



**Designing an Evaluation Plan for the PHCAST grants
PHI Q&A**

What are the evaluation requirements of the PHCAST grant?

The evaluation plan accounts for 30% of one’s application, so it is important to lay out clearly the specifics. Each application must have its own evaluation plan that is distinct from the overall national evaluation plan, but that can be adapted to accommodate the national evaluation once that contractor is identified.

The RPF states that:

Specific project outcome measures should quantitatively and qualitatively assess the degree to which the intervention increases the availability of culturally competent, personal and home care aides who demonstrate the skills and attitudes necessary to improve patient health outcomes and reduce health disparities.

The evaluation plan must include:

1. A comparison group against which relative effects of the intervention can be measured/estimated
2. Educational outcomes at primary (e.g., knowledge gained by the trainee), secondary (e.g., actual practice changes by the trainee), and if possible tertiary (effects on patient outcomes) levels. (“if appropriate”)
3. Data collection, analysis, and reporting methods
4. Description of the processes used to assure the quality and integrity of the evaluation
5. Milestones and target dates to implement a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and reporting performance and evaluation data (if systems do not yet exist)
6. Description of current experience, skills, and knowledge of evaluation staff, including previous work of a similar nature and related publications

What are the definitions of some of the terms used, and what are examples of means of measurement?

The table below defines terms, provides example indicators, and methods of data collection.

Term	Definition	Example indicators	Data collection methods
Quantitative measures	Measurements that quantify training results (counts, percentages, levels of knowledge, satisfaction, skills, attitudes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/percentage of trainees knowledgeable in each of the curriculum’s learning objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Knowledge tests • Trainee database capturing numbers trained, demographics, etc.

Term	Definition	Example indicators	Data collection methods
Qualitative measures	Measurements gathered through interviews and focus group discussions that qualitatively characterize the extent to which the training has been effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which trainees practice newly acquired skills in the workplace(including cultural sensitivity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • Qualitative (open-ended) interviews
Availability of trained aides	Extent to which trained individuals are available for employment or currently employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of aides trained and competent in curriculum content • Number of trained aides who remain on the job 3 to 6 months following training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainee database • Knowledge, attitudes, and skills test results • Employer-based retention data • Follow-up interviews
Primary educational outcomes	The immediate result of training: Improved knowledge, attitudes, and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge: % of trainees scoring 80% or above on knowledge test • Attitudes: % of trainees scoring 80% or higher on attitude scale • Skills: % of trainees demonstrating adequate skills at completion of training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and Attitudes test • Skills checklist (observation)
Secondary educational outcomes	Changes in practice at the workplace due to training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of trainees observed practicing skills at the workplace • Extent to which trainees practice skills at the workplace (qualitative indicator) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills checklist (observation) • Questionnaires • Interviews/focus group discussions
Tertiary educational outcomes	Effects of training on consumers of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of consumers reporting satisfaction with services • Extent to which consumers are satisfied with services • Improvements in consumer clinical outcomes (infection rates; falls; hospitalization) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative surveys or interviews • Qualitative interviews • Tracking/reporting systems for clinical indicators

Where can one locate training evaluation resources?

There are numerous resources that can guide states in the development of an educational or training evaluation plan:

- Resources on Donald Kirkpatrick's four levels of training evaluation
<http://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Resources/tabid/56/Default.aspx>
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook, 2004
<http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2010/W-K-Kellogg-Foundation-Evaluation-Handbook.aspx>
- *How Do They Know They Know? Evaluating Adult Learning*
Jane Vella, Paula Berardinelli, Jim Burrow | 1997 | Jossey-Bass | ISBN: 0-7879-1047-3
<http://www.globalearning.com/How-Do-They-Know-They-Know-Evaluating-Adult-Learning-by-Vella-and-Berardinelli-and-Burrow.htm>

What does one need to consider when identifying a comparison group?

To the extent possible, individuals in the intervention and comparison groups should be similar in terms of cultural and linguistic background, socioeconomic status and annual income, years of experience in the field, educational background.

Possibilities for comparison groups include:

- Random assignment – randomly assigning aides to training or no training
- Comparing against a different training modality – collecting results from aides receiving standard state-approved training (if it exists)
- Staging the intervention so that organizations can serve as their own comparison group over time.

Is there literature on evaluations of PCA training interventions?

Given the dearth of regulation surrounding PCA training and certification requirements across most states, and no specific federal educational requirements, there has been little in the way of published evaluation of PCA training programs. Given that this is a nascent field of evaluation inquiry, we recommend consulting evaluation literature of training programs for CNAs or home health aides. Evaluations of projects that included paraprofessional training are:

- Gemeinhardt. *Evaluation of Quality Workforce Workgroup Strategies*. Final Report Submitted to Care for Elders, April 2008
<http://www.careforelders.org/default.aspx?MenuItemID=309&MenuGroup=Initiatives+%26+Tools>

- Heineman, Washko, Gottlieb, and Wilson. "The qualitative evaluation of ECCLI." *Commonwealth Corporation Research and Evaluation Briefs*, Vol. 5, Issue 2. Commonwealth Corporation, January 2008. http://www.directcareclearinghouse.org/l_art_det.jsp?res_id=270110
- Washko, Gottlieb, Wilson, Heineman, Stone, Caro. *Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI) Qualitative Evaluation Project Final Report*. Prepared for the Commonwealth Co by Institute for the Future of Aging Services, American Assoc. of Homes and Services for the Aging and The Gerontology Institute, University of Massachusetts, Boston, 2007. [http://www.aahsa.org/uploadedFiles/IFAS/Publications_amp_Products/eccli_final_report\(1\).pdf](http://www.aahsa.org/uploadedFiles/IFAS/Publications_amp_Products/eccli_final_report(1).pdf)
- Casper, McNelis, Carey, Oursler. "Effectiveness of a Low-Cost Curriculum among Entry-Level Psychiatric Rehabilitation Workers." *Psychiatric Services*, Vol. 58, No.3, pg 409-412. 2007.
- Coogle, Parham, Jablonski. "Enhanced Care Assistant Training to Address the Workforce Crisis in HomeCare: Changes Related to Job Satisfaction and Career Commitment." *Care Management Journals*, Vo.8, No.2, 25-37. Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center, Richmond, VA, 2007.
- Konrad and Morgan. Executive Summary of WIN-A-STEP UP Evaluation. 2006. http://www.bjbc.org/content/docs/ExecSummary_UNC_FINALCOLOR8-06.pdf
- Kathryn L. Braun. "Increasing knowledge, skills, and empathy among direct care workers in elder care: A preliminary study of an Active-Learning Model." *The Gerontologist*. Vol 45. No 1. 118-124. The Paraprofessionals in Aging Project (PAP), 2005.
- Wilson, Eaton, and Kamanu. *Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI), Round 2: Evaluation Report*, 2002. http://directcareclearinghouse.org/download/rwp03_006_eaton_rev2.pdf