Instrument 8: Data Administrator Discussion Guide

Thank you for talking with us today. As you may know, we are researchers from [Westat, an independent research firm located in Rockville, MD / the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine University of Colorado]. We have been contracted by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to conduct an evaluation of programs serving youth in or transitioning out of foster care (called the Chafee Strengthening Outcomes for Transition to Adulthood [Chafee SOTA] Project). Per your executive director, you have agreed to meet with us to discuss [NOMINATED PROGRAM] administrative data [NOTE: This discussion will be planned and scheduled as we work with sites to plan evaluability assessment site visits.] This meeting will take about an hour and will focus on helping us to understand the data you routinely collect for [NOMINATED PROGRAM], address issues of data quality and availability, and ultimately determine if these data might be useful to an evaluation of [NONIMATED PROGRAM]. Your participation in this discussion is voluntary and we will keep your responses private. You also do not have to answer any questions you do not want to (or simply can't) answer.

As part of this review, you agreed to provide available documentation to help us understand these data (e.g., data dictionaries, entity relationship models, dashboards; a map linking data sources to the program logic model; a small de-identified data sample). [NOTE: Executive directors and data administrators will have discretion over what is relevant and appropriate to provide.]

We will be recording this session for purposes of accurate note-taking. If you are not comfortable being recorded, please let me know. Recorded interviews will be stored in a secure location and will be destroyed after the recording has been transcribed.

For each component of the administrative dataset (or documentation provided), we will ask five general questions, with the expectation that a discussion will result from each.

Do you have any questions for us before we begin?

1. Please provide an overview of [documentation] and describe how it is used for program monitoring.

2. Please describe how the [documentation] is aligned with the program model (or core component).

3. Please describe how these data, in particular, might be used for evaluation purposes. Is it possible to add data elements specifically for the evaluation? We would only add those that you could also use for your own purposes.

4. Are there issues related to data quality? Are they ways in which these issues can be overcome or managed if the data were to be used for evaluation purposes?

5. Are there any security or privacy issues related to the data that we might need to address before it can be used for evaluation purposes?