

SPHARC INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

SPHARC 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 descriptive information about SPHARC's activities and outcomes 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, data collection and management activities, and production and dissemination of 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 MCHB 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.

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

1. Please describe the kinds of technical assistance you provide to the State grantees in support of their activities under Autism CARES.
2. What are some examples of technical assistance 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 provided helped grantees meet their program goals; specifically, their Autism CARES objectives?
 - a. Can you give an example of where the technical assistance provided by SPHARC enabled a grantee to effectively manage a specific challenge of accomplish an ambitious goal?

[Probe if needed] The goals are training, awareness building, research, and improving systems of care. How has your technical assistance addressed those goals?

5. What are some specific challenges grantees have been able to address with SPHARC's support?
6. [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 on X?"
7. What challenges do you face in meeting the Autism CARES grantees' technical assistance needs?
 - a. What challenges have you faced in making States aware of available resources?
 - b. Did you see any changes over time with respect to use of the resources you've made available to grantees?

B. Collaboration

Next, I'd like to ask you some questions about the ways SPHARC facilitates collaboration, both among State Implementation grantees and with other organizations and entities focused on children with ASD and other developmental disabilities (DDs) and their families. I would also like to know about any work you've done with the other MCHB-funded resource center, the Interdisciplinary Technical Assistance Center (ITAC).

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 will ask for details about your work with specific grantees.

8. How would you describe your overall role in facilitating coordination among Autism CARES grantees?
 - a. What about other stakeholders and State systems outside of the Autism CARES grantees?
9. How does SPHARC facilitate collaborations among State grantees?
 - a. What was the format of these collaborations (e.g., 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?
10. To what extent have you collaborated with the Interdisciplinary Technical Assistance Center (ITAC)? 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?).
11. Does SPHARC ever facilitate collaboration between State grantees and other Autism CARES grantees?
- a. With LEND programs? DBP programs? Research programs? ITAC or other coordinating centers?
12. Can you share any examples of two or more grantees leveraging their resources to meet a common goal?

[Placeholder for specific questions you may have from progress reports/other data sources where you would like more information. For example, "(Source) mentioned that AUCD (hosted an event/held some activity). How many people attended this event? What was the goal of this event? Had this 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.

13. Please describe how SPHARC facilitates collaborations that involve these types of entities.
- a. What was the format of these collaborations (e.g., in-person meetings, electronic forums such as Webinars, teleconferences, other ways)?
14. How often did these collaborations take place?
15. How many grantees or other stakeholders participated in these activities?
16. To what extent were these efforts successful in promoting collaboration?
17. Overall, to what extent did SPHARC's collaborative efforts influence grantees' success in meeting their goals and the broader goals of Autism CARES?
18. [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 does it refer to?"]
19. 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 SPHARC's data collection and management activities.

20. What types of data has SPHARC collected and managed for Autism CARES grantees?
[Probe] customer satisfaction surveys, knowledge transfer
21. What challenges have you faced in collecting these data?
22. [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.

23. What types of materials and resources has SPHARC developed as part of its Autism CARES activities?
 24. How are these materials and resources developed? Who develops them?
 25. How are these materials and resources disseminated?
 26. Who are the audiences for these materials?
 - a. Does SPHARC disseminate information and resources developed by other entities, such as grantees, families, and other stakeholders?
[Probe] this can range from pamphlets to online resources, to strategies, systems, best practices. 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/informants for these materials and resources?
 - c. Who are the intended audiences of these materials and resources?
 27. What type of feedback have you received from Autism CARES grantees about the information you disseminated?
 28. What challenges have you faced in producing and disseminating information?
 29. [Placeholder for any questions you may have from progress reports/other sources of information]
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E. Other Questions, Wrap-Up

30. What would you consider your greatest successes?
[Probe] Technical assistance, fostering collaboration, data collection, disseminating resources
31. What would you consider your greatest challenges?
[Probe] Technical assistance, fostering collaboration, data collection, disseminating resources
32. What effect, if any, has SPHARC had on the level of communication across States and with other grantees?
33. Is there anything else you would like to share about your program at this time?
34. Are there any questions I should have asked that I didn't ask?
35. [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-031, Rockville, Maryland, 20857.