

## Importance of producing a written report

Community health practitioners and services put a lot of effort into evaluation but it seldom gets written up in a way that services and others can use. This template provides you with a framework to produce credible reports that will reflect well on your organisation. It will also help others to learn from your evaluation.

## Why Evaluate?

Key reasons for conducting an evaluation are to:

- be accountable
- find out what worked, what didn't, and why in what context
- feed into broader service and health system planning
- demonstrate effectiveness of the comprehensive community health model and contribute to a rigorous evidence base for this model.

This report template is designed to give you a report that will fulfil each of these purposes.

## The template includes:

- Title
- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Program rationale and logic
- Description of the initiative/ program
- Evaluation methods
- Research/findings
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- References
- Appendices

# Are you writing an evaluation report?

## Evaluation Report Template

### Title

Choose a title that is descriptive of your project keeping your main audience in mind.

### Executive Summary

This will be useful for people, including funders, politicians and policy makers, who have very little time to read but do need to know about community health work. One to two pages long, use sub-headings and bullet lists to break up text and increase readability.

Summarise the main points from the evaluation. Put the main findings upfront. Include a summary of key recommendations.

### Introduction

This part of your report introduces the initiative being evaluated and the context in which it took place.

Briefly describe the geographical, socio-economic, political, environmental and historical context and setting, as relevant to your initiative. The context is critical to understanding the evaluation.

### Program rationale and logic

This aspect of evaluation is often taken for granted by people running programs because they assume that outsiders would have this knowledge. In fact it is a crucial aspect of building the evidence base for effectiveness.

Describe the health issue and why it was selected. Outline what is known about the issue in your community or more widely. Explain why you have chosen to tackle the issue in the way you have. Describe the overall goal of the program i.e. what you are trying to achieve and why you think your approach will work. Draw on literature, previous experience and practice knowledge.

*'Put the main findings upfront. Include a summary of key recommendations...'*

### Description of the initiative/program

A full description of the initiative allows someone who was not involved to get a good idea of what was done.

Include the following:

- the issue and how it was addressed
- overall goal and specific objectives of the initiative
- who the initiative was aimed at
- what services and activities took place
- who was involved in providing the services/activities
- involvement of other organisations and sectors
- ways in which community people were involved
- costs of the program (staff time in planning and implementation, other costs).
- if and how the initiative planned to tackle equity of access to services
- if and how the initiative planned to contribute to more equitable health outcomes



*'A full description of the initiative allows someone who was not involved to get a good idea of what was done...'*

### Evaluation Methods

This section enables the reader to judge how accurate the findings of the evaluation are likely to be.

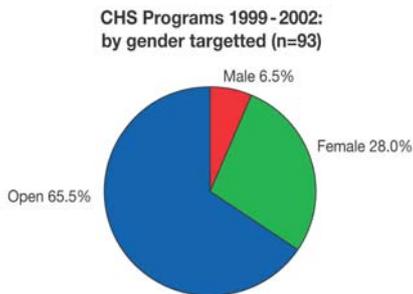
Include the following information:

- full description of evaluation methods (e.g. focus groups, self-completion questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, observation)
- who took part in the evaluation (numbers and characteristics) and details of any sampling undertaken
- description of the attempts to follow up people who did not respond to the data collection method
- how the data was analysed
- strengths and weaknesses of the chosen methods

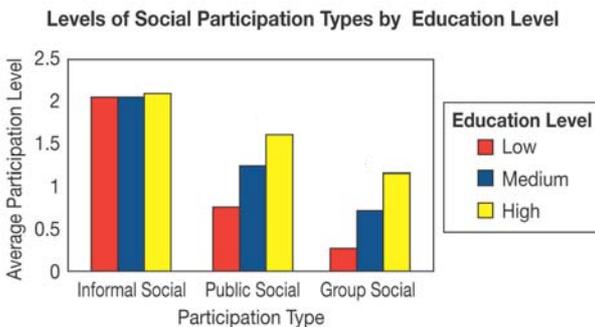
Use of different methods and different data sources is useful for establishing validity

## Results/findings

### Example of Pie Chart



### Example of graph



This section presents your results – what the data tells you. Usually, an evaluation will contain a mix of quantitative data and qualitative data.

If you have identified key performance indicators for your program, report against these.

Divide the results into process (eg. attendance, satisfaction) and impact (eg changes in participants' knowledge, skills, behaviour).

Present quantitative data as tables, pie charts or graphs where appropriate. Present qualitative data as descriptive themes. Use quotes to illustrate key themes and allow the voices of people who were part of the evaluation to be heard but also consider the confidentiality of your informants.

If relevant, report on:

- extent to which equity of access was achieved
- extent of contribution to making health outcomes more equitable
- extent and quality of community participation
- extent and quality of collaboration and partnership
- any unexpected outcomes

*'Present quantitative data as tables, pie charts or graphs. Present qualitative data as descriptive themes...'*

## Discussion

This section is where you reflect on the broader lessons from your evaluation and make recommendations on the basis of the findings. Recommendations identify what was successful and should be maintained or expanded, and where changes to practices and policies seem necessary. Recommendations can be directed at professional practice, the service organisation, or other bodies whose work impacts on the initiative you have evaluated.

Discuss each objective in light of the findings relating to them and describe your achievements. Consider how your initiative dealt with the key primary health care principles of equity, participation across sectors and involvement of the community.

Consider the impacts in relation to the costs ie value for money, benefit of the investment.

Describe the implications of the findings for your work, for your work team and organisation, and for people beyond your organisation eg policy makers. Address the question of what your evaluation suggests should change.

List each recommendation with an explanation linked to your findings and identify who has main responsibility for action.

## Conclusion

This section is short and is used to reinforce the main "take home messages" from your evaluation. Summarise what the evaluation has found.

## Acknowledgments

Thank people who were involved in your evaluation, including respondents and external players such as a funding body. Acknowledgments can be at the front or end of your report.

## References

List any references in a style which enables a reader to follow up on them and is consistent. SACHRU prefers the Harvard style e.g.

Baum, F 2002, *The New Public Health*, 2nd edn, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Jolley, G 2003, 'Performance measurement for community health services: opportunities and challenges', *Australian Health Review*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp.133-140.

## Appendices

Include copies of your data collection tools, detailed statistical data etc. that would interrupt the flow of the main report.

*'Ensure you write to engage a particular audience...'*

### Presentation and dissemination

Your report should be written in a style appropriate to your audience. This may be community people, politicians, policy makers or your service's board of management.

Clear presentation and thoughtful design will enhance the impact of your report. Desk-top publishing and electronic scanning make it easier to produce a professional looking report. Cartoons and photos can highlight main findings and make your report easier to read.

Consider other ways to present your findings so that different audiences are informed eg posters, oral presentations, newsletters, journal articles.



*'The more professional the presentation of your report, the more impact it is likely to have...'*