

Food, Pools, and Lodging Services Program Re-evaluation Process

Summary of Feedback

March, 9, 2016

Feedback interviews were conducted in January 2016 with each of the four programs that participated in the FPLS program re-evaluation process in 2015. Below is an aggregate summary of the results from the interviews.

Summary of Responses by Question

1. *To what extent was there a shared understanding of the process between MDH and your program? Describe the extent to which this process ensured clear expectations.*

In general, the process was understood. The timeline and steps were clear. However, the steps between “exit interview” and “final report” and the final report itself did cause some confusion.

2. *Describe how this re-evaluation process supported an open dialogue between the evaluators and your program.*

Overall, programs felt the re-evaluation process supported an open dialogue and MDH staff were accessible. However, the comfort level ranged from uncomfortable to comfortable and programs felt that the dialogue from the “exit interview” to the “final report” could be improved.

3. *If applicable, describe how the improvements you implemented and progress you made were recognized during the re-evaluation?*

The majority of programs felt that MDH acknowledged their improvement efforts either through verbal acknowledgement or in the written report. Some programs indicated that the process should feel like an improvement process and include both positive and negative feedback, but it does not always feel that way. The whole evaluation process would be easier if viewed as an improvement process and programs’ situations are taken into account.

4. *Tell me about one thing that went particularly well.*

Overall, programs thought the whole process went fairly well and felt more collaborative than in the past. They appreciated MDH’s acknowledgement of their improvement efforts.

5. *Tell me about one thing that did not go as well as you hoped.*

The main things that did not go as well as programs hoped include:

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- **Results:** No indication of results were given at the closing meeting and the report took long to receive, so programs were left waiting to know their results. Also, programs were disappointed by the lack of dialogue and ability to change anything once the report was written.
 - **Tool:** Programs feel the tool is still subjective and inflexible.
6. *Describe the speed at which the re-evaluation process progressed/advanced/moved from the point of the initial feedback interview to when you received your re-evaluation report.*

Overall, the process felt long for most programs. There was a lot of waiting. However, programs did acknowledge that the lead time was good and MDH had limited capacity to do these re-evaluations and did turn them around fairly quickly.

7. *How would you rate the accuracy of the re-evaluation results reflected in the report?*

In general, programs felt their results were more or less accurate, though opinion varied from program to program.

8. *What level of resources was required from your program to conduct the re-evaluation?*

The majority of programs felt the level of resources required to conduct the re-evaluation was high. It is a lot of work and a lot of time.

9. *If you participate in the process again, what would you change?*

Programs would change:

- **How the evaluation is conducted by the evaluator:** evaluation results are subjective depending on who does the evaluation. There should be consistency and more effort to understand programs. Suggestions included: understand how and why programs operate as they do, have a single person or team evaluate all programs, assure communication is consistent so that programs do not get different answers from different MDH staff to the same question, allow programs to provide good examples in addition to what MDH selects, and be consistent with reviewing white items – either review them all or don't review any.
- **Field data gathering portion of evaluation:** programs would like this part of the evaluation process to improve. The majority feel it does not provide an accurate assessment. Suggestions to improve it included: conduct it together and have MDH be on-site for an inspection with the program.
- **More dialogue between exit interview and final report:** programs felt that dialogue and a chance to talk about results and comments was missing at the end of the process.

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10. Overall, how would you rate the experience:

The experience as a whole went well for most programs.

11. Is there anything else you would like to add?

- **Partnership:** this process should be a partnership. The same opportunities should be afforded to both local programs and MDH.
- **Consistency and transparency:** there needs to be consistency and transparency with communications, scoring, etc. This is a very subjective process with high stakes for local programs.
- **Continuous improvement:** the evaluation and re-evaluation processes need to have a core purpose of being tools for CI. They are not intended to be a list of deficiencies or tools used to take back programs. Rather, they should be used as tools to build up programs, make them better.
- **Evaluation can be a good thing:** it helps identify issues and provides valuable learning experiences to programs.