

Discussion guide: Sustainability of the Pathway Home grant project

Instructions to interviewers: Bulleted items below each question are probes for important details. Depending on how well you are doing on time, try to make sure respondents touch on each of these issues.

Date of call:		Respondents (Name, title, program):	1.
Call length:	60/90 minutes		2..
Facilitator:			3.
Notetaker:			4.

Introduction (5 minutes)

Thank you for taking the time to join the call today. I’m going to start with a brief introduction, go over some logistics for the call, and then we can jump in with questions for you. Does that sound good to everyone?

My name is [NAME OF INTERVIEWER], and I work for [Mathematica/SPR]. [I’m also joined by colleague(s), [NOTETAKER], who [is/are] also on the line and will be taking notes during our discussion and may also jump in with questions when needed.] The U.S. Department of Labor contracted with Mathematica, Social Policy Research Associates, and the Council of State Governments Justice Center to conduct an evaluation of the Pathway Home grants. We have invited you here today to learn about your plans for continuing your program beyond the Pathway Home grant period.

[For interviews with sites we visited] Specifically, we will ask you questions about any changes you have made to your program since we last spoke, and how you’ve progressed in your plans for sustaining your programs. We’ll also ask about what you think are the key program elements for a successful program and factors for determining whether you will sustain the program after the grant ends. This conversation will inform a report to the U.S. Department of Labor about implementing programs like those supported by the Pathway Home grants.

[For focus groups with sites we did not visit] Specifically, we will ask you questions about how you’ve progressed in your plans for sustaining your programs, what you think are the key program elements for a successful program, and factors for determining whether you will sustain the program after the grant ends. This virtual group conversation will inform a report to the U.S. Department of Labor about implementing programs like those supported by the Pathway Home grants.

Before we start, I would like to remind you that your participation in this call is voluntary. You may choose not to answer a question if you wish. I also ask that you not share what you hear today with anyone outside of this group. We might mention the name of a grantee in a published

report, in the context of sharing promising practices, but we will not include your name in relation to anything you say today. We should be able to finish this call in about 60/90 minutes.

In addition, we would like to record our conversation to make sure we capture everything you share. The notes and recording will not be used for any other purpose or shared with anyone outside the study team, including the Department of Labor, and we will destroy these notes and the recording after the project ends. Do we have permission from each of you to record our conversation? *[NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: If anyone does NOT agree to be recorded, do NOT record the conversation.]* Do you have any questions before we begin?

Okay, let's begin recording [if all agree to be recorded]. If at any point someone wants to stop the recording, please say so.

A. Changes since last visit (30 minutes) [Will only ask grantees we visited]

I'd like to talk about changes you have made to your Pathway Home program since we last visited your site.

Changes to eligibility and recruitment

First, walk me through any changes to how you identify potential participants.

1. What, if anything, do you do differently now? What has worked well for identifying potential participants?
 - Did the changes affect enrollment? If yes, how?
2. Given what you know today, would you have changed who was eligible for the program or how you identified or recruited participants if you were able to do so? What would you change?

Changes to how you operate services pre-release

Now let's talk about how you operate your pre-release services.

3. Tell me about any lessons you have learned from implementing your program pre-release. What approaches have worked well in providing pre-release services?
 - What changes have you made to the services you offer pre-release? Is there anything related to sequence or timing of the services?
4. Have there been changes in your ability to operate inside a correctional facility?
5. Have there been changes in the partners you work with to provide services to participants pre-release?
6. Have there been any changes in the staffing structure for Pathway Home pre-release?

- If so, what changes? Were these changes made because the grant was ending, or were they made for other reasons?

Change to how you operate post-release

Thank you for sharing about how your pre-release services have gone. Now let's talk about post-release services.

7. Can you help me understand what you have learned from implementing your program that has informed how you link participants to the community-based Pathway Home services? What, if anything, do you do differently now?
 - Have you changed anything about the handoff between pre- and post-release since we last visited?
8. Have there been any changes in your relationships with employers or how employers are engaged in the grant since we last visited?
 - What approaches for working with employers have worked well?
 - Have there been any new challenges with getting employers to hire participants? If so, how have you worked to overcome those challenges?
9. Have there been any changes in the staffing structure for Pathway Home post-release?
 - If so, what changes? Were these changes made because the grant was ending, or were they made for other reasons?

B. Plans for sustainability (15 minutes)

Thank you for sharing about any changes and lessons you have learned in operating your Pathway Home program. I'd like to spend the rest of our time discussing sustainability.

1. What plans do you have in place to continue the program currently being funded by your Pathway Home grant?
2. What potential sources of funding have you identified that could support your program beyond the end of the Pathway Home grant period?
3. What activities have you done to secure the resources necessary for sustaining your program?
4. Are the resources you have in place sufficient to continue the program as it currently operates? If not, do you have plans to identify additional resources to continue the program, or will the program need to end or be altered?
5. What factors have allowed you to progress the most on your plans to sustain your program beyond the end of the Pathway Home grant period?
6. Have you faced any obstacles in your approach to successfully extend your program beyond the Pathway Home grant period?

7. What roles have your partners played in supporting your efforts to sustain your program beyond the Pathway Home grant?

C. Program components necessary for sustainability (25 minutes)

Now I'm going to ask you questions about how you anticipate your program will look beyond the end of the grant.

1. What key elements of the Pathway Home program model do you want to sustain?
2. Do you plan to continue serving the same type of participants? Do you plan to expand or narrow your eligibility criteria?
3. Do you plan to continue working with the same partners? Why?
4. Have you identified new partners to support implementation of your program beyond your Pathway Home grant? What types of partners? Why did you choose to bring them on board?
5. Will your program provide the same types of occupational training opportunities? Will you provide training for employment opportunities in the same industries?
 - [If no or adding] Why did you decide to provide training in these new industries?

D. Lessons learned (10 minutes)

Lastly, I want to see if you have learned any lessons about sustainability that you would like to share with others who might look to sustain a program like Pathway Home.

1. What lessons have you learned from your efforts to sustain your program that have informed your sustainability plans? Is there anything you would do differently?
 - What approaches do you think you should have done sooner?
 - Were there areas where you gave more effort than was necessary?
2. Is there anything else that you would like to share that we did not already discuss?

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and ideas with us today. This discussion has been very helpful in learning more about Pathway Home and staff experiences. We appreciate your time.