community planning open, candid, and participatory? In the Meeting Guide, the section on Evaluating the Group Process Used (page MGO-8) contains a self-assessment tool that can be used with the community or working groups. Such self-assessments should be made throughout the PATCH process so that corrective actions can be taken to nurture or refocus the group. In the meeting guides for each phase, you will find suggestions for monitoring the phases in the sections on Preparation, Wrap-Up, and Topics for Discussion After the Community Group Meeting.

Second, the evaluation process enables you to examine interventions to determine if activities are completed and if positive changes occur. This Meeting Guide for Phase V focuses on evaluating interventions. Chapter 6 of the Concept Guide provides suggestions and steps for planning evaluations appropriate for your PATCH community. An example of an evaluation plan can be found in Chapter 5 of the Concept Guide, and an evaluation worksheet can be found in the "Checklist for Designing a Successful Intervention" located in the handouts for phase IV.

This Meeting Guide for Phase V is designed to assist you with planning and conducting the community group meeting(s) related to phase V. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the other two parts of the PATCH materials: the PATCH Concept Guide and the Visual Aids packet. This guide includes a suggested agenda, an estimate of the time required to complete the agenda, and suggested text or activities you can use as you undertake each segment of the agenda.

Feel free to adapt the materials in this guide to meet your own needs and circumstances depending on how your community approaches evaluation and how evaluation issues have been integrated into meetings in phases I–IV. Carefully review Chapter 6 in the Concept Guide for discussion points and examples not repeated in this meeting guide. Expand, shorten, or omit topics on the agenda on the basis of your community group's level of understanding and on the amount of detail appropriate for the working groups.

If you have questions, identify expertise within your community or call your state health department, college, university, or other resources for assistance.

You should plan to review working group accomplishments before this community group meeting and to debrief after the meeting with groups such as your steering committee, partners, and working group chairpersons. At the end of this guide, there is a section on Topics for Discussion After the Community Group Meeting for Phase V.

Preparations for community group meeting for phase V

Suggested Agenda:

<div align="center">

Community Group Meeting

Agenda

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Welcome and announcements	10*
PATCH update and meeting goals	10
Why evaluate?	15
Evaluating intervention activities	25
Deciding what to evaluate	30
Using the evaluation worksheet	20
Updates from working groups	15
Wrap-up and closure	10
Meeting as working groups	varies

*Estimated time in minutes

Time Required: About 2 1/2 hours. The time needed will vary depending on the level of understanding of the group members, the dynamics of the group, and the work already completed by working groups. Some topics on the agenda might be discussed generally with the community group and in more detail with the working groups.

Preparation: Review results of previous meetings before proceeding. Review Chapter 6 in the Concept Guide. Review, as needed, Chapter 4 for information on developing objectives, Chapter 5 for information on developing work plans and evaluation plans, and the "Checklist for Designing a Successful Intervention" located with the handouts for phase IV. Review PD-XII, the Intervention Activity Summary in the Program Documentation, located in Appendix 3. Valuable discussion points and examples provided in Chapter 6 of the Concept Guide are not repeated in this meeting guide. Discuss with stakeholders and funding sources, as appropriate, their expectations and requirements for evaluation.

Determine the level of understanding of your group, and expand or shorten the discussion of topics. You may want to omit or only briefly review evaluation issues that have been integrated into meetings in phases I–IV or those that have already been performed by a working group. Determine the level of detail appropriate for the community group and for the working groups. Prepare an agenda. ■

Welcome and announcements

Preparation: Review and revise the meeting goals, and prepare as an overhead or write on a flip chart. Prepare to quickly review the agenda for the group. ■

Welcome participants, thank them for their efforts, and make general announcements.

Distribute and briefly discuss the agenda.

PATCH update and meeting goals

Preparation: Determine the accomplishments to be highlighted and the level of review appropriate for your group. You may want to ask the intervention working groups established in phase IV to be ready to summarize their activities. ■

Display and discuss overhead "Five Phases of PATCH."

• Briefly review PATCH phases, where the group is in the process, and the results to date.

• Name the working groups that will report on their accomplishments later in the meeting.

Display overhead "Phase V: Evaluating PATCH." Discuss the things to be accomplished during phase V. Summarize decisions made during earlier phases, if needed.

Display and review the meeting goals, which might include the following:

• Review why it is important to evaluate interventions.

• Identify components of an evaluation plan.

• Identify steps in planning an evaluation.

• Focus our evaluation.

Why evaluate?

Preparation: Review Chapter 6 of the Concept Guide. ■

Ask the group to respond to the question, "Why should we evaluate our efforts?" Ask for a volunteer to record responses on a flip chart. Answers could include the following:

• Monitor progress.

• Assess success and effectiveness; prove we are making a difference.

• Provide accountability and to justify the program to sponsors or funders.

• Ensure we are reaching the people we hoped to reach with our activities.

• Document that we are doing what we planned.

• Provide information to help us make decisions about the program.

• Provide feedback for revising or refining our program.

• Provide feedback for staff and volunteers.

• Help obtain funding.

• Gain credibility.

• Identify unintended effects.

• Use results to publicize the program.

• Provide information to assist with replicating and disseminating the program.

As needed, display overhead "Major Reasons to Evaluate."

As we undertake an activity, we will want to know if it is a success and whether it will be worth our time and effort to repeat it or to take it to new places in the community. We will also want to know how it can be improved. Evaluation will provide the answers to these questions.

By evaluating our efforts, we can help ensure that we are using our energies and resources to do what is best for our community. Scrutinizing our efforts helps in giving feedback to the people who support us. This support can be in the form of funding, sponsoring events, or contributing time and skills.

Evaluating interventions activities

Preparation: Review in Chapter 6 the section on Program Effects (page CG6-7). ■

Display overhead "Types of Evaluation."

As we plan our evaluation we will want to include strategies for monitoring or overseeing the interventions, for determining the short- and long-term effects of the interventions, and for monitoring organizational change related to undertaking the phases of PATCH itself.

Three levels of evaluation provide a conceptual framework for developing an evaluation plan: process, impact, and outcome. Each serves a different purpose, and each is measured differently.

Process evaluation, the first level, concerns what was done. Our objectives and work plans describe the activities we will undertake to produce change. As we complete our work plans, we will want to ask: "What did we do? Did we do what we planned to do?" By comparing what was planned with what actually occurred we are conducting process evaluation.

Process evaluation will help us monitor, track, and document our activities. This information can help us understand what occurred and provide feedback to our sponsors, volunteers, and community. We can then fine-tune our program based on information about such things as which activities are working, which ones are not working, and who is–and is not–being served by the program.

Ask the group to respond to the question, "What kinds of process information do you think are important to collect?" Ask a recorder to write the answers on a flip chart. (If possible, elaborate on the responses with examples from your work plans.) The answers could include the following:

• the number of activities or sessions provided.

• the number of people who attended.

• demographics of the attendees (e.g., age, sex, ethnicity, and educational level).

• the number, type, and content of media activities.

• the activities completed to help bring about policy and environmental change.

Explain that *impact evaluation*, the second level of evaluation, is the measure of short-term effects of your intervention. Explain that many people use the term "outcome" for this level of evaluation and that you are following standard public health practice and using the term "impact" to measure the short-term effects of our program. Also explain that, in addition to focusing on process evaluation, the group should work to include impact data to strengthen the evaluation.

With impact evaluation, the important question is whether the intended changes occurred. We will want to examine the effects of our activities on individual behaviors, organizations, policy, and the environment.

Our objectives should indicate who or what we want to change, what we want to accomplish, and our criteria for success. We will want to know such things as (give examples from your work plans, if possible): *Have we achieved our attendance goals? Has the number of smokers in the intervention group declined? Have more grocery stores begun offering low-fat milk? Impact evaluation assesses the program's effectiveness in changing health-related behavior and factors that enable, motivate, and reward health-related behavior.*

Use examples from your work plans or use the following objectives to demonstrate measurable impacts that could be evaluated:

- Behavioral impact objective: By the end of our Fitness for Life course that meets once a week for 8 weeks, the percentage of participants who state they are physically active for 20 minutes three times per week will increase from 10% to 60%.

- Policy impact objective: By December 31, 1998, five of nine major worksites in the community without a clean indoor air policy will have adopted a clean indoor air policy.

- Environmental measure impact object: By December 31, 1997, three of four neighborhood grocery stores will increase the availability of low-fat dairy products as indicated by an increase in shelf space for low-fat milk.

Ask the group for examples of impact that they might wish to measure. Ask a recorder to write responses on a flip chart. Responses may include the following:

- changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

- changes in behaviors.

- increases in amount of desired services and activities.

- changes in policy (e.g., restrictions of sale of tobacco products to minors or school board rule allows use of school exercise facilities by community members during nonschool hours).

- improvements in how community agencies work together (e.g., increases in communication or commitments of staff and resources to address community problems).

- changes in social and environment factors supportive of healthy behaviors (e.g., developing a support network for family members who are caregivers of patients with Alzheimer's disease, constructing walking trails, or increasing the availability of low-fat milk in stores).

- increases in the intent to change behavior.

As appropriate, you can distribute the handout "Stages of Change" and discuss Prochaska's Transtheoretical Model. Once again, use examples that relate to your community's objectives and work plans.

Explain that the third level of evaluation is *outcome evaluation.*

Discuss that outcome evaluation is concerned with the long-term effects of our program, such as changes in health status or disease prevalence. Has the number of deaths due to heart attacks dropped? Has the quality of life in your community improved?

Explain that evaluating outcomes may be feasible when addressing causes of morbidity and mortality that have short time frames, such as preventing infant deaths or drinking and driving injuries. When addressing long-term health problems, such as mortality from heart disease or cancer, evaluation of outcomes is beyond the scope of most community programs.

Discuss that for long-term problems, evaluating changes in the behavioral risk factors that influence the morbidity and mortality is more appropriate. Many of the Healthy People 2000 objectives are concerned with these kinds of behavioral changes. Provide an example such as (give an example related to your community's health priority, if possible): "Reduce overweight to a prevalence of no more than 20 percent among people aged 20 years and older and no more than 15 percent among adolescents aged 12 through 19 years. (Baseline: 26 percent for people aged 20–74 years, 24 percent for men and 27 percent for women, and 15 percent for adolescents aged 12–19 years in 1976–80)."

Although our evaluation may not address long-term outcomes directly, we should think of our health promotion programs and their impact as contributing to the long-term outcomes of morbid-

ity and mortality change in our community. We may not be able to prove that our efforts caused the changes in morbidity and mortality. But, if we aggressively track and document our efforts by collecting both process and impact data, we may be able to suggest that our efforts contributed toward these outcome goals.

Deciding what to evaluate

Preparation: In Chapter 6 of the Concept Guide, review the sections on Identifying Data Sources, Techniques for Data Collection, and Focusing Your Evaluation.

Determine how much discussion and priority setting the group should undertake at this time and how much will be done by working groups and the steering committee. Vary the contents appropriately. If appropriate, discuss these materials briefly with the community group or expand the contents of this section to include such things as the "Five Steps in Planning the Evaluation" (page CG6-13, which may be copied as handout) and information on data sources and collection techniques. ■

In designing and carrying out evaluations of program activities and in using evaluation results, we must make many decisions: What should be evaluated? What are appropriate levels of program evaluation? What steps should be used in planning the evaluation? How should we involve any major sponsors or funders in the evaluation?

Our evaluation should

- *be consistent with our program's goals and intervention plan.*

- *give us information we need to improve programs and to provide feedback to volunteers, staff, and the community.*

- *be achievable within a reasonable time.*

- *be accomplished with available resources.*

We may not have the resources to evaluate all of the many activities of our program, but we will want to evaluate our major activities and to document who was served, how well, and what changes occurred. We will want to use process data to improve programs and to provide feedback on activities to participants and volunteers that encourages future involvement. We will also want to monitor policy and environmental changes that support health and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Ask participants to discuss reasons why a group might decide to evaluate one activity more than others. Write responses on a flip chart, if desired. Items discussed might include the following:

• The activity has a greater potential for impacting the overall program (e.g., the eight-session Fitness for Life course might warrant a more complex evaluation plan than a fun run).

• The activity requires a greater amount of resources.

• The activity is closely related to the overall goals of the program.

• The activity reaches a target group of special interest.

If appropriate, distribute and review handout "Five Steps in Planning the Evaluation." Discuss each of the following steps and the role of working groups and others in developing the overall evaluation plan.

1. Describe your program activity.

2. Select evaluation measures.

3. Design data collection and analysis (discuss possible data sources and collection techniques, as appropriate).

4. Develop an action plan.

5. Report the results.

Using the evaluation worksheet

Preparation: Review the section of the "Checklist" on evaluation. Review handout "Evaluation Worksheet: Example." Determine how much discussion is appropriate for the community group and for the working groups or the steering committee, and vary the contents appropriately. ■

Discuss handout "Evaluation Worksheet: Example" and have ready the blank "Evaluation Worksheet."

Remind the participants that this worksheet is a tool for helping them come up with a few good evaluation measures for an activity. Explain the worksheet column by column. Go through it by using the example worksheet and explaining the process step by step.

First

Explain that the first step is to brainstorm the type of information the group would like to have to determine whether the activity was a success. Review the ideas recorded in the first column of the handout. Emphasize that it is important to be creative and to record a variety of options.

Second

Review that the second step is to discuss the items in the first column and cross off those that could not be realistically achieved or monitored. Review the items that were crossed off on the hand-out and the reasons given.

Third

Explain that the third step is to determine how the results would be achieved, and record this product or measurement in the second column. Review several of the examples in the handout. Explain that the responses should be specific−observable or reportable so that they can be measured or evaluated.

Fourth

Explain that the fourth step is to set a deadline for completing the tasks. Review several of the examples in the "When?" column of the handout. Mention that some items might give immediate results; others might take several months or even years.

Fifth

Explain that step five is to list in the "Who?" column the person responsible for following up on the results. Complete discussion of the handout.

Full group or small group activity (optional).

Distribute copies of the blank "Evaluation Worksheet." Select an activity from the group's objectives and work plans that is different from the example just reviewed, and explain the activity to the group. As a large group or several small groups, have the members complete the blank evaluation worksheet for the intervention activity. If using small groups, allow time for each small group to summarize results for the full group.

Review, as needed, that the primary criteria for determining the effects of the program should be the group's goals and objectives. State that as the group designs its evaluation plans, emphasis should be placed on the process evaluation and, to some extent, the impact evaluation because these two types of evaluation will provide the kind of information needed to assess if the activity was a success, if it was worth repeating, or how it could be improved. These types of evaluation will also provide information to share with the community, supporters, and volunteers.

Remind participants of the most appropriate uses of statistical information and opinion information, and encourage them to try to incorporate both kinds of evaluation into the evaluation plans. If appropriate, discuss briefly data sources and the need for quantitative and qualitative data. You might choose to discuss some sources of evaluation information, including the following:

• Existing information from program records–how many attended, how many completed a series of classes, how many maintained the desired behavior change after completing the classes, how many people reported on pretest and posttests changes in knowledge or behavior, etc.

• Personal interviews with staff or participants–asking for people's opinions about the activity by using questionnaires, interviews, or focus groups.

• Direct observations–measuring changes in behavior by noting increases in usage of exercise facilities, decreases in smoking in restaurants, etc.

At the end of the time allotted for this activity, summarize who in your community will be completing the evaluation plans. Encourage interested members to join working groups, etc.

Updates from working groups

Preparation: Help working group chairpersons or members to prepare an overview of their activities and accomplishments since the last meeting. ■

Have the working groups report on their activities, as appropriate. For example, the public relations working group might summarize what has been done to keep the community informed about the PATCH process and intervention activities.

Other issues the working groups might want to discuss include how to recruit new partners and volunteers to help plan and carry out intervention activities.

Wrap-up and closure

Preparation: Prepare a brief outline of the day's accomplishments on a flip chart or overhead, and prepare to share it (orally) with the group. Also develop a to-do list. In the Concept Guide, review the Monitoring the Phases of PATCH section of Chapter 6. In this Meeting Guide, review the section on Evaluating the Community Group Meetings. Use a meeting evaluation method to obtain feedback from participants; for example, pass out an evaluation form and ask participants to complete it before they leave. ■

Discuss the tasks on the to-do list and ask for working group or volunteers to work on the tasks.

Have participants set a date for the next meeting.

Distribute the meeting evaluation sheet, and ask participants to fill it out and return it to you before they leave.

Thank group members for their participation.

Working group meetings

Preparation: Update or develop new task sheets for the working groups, as appropriate. ■

Encourage working groups to meet at least long enough to clarify tasks and to set a time and place to meet again.

Topics for Discussion After the Community Group Meeting for Phase V

The following are potential topics for discussion with partners and steering committee members, including working group chairpersons.

1. Discuss what happened during the community group meeting, including group dynamics and decisions made.

2. Review tasks to be done by working groups, partners, and others and determine training and technical assistance needs.

    –Discuss any problems or needs related to working groups.

    –Determine what assistance is needed by the working group that will design and carry out evaluation plans.

    –Determine how stakeholders will be kept involved and informed.

3. Review evaluation resources.

    –Review the Inventory of Collaborating Groups to identify potential involvement of local agencies and groups.

    –Network concerning evaluation with other states and communities using the PATCH process.

    –Identify local or state expertise in evaluation.

    –Explore resources available for evaluation from groups such as foundations.

4. Schedule regular communications with PATCH partners, community members, and working groups. Plan for distributing a summary of the community group meeting to attendees, partners, and others in the community.