



Nevada's Executive Summary of Prevention Coalitions Evidence Based Practices, Programs, and Policies Evaluation Reviews 2020-2021

At the direction of the Bureau of Behavioral Health Wellness (Bureau) and Prevention Health Program Manager, Nevada designed and developed a process to review prevention coalition implemented programming to determine the level of Evidence-based Practices, Programs, and Policies (EBPPP) implementation and assess program validity. This process was accomplished through a random selection of proposed programming based on FY-2021 Scopes of Work. This evaluation was supported through the Nevada Partnership for Success (PFS), Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block (SABG) Grant, and Strategic Progress, LLC. From a holistic review perspective, there are ten funded Prevention Coalitions each of which was required to submit three randomly selected programs for review, which included completing the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form and providing all supporting documentation for randomly selected programs. In total, there were 30-randomly selected programs selected for review from both the PFS and SABG funding awards for FY-2021.

The Evidence Based Practices, Programs, and Policies Active Workgroup (EBPPPAW), which is designed to support EBPPP prevention programming in Nevada, collaborated with Strategic Progress and state to facilitate the review of submitted program documentation from each coalition. The EPPPAW team is made up of ten volunteers from diverse backgrounds that are reflective of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) targeted high-risk population of need and also includes members of the Bureau team and Strategic Progress, LLC. Strategic Progress, LLC is Nevada Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) evaluator, external program and fiscal monitor, and programmatic developer per contracts funded through the Master Service Agreement (MSA). The EBPPPAW meets quarterly or sooner if needed to support the implementation of EBPPPs among prevention coalitions. For the EBPPP review

process, EBPPPAW members were provided a training that was also recorded and shared with all members and assigned 3-4 randomly selected programs with instructions to review provided documentation and EBPPP Proposal and Review forms to determine the status of the submitted program. Review outcomes were determined by each reviewer pursuant to available options on the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form to include EBP (implemented as designed), EBP Waiver (existing EBP that was modified or locally derived program in alignment with an existing EBP as supported by literature and documentation), Provisional EBP (lacked documentation to support EBP or EBP Waiver status, but with additional documentation should be eligible as either an EBP or EBP Waiver status), or Not an EBP (could include a variety of programming that does not or will not meet eligibility requirements of an EBP or EBP Waiver status). In addition to the EBPPPAW member reviews, Strategic Progress, LLC reviewed all 30-randomly selected programs as a validation mechanism to ensure efficacy of reviews and provide specific instructions for prevention coalitions to address for each reviewed program.

It is Nevada's overarching goal to be compliant to SAMHSA's terms and condition pursuant to awarded Federal Grants. The primary goal of this random selection evaluation process was to provide both a holistic and comprehensive view of current EBPPP implementation across the ten funded prevention coalitions as part of the Nevada PFS and SABG program validity to sustainability efforts. It is important to note that randomly selected programs for this review were not reserved to only EBP programs but incorporated all funded programming activities. One of the goals of this comprehensive review was to determine the relative percentages of programming pursuant to the categories presented previously (EBP, EBP Waiver, Provisional EBP, or Not an EBP) and seek to identify gaps, barriers, or other impediments related to EBP implementation. Fundamentally, there were programs selected for this review that are not EBPs and will never be eligible for EBP status, but support programming such as meetings, events, and trainings. For these categorizations, this process sought to identify alignment with EBP programming and prevention literature and data to substantiate the need for implemented programming. While there are numerous EBPs available from national clearinghouses and resource centers, it is understood that unique community attributes as often found in Nevada related to population dynamics, distribution, and diversity of the Silver State, which necessitates modified or specialized programming from an EBP perspective. To that end, this review process is not designed to restrict programming to limit options to only EBP implementation, but instead

assess validity and alignment of implemented programming with EBP best practices, literature, and resources such that evaluation of programming is comparable to EBP standards wherever possible.

Prevention Coalitions were required to attend an initial training session during which they were informed about the review process, provided the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form and EBPPP Manual developed to include programming information from FY-2020 and FY-2021, and given the opportunity to ask questions about the EBPPPAW and the EBPPP review process. The EBPPP Manual was utilized as a reference of a comprehensive list of current and recent EBPs, including Waiver programs, as well as literature resources associated with each listed EBP, or Waiver approved EBP and a summary of 9 national or regional clearinghouses or resource centers for approved EBPs for prevention programming along with links to each registry's website. These were instrumental in the review process by the EBPPPAW members and have been available resources to Prevention Coalitions. Following the completion of the Prevention Coalition training, each coalition was provided a list of their 3 randomly selected programs from the FY-2021 scopes of work for PFS and SABG. The Prevention Coalitions were provided a deadline for submitting the completed EBPPP Proposal and Review Form as well as supporting documentation for their randomly selected programs. After the EBPPPAW member training, each EBPPPAW member was randomly assigned 3-4 programs to be reviewed. As there is one Prevention Coalition Executive Director and one Prevention Coalition staff member on the EBPPPAW assurances were taken so they did not review submitted documentation from their Prevention Coalition. At this time, the EBPPPAW reviews have been completed and initial results have been discussed and presented to the Prevention Coalitions, however, the completed EBPPP Proposal and Review Forms along with feedback and guidance have not yet been distributed to the Prevention Coalitions.

Results

To address one of the fundamental goals of this EBPPP review process, the outcomes of the EBPPPAW reviews were assessed and categorized based on findings from the comprehensive reviews. A summary of those findings is presented below as a baseline for future initiatives to increase the number of EBPs implemented with PFS and SABG funding as well as improve the programming provided with those funds to Nevadans.

- 10% of reviewed programs (3) were found to be Approved EBPs with all supporting documentation as required by the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form.
- 20% of reviewed programs (6) were found to be Waiver Approved programs, which includes three different categorizations of Waiver programs:
 - One of the Waiver Approved programs was a modified EBP with sufficient supporting literature and documented tools to gain Waiver Approval status.
 - Four of the Waiver Approved programs were defined as Non-EBPs that were provided waivers based on EBPPP Manual inclusion and past waiver approval status. These include programs such as Events, Meetings, Trainings, and similar programming that by definition will not meet EBP standards yet are important elements of prevention programming. For Waiver Approved status, these programs were reviewed for completeness of the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form to include citations from the literature to support the programming efficacy.
 - One of the Waiver Approved programs were defined as a locally or regionally developed program with sufficient literature and links to existing EBP resources along with sufficient responses and supporting documentation for the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form. Programs such as these are viewed as potential future EBPs and critical to providing programming to unique target populations for which there is not an available EBP.
- 67% of review programs (20) were found to be Provisional Waiver programs, which includes three different categorizations of Provisional Waiver programs:
 - Four of the Provisional Waiver programs were found to be Approved EBPs; however, the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form was insufficient and/or the supporting documentation and literature citations were either missing or insufficient. With additional documentation and more complete responses, these programs would be recategorized as Approved EBPs.
 - 15 of the Provisional Waiver programs were found to be eligible for Waiver Approval status; however, the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form was insufficient and/or the supporting

documentation and literature citations were either missing or insufficient. With additional documentation and more complete responses, these programs could be further assessed for potential Waiver Approved status and would be further categorized as either a modified EBP, non-EBP waiver eligible program, or a locally or regionally developed program that is aligned with EBP literature and best practices.

- One of the Provisional Waiver programs was found to be missing an extensive amount of documentation and had limited responses to required sections of the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form. From the available documentation, the Provisional Waiver status was granted so this program could be adequately reviewed for potential Waiver Approved status. However, if additional narrative and supporting documentation is not provided or available, this program would be recategorized as Not Approved.
- 3% of reviewed programs (1) were reported as Non-EBP or Not Approved, which was a result of the selected program not being implemented by the Prevention Coalition during FY-2021.

Fundamentally, if all documentation and supporting narrative is addressed for these 30-randomly selected programs from FY-2021 Approved EBPs would account for approximately 24% of implemented programming, which equates to 7 of 30 programs. Similarly, with all supporting narrative and documentation provided for the Provisional Waiver programs, the majority of programming being implemented would be categorized as Waiver Approved with approximately 73% of programming (22 of 30 programs) expected to fall within the Waiver Approved category. Of those Waiver Approved programs, there would be at least five that would be categorized as Non-EBP Waivers, which as aforementioned include programming such as Events, Meetings, Trainings, and other similar initiatives. The remaining programs would be subcategorized as either modified EBPs or locally or regionally developed programs that adhere to EBP literature and best practices but have not been reviewed through academic and scientific rigor.

The increased emphasis on funding EBPs with PFS and SABG awarded funding is based on directives from SAMHSA, which the Bureau is working diligently to implement in Nevada. EBPs offer scientifically tested and validated programs, practices, and policies for implementation among specified or similarly oriented populations along with high-risk targeted

populations. From this EBPPP review process, Nevada prevention providers are implementing modified or locally developed programs at much higher rates than available EBPs. From these results, the Bureau in collaboration with the EBPPPAW and Strategic Progress, LLC will further assess the gaps and barriers to implementing EBPs and work to both increase the number of EBPs implemented with PFS and SABG funding and improve overall programming efficacy for PFS and SABG supported and funded activities.

Challenges

From a holistic review of the EBPPP review process, there were a series of challenges that limited to initial impact and outcomes. First and foremost, 67% of completed EBPPP Proposal and Review Forms were determined to be lacking sufficient responses or supporting documentation to conduct a full review of the randomly selected program as denoted by the Provisional Waiver programs in the Results section. Furthermore, several coalitions failed to submit the required documentation in a timely fashion with delays that extended for more than 45-days following the deadline for submission. Additionally, there were numerous programs presented as EBPs on the EBPPP Proposal and Review Form that were not Approved EBPs and therefore the response information provided by the reporting coalition was lacking (The EBPPP Proposal and Review Form required less narrative and supporting documentation for Approved EBPs).

One of the most common issues found during this review process was a lack of knowledge or awareness of supporting documentation requirements to include literature citations, standardized tools (pre- and post-test survey instruments, assessment instruments, etc.), and curriculum materials. Even for a modified EBP, there should be extensive alignment of the modified program with the EBP being modeled and there should be sufficient justification for the rationale for deploying a modified version of the EBP in lieu of the scientifically tested and academically reviewed EBP. Fundamentally, a modified EBP should be able to align with validity measures through the use of standardized curriculum, tools, and supporting literature, which would be applicable to expanding the reach of an existing EBP to a population that was not included in previous implementations. However, from the review of materials provided, there were observable gaps especially concerning modified EBPs as well as fully Approved EBPs. It was observed that forms were not used as designed or intended and, in some cases, not used at all when implementing the program.

Recommendations

It is the recommendation for the Bureau Quality Assurance and program staff to work collaboratively with prevention coalition directors, the program oversight directors, the EBPPPAW, and Strategic Progress, LLC on developing and implementing more EBP programs and improve alignment of Waiver Approved programs to the EBP literature and best practices. The goal of this approach is to connect proposals and scopes of work to actionable evaluation and compliance monitoring related to EBP implementation and administration to ensure PFS and SABG funding is impacting identified target populations. The Bureau recognizes that there are varying needs and unique population dynamics across the service areas of the 10 Prevention Coalitions funded by PFS and SABG prevention awards. Similarly, the Bureau is aware of the statewide data trends related to prevention needs, which do not necessarily align across all service areas on an equitable basis. As such, there is a need for different programming to serve the needs of Nevadans across all of the service areas of the Prevention Coalitions.

To support the accomplishment of statewide prevention goals and reduction of substance use and abuse among Nevadans, there must be collaboration between the Bureau and the Prevention Coalitions to determine the most effective programming to serve local needs with various service areas around that State. The EBPPPAW is designed to support that initiative by bringing together experts and representatives of target service populations to ensure programming is being selected and implemented to the highest efficacy for those target service populations. Furthermore, the Bureau has invested in external monitoring and evaluation with support of Strategic Progress, LLC to maintain compliance, align programming with Strategic Plans and statewide goals, develop standardized data collection instruments, and publish various reports and guidance documentation to support PFS and SABG funded programs. Fundamentally, the Bureau has made substantial progress on developing the infrastructure to support the continued improvement of prevention programming and increase the number of implemented EBPs by Prevention Coalitions, which is expected to be observable over the coming years.