

CalSWEC Dissemination Planning Tool¹

This tool is designed to be used during the research process to develop the methods of disseminating the findings when the research has been completed. This tool will help the researchers think through how partners can be engaged more fully before the project begins with the ultimate goal being successful dissemination to the intended audiences (end users).

Instructions

Select **one (1)** research finding or product that you expect to be particularly important and that is ready for dissemination.

To develop your plan, please answer a few key questions in each step below about your selected finding or product. At the end, you will integrate your responses into an overall strategy. CalSWEC staff will then take your plan and develop a workplan with action steps and a timeline for completion.

- ***Don't be discouraged if at first you cannot answer every question in this planning tool.*** The questions serve as prompts for you to consider these elements in the future as your dissemination effort evolves.
- ***Consider this a working document.*** It will help you think through the steps you will need to take to get the word out about your research finding or product.
- ***This may take a few iterations!*** You may want to work back and forth between questions as your thinking develops. You may do a first pass at the tool, then revisit it after a few days. You may also want to ask for input from others.

Step One:

Specifying Research Findings and Products: What You Intend to Disseminate

Draw the boundary around your research finding or product as broadly or as narrowly as you wish, depending on your dissemination aims. Be specific. The more concrete you can be in defining your finding or product, the easier it will be to complete the tool.

- 1. Describe the research finding or product you wish to disseminate. You may want to start by listing your major findings and products, then select one major finding or product for dissemination. For example: A decision support device, an educational curriculum, data collection tool, etc.**

¹ Adapted from: Carpenter, D. Nieva, V., Albaghal, T., & Sorgal, J. (Westat). (2005). Development of a Planning Tool to Guide Dissemination of Research Results. Dissemination Planning Tool: Exhibit A. Advances in Patient Safety: From Research to Implementation. Vol. 4. Rockville MD: Agency for Healthcare and Research Quality. Accessed on October 1, 2010 at <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/advances/planningtool.htm>

2. What child welfare outcome does the finding or product address?

3. What makes your research finding or product stand out?

For example: Is it an innovative way to tackle an existing problem? Does it identify a new problem? Does it support or contradict current practices?

Issues to consider in selecting what to disseminate:

- Think about the pros and cons of disseminating portions of the research vs. all related products and findings. Different end users (e.g., policymakers and health care providers) may be interested in different aspects of the research.
- Is your research finding ready for dissemination?
- How strong is the evidence on your research findings? How generalizable are your findings?
- How does your research finding/product conform to current procedures?
- What additional research (for a finding) or testing (for a product) would be needed before launching a dissemination effort?

Step Two:

Identifying End Users

End users are individuals, professionals, or delivery organizations that could benefit from and use your research finding or product. These end users are the ultimate target for your dissemination efforts. Specifying your target audience and their needs will provide focus for your dissemination plan and will help you tailor your offering to their needs.

1. List the end users for your research finding or product. Be as specific as possible. You may want to consider settings and levels of staffing in the organization.

For example: Social work students, child welfare workers, supervisors, manager, directors, community-based organizations, tribes.

2. Describe how your research finding or product is useful to your end users. Why would they want to use your finding or product?

3. What recent or future events might help or hinder end user interest in your finding or product?

4. **Have you involved these end users in your research project? How? How can you involve them at this point?**

5. **What barriers might your end users face in trying to implement your finding or product? What suggestions might you have for overcoming these barriers?**

Step Three:

Working with Dissemination Partners

You do not have to work alone to reach your end users! Consider working with professionals who are trusted opinion leaders and are influential in their fields. Think about formal and informal networks that you can tap into to spread the word about your research findings or products.

Consider also how you might develop working partnerships with organizations to which your end users belong, or that can influence them through their credibility, expertise, or licensing powers. These individuals and organizations can serve as dissemination intermediaries, amplifying your reach into your target audiences.

- Think about *opinion leaders* in your professional community who might be interested in spreading the word about your research.
- *Informal networks* and colleagues may be useful dissemination partners.
- *Organizational dissemination partners* could include quality improvement organizations, professional groups of your target audience, accreditation or licensing boards, or health care delivery associations.

1. List individuals, organizations, and informal networks that might partner with you in translating and communicating your research findings or products to your end users. Note how they are important to reaching particular end users (see appendix A for options)

End users	Individual/Organizations/Networks	Importance of end users

2. **How does your research finding or product fit with and advance the mission and goals of these parties? Why would they want to work with you? What recent/future events might help or hinder their willingness to work with you?**

3. What characteristics of your finding or product would appeal to each of these potential dissemination partners?

4. How can you develop an ongoing relationship with these potential dissemination partners? How would you work with them so that your research finding or product is included in their communication channels, and/or tailored to their health delivery systems?

Issues to consider about dissemination partners:

- How will you reach the professional opinion leaders? Do you work with anyone who can link you up with them?
- How will you work with organizational partners? Do you have a personal contact, have you reviewed their websites, their standard publications, and annual reports? What materials might you prepare for their use?
- Do you need different partners to reach different end users?
- How can you use partners existing informal networks to reach end users?

**Step Four:
Communicating Your Message**

Effective dissemination relies on the use of varied channels—e.g., publications and reports, websites and other electronic communications, meetings and conferences, person-to-person communications, formal collaborations or information networks.

Consider what methods and channels you might use to bring your research finding or product directly to your end users or partners. Consider also how your dissemination partners communicate regularly with their constituencies—your end users. How you might use their channels to disseminate your finding or product?

You should consider all of these channels to ensure that the widest possible audience is exposed to your research finding or product—and in ways that are both accessible and easy to use. Cost and cost-effectiveness are obviously important considerations in choosing the right medium.

Your end users could obtain information about research findings, products, or innovations in child welfare through various means. Optimally, you will need to use a combination of methods to reach end users.

Broadcast media	Personal contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinars • Web conference • Podcast • Technical reports • On line curriculum module • Academic journals • Book chapters • Special interest newsletters • Interest group listservs • Websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum dissemination • Informal professional networks • Professional conferences • Professional meetings • Presentation/Workshop/ Training • Participating in pilot testing

1. How do you think your end users obtain information about practice innovations? Which of the methods above would be effective channels to reach them? What combinations of methods could reinforce your message?

2. Which of these methods could you *realistically* use to reach your end users?

3. Which methods do your potential dissemination partners use to communicate with your end users? Which ones could be used as channels for your research finding or product?

4. What difficulties might end users have with the methods of communication used, and how could you plan to overcome those difficulties?

Issues to consider about communicating your message:

- What materials might you provide to potential dissemination partners about your research? How can you frame your research results to make them relevant to your partners' agenda?
- How will you tailor your materials and message to adapt to their ways of communicating with your end users?

**Step Five:
Evaluating Success**

Evaluating the success of your dissemination efforts is an iterative process. Once you have begun to disseminate your research finding or product, consider how you might evaluate the effect that your dissemination strategies have on getting your message to end users. Dissemination is not a one-time activity; rather, it is a long-term relationship with your users that will provide ongoing feedback to help you improve your message.

1. **How will you know if you have met your dissemination goals? What are your success criteria? Are there measurable indicators for these criteria?**

For example: Number of students, faculty, child welfare workers reached.

2. **How will you involve end users in evaluating the dissemination activities?**

For example: Obtaining feedback on relevancy of finding or product. Ease of translation into practice i setting.

3. **How will you involve end users in evaluating the dissemination activities?**

Issues to consider in evaluating success of the dissemination effort:

- What are ways that you can measure the success of your dissemination effort?
- How will you keep in contact with users and potential users?
- How will you provide feedback to your users and dissemination partners?
- How will you incorporate their feedback in your future research, product design, and ongoing development?

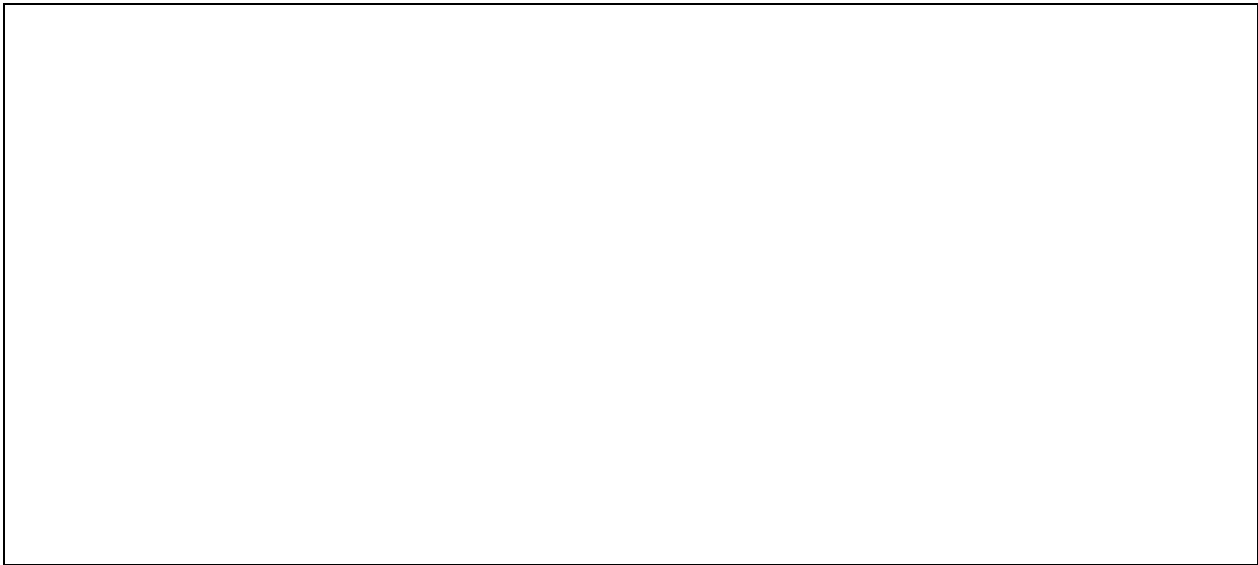
Step Six:

Developing A Summary

After you have considered the components of your dissemination plan, use the last page to write a summary of 100-200 words that outlines your basic plan, based on the structure in this planning tool, by completing the following statements.

- My research finding or product is _____. *(Description.)*
- It can be used to _____.
(Value statement of advantages over current practice.)
- My primary end users are _____.
(Who is in a position to use the information?)
- I plan to involve users in my dissemination efforts by _____.
(How can I make sure my message is clear?)
- I can use the following individuals, organizations and networks _____ to help. *(Who has influence with target users?)*
- The ways that I will communicate the results include: _____
(Communication mechanisms.)
- Potential obstacles that I face in disseminating my research include: _____.
(List potential difficulties.)
- I can mitigate these obstacles by _____.
(Plan to overcome the difficulties.)
- I plan to evaluate the dissemination plan by _____.
(Indicators to be used; plans for involving end users and partners.)
- I plan to encourage feedback from endusers and dissemination partners by _____ and provide feedback to them by _____.
(Obtaining and providing feedback.)

My Dissemination Strategy—Summary



AUDIENCES

CalSWEC

Board
CalSWEC Library
CalSWEC Website
EBP Symposium
F&E symposium
NHSTES Symposium
Other symposia
Project Coordinators
Student Day

Agencies

CDA Board
CDSS
Children's Comm.
CIMH
CMDHA
CWDA Board
DMH
HR
Other

Universities

Faculty Institutes
Seminar
Other

Other Partners

AOC
BASSC
CCASSC
CFPIC
IUC
North Directors
SACHS
Other

In-Service Training

STEC
RTA Directors
RTA All Staff
Other

Glossary of Acronyms:

AOC - Administrative Office of the Courts
BASSC - Bay Area Social Services Consortium
CCASSC - Central California Area Social Services Consortium
CDA - California Department of Aging
CDSS - California Department of Social Services
CDWA - Child Welfare Directors Association
CFPIC - Child and Family Policy Institute of California
CIMH - California Institute of Mental Health
CMHDA - California Mental Health Directors Association
DMH - Department of Mental Health

DMH - Department of Mental Health
EBP - Evidence-Based Practice
F&E - Fairness & Equity
HR - Human Resources
IUC - Inter University Consortium (LA)
NHSTES - National Human Services Training and Evaluation
RTA - Regional Training Academy
SACHS - Southern Area Consortium of Human Services
STEC - Statewide Training and Evaluation Committee

VENUES

Conference Presentation
Email
In Person
Inclusion in IV-E and In-Service Curricula
Journal Articles
Links in CalSWEC News Letter
Links in School of Social Welfare letter
Professional Publications
Videoconference
Webinar
Other (specify in notes)

Dissemination Work Plan (option 2)

- **Action items first 6 months.** Action items, schedule, and persons responsible:

Action Items	Timeframe	Who is Responsible?

Resources needed:

- **Action items 6 months to a year post completion of project.** Action items, schedule, and persons responsible:

Action Items	Timeframe	Who is Responsible?
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Resources needed:
