Where Are You?

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Accessing and Using Data for Evaluation

RESEA Evaluation Technical Assistance

January 13, 2021

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Today’s Speakers

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Senior Analyst
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Senior Analyst
Abt Associates
Cycle of Learning and Doing

1. Plan Evaluation of Program
2. Conduct Evaluation
3. Reflect on & Communicate Evaluation Findings
4. Refine Program or Evaluation

Process:
- Plan Evaluation of Program
- Conduct Evaluation
- Reflect on & Communicate Evaluation Findings
- Refine Program or Evaluation
Today’s Objectives

- Review key concepts related to assessing data for evaluation from the RESEA EvalTA “Assessing Data for Evaluation” webcast
- Discuss how to identify and access specific administrative data sources that are relevant for RESEA evaluations
- Describe best practices for accessing and using administrative data
Using Data for Evaluations

Key Points from “Assessing Data for Evaluation” Webcast
How Is Data Used for RESEA Evaluations?

Evaluation data helps you:

- Learn about RESEA claimant characteristics
- Understand claimant participation and services receipt
- Measure claimant outcomes (UI, employment, earnings)
- Estimate RESEA program impact on outcomes
Common Data Types

- Administrative data
- Survey data
- Random assignment data
- Interview and focus group transcriptions
- Observation notes
Poll Question #1

Which of the following is NOT key to using data for an evaluation?

1. Data are reliable
2. Data are complete for the study population
3. Follow-up outcomes data (earnings & employment) are collected 2 quarters after exit from UI

Please select one of the three options.
What Makes Data Usable for an Evaluation?

- Data should be *complete* for most claimants
  - Complete for both intervention and comparison groups
  - More missing data = more risk of bias

- Data should be *reliable*
  - Be consistent across sites and staff
  - Definitions are clear, have little interpretation

- Data should be *high quality*
  - Data are both complete and reliable
Data Sharing and Security

- RESEA data may include data that are considered **confidential UC data**
  - This data is subject to federal regulations that require confidentiality and privacy protections as outlined in 20 CFR Part 603
  - If you have further questions, please contact the US DOL Office of Unemployment Insurance

- Your evaluator will need to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) review and approval to ensure human subjects protection

- You and your evaluator will need to create and comply with a data use agreement
  - Describes what data will be shared, who will the data be shared with, how that data can be used and shared, destruction of data upon completion of the evaluation
Using Administrative Data for RESEA Evaluations
Why Use Administrative Data for RESEA Evaluations?

- There are several advantages and disadvantages compared to other data sources (e.g., surveys, interviews)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typically contains information about the universe of participants</td>
<td>Data quality may vary due to inconsistencies in data entry practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official record of what occurred</td>
<td>Historical records may not always be retained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is updated regularly</td>
<td>Dataset may not be designed to easily link to or merge with other dataset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often more accurate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low cost as data are already collected and does not require expensive data collection procedures (e.g., surveys)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Common Data Elements RESEA Evaluations Are Likely to Need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Information Needed</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claimant identifiers (i.e., SSN)</td>
<td>Link or merge data across data systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claimant demographic information</td>
<td>Learn about claimant characteristics and differences in experiences in outcomes among claimants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior employment and earnings information</td>
<td>Establish a baseline for key outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information for the claim, including application and approval dates</td>
<td>Understand implementation; create matched control from similar time period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UI claim and duration information</td>
<td>Understand claimants’ experiences and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services provided</td>
<td>Understand claimants’ experiences and implementation; Compare to control group for impact analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonmonetary issues raised and denials</td>
<td>Understand claimants’ experiences and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and earnings after claim</td>
<td>Determine impact of RESEA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Potential Administrative Data Sources

- Wage Record Data
- Labor market information
- RESEA program information system
- RESEA Evaluation
- State workforce information system
- State UI data system
Tip: Connect Your Evaluator to Key Data Information and Contacts!

Evaluator will rely on RESEA program or data staff for information about the different data systems and to ensure that state legal access requirements are met.

Key contacts include:
- RESEA program staff
- LMI, performance management, and other state staff that oversee different data systems (e.g., WIOA)
- Key IT and data security staff
- State legal team
Identifying Data Elements and Administrative Data Sources for RESEA Impact Evaluations
Strategy for Identifying Data Elements and Data Sources

What information is needed to measure our outcomes of interest?

What administrative data sources are available?

What is the process for accessing the data?
- Who is the main contact?
- Is an application and/or data use agreement required?
- Are there issues in getting access?

How is the data structured?
- At what level (e.g., one record per claim) is the data stored?
- What unique identifiers can be used to link to other datasets?
- Why might data be missing?

How accurate is the data?
- What is the process (computer, manual) for checking data quality?
- Is there strong incentive to enter data accurately and consistently?

Is the data suitable for evaluation purposes?
- Is the data complete for the study population and time period?
- Is the data reliable?
- How frequently is the data available?
## What Information is Needed to Measure Outcomes of Interest?

The data needed will depend on the evaluation’s research questions and methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Research Question</th>
<th>Outcome of Interest</th>
<th>What data are needed?</th>
<th>For whom?</th>
<th>For what time period?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Do claimants who are scheduled for an RESEA meeting earn more than claimants who are not scheduled for RESEA services? | • Earnings | • Scheduling status  
• Meeting attendance  
• Quarterly earnings | RESEA eligible claimants, including those not scheduled for services | During claim through 2\textsuperscript{nd} quarter after claim approval |
| Is the program meeting its targets for rates of scheduled and completed initial RESEA meetings? | • Scheduled RESEA meetings  
• Completed initial RESEA meetings | • Scheduling status  
• Meeting attendance | Claimants scheduled for at least one RESEA meeting | During claim |
| What services do claimants most frequently engage in? | • Use of services | • Service referrals and dates, by service  
• Attendance dates, by services | Claimants scheduled for at least one RESEA meeting | During claim |
## What Administrative Data Sources are Available?

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<td>State UI data system; RESEA program information system</td>
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<td>UI claim and duration information</td>
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<td>Services provided</td>
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What is the Process for Accessing the Data?

Key questions to ask about the data access process:

- Who is the main point of contact for the data system(s)?
- Is there an application to access the data? How long will it take to be approved?
- Is a formal data use agreement(s) required? Who needs to be involved?
- What are the security restrictions and protocols?
- What are the software requirements and operating system needed to access the data?
How is the Data Structured?

Key questions to ask about the data structure:

- At what level is the data stored?
  - For instance, are the data stored at the individual claimant level (one record per claimant) or claims level (one record per claimant per claim)?

- Why might data be missing?

- How are the data elements of interest defined and stored in the database (e.g., numerical, date, open-ended text field, etc.)?

- How often are the data collected or updated?

- What identifiers (e.g., SSN, name, birthdate) are available?
Importance of Common Identifiers

- Having common identifiers is important for linking data records across data systems while protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Common Identifiers
- Social Security Number
- Full name + birthdate
- Claimant Identification Number

Evaluators receive fully identified data
Evaluators receive de-identified data from data administrators
How Accurate is the Data?

Processes that enhance data accuracy include:

- Clearly communicated and consistently applied data entry protocols
- Routine monitoring of data entry, e.g., running basic descriptive tabulations to identify discrepancies in data and deviations from data entry protocol
- Automated processes for updating and checking data

Key questions to ask about data accuracy:

- What processes (computer, manual) are in place for checking the accuracy of the data?
- For data that are manually entered, is there strong incentive to enter data accurately and consistently?
Is the Data Suitable for Evaluation Purposes?

- Data appropriate for evaluation are:
  - **Complete** for nearly all claimants (intervention and comparison) in the evaluation
  - **Reliable**, i.e., data mean what you think they mean

- Key questions to ask:
  - Does the data system contain data for all claimants included in the study?
  - Does the data cover the study time period?
  - Are the data reliable? Do the data fields contain the information that we need?
  - How frequently is the data available?
Example: Measuring UI Duration
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  - Routinely checked and verified

- **Contains information for all UI claimants**
  - Contains information for time period of interest
Example: Measuring Reemployment Services Utilization
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Data Availability for Evaluations of RESEA Programs: A Tool to Identify Data Sources

- This tool is designed to help you collect information about the data elements you may need for your evaluation and the data systems in which the data are stored

- To access the tool:
  - Please download the Microsoft Word version of the document in this webinar
  - You can print this document and write in your answers or type them into the electronic version of the document
Additional Considerations for Accessing Administrative Data

- Provide evaluator with routine data extracts to monitor data quality for evaluation
- Obtain a clearly written data request that includes:
  - Timeframe for data requested
  - Preferred data format (e.g., csv, SAS, STATA)
  - Data structure
  - List of specific data elements
- Have a data dictionary for the database(s) to help evaluator understand the data and its structure
- Give evaluator “raw” data elements rather than calculated or aggregated data elements to help improve precision
Additional Considerations for Using Administrative Data

Evaluator is required to maintain privacy and confidentiality of individual information by:

- Sharing information only with authorized individuals
- Complying with security protocols described in the data use agreement
- Reporting results in aggregate (e.g., county level, sub-group level)
- Destroying the data after the evaluation is complete
Wrap-up and Closing Remarks
Poll Question #2

If future RESEA evaluation technical assistance is provided, what additional evaluation topics would help you lay the groundwork for your states’ RESEA evaluation?

1. Preparing Frontline Staff for Their Role in an Evaluation
2. Evaluation Design Reports: What to Expect
3. Planning Your RESEA Evaluation During COVID-19
4. Other (please specify in chat box)

Please select one or more of the four options.
Resources:

- “RESEA: Overview of Evaluation and Evidence Requirements” Webinar
  This webinar provides an overview of guidance and expectations regarding implementation of the RESEA Program's evaluation and evidence requirements.

- “Assessing Data for Evaluation” Webcast
  This webcast discusses the kinds of data and possible sources for this data for RESEA evaluations.
  ➤ https://mahernet.adobeconnect.com/_a14339732/p6pqigvrkwo0/

- Coming soon:
  Frequently Asked Questions about RESEA Evaluations
  RESEA Evaluation Toolkit: Key Elements for State RESEA Programs
Any Questions?

Please enter any questions that you may have related to the topics from today’s webinar in the chat box.
Contact Us

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Thank You!

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Navigate to Success

Need help? Email: Support@workforceGPS.org