



Tip Sheet: Planning for and Supporting Sustainment

What is Sustainment?

Sustainment is the extent to which a program is to be delivered and maintained in the intended way over time after initial implementation – once initial funding, research support, or external facilitation ends.

Why is this step important?

- Having a successful project does not guarantee that it will be sustained.
- The context for programs (things like policies, reimbursement, and competing demands) heavily influences program impact. Context can and will vary over time.
- Planning for sustainment can help your program continue throughout these changes.

Key Steps

1. Revisit what is of greatest value to key partners to help define success.
2. Summarize results for key partners, including estimates of time, resources, organizational readiness, and costs within different contexts [See Cost Tip Sheet].
3. Identify a site champion going forward.
4. Work with sites to establish ongoing tracking (e.g., an ‘audit and feedback’) system.
5. Consider creating an Implementation and Sustainability Guidebook [see *Detailed Guidance*]

Pro Tips

- *Programs, even successful ones, are rarely continued the same way. Work with partners to adapt for sustainment.*
- *You may need to change implementation strategies – who does what when – so the intervention can continue without research support.*
- *Sustainment is ongoing. Context changes over time, and you must adapt as it shifts.*

Common Pit Falls

1. Making the guidance too formal and generic
2. Providing an insufficient level of detail
3. Waiting to engage partners only at the end
4. Designing a guidebook without highlighting iteration and adaptation

Actions to Avoid Them

1. Use examples, quotes, stories, and humor.
2. Include worksheets and completed examples.
3. Engage partners throughout all stages.
4. Update your guidebook frequently.