Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

Evaluating Implementation of the Families in Recovery Program

Statement of Problem

Recovery from substance use disorders can be especially challenging for parents of young children. Parental substance and opioid use disorders impact more than 8 million children in the United States and disproportionately affect adults of childbearing age, contributing to increasing rates of family instability and maternal mortality. Parents with substance use disorders face unique challenges, often interfacing with multiple systems, including drug and alcohol treatment, child welfare, and counseling, and balancing the recovery process with their parental duties.

In response to this need, Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance, a nonprofit child abuse prevention organization, developed an innovative program aimed at engaging and supporting parents of young children impacted by substance use disorder. This program, Families in Recovery, is comprised of seven strengths-based group sessions that explore the experiences of parents in recovery. Since 2018, Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance has piloted Families in Recovery at a variety of sites including maternal and child home visiting programs, drug and alcohol treatment centers and family support hubs, among others. Though the program has received overwhelmingly positive reviews from facilitators and participants since its inception, we don't yet have an evidence base for how best to implement it in diverse contexts and settings.

Description

Over the course of the next two years, our team will partner with Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance to evaluate the implementation of Families in Recovery. The purpose of this study is to understand how the program is being implemented at each site and assess whether the program is being delivered as intended. Through this evaluation, we hope to identify best practices in implementation and describe facilitator, administrator and family perspectives on key components of the program.

We will use mixed methods to evaluate Families in Recovery, including engaging key stakeholders such as program facilitators, administrators, and participants through in-depth qualitative interviews, longitudinal surveys, a focus group and site observations. We'll then combine information learned from these stakeholder engagement efforts with process metrics collected throughout the evaluation and descriptive statistics about each implementing site. These metrics will cover program enrollment and participation, staffing and turnover, and site-level implementation characteristics. This will help us assess local and contextual factors that may impact fidelity to the program model.

To facilitate effective, respectful, and responsive research, we will include a community advisory board of four community experts to consult on evaluation materials (e.g., interview guides, survey instruments) and support interpretation and external validation of findings.

Findings and recommendations from this implementation evaluation will inform quality improvement efforts and future outcome evaluation efforts for Families in Recovery.

To view the Families in Recovery Implementation Evaluation Final Report, click here.

Next Steps

We will begin this evaluation with the first of three surveys to gauge site context, concepts of fidelity to the program model and experiences with implementation. Administrators and facilitators at each site currently implementing Families in Recovery will complete these surveys. We will also engage a small number of experienced Families in Recovery facilitators in a focus group to understand key facilitators and barriers to implementing the program.

This project page was last updated in March 2024.

Suggested Citation

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, PolicyLab. *Evaluating Implementation of the Families in Recovery Program* [online]. Available at: http://www.policylab.chop.edu. [Accessed: plug in date accessed here].

PolicyLab Leads

Meredith Matone
Meredith Matone
DrPH, MHS
Director

Team

Kali Hackett
Kali Hackett
MSW, MPH
Senior Manager of HealthySteps and Maternal Child Health Projects
Deanna Marshall
Peter Cronholm
Peter Cronholm
MD, MSCE, CAQHPM, FAAFP
Faculty Scholar

Funders

Funders
Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance

Project Contact

Deanna Marshall

marshalldb@chop.edu

Related Tools & Publications

2020 Pennsylvania Family Support Needs Assessment
Tools and Memos
Oct 2020

Supporting Caregivers Impacted by Substance Use Disorders: A Conversation with Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance
Blog Post
Nov 09, 2022
Related Projects

Evaluating and Supporting Pennsylvania’s Home Visiting Programs
Family & Community Health