Instrument 5D: Site Visit 2 Interview Guide for Administrators: Provider Agency Administrators

Instructions
Thank you for joining us today. We would like to invite you to participate in an interview that will last about 60 minutes. We are conducting an evaluation of LifeSet, and today we'd like to learn more about the LifeSet program model and service delivery. Specifically, we will talk about the challenges and barriers the program has experienced, key program components, the enrollment and intake process, among other topics. We will use this information to better understand how the LifeSet program operates and serves young adults in New Jersey.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question or not participate in the interview at all. There will be no consequences to you if you choose not to participate. We will keep the information you provide private and will not share it with anyone except for research staff working on the study. Additionally, federal law states that 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 number for this data collection is 0970-0XXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

Background and Role
Current position and professional experience & Main responsibilities and role within LifeSet program
Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today.

[Note to Interviewer: Only ask if this is the first time interviewing this respondent, otherwise go to #10] I'd like to start by learning a little bit about you.
1. What is your current position and how long have you been in it?
2. What are your main responsibilities?
3. [If held current position since before March 2020] Are these the same responsibilities you had pre-COVID? If not how did your responsibilities change?
4. How long have you worked at [agency]?
5. What other positions have you held at [agency]?
6. What role do you play as part of the LifeSet program?
7. Have you worked with former foster youth or other vulnerable youth populations before working for [agency]? If so, in what capacity?
8. Have you held other positions – client facing or management – in social services before? If so, what were they?
9. Is there a degree/credential or experience requirement for your position? What is it?

[Note to interviewer: Only ask if this is a follow-up interview with this respondent] First I'd like to ask if anything changed about your current position or your agency's services since we last spoke on [date]?
10. Please describe any changes in your position or main responsibilities. When did the changes occur and why?
11. Have there been any changes in services, other than LifeSet, your agency provides to transition-aged youth? Please describe.

Implementation Supports
Next, I'd like to ask you about policies on the implementation of LifeSet in New Jersey and successes and challenges you have encountered during implementation.
Impact of new or current policies on implementation
12. Can you describe any new policies your agency created to support the implementation of LifeSet?
13. What are the DCF policies you must follow in order to implement LifeSet?
    a. Do those policies make it easier or harder to provide the services youth need?
14. What are the YV policies you must follow in order to implement LifeSet?
    a. Do those policies make it easier or harder to provide the services youth need?

Implementation successes and challenges
15. What challenges, if any, have you encountered implementing LifeSet? How did you overcome these challenges?
16. What would you describe as successes, or what worked well, in implementing LifeSet? What contributed to that success?

Implementation supports and barriers
17. What has been particularly helpful in implementing LifeSet?
    a. Probes: readiness of providers, support from leadership of partner agencies (DCF, YV, providers), policies, technology, funding, use of data for program improvement, monitoring, and decision-making, teaming and communication structure with DCF and YV, etc.
18. What things have been barriers to implementing LifeSet?
    a. Probes: lack of support from leadership, policies, technology, funding, teaming and communication structure with DCF and YV, etc.

Program Model
Now, I would like to learn more about LifeSet's program model, including the program's goals and key features.
Program goals and main components
19. What are the goals of LifeSet?
20. Are the goals of LifeSet different from the goals established for youths served by other transition services programs?
21. What are the main components and program features of LifeSet?
    a. If someone came to you and asked which of these components they need to have to start LifeSet in their state or agency, what would they be?
22. [Bring/ show copy of the logic model] We have been shown this logic model. Does this reflect inputs, outputs and outcomes for the operation of LifeSet in New Jersey in early 2021? If not, what would you add or take away from this model to make it more accurate?
    a. Inputs are program resources such as staff, caseload size, and tools.
    b. Outputs are program activities such as supervision and consultation, sessions with youth, setting youth goals, and holding group sessions with youth.
    c. Outcomes, or goals, are the changes the program expects will result from the inputs and outputs such as increased education and employment or housing stability.

Next, I would like to learn about any modifications made to the program for New Jersey.
New Jersey-specific modification
23. Do you know if the model and program has been changed from the manual in New Jersey? If so, how so?
24. How, if at all, has the evaluation impacted service delivery?
25. How, if at all, has COVID impacted service delivery? What has that looked like over time?

Fidelity
26. Do you believe LifeSet is being delivered with fidelity in your agency?
    a. If yes, how do you know?
    b. If no, what LifeSet components are not being delivered with fidelity?
27. Do the staff who are implementing LifeSet believe in the model?
    a. Have you found that LifeSet staff in your agency tend to follow the model, even if a staff member might prefer a different approach? Do you have an example you can share?

Service Delivery
Next, I'd like to learn more about the referral and intake process for LifeSet.
Eligibility and intake
28. Can you please tell me how youth are referred to LifeSet?
    a. Do referrals happen on a regular basis?
    b. Have there been time periods where referrals have slowed at all? Please describe.
    c. Do you believe that there are ethnic/racial/gender disparities in those who are referred to LifeSet? Can you describe the disparities that you see in referrals?
29. Do you ever receive referrals that do not comply with the eligibility requirements? If so, what happens? How often does this happen?
    a. What do you do with referred youth who don't meet eligibility requirements?

  b. Would a LifeSet Supervisor or Specialist ever decide that a referred youth is not appropriate for LifeSet services? Why or why not?

  c. Under what circumstances would the program refuse to serve a referred youth? How often does this happen?

30. What is the enrollment and intake process for youth in LifeSet?

  a. Who do youth meet with first? What's important to know about this first point of contact (i.e., anything specifically important to do during this first meeting, how to introduce LifeSet to the youth, etc.?)

  b. What happens if youth decline LifeSet services during the first meeting?

  c. After the first meeting, who do the youth work with and when?

Data Systems and Use

Next, I'd like to know about the data systems you use to track information related to LifeSet.

31. Is there a data system you use to record information for the LifeSet program?

  a. Are there one or multiple data systems used? What are they called?

  b. Is it specific to LifeSet or does it record information for all of your cases?

  c. What type of data are in this system? [Probes: case notes, assessments, service plans, demographics, worker activities with youth]

  d. Who is responsible for entering/tracking the information?

32. Are any changes or improvements to the system planned in the short term - e.g., over the next few months or within the next year? If so, what improvements?

33. Did you make any changes to your data system when you started implementing LifeSet? If yes, what changed were made?

34. How do you use the information collected in your data system?

  a. [Probe for how it informs service delivery, practices, and the program model]

35. What types of reports, specific to LifeSet services, are produced?

  a. What information or data are in the reports?

  b. Are LifeSet Specialists and Supervisors able to access these reports for youth they serve?

36. How does data quality affect LifeSet's ability to help youth, in your opinion?

Opinion of Program Effectiveness

Lastly, I'd like to talk about your opinion of the effectiveness of LifeSet services in New Jersey.

Opinion of services

37. Overall, how effective do you perceive LifeSet has been at providing services to youth transitioning out of care?

  a. What are major strengths? Limitations?

38. Is there anything about LifeSet that you would like to change? If so, what is it?

39. To what extent do you perceive LifeSet meets the needs of youth served? What needs are not currently met through the LifeSet program?

40. What challenges do youth in LifeSet continue to face after they leave the program?

  a. Is there anything you think LifeSet could be doing to better serve and meet the needs of youth? If so, what?

Closing Questions

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I have a couple closing questions.

41. Is there anything that I did not ask about that you think I should know about LifeSet or your experience?

42. Do you have any final questions for me about the study, or about the research team?