

ITAC INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

ITAC Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. My name is [name], and I'm a researcher at Insight Policy Research. The purpose of this interview is to obtain some descriptive information about your activities and outcomes as the Interdisciplinary Technical Assistance Center (ITAC) for the evaluation of MCHB's Autism CARES (or Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support) Act Initiative. I will be asking you questions about your activities and accomplishments related to the goals and objectives of Autism CARES. I'll focus on four main topic areas: providing technical assistance to Autism CARES grantees, fostering collaboration, collecting data, and disseminating resources.

Throughout our discussion, I will also be asking you about activities related to supporting youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) during their transition to adulthood because this is a new reporting requirement for MCHB.

Touch on bulleted topics as needed

- ▶ **Review of additional data sources.** We have already reviewed some quantitative and qualitative data on your program from other sources, including [name relevant documents]. The information you share today can supplement the sources we have reviewed. You may be able to provide additional context or share new information.

[Note to interviewer: To the extent possible, try to focus the conversation on new information or supplemental details that are not adequately covered in the progress reports.]

- ▶ **Evaluation results.** The results from this evaluation will be presented in a detailed report that will focus on all grant programs that received funding under Autism CARES.
- ▶ **Evaluation period.** This evaluation builds on the previous evaluation, which covered Autism CARES activities and accomplishments through roughly summer 2014. For each set of questions, I'd like you to report on activities or outcomes that have occurred since approximately fall 2014.
- ▶ **ASD/developmental disabilities (DDs) focus.** I know your program works on many DDs other than ASD. We are interested in hearing about activities related to both ASD and other DDs.
- ▶ **CARES Funding.** I know your program has funding from various sources, and it can be challenging to separate out the contributions of each. Because this evaluation focuses on Autism CARES funding, please try to focus on activities supported by Autism CARES funding. In your case, this should be LEND, DBP, and the funding for the ITAC Resource Center cooperative agreement with MCHB.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Do I have your permission to record our conversation? The purpose of the recording is to be certain we accurately capture the information you share today. The recording will not be shared with anyone outside the Insight evaluation team.

[Confirm permission once recording starts.]

A. Technical Assistance

For this first set of questions, I'd like to talk about some of the ways you have provided technical assistance to Autism CARES grantees.

1. Please describe the kinds of technical assistance you have provided to the LEND and DBP grantees in support of their activities under Autism CARES.
2. What are some examples of technical assistance you have offered?
[Probe] What methods or formats did you use for providing technical assistance?
 - a. How was that assistance provided? How often?
 - b. Was it broadly available to all grantees or targeted to single grantees?
3. How did you learn what types of technical assistance the grantees would like or need?
4. How has the technical assistance you have provided helped grantees meet their program goals; specifically, their Autism CARES objectives?
[Probe if needed] The goals are training, awareness building, research, and improving systems of care. How has your technical assistance addressed those goals? What are some specific challenges that grantees have been able to address with ITAC's support?
5. [Placeholder for questions you may have from progress reports/other data sources where you would like more detail. For example, "I noticed in (source) that you mention having done X for Y. Could you provide a little more information about X?"]
6. What challenges did you face in meeting the Autism CARES grantees' technical assistance needs?

I'd like to ask you a few more questions specifically about successes and difficulties that LEND and DBP programs have encountered.

7. Let's start with LEND grantees. What are some of the ways LEND grantees have been particularly successful in working toward the goals of Autism CARES since 2014?
8. What outstanding challenges remain? What would help the LENDs meet those challenges?
9. And what about DBP? What are some of the ways DBP grantees have been particularly successful in working toward the goals of Autism CARES since 2014?
10. What outstanding challenges remain? What would help the DBPs meet those challenges?
11. How do you see your role differing in providing support to LENDs compared to DBPs?
12. [Placeholder for questions you may have from progress reports/other data sources where you would like more detail.]

B. Collaboration

Next, I'd like to ask you some questions about how ITAC facilitates collaboration, both among LEND and DBP grantees and with other organizations and entities focused on children with ASD and other DDs and their families. I would also like to know about any work you've done with the other MCHB-funded resource center, the State Public Health Autism Resource Center (SPHARC).

First, let's talk about collaboration among Autism CARES grantees. I'd like to start with a big-picture overview of your activities in this realm, then ask for details about your work with specific grantees.

13. How would you describe your overall role in facilitating coordination among Autism CARES grantees?
14. How did ITAC facilitate collaborations among LEND and DBP grantees?
 - a. What was the format of these collaborations; for example, in-person meetings, electronic forums (such as Webinars, teleconferences), other ways?
 - b. How often did these collaborations take place?
 - c. How well attended were these activities?
 - d. How, if at all, did these activities facilitate collaboration among grantees? Was collaboration a primary goal of these events?
15. To what extent have you collaborated with SPHARC? Please describe these collaborations
[Probe: What can you tell me about the format of these collaborations? What about the frequency? What was the goal of these activities?]
16. Does ITAC ever facilitate collaboration among other Autism CARES grantees other than LEND and DBP grantees? If yes, how?
17. Can you share any examples of outcomes of collaborations among and between grantees?
18. [Placeholder for specific questions you may have from progress reports/other data sources where you would like more information. For example, "(Source) mentioned that ITAC (hosted an event/held some activity). How many people attended this event? What was the goal of this event? Had this event been held before?"]

Now let's talk about collaboration with organizations beyond Autism CARES grantees. These could be State Title V agencies, advocacy groups, governmental commissions on autism, professional associations, etc.

19. Please describe how ITAC facilitated collaborations that involved these types of entities.
 - a. What was the format of these collaborations; for example, in-person meetings, electronic forums (such as Webinars, teleconferences), other ways?
20. How often did these collaborations take place?
21. How many grantees or other stakeholders participated in these activities?

22. To what extent were these efforts successful in promoting collaboration?
23. Overall, to what extent did ITAC's collaborative efforts influence grantees' success in meeting their goals and the broader goals of Autism CARES?
24. [Placeholder for specific questions you may have from progress reports/other data sources where you would like more information. For example, "We've heard X mentioned a few times. What is it referring to?"]
25. Overall, what challenges have you faced in working to facilitate collaboration among and between Autism CARES grantees?

C. Data Collection and Management Activities

The next questions pertain to ITAC's contributions to MCHB's performance measurement of grantees through data collection and management activities.

26. What types of data has ITAC collected and managed for Autism CARES grantees?
27. How has ITAC supported grantees in their data collection and reporting requirements?
28. What challenges have you faced in collecting these data?
29. [Placeholder for specific questions you may have from progress reports/other sources of information. For example, "Some grantees mentioned having difficulty with (X aspect of data collection). Has this been a widespread issue? If so, how are you addressing it?"]

D. Resource Production and Dissemination

The final questions relate to the production and dissemination of resources, including research findings and other information about ASD/DDs.

30. What types of information and resources has ITAC developed as part of Autism CARES activities? [Probe] This can range from pamphlets, to online resources, to strategies, systems, best practices.
31. How were these materials and resources developed? Who developed them?
32. How were these materials and resources disseminated?
33. Who were the audiences for these materials?
34. Does ITAC disseminate materials and resources developed by other entities, such as grantees, families, and other stakeholders?
 - a. How are these materials and resources disseminated?
[Probe, if online] Is there a way to track how many people have viewed or downloaded these resources?

- b. Who are the authors for these materials and resources?
 - c. What audiences are these materials and resources intended for?
35. What type of feedback have you received from Autism CARES grantees about the materials you disseminate?
36. What challenges have you faced in producing and disseminating materials?
37. [Placeholder for any questions you may have from progress reports/other sources of information]

E. Other Questions, Wrap-Up

38. What would you consider your greatest successes?
[Probe] Technical assistance, fostering collaboration, data collection, disseminating resources
39. What would you consider your greatest challenges?
[Probe] Technical assistance, fostering collaboration, data collection, disseminating resources
40. Is there anything else you would like to share about your program at this time?
41. Are there any questions I should have asked that I didn't ask?
42. [Placeholder for questions you may have from progress reports/other data sources where you would like more detail]

That concludes my questions for you. Thank you very much for speaking with me today.

1. Public Burden Statement: An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this project is 0915-XXXX. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to HRSA Reports Clearance Officer, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 10C-03I, Rockville, Maryland, 20857.