Instrument 1: SIRF Phone Meeting with Program Staff Protocol

SIRF Semi Structured Protocol for Initial Phone Call with Program Staff

What is SIRF? What is the purpose of our call?

My name is _____, and I'm a researcher with MDRC/MEF/Insight Policy Research. We're contacting you on behalf of the Strengthening the Implementation of Responsible Fatherhood Programs (SIRF) project. SIRF is a new study sponsored by the federal government examining the implementation challenges and effective solutions that Responsible Fatherhood programs, or programs like them, face. As you know, since 2006, Responsible Fatherhood programs have been supported by dedicated federal funding from the Office of Family Assistance within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, or ACF. While there is a growing body of research to learn from regarding fatherhood services, research and evaluation efforts have also uncovered implementation challenges associated with recruiting fathers, supporting them to show up for services, and keeping them engaged in services over time, among others. The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation of ACF awarded MDRC and its partners MEF and Insight Policy Research a contract to test innovative approaches to overcome these challenges. The funding for this project comes from the Office of Family Assistance within ACF.

Today, we are calling because we are in a preliminary stage of gathering information to inform the research questions and design for the SIRF project. We heard about your program from [insert name or organization] and thought it would be valuable to learn more about the kinds of services you provide to fathers, specifically [insert organization information] and the challenging and successful aspects of service delivery. Over the next hour, we would like to walk through specific questions about the topics we provided in advance of the meeting. Please know that talking with the SIRF team is completely voluntary, and you can choose not to answer any question you don't want to answer, or to leave the discussion entirely. Any information you share will be kept private and will not be used to evaluate you in any way. I'll be taking some notes in order to keep track of what we discussed here today. They'll be stored securely and will not be shared with anyone outside of the SIRF team. Do you have any questions before we get started?

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 # for this information collection is 0970-0356 and the expiration date is 6/30/2021.

<u>Current Affiliation, Role, and Organization</u>

    a.   What is your current role at [insert program name]?

    b.   Prior to this role, what experience did you have working with fathers? *Probe for past affiliations, roles, and time period of experience with program (s)*

    c.   Walk through a brief history and overview of your organization.

<u>Structure of Program</u>

a. What services for fathers does [insert organization name] provide?

b. How are the fatherhood services structured?

    a. [if grantee] Are any of the required RF fatherhood components (economic stability, healthy relationships, parenting) offered by partner organizations?

    b. Can a participant start services any time, or are services offered in cohorts?

    c. How long has the fatherhood program been in operation?

c. What type of agency or organization operates the fatherhood program? (e.g. social service government agency, social service stand-alone agency, child support agency.) What other services are offered, if any?

d. Who do you primarily serve? (e.g. non-resident fathers, resident fathers, under 25, over 35, fathers with prior justice involvement, couples, mothers)

e. How many clients can your program serve at any one time? How many are served at any one time in each service component?

f. How many new enrollments do you have in an average year?

g. How is your program staffed? What is the prior professional experience of most staff?(Probe: prior work with community-based organization, prior work with fathers, prior work with systems (child support, criminal justice, etc.)

h. What are the primary funding sources for the fatherhood services?

<u>Program Implementation Challenges</u>

a. What are the biggest implementation challenges that your program faces?

b. What challenges do you face recruiting fathers?

c. What challenges do you face in delivering services?

d. What challenges do you face engaging and retaining fathers in services?

e. What are the main barriers fathers face?

f. How do those barriers affect the implementation of fatherhood services?

Program Approaches to Address Implementation Challenges

    a.   What are the most effective program components and practices used to address implementation challenges?

    b.   What approaches, if any, did your program try that did not work?

    c.   How have those practices been implemented?

Use of Data and Experience with Evaluation

    a.   How does your program use data to manage the program?

    b.   Has your program or organization participated in an evaluation?

    c.   [If yes] Please describe the evaluation.

Referral Sources and Service Partners

    a.   What existing referral partnerships does your program have?

    b.   Can you describe how you work with your referral partners?

    c.   How have the relationships changed over time?

    d.   Are there current implementation challenges related to referral sources?

    e.   Who are your current service partners?

    f.   Can you describe how you work with the service partners?

    g.   How have these relationships changed over time?

    h.   Are there current implementation challenges related to service partners?
        a.   What are approaches you have tied to address these issues? Were you successful? Why, or why not?

Site Visit Preparation [if applicable]

    a.   Would you be open to having our team visit your program to learn more about your program, the implementation challenges you face, and innovative approaches to overcome these challenges?

b. [If yes] If possible, we would also like to speak with other program staff and participants. Would that be possible?

c. [If yes] Can you provide the contact information for who we should coordinate with?