Federal-State Partnerships in Support of Data-Informed, Evidence-Based Programs

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Context

• Uncoordinated programs and services are wasteful and often less effective
• Sharing information is necessary for coordination and responsible management of taxpayer resources
• We need a “Yes, Unless” expectation of data sharing:
  – Technology and systems with capacity to safely and efficiently share data
  – Rules and policies that support responsible data sharing
  – Empowered governance structures to manage data sharing
  – Agency culture that recognizes the risks of failing to share
Opportunities for Federal Leadership

• Clarify permissible practice and expectations
  – Articulate a “Yes, Unless” culture
  – Remove regulatory barriers, actively support and promote appropriate data sharing as a fundamental responsibility
  – Hold federal agencies and states responsible when failure to share data imposes costs on participants and systems

• Provide Resources
  – Guidance and TA on sharing data across program silos
  – Model systems, infrastructure, and tools
  – Support for federal agency efforts (technology, governance, data management), and state integrated data systems
Recent Examples from ACF (1)

- Information Memorandum on “Data sharing between TANF and child welfare agencies”
  - Clarifying existing permissions
  - Articulating the logic and benefits of data sharing
- Comprehensive Child Welfare Information Systems Regulation (CCWIS) makes data sharing a fundamental component, requiring:
  - New data exchanges with education, courts, and Medicaid
  - A data exchange standard for interfaces with service providers and other agency systems
Recent Examples from ACF (2)

- **New Division of Data and Improvement within the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE)**
  - Integrate existing previously disconnected efforts:
    - State system assessment
    - PARIS data matching
    - Support for interoperability and data exchange (e.g. NIEM)
  - Support data sharing across ACF programs (e.g. TANF, child welfare, child support), with other agencies and programs in HHS (e.g. Medicaid) and beyond (e.g. SNAP) with technical and legal resources
  - Support data-informed decision making through improved data systems combined with analytic capacity, planning, and evaluation resources within OPRE
Recent Examples from ACF (3)

• **Proposed State Human Services Longitudinal Data System**
  – Aligns federal and state interests; States as willing partners, with federal government offering TA, peer learning, funding
  – Supports program management and delivers directly to program administrators – improving buy-in and data quality
  – Addresses challenge of harmonization across programs in different organizations, with capacity to roll up to national level
  – Could include incentives and capacity to share data with federal system for administrative use, research/statistical use, or both

• **Proposed Systems Innovation Technical Assistance Center**
  – Supports shared software and standards/architecture development
  – Current program funding “vertical” with limited support for integration
  – Current funding state-specific, not leveraging reuse
Key Objectives of Data Sharing

• Improving Services, e.g.:
  – Streamline eligibility determination by sharing verified information across programs to reduce administrative costs and burden on participants
  – Connect information from schools or health providers to child welfare records to improve continuity of educational and health services, avoid waste

• Measuring Performance
  – Individual program performance and variation over time or across jurisdictions
  – Indicators of performance drawn from other systems serving the same participant (e.g. the earnings of job training program participants, the educational outcomes of children in foster care)

• Supporting Formal Evaluations and Research
  – Reduce the costs and respondent burden associated with surveys
  – Capture detailed and accurate information on government services
Questions?

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