Coordinating Human Services Programs with Health Reform Implementation

A Toolkit for State Agencies

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, located in Washington, D.C., is a non-profit research and policy institute that conducts research and analysis of government policies and the programs and public policy issues that affect low and middle-income households. The Center is supported by foundations and individual contributors.

Authors

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III. VERIFICATIONS

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V. STAFF READINESS

VI. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Appendix 6.1: Project Charter Template

A. General Information

Information to be provided in this section gives a specific name to the project as well as pertinent information about the personnel involved.

Project Name:		Date:	
Sponsoring Agency(ies):		Modification Date:	
Charter prepared by:			

B. Project Purpose

This section communicates the purpose of the project and the charter that is being established.

C. Project Objective

This section defines the objectives of the project as they relate to the goals and objectives of the organization. Note: projects are full of uncertainty. As such, it is advisable as part of this charter to develop an initial risk assessment to identify, quantify, and establish mitigation responses to high-level risks that could adversely affect the outcome of the project.

The project will support the following organization strategic goals. For each goal, project objectives are identified. The project plan developed as a result of this project charter will:

- Develop a project performance measurement plan to measure performance against these objectives.

- Provide a project performance report to document the results.   The external oversight committee must approve the project performance measurement plan.)

Agency Goals	Project Objectives

D. Project Scope

The level of detail in this section should be sufficient to allow for detailed scope development in the project plan. A more detailed description of the project scope will be developed in the planning phase. The charter should assume project scope will change over time as the project and environment evolve. Be sure to include current assumptions about time, human resources, and budget constraints.

E. Project Authority

This section describes the authority of the individual or organization initiating the project, limitations or initial checkpoint of the authorization, management oversight over the project, and the authority of the Project Manager.

Authorization

This section ensures that the project initiator has the authority to commit the appropriate resources within the organization.

This Project Charter has been initiated by (project sponsor) and authorizes the expenditure of planning resources to complete this project charter as a first checkpoint for the project.

F. Roles and Responsibilities

This section discusses the overall structure of the project organization and roles and responsibilities throughout the project phases. Note: as an addendum to this sub-section, it may be advisable to develop a responsibility matrix. The matrix lays out the major activities in the project and the key stakeholder groups. It also provides a good example of showing cross-functional/organizational interaction.

Project Manager

This section explicitly names the project manager and may define his or her role and responsibility over the project.

Identify the Project Manager, his/her expressed authority, his/her performance expectations and approach, and his/her reporting relationship to the project sponsor and steering committee.

Oversight (Steering) Committee

This section describes the role of an oversight or steering committee in supporting the project manager and making decisions. It should describe the stakeholder groups that are represented on the steering committee and their role in the committee.

List Oversight Committee members and contact information.

Committee Member Name	Organization	Contact Information

G. Expected Outcomes and Success Criteria

This section describes key outcomes expected and the criteria the project team will use to determine if they have achieved their objectives.

Project Outcome	Criteria to Determine Success
Example: *Seamless service delivery system that connects newly eligible Medicaid beneficiaries to human services programs.*	• Implementation of integrated online application for benefits. • Proportion of Medicaid recipients who receive SNAP benefits within 60 days of Medicaid eligibility determination. • No Wrong Door referral procedures developed and implemented with Community Based Organizations and providers.

H. Signatures

By signing this document you agree to this as the formal Charter statement to begin work on the project described within, and commitment of the necessary resources.

Name/Title	Signature	Date

Appendix 6.2: Communications Plan Template

AGENCY NAME
PROJECT NAME
[project ID #]

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
Project Manager

Date
Version:

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Context and Project Background

As you have learned in the Project Management and Communications module, a solid communications plan will help ensure that your staff knows the purpose of the intended changes. Developing a plan usually starts by working with your core project team to create a mental picture of what will be different after the project is completed. Remember, the more detailed this mental picture is, the easier it will be for people to support the change.

A communications plan also helps to make sure that everyone has a role to play in making the changes that will be required for the new Medicaid/CHIP and human services delivery model. People participate when they feel they are making a genuine contribution to the success of the change, even if their role is simply to raise awareness about the project vision and goals.

In this section, fill in a summary of the project with which this communication plan is associated. List the relevant schedules and milestones here. Also, include information such as how risks and issues are communicated, the budget as it affects the communications plan, and key partners in planning the project.

You also will want to include information such as competitors, media coverage, and political climate if any of these factors apply to your project.

This section should be concise. Just enough information will be covered here to get the point across.

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders play a critical role in the eventual success of any project, as they become actors in the new service delivery model. Two key components of modern methods of project management focus on stakeholder communications, the first focused more on internal communications and the second more on external:

- Getting project stakeholders to feel individually responsible for the work, but also feeling they are a part of a team of individuals that is collectively accountable for project outcomes; and

- Creating conditions and mechanisms to ensure that all project stakeholders have the same understanding of the goals and desired outcomes, so they are on the same page as the project and the environment evolves over time.

A good place to start is an evaluation of your internal and external stakeholders. Use the following table to capture the results of your stakeholder analysis. In the table, stakeholder names could be individuals or groups of people. This section should be detailed and should describe how you gathered the information to complete the analysis.

Table 1. Stakeholder Evaluation

	Impact of Project /Change on	Stakeholder Location	Preferred Method of Communication	Deadline to Initiate Communication
1. Stakeholder Name (insert)				
2. Stakeholder Name (insert)				
3. Stakeholder Name (insert)				
4. Stakeholder Name (insert)				

Communication Plan

Communication Objectives

In this section, you will want to list and detail all the objectives of your communication plan.

Key Questions 1:	*What are your communication objectives?*

Notes:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Key Question 2:	*Do you want to increase collaboration?*

Notes:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Key Questions 3:	*How will stakeholders be kept informed?*

Notes:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Themes and Key Messages

This section is where you identify the project themes and key messages that all communications should adhere to. Include the goals of project and the values of project management (e.g., "The primary goal of this project is to make our business processes streamlined for easier accessibility by clients and improved efficiency for staff."). Several key messages could be developed around that one theme.

Communications Strategy

A well-planned project has a well-planned communication strategy. The following are examples of different types of communication strategies.

Regular Communication

Here, you will include information about how day-to-day communications will happen, primarily with internal stakeholders. Information in this section should include how to update status of tasks, communicate issues, and identify meeting agenda items. Anything that is important for the functioning of your project should be included here. The following table is an example of how you could identify and track regular communications.

Table 2. Regular Communications

Communication	Purpose	Audience	Author	Communication Vehicle Location	Frequency
Monthly status report to agency executives	To keep senior agency leadership informed of the project's progress and key upcoming activities.	• Executive sponsors • Steering Committee • IT advisory groups	Project Manager	• E-mail to list • Posting on agency website	Monthly
Weekly schedule metrics	Monitor and report progress on scheduled tasks. Troubleshoot problem areas and solve or escalate issues as appropriate.	• Project management team • Steering Committee • Others, as appropriate	Project Manager	• E-mail to list • Posting on agency website • Steering Committee meetings	Weekly
Project team calendar	Keep project participants aware of key project dates and to help them manage their schedules. Maintain training calendars.	• All project participants (project management team, steering team, line staff, and supervisors	Project Coordinator	• Post in project folders	Update as needed

Event-driven Communication

Here you will identify one-time opportunities to communicate with stakeholders about project status. You may also want to consider providing presentations to special interest groups, doing periodic demos of IT tools, and conducting target presentations to specific groups of staff. These could also be tracked in the event-driven communication table.

The following table provides you with an idea of what your project timeline might look like; however, this piece of communication could be managed in myriad ways. How you decide to record and present the information is less important than having a clear communication plan to which the team is committed and a schedule that is both manageable and adhered to.

Table 3. Event-Driven Communication — Example

	June	July	August
Project Kickoff	**Task 1:** Initiation meeting to be held June 1, 2012.		
Pilots	**Task 1:** Notify offices X, Y, and Z that they will pilot same-day service (June 1). **Task 2:** Produce and distribute monthly update for all staff on pilot offices' progress and any related organizational changes (1st Wednesday of each month).	**Task 3:** Produce and distribute monthly update for all staff on pilot offices' progress and any related organizational changes (1st Wednesday of each month).	**Task 4:** Produce and distribute monthly update for all staff on pilot offices' progress and any related organizational changes (1st Wednesday of each month).
Training	**Task 1:** Announce training for call center staff (June 15).	**Task 2:** Announce mandatory all-staff training for new employment / income verification system (July 1).	**Task 3:** Send offer for staff to tour same day service offices (2nd Tuesday of August).
Technology Improvements		**Task 1:** Announcement to all staff that call center testing is complete (Date TBD).	

Risk and Issues Communication

In this section, you will include the plan on how to communicate when things go unexpectedly. Who needs to be informed? When? Where? How?

You may find the following template helpful in recognizing and detailing risks and addressing issues in your agency.

Issue	Impact Level	Decision/Action	Responsibility	Follow-Up Date

Budget

In this section you will discuss factors including the percentage of the project budget that will be directed toward facilitating communication and what to do in cases of budget overage.

You may find the following table helpful in making thoughtful decisions and clearly communicating about your project's budget.

1. Total Project Budget	$
2. Budget for Communications	$
3. Previously Reported Expenses (Total)	$
4. Previously Reported Expenses (Communications-Related Only)	$
5. Expenses this Quarter (Total)	$
6. Expenses this Quarter (Communications-Related Only)	$
7. Total Expenses to Date	$
8. Total Communications-Related Expenses to Date	$
9. Funds Remaining	$
10. Communications-Related Funds Remaining	$

Approval

DOCUMENT APPROVED BY: _____ ON _____