Information, Family Outcomes, Reporting, and Management (nFORM): A Tool for Data Management and Reporting Transcript

Please stand by for real time captions.

Welcome

Hello everyone and thank you for attending today's webinar, Information, Family Outcomes, reporting, and Management (nFORM): A Tool for Data Management and Reporting.

Before we begin we wanted to cover a few housekeeping items. At the bottom of your audience console are multiple application widgets that you can use. You can expand each widget by clicking on the maximize icon on the top right of the widget or by dragging the bottom right corner of the widget panel.

If you have any questions for presenters during the webcast, you can click on the question-and-answer widget at the bottom and submit your questions. We will try to address as many questions as possible during this event, but if a fuller answer is required or we run out of time, your question will be answered later via an FAQ document that will be posted on the websites for Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood and on the FaMLE Cross-Site website.

A copy of the slide deck and additional materials are available in the resource list widget that looks like a green folder on the bottom of the screen.

If you have any technical difficulty, please click on the Help widget. It has a question mark icon and covers common technical issues.

A recording of the webcast will be available soon after the webcast and can be accessed using the same audience link that you used to access this event.

Now I would like to introduce Robin Dion, Senior Fellow at Mathematica Policy Research. Robin, you now have the floor.

Introduction

Thanks Kansola and welcome everyone to the third in a series of webinars presented by the Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation and Cross-site project, also known as the FaMLE cross-site.

Sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families, this webinar, like the others in this series, is specifically intended to provide assistance to organizations interested in applying for a new federal healthy marriage or responsible fatherhood grant. This includes the Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education grants, the New Pathways for Fathers and Families grants, and the Responsible Fatherhood Opportunities for Reentry and Mobility grants.

The main goal of this webinar is to introduce you to a web-based management information system that has been developed especially to help the next round of grantees systematically collect and report on high-quality data. This will be a free system that all grantees will be required to use.

The system is called, as Kansola said, Information, Family Outcomes, Reporting, and Management, or nFORM for short.

Today's webinar is going to cover three major topic areas, the components and purpose of the FaMLE Cross-site project, the data that are required to be collected through the nFORM system, and a preview of the nFORM system itself.

Today's webinar is intended to help you understand how the OFA grants and the FaMLE cross-site project are connected, what the basic data reporting requirements are for those who receive a grant under any of the three healthy marriage or responsible fatherhood funding opportunity announcements, and what the nFORM system will be able to do to help you collect and report on these performance measures.

We have three speakers from Mathematica today. As Kansola said, I am the project director for the FaMLE cross-site project and I will start us off by describing the project and then moving to a discussion of the performance measures that grantees will collect and report on. Then I'm going to turn it over to Sarah Avellar are deputy project director who will introduce what nFORM is and talk about how it was designed to be a useful tool to help you efficiently collect and report the data. Next Mark Brinkley, a senior systems analyst at Mathematica who's leading development of the tool, will escort us on a sort of guided tour of a prototype of the nFORM system. I will then conclude by highlighting a few of the requirements in the funding opportunity announcements related to data collection and reporting. After the presentations, Seth Chamberlain and Julie Leis, project officers from OPRE at the Administration for Children and Families, will take as many questions as possible. Please do remember to submit them via the chat function, or rather via the Q&A function.

So what is the FaMLE Cross-Site Project?

Forgive me for those who have heard this before but we do know that there are some new people on these webinars who have not heard some of this information before so it might be a little repetitive for some, but new for others.

The FaMLE cross-site project focuses on providing support for the 2015 cohort of the healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood grantees sponsored by OFA. This support will specifically be for collecting the performance measure data and assistance for grantees' local evaluations. Ultimately, the project will also conduct analyses of data collected across all of the grantees, which is why there is cross-site in the project name.

ACF first engaged Mathematica to conduct the project beginning in fall of 2013. The first activity was to examine, recommend and develop a comprehensive set of research-based performance measures that would help grantees manage their programs and also provide high quality data on program operations and the outcomes of participants. We've also begun development of the nFORM system, which as I said will provided for free to grantees with all of the performance measures and reports already programmed in.

We also developed a website where you can access many resources for developing strong grant proposals, www.famlecross-site.info. Once the grants are awarded, the project will continue to provide training and ongoing support to grantees as they use the web-based system to collect and report on performance measure data.

In the second major area of activity, the project will also provide evaluation technical assistance and support for grantees as they conduct their own locally-led evaluations. As you know, these evaluations are separate from the effort to collect and report on performance measures; local evaluations may be descriptive studies or they may be impact evaluations.

And third, to develop the bigger picture of the grants' accomplishments, the FaMLE cross-site project is going to aggregate the performance measure data across all the grantees and conduct broad cross-site analyses in 3 areas: program design, implementation, and outcomes. So there are a lot of uses for this data.

To help you get a better sense of who's who at ACF and how the FaMLE Cross-Site project and the OFA grants are linked, this diagram shows how the organizations are inter-related and how oversight of the grants will be conducted.

The box at the top of the diagram shows how ACF includes two agencies, among others, – the Office of Family Assistance, or OFA, in the left-hand box of the second row, and the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, or OPRE, in the right-hand box.

You can see on the left that OFA oversees the grant funding for the responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage grantees. On the right, you can see that OPRE oversees Mathematica's work on the FaMLE Cross-Site project, which you now know will provide support to OFA grantees in collecting and reporting on data and conducting local evaluations.

Notice in particular the double-headed arrow in the center of the diagram between OFA and OPRE. This signifies a close collaboration that these two agencies have developed to facilitate high quality data collection and other research activities among the grantees. For example, OFA has been highly involved with OPRE and Mathematica over the past year and a half in the development and refinement of the performance measures, developing the data collection modalities, and designing the report formats.

Now I will turn just to a brief discussion of the purpose of the performance measures, how they were selected, how they will be collected and how the data will be reported within the nFORM system. So this will serve as a quick summary for those of you who were not able to join the webinar on performance measures.

Systematically collecting and reporting on data in a consistent way is important for both grantee programs and their sponsors in multiple ways.

First, high-quality data helps grantees and their funders, in this case the government, to regularly assess the program's performance for two purposes. To identify successes that might be replicated in other programs, and to identify areas that need to be strengthened. Data also provide a fair and objective way for the government to assess whether a program is achieving its goals.

Second, data based on a consistent set of measures, that assess program operations, outputs and outcomes, will help advance the fields of healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood. Providing information on which to build the next generation of programs and policies.

And third, high-quality data can lead to better decisions in terms of future investments. To provide a simple example, let's suppose that when looking at all of the data collected across all the responsible fatherhood grantees, we see that a specific recruitment method is consistently associated with higher levels of program participation. In this situation the government may decide to invest more heavily and programs that use that method. The goal is to use data to make informed decisions. At the level of both the government and at the level of program practitioners.

As I mentioned, the FaMLE cross-site project has been engaged with OFA and OPRE in an intensive effort over the past 18 months to identify measures of program operations, program outputs, and participant outcomes that healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood programs are intended to affect. Whenever possible, measures were selected because they were successfully used in prior evaluations of programs with similar target populations. And they have, many of these measures have established reliability and validity with these populations. Specific measures were identified for programs serving youth, couples, individuals, and incarcerated fathers. After OFA and OPRE approval, the measures were pre-tested with low income participants at existing responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage programs, including those with low levels of education and literacy.

A federal register notice also asked the public to comment on the draft of the performance measures. Several comments were received, carefully considered, and another round of revisions were made based on the comments and on results of the pretesting.

As you know by now, all new grantees will be required to collect and report on these performance measures using the nFORM system. Two basic types of data will be collected, grant staff will enter information themselves and program clients will also enter information directly into the system. Program staff will use the system to respond to a set of questions about the program's operations, such as advertising methods and techniques for encouraging retention. They will also track the enrollment and participation of individuals in the program activities including workshop attendance, and case management services. When individuals seek to join the program, grantee staff ask them to complete a short survey on their background characteristics, which we call the applicant characteristics form. Then at their first program attendance, staff will ask participants to complete a pretest survey. And, at their last program attendance they will be asked to complete a posttest survey. These surveys ask clients about outcomes that healthy marriage or responsible fatherhood programs are expected to affect, such as relationship status and quality, father involvement, parenting behavior, and economic stability.

The data that will be collected through nFORM will help grantees manage their programs and also provide regular reports to OFA on program performance. OFA selected a set of the performance measures to be the basis for regular reporting. There will be two basic types of reports. And the basis for both of these reports will be automatically generated by the nFORM system with the click of a button. First there will be a semi-annual performance progress report or a PPR, as there is now. A section of the new PPR form will be automatically pre-populated with quantitative data from nFORM, and will include narrative sections so grantees can provide remarks and comments to place the data in context. A reporting activity that will be new to the 2015 round of grantees is the quarterly progress report or QPR. This report simply includes a smaller subset of the PPR data elements. And it will be submitted every other quarter when the PPRs are not submitted. Like the PPR it will also be pre-populated with data from nFORM and it will include the opportunity for grantees to provide narrative comments on performance. Now I’m going to turn it over to Sarah. She will provide an overview of the major features nFORM of the system. Sarah?

Introduction to nFORM

Thanks Robin.

Now let's talk specifically about the nFORM system.

As Robin said, nFORM is an acronym for Information, Family Outcomes, Reporting, and Management.

nFORM is a management information system that is being designed specifically for the next round of OFA's responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage grantees. We're designing the system so that it can collect and store all data for reporting to OFA. As Robin mentioned and you may have seen in the FOA, grantees must submit one of two reports each quarter. nFORM will pull data from the system to calculate necessary empirical results and combine that with the narrative that grantees write to produce the report with one click. It also allows users to export data if they wish to analyze it or view it, for example in another program such as Excel or a statistical package.

nFORM will be web-based and it does not require users to download any applications or do any programming. It will be usable anywhere someone has internet access.

It is free to OFA grantees, and as stated in the FOA: grantees will need to obtain and maintain data in nFORM to comply with the requirement of performance measure data collection.

nFORM is a secure system, which is important since you'll be collecting information such as individuals' identifying information and their responses to questions about their attitudes, relationships, and parenting.

So that's the overview, and now let's dig a little bit deeper into some of the details.

nFORM is designed so that clients will complete the three required surveys in the system. Administering the surveys this way is easier for clients and it improves data quality. For example nFORM will have skip patterns automatically programmed in so that it directs clients to the right question based on their previous responses. If you have looked at the PDFs of the surveys which are available on the FaMLE cross-site website, the skip patterns are shown by arrows that direct someone to the next question. For example, if someone does not have children they should not be answering the questions on parenting obviously. In nFORM, the system will take into account the client's response and direct them to the appropriate next question automatically. So the client does not need to follow arrows or any written instruction on what to answer next.

Importantly, nFORM will be programmed with audio computer-assisted self-interview technology (or ACASI for short). ACASI gives clients the option to listen to a recording of the questions and answers, rather than having to read them himself or herself.

So I'll walk quickly through how that might work on a practical level.

Staff will set up a tablet with the survey the client is supposed to answer, such as whether it is the pre-test or post-test. The staff will then hand the tablet to the client. The client will put on a set of headphones, provided by the grantee, for privacy. He or she will push a button and a recording of the first question and response options will play through the headphones. The recording will pause until the client enters their response, and then the recording will advance to the next question. This will continue throughout the survey. And as I mentioned the skip patterns will be automatically taken into account. So the recording will not read questions that the client does not need to answer.

ACASI is crucial for clients with literacy challenges, who might otherwise struggle or need to ask staff for assistance. It will also reduce the length of time that someone with literacy issues will need to complete the surveys compared to reading them. ACASI also protects privacy—clients do not have to complete the survey in front of staff, for example. And with electronic administration, we have the additional benefit that there aren't paper forms that can be lost or mishandled.

The electronic administration also means that staff do not have to enter data into the system, as they would with paper forms.

And the ACASI option and the surveys will be available in English and Spanish to all grantees.

The FOA states that ACF is engaged in a learning agenda to increase understanding of what works and why in healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood programs. Thus grantees will be asked to regularly provide information on program operations. That includes outreach and recruitment activities in the past quarter, target enrollment, staff characteristics, and implementation challenges. Grantee staff will also need to record and report data on client participation in workshop, one-on-one activities and referral receipt. nFORM is being designed to capture all of that information.

As also stated in the FOA: Standardized reporting across grantees will enable ACF to track programming outputs and outcomes across programs to inform current and future program design and operations.

Grantees will submit reports every quarter, which as we said will draw from numerous data sources, including the surveys, program operations, and participation. Calculations for the reports will be automatically generated by nFORM. In addition, grantees will be asked to respond to narrative questions to provide more context for the data. nFORM will combine the narrative and the data to create a single document which grantees will then send the report to their Federal Program Specialist.

So let me give you an example of how nFORM will help with reporting but also help with learning about the progress of your program. We'll give you a demonstration of the system in just a minute, but briefly nFORM is set up so that you can easily register or assign clients to a workshop. Then after you have a particular session, say it's the Tuesday class at 6:30, you will need to record attendance in nFORM. You'll do this with every session.

Then for reporting nFORM will calculate a number of outputs that are required, but, also I think, will be of interest to you. So for example, based on the information you added about participation in workshops, nFORM will calculate such statistics as:

- The percentage of clients who participated in a workshop within a week of intake. It will also calculate the percent of clients that participated within one month of intake.
- It will calculate the percent of clients who attended at least one workshop of a particular type. So if you have separate parenting and relationship classes, for example, nFORM will track that separately.
- It will also calculate the percentage who attended at least half of the workshops of a particular type.

These results will give you information on how quickly clients start workshops, the percentage who ever attend, and the percentage who receive a substantial amount of services. This data can show you your successes and help you figure out if you need to increase efforts at certain points.

We are also developing what we're calling a query tool. We're envisioning that users will be able to select certain parameters, such as particular data elements and dates, and then those are used to generate tailored tables and graphs. For example, a user may want to know how many clients have a high school diploma or whether participation was higher in the first quarter or the second quarter of the year.

We are still developing details of the system, but the underlying goal is to provide users a lot of flexibility to get the information they want from the data in the system.

nFORM will work on desktop computers, laptops, and tablets. We're optimizing the system for Google Chrome (version 36 or higher). If you are not already familiar with it, Google Chrome is a free web browser available online. And we've included a link here on the slide.

In addition to browser requirements, we are going to test nFORM on multiple devices, including the iPad (though not the mini), and The Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1, and a desktop computer using Chrome and Internet Explorer version 10.

nFORM may work with other configurations but we're just not going to be testing it on other systems.

The live version of nFORM will be available in early 2016. In the meantime, we've created a prototype, which is available on the FaMLE cross-site website.

Please note that this is a prototype so it does not accept data. But it will give you the look and feel of select screens of nFORM, and an idea of how to navigate the system. The prototype does not contain all the planned screens or fields that we're developing. For example, we are still conceptualizing the query tool, so there will be more on the live system. But the prototype contains most of the key features you'll use.

Now with that, we'll take a look at the prototype and I'm going to hand it over to Mark.

nFORM Demonstration

Okay, thanks Sarah - so let's jump right in. I'm going to open up the prototype and you should be able to see it now.

As Sarah mentioned nForm is our web-based system to facilitate the collection of performance measure data. We designed this prototype to provide you with an idea of how the actual system will work. After this webinar, you can click on the link to the prototype from the FaMLE Cross-Site website, and explore it yourself.

My goal today is to just to walk through some of the key features of the system.

Because this is a prototype and not the actual system, you can poke around, click on options, use the drop-downs, and navigate through the pages – but no data will actually be saved.

Sarah?

Thanks, so let's start with the overarching structure of nFORM. In developing it we brainstormed about how to design the system to meet ACF's needs and incorporate the flexibility to accommodate a wide range of programs. Although grantees serve different populations and provide many different services, there are three broad areas that apply to all grantees. So we designed nFORM so that those three areas are always visible and easily accessible.

At the top of each web page you'll see three large icons labeled Clients, Workshops, and Administrator.

Mark will walk you through the tabs, but I'm going to describe them very briefly. We've tried to make all of the names intuitive, so hopefully even just from a quick glance, you have a sense of what is under each tab.

The Clients tab is where you go to enter a new client and you'll find all stored information on someone, such as their contact information, the services they received, and the surveys they've taken.

The Workshops tab includes information on what workshops are offered in the program, scheduling of sessions, and its where attendance is tracked.

And the administrative tab is where you conduct housekeeping tasks, like creating a user account, resetting a password, and generating reports.

So, regardless of where you are within nForm you can quickly and easily use just one of these three icons to jump to somewhere else within the system. Now I'll turn it back to Mark to show you the Clients tab.

Thanks Sarah. So let's first look at the Clients section. nFORM is designed so that staff can be assigned to specific clients. By default when you go to the Clients page you'll see a list of what we've called "my clients." The list of "My Clients" is a subset of all clients that have been assigned to a particular user, such as a caseworker. So when the caseworker logs in, his or her assigned clients appear in this list.

Also, the system will allow multiple staff to be assigned to the same client. We know that is the way many grantees operate, for example, a client may be working with both a case worker and a job developer.

Right next to the 'My Clients' option you'll also see 'All Clients'. Clicking on this will display all of the program's clients, not just those clients assigned to a particular worker. Keep in mind, staff will only see information for the clients at their own program. We will have security in place to prevent Grantees from seeing each other's clients. And this 'security' really applies to all aspects of nFORM. nFORM is a Grantee level system so all pieces of nFORM (for example clients, sessions, and reports) will only have data for your Grantee's programs.

On this page you can filter and also sort by name, case worker, status or intake. You can also control the number of items presented on a page.

Filtering, sorting, and controlling the items per page are all tools to help you more easily manage your clients within nFORM. And these three tools are all displayed on this page so you don't have to go somewhere else to use them.

For those grantees that have more than one location, or site, there is also a SITE drop down so you can see all clients or just clients for a particular location or site.

To enter in a new client, you simply click on the "new client" button. This is how you would create a record for someone and, as you can see, where you would add their contact information. You can see we have fields for multiple ways to contact someone. We know that many clients are mobile or switch phone numbers relatively frequently, so it's important to have different ways to keep in touch with them. After you enter in their information, you hit save.

For grantees serving couples, you will see there is the option to add a partner or spouse. nFORM will allow you to track the progress of individuals and both members of a couple. So for example, you can track whether both partners attended case management meetings together.

But nFORM is flexible, so if you are serving individuals, it will not prompt you to add information on a partner. After you click save, you'll be given a prompt to let you know that the entry was successful, and then brought back to the "My Clients" page.

After you enter in a new client, nFORM will create a unique client ID number. A client ID will allow you to track clients while protecting their personally identifiable information. Clicking on this Client ID will display detailed information for that Client. So, let's take a look.

So, now looking at one client we are presented with a wealth of information. This is by design – we are trying to create a single place for information – basically a one-stop shop so that you can easily see all of the relevant information on a client in one place.

On the left hand side of the page you have some basic information on the client, such as their name, when they enrolled, whether they are active in the program. Under that, you'll see the assigned caseworker or caseworkers. And the last section on the left side is the Client information that was captured when you entered a new client.

And as you can see there is a little 'Edit' link next to the Assigned Case worker and client information sections. Clicking on Edit will allow you to update the Caseworker assignment or the Client Information as needed.

This screen should look familiar. It’s the same screen that popped up to enter a new client. When you access it through the client profile page, you can update or correct anything that was entered before. Compared to going to a different page, the pop up makes it easy to keep track of where you are in the system because you are still on the client profile page.

Now on the right side is the Program Activity Dashboard. These sections provide information on all contact the client has had with the program.

Service History shows the complete history of one-on-one services the client has received, which we call a “service contact”. With a quick glance, you can see the date of the contact, who conducted the contact, the type of contact that was provided, and where the contact occurred. In the last column (under details) you can view or edit this information.

For example, for this hypothetical client, the caseworker had a phone call with him or her on February 3rd. In the second row, you can see information prominently displayed in red.

Sarah – do you want to comment on the ‘Referral’ feature part of nForm?

Sure. ACF is interested in not only what referrals a client receives but whether the client has followed up on the referral. However, it can be difficult for a case worker or other staff person to remember to ask a client whether he or she followed up on a referral. So after a referral is entered into nFORM, the system reminds the caseworker to ask the client and record the information.

Here you can also see other information nFORM is collecting on the referral, such as where a client was referred, how the client was referred, and for what services. This level of information is useful for ACF and grantees’ own program management.

Now Mark will show you how to enter a new one on one service contact.

Thanks Sarah. Entering a service contact is easy; just click on the “record new service” button which I’ve done here. You can see there are three basic options: consultation, incentive, or referral. The rest of the information in this popup changes based on which option you choose.

For consultation, you enter such information as the length of time of the contact and where it was conducted. There is also space for the topics covered, and at the bottom, a space for staff to enter notes.

When you select “incentive” additional fields appear that are relevant for that category. These include information on the type of incentive that was provided and the reason for the incentive.

And when you click on the referral box, another set of fields become visible. Notice that the red “follow up” reminder is not here. Obviously a client can’t follow-up until after they receive the referral. So that prompt only appears once a referral has been saved.

Now, underneath Service History we have Workshops and Sessions. This shows a list of the group-based workshops and sessions this client has registered for. And just like with Service History there is the option to View or Edit the details. I'll talk more about workshops in a few minutes.

And lastly we show the status for the three client surveys which are the Applicant Characteristics, the Pre-Program, and the Post-Program surveys. You can see that this hypothetical client has completed the applicant characteristics survey, but hasn't yet taken the pretest. The post-test option is grayed out, because the client needs to take the pretest first. These safeguards help staff direct clients to the correct survey.

Clicking on one of the URL links will launch the corresponding survey so that the client can proceed to take that survey. Right now clicking on the URL will just pull up a PDF of the survey but when fully operational, nFORM will launch the web survey for the client to take.

So to summarize, the client profile gives you an easy way to see a lot of useful things in a single place. You can see case worker assignment, client information, service contacts, workshop and session assignment, and survey status.

Now let's take a look at Workshops. I've clicked on the Workshops icon. Sarah?

Thanks Mark. Most grantees offer at least one group workshop to their clients. It would be really time consuming for grantee staff to enter in information one-by-one into each client's profile which we just showed you, so we created the Workshops tab to streamline the process of collecting and entering data.

However, you may notice that the look of this landing page, is similar to that of the Clients tab. This feature is intentional. It means the user doesn't have to keep learning new interfaces so the user can quickly grasp the way each page flows.

I'll turn it over to Mark to walk you through the specifics again.

Okay thank you Sarah. On the Workshops page there are three links: Sessions, Calendar, and Workshops. I'm going to start with the Workshops link on the right.

Most grantees offer one or more curriculum-based workshops. For example, a grantee may have a relationships skills workshop and a parenting workshop, as shown on this screen. Those workshops will likely be offered many times through different sessions. For example, you may have a parenting workshop starting up every 6 weeks. We've designed the system so that you can enter detailed information about each workshop once, and then, as I'll show you, it's stored for when you want to schedule specific sessions.

For the workshops, you will enter information on whether registration is required or not, the total number of workshop hours to be offered, the agencies providing the workshop, the activities, and elements.

Note that the activities and elements are tied to the grant reporting requirements, and nFORM will display the specific activities and elements authorized for healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood.

Now let's jump to sessions. The landing page shows you past and upcoming sessions at a glance. You can see on this screen, we have four healthy father workshops offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. In the first row, you can see that the class on Monday, March 16th was completed. This Sessions grid shows the Session Name, the Occurrence, who the Facilitators were (or will be) and the Session Status.

But let's create a new session. In the first field, you will have a drop down of all the workshops you entered. nFORM will then tailor your options based on which workshops you choose. You can then enter the specifics, such as where the sessions will be offered and who will be facilitating. I also want to highlight the last section of this field.

The default is one session and nFORM prompts you to enter the session date and time. But if I change this to multiple sessions…the prompts change, so you're asked for the start date and the days the sessions will be offered. nFORM will then automatically create records for the individual sessions, which will appear in the session list.

You can also see Session Details or edit the session, if for example, you must reschedule it.

Next, clicking on Manage allows you to manage registration. The registration option allows you to assign clients to a specific session. The popup here gives you the option to manage the Session series or just manage a single session occurrence.

We've designed nFORM with a convenient way to assign clients to workshops. On the left is a list of all the clients who could be registered for the session. The user simply needs to select clients and click on the arrows to register someone. And again, you can do this for one session, like next Wednesday's class, or for the whole session series, like the next 10 Wednesday classes.

There are a couple of benefits of registering clients to a session. First there is a roster. The prototype doesn't yet have the functionality, but the live system will allow you to click on "roster" and generate a PDF with the registered client's names. You can use it to have clients sign in or the facilitator can mark off who attended to enter into the system later.

The last column is for attendance. You can see this is in the same format as the registration pop-up. All the clients who you've registered for the session will appear in the left column.

Again, just highlight and click on those who attended. By registering clients, you can manage attendance with a shorter list. But the system also has the flexibility to record any drop-ins so you can include any client who attended the session.

nFORM also has built-in reminders to record attendance. You can see this in the second row, a red reminder that the session is complete and attendance should be tracked in the system.

Going back to the top, we are also exploring the possibility of building in a Calendar option. The details and functionality are still being fleshed out, but we are researching an option for a calendar view which may further help users assign clients to sessions.

Now lastly, let's take a look at Administration. I'll click on the Administrator icon at the top of the page. This tab is not as fully developed as the others, but the prototype will give you a sense of the various functions.

On this page there are four links: News and Alerts, Reports, Partner Organizations, and User Management.

News and Alerts allows you to see the latest news and information from the FaMLE Cross-Site team at Mathematica. So, this will just be a way to pass information on to the Grantees. This could be a reminder, for example, a reminder about an upcoming PPR being due or information about some upcoming maintenance on the nFORM system.

The Reports function will allow users to complete the Program Operations Survey, and also run their Quarterly Performance Report and Performance Progress Reports.

You can't see the functionality in the prototype, but nFORM will combine the information from the surveys, the clients tab, and the workshops tab, to create a single document, which will form the basis for the grantees' quarterly and semi-annual reports for OFA.

Right next to Reports is Partner Organizations. This piece has not yet been prototyped, but is a way to record your partner organization relationships. It will serve as a convenient directory for staff to find contact information for partners who may provide referrals or services to the grantee's clients.

And last, there is the User Management piece. This component is also not yet prototyped, but it will be a way you can add new users to nFORM. This will also be a way to edit or remove users. And passwords can be reset here if users get locked out of nFORM. And that is the nFORM system in a nutshell. The prototype, and everything we've just shown you, is available on the FaMLE cross-site website. We encourage you to take a look and explore the system.

Thank you and now I'll turn it back over to Robin.

Overview

Thank you so much, Mark. I will just say a few words about the requirements in the funding opportunity announcements regarding the NFORM system. As stated in the funding opportunity announcements, the grantees will be required to collect, store, and report performance measure data in the four areas that we've described. The program applicant characteristics, program operations, enrollment and participation, and participant outcomes. The NFORM system will be programmed with all of these measures.

Anyone who is submitting a grant application, should be sure to explicitly describe their procedure for data collection through nFORM and confirm their process for offering clients the opportunity to use the ACASI option. Keep in mind that although the system is being designed to be user-friendly and intuitive, Mathematica staff will be providing training and technical assistance to grantees as they learn and use the NFORM system under its FaMLE Cross-Site contact with OPRE.

The funding opportunity announcements also indicate that to use NFORM, grantees will need to have Internet service and specific equipment. All grant applicants must specifically indicate that they have budgeted for this equipment in their grant applications and must specify the type of equipment and services they're planning to have. As Sarah mentioned and as specified in the funding opportunity announcements, grantees must have laptops, desktops or tablets that are equipped with Internet Explorer version 10 or higher, or Chrome version 36 or higher. Grantees who choose to have respondents take the surveys on tablets, iPads or the Samsung galaxy tablet 10.1 may be used. Also as

Sarah said it is possible that other configurations could work, but they may not because they won't have been fully tested with nFORM.

Again, grant funds may be used to support the purchase of this equipment as well as the equipment needed to offer the audio computer assisted self-interview or ACASI function. In the event that a grant applicant does not have Internet access the grant application must describe potential ways the data can be collected through the Internet and indicate willingness to work with ACF to find a way to collect the data via the web.

Before we wrap up, I would like to highlight a few resources that grant applicants can access to help them write strong proposals. One of the key resources is the FaMLE Cross-Site website at Www.famlecross-site.info. This website contains a great deal of information that was developed specifically to help you craft solid healthy marriage or responsible fatherhood proposals. Proposals that describe your plans for program design, implementation and evaluation. It includes questions for you to consider as you develop your plans and proposal. It provides targeted tips and offers links to other resources that might be useful.

Under the performance measures tab, the website contains links to all of the measures that the grantees will be required to collect and includes a link to the nFORM prototype that you just got a tour of today so as Mark said you can explore it yourself.

At the beginning of our talk today, as I mentioned at the beginning of our talk today, this webinar has been one in the series designed specifically for healthy marriage and responsible father grant applicants. Two other webinars have already been conducted and recordings of them will soon appear on the FaMLE Cross-Site website. The final webinar on local evaluations will be conducted tomorrow May 28, at 2:00 Eastern.

Hopefully these webinars and these resources will help address your questions. In addition, we will be taking some questions today and we will be recording and archiving the answers to the questions on the FaMLE Cross-Site website. Please do understand however that we will not be able to answer questions outside of this series of webinars. This is a grant competition which means everyone should have access to the same information.

Thank you so much for your attention today, I'm now turn the webinar over to staff from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation at ACF who will address your questions. Seth, Julie?

Question & Answer

Hello. This is Seth Chamberlain I work in ACF's Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Thank you all for your participation in the webinar today. I'm going to be answering some questions. I do want to mention that this webinar will be archived and posted to the FaMLE Cross-Site website and the questions that are asked today will be part of the archive but I will also be addressing all of the questions that I don't get to address today in a frequently asked questions document that will be posted to the FaMLE Cross-Site website we believe next week. So if you do not get your question answered today, it should be answered soon.

The first question is: Regarding the NFORM data collection can we start data collection at the first case management session versus at the first workshop if the case management session will happen first?

The answer is: probably yes. We are going to consider all of the options for when to do the pretest so that's on the table, that's probably yes.

The next question is: Does NFORM allow for uploading of data from Excel files?

The answer is no. Unfortunately, nFORM will not permit uploading of data.

The next question is: Does nFORM work with Safari on a desktop or laptop?

That question was submitted three minutes into the webinar so in case it wasn't clear because I think Sarah or Mark addressed this. In the healthy marriage FOA on page 30 and in the responsible fatherhood FOA on page 32 there is language in the second paragraph under performance measures that says applicants must document that they have budgeted for sufficient computers, laptops, desktops, tablets that they can use - - the specific web browsers must be Internet Explorer version 10 or higher or Chrome version 36 or higher. With regard to tablets, grantees may use the iPad, not the mini or Samsung galaxy tablet 10.1. Both tablets must use the Chrome browser version 36 or higher. It is possible that other tablets will also work with nFORM as long as they are using Chrome however the extensive testing will be conducted with the identified on tablet models. It is possible that nFORM will work with Safari, but applicants must document that they have budgeted for sufficient computers that can use the specific web browsers Internet Explorer version 10 or higher or Chrome version 36 or higher.

Next question: Is it possible to import data from a local system into NFORM?

I think that's the same as the uploading question and no, it will not be possible to import or upload data into NFORM. Just to be clear, when caseworkers enter data, they enter case notes or they indicate that someone participated in a session, absolutely that can be entered into nFORM. When I am talking about uploading data, I am talking about a separate, perhaps an Excel file that would be uploaded into NFORM and that is not possible.

Next question: We aim to deliver programming in three cities, same state, same organization. Would the program operation survey be filled out in nFORM by the local program manager or would one survey be submitted by the lead grantee capturing perspectives of all local programs?

The answer is it would be one survey to be submitted by the lead grantee. Now, that grantee may determine that they want to ask those questions of the different organizations in order to submit a complete comprehensive form, but with regard to OFA and ACF one form will be required per grantee.

Next question: Does OFA envision nFORM to be the only data system used?

nFORM has been designed to be very user-friendly so that it can be the only management information system that grantees use. However, there is nothing in the FOAs that precludes grantees from using an additional management information system. It is possible that an applicant and an eventual grantee could decide to use more than the nFORM system. However the nFORM system will be one of the required systems to use.

The next question: Does this completely replace the PPR? Or is this in addition to the existing PPR? Will the data on the PPR currently still be required?

I'm thinking the question means does nFORM completely replace the PPR? So nFORM does not replace the PPR. The PPR will still be required. What nFORM does is it will pre-populate data into the PPR form so that grantees do not have to do these calculations themselves. When a PPR comes due, the form will be pre-populated with the data. And then grantees will have the option of entering narrative in the PPR before they submit it. We think this will help grantees so they don't have to do all of the calculations and aggregation of data. I should mention that nFORM does and the system for creating and submitting the PPRs, that does replace the OLDC, the online data collection that was required of the first and second cohorts of healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood grantees. So this will replace the OLDC.

Next question: Will NFORM exported data be compatible with SPSS with local data and analyses?

The short answer is yes. The exporting capability is still being worked out. We are aiming to make it exportable so it can be used in statistical packages, so that the exportable data can be used in statistical packages like SPSS or SAS or even Excel.

The next question: Is there a list of specific performance measures we need to report on, should this list be included in the grant application?

The answer is yes. There is a list of performance measures that grantees will be required to report on. They are discussed in a few different places in the funding opportunity announcement. For example, on page 30 of the healthy marriage and relationship education funding opportunity announcement and on page 32 of the responsible fatherhood funding opportunity announcement under number one performance measures, it says applicants must describe how they will collect required data and then in parentheses it says applicant characteristics, program operations, enrollment, and participation service delivery and participant outcomes including attitudes, beliefs and actions. Both at the beginning of the program on pretest and program exit at posttest. So those are the performance measures that are required. The list of performance measures can be found on the FaMLE Cross-Site website, if you go to the FaMLE Cross-Site website and in the ribbon at the top there is a link to a page called performance measures, and on that page are links to PDFs of all of the performance measures. I should mention that those performance measures are listed in a survey form, a paper survey form, but for nFORM, the questions will appear differently. They will not appear as a paper form. We think this will be easier for participants because if there are pages of the survey that are not relevant to them, the computer will quickly skip through those questions.

The next question: If the tablets will be capable in off-line environments of saving survey data and then when back - - I think the question is not if the tablets will be capable, I think the question is will the tablets be capable in off-line environments of saving survey data and then when back online can the data be uploaded--will this nFORM system allow for that capability?

The answer is no. It will not, as it is being designed right now, it will not permit saving the data off-line and then later uploading it.

The next question: Will the pre-and post-tests be coded so individuals pre-post can be compared?

I think they mean the individual's pretest to be compared with the posttest? Or is it group change the systems will measure? I think what the question is asking is, is the system designed to look at whether an individual changes from the beginning of the program to the end? Or is it looking at perhaps cohorts of people, so for example does class two learn more than class four?

The answer is it's designed for individual level change. So that we can determine individual level change.

The next question is: For projects using an evaluation design that includes a comparison or control group, does the grantee need to submit nFORM data for participants in the comparison or control group? Or are these data only required for the intervention group?

To be clear, I think the questioner here is asking about nFORM with regard to a local evaluation. So all applicants are expected to propose local evaluations. The types of local evaluation that are eligible to be proposed depend on the level of funding that is sought in each application. If you turn to page 35 in the healthy marriage funding opportunity announcement, or if you turn to page 38 of the responsible fatherhood funding opportunity announcement, under local evaluation costs it says, applicants requesting funding levels between $350,000 and $699,999 are expected to allocate at least $35,000 per year for a descriptive local evaluation. It discusses applicants requesting funding levels between $700,000 and $999,999, they are expected to propose descriptive or impact local evaluations. For those requesting funding between $1 million and $2 million, they are expected to propose impact evaluations. Those are the local evaluations that must be proposed. I should mention that the expectations for local evaluations are slightly different for ReFORM grant applicants. They are different than the expectations for the healthy marriage and relationship education grant applicants and the new pathways for fathers and families grant applicants. For those that are proposing impact evaluations, there may be, or there should be, a control or comparison condition of some sort. The questioner is asking will the data for the control or comparison condition be required to be in nFORM. The question once again is: does the grantee need to submit nFORM data for participants into comparison or control condition, I'm sorry comparison or control group? Or are these data required for the control group? First, the data are required for the intervention group. Because they are performance measures and performance measures are required to be submitted for all participants. But for data for the comparison or control group, it would depend on the design of the evaluation. Depending on whether the pretest or the posttest, or for that matter the applicant characteristics, data will be used in the local evaluation. If those data will be used, then it makes sense that those data - - then nFORM will be able to collect data for those people for the control or comparison group persons. Grantees will be able to ask control or comparison group members to complete the applicant characteristics form and/or the pretest and/or the posttest. However, I can't say more about whether you should or shouldn't do that. And specifically, we can't provide assistance to one specific organization over another. What I will say is I will direct everyone's attention to page 31 in the healthy marriage funding opportunity announcement and page 34 in the responsible fatherhood funding opportunity announcement. Under the bullet research design, the second paragraph says applicants must include a justification for why the proposed research design is best suited to answer the research questions. So that means, if the research questions will involve the performance measures, the applicant must include a justification for why the design including the measures is best suited to answer the research questions.

Next question: Will participants without reading difficulties be able to use nFORM without the audio assist? I'm trying to imagine this working with a full classroom or a large workshop setting. Teachers will have to go around to many students turning on nFORM.

The answer is: yes. Students or others without reading difficulties will be able to take the surveys without the audio component. The audio component is there if needed. If it is not needed it does not need to be used.

The next question is: Can questions be added to the nFORM surveys to collect data for local evaluation components? Or, will grantees have access to ACASI for those additional questions?

The answer is no. Questions cannot be added to the nFORM surveys. It is - - for the local evaluations additional questions can absolutely be considered, and additional data collection can absolutely be proposed. Additional questions and additional data collection instruments, should relate to the research questions of the local evaluation proposed. And the design that is best suited to answer the research questions. But questions cannot be added to the nFORM surveys.

The next question is: what alternate intake and pretest/posttests are available for use in situations where there is no Internet access?

To answer this question I want to direct everyone's attention to another place in the funding opportunity announcements. I am looking… in the healthy marriage funding opportunity announcement I am looking at page 30. In the responsible fatherhood funding opportunity announcement I am looking on page 33. Under the subheading performance measures there is a third paragraph that says applicants must describe whether and how data will be collected by grantee staff etc. The last sentence in that paragraph states, in the rare case where applicants and/or partners do not have access to the Internet, because of systemic lack of connectivity, the proposal must clearly describe potential avenues for collecting performance measurement data through the Internet, as well as indicate a willingness to work with ACF to find ways to implement Internet data collection through these other avenues. In the proposal, the applications must clearly describe potential avenues for collecting performance measure data through the Internet, and indicate a willingness to work with ACF to find ways to implement Internet data collection through these other avenues.

I'm going to ask the team to let me know if my sound is coming through. If you could chat me in a team chat I would appreciate it.

The next question is: Would a client, specifically high school students, be able to do the characteristics and pretest on the same day?

The answer is: possibly. We are still working out exactly what will be possible and what won't. It seems reasonable that a high school student would take and complete both the applicant characteristics and pretest on the same day but the final decision has not been made.

The next question is: how will we count couples in nFORM?

Let me start with the last part of the question. Will we count couples in nFORM ? Yes. Couples will be counted in nFORM. How will we count couples in nFORM? I'm not exactly sure how to answer that question. When a couple arrives for the applicant characteristics, each member of the couple will be able to fill out the applicant characteristics form and then the couple will be part of the system. There may be more to the question, there is also a lot more to nFORM.

The next question is: It seems that nFORM was designed assuming grantees do not have their own performance management system. What about grantees that have their own system that they collect data into?

As I mentioned earlier, grantees, there is nothing in the FOAs that precludes grantees from using additional management information systems. They can absolutely do that. However, nFORM is required so data will need to be entered into nFORM.

The next question is: If one workshop integrates parenting, financial literacy, and employment soft skills will nFORM capture this?

My understanding is yes, it will capture this. When grantees set up workshops in nFORM they will be able to identify the types of programming that are involved in that specific workshop.

The next question is: How many usernames will be available to grantees?

I'm not sure how many usernames will be available to grantees. I know it will be a lot. I don't want to say an infinite number, but it's likely very high.

The next question is: If we have case managers that have specific caseloads, can nFORM limit what a case manager sees to just their caseload?

The way - - I think that is currently being worked out. My understanding is that nFORM will not be able to limit one case manager from seeing what another case manager's caseload looks like or their clients. I think that is still being developed, but my understanding is at present, within a grantee organization, all case managers will be able to see other case managers' caseloads.

The next question is: In schools we do enrollment data with pre-survey at the first session. Please advise if this is permissible.

I talked about this a few questions back. Yes, that is likely going to be permissible, but the final decision has not been made about whether an applicant characteristics and pretest can be done at the first session. I should mention that if there are additional surveys that a grantee wants to implement, in this case perhaps the questioner has an additional pre-survey, if there are additional data collection, there is nothing in the FOA that precludes grantees from collecting additional data. So a grantee could elect to collect additional data in addition to the applicant characteristics and the pretest.

The next question is: Entering in all of this contact information into the survey, will this information reside only on grantee computers, or is it automatically uploaded to OPRE?

So the information will not reside on the grantees' computers. The information will reside on a server at Mathematica Policy Research. To be clear with the last part of the question which was, are the data automatically uploaded to OPRE? No. The data will not be uploaded to us in OPRE. It will be uploaded to Mathematica Policy Research. Mathematica is an organization with a stellar history of protecting privacy of data and they have, and are continuing to employ, safeguards as they are developing the nFORM system to protect participant privacy.

The next question is: If a participant is enrolled in another responsible fatherhood program, will nFORM tell you when you're entering them in the new client field?

The answer is no. nFORM is not designed to tell one grantee organization when a participant is being served by another grantee organization. It's not being designed to communicate like that. So no, nFORM will not tell the grantee that that participant is being served by another grantee.

The next question is: Will you expect high school students to share contact information?

The answer is: we do expect high school students to complete the applicant characteristics form, the pretest, and the posttest. I should mention that at least in the healthy marriage program, there is a separate pretest and posttest for youth. So those surveys the pretests and posttests have been designed specifically for use in a healthy marriage and relationship education program. There is no separate survey for youth in the responsible fatherhood program.

The next question is: Will there be training set up for awarded grantees on NFORM?

The answer is absolutely. There shall be training.

I saw another question come through and am not sure if we're going to get to it. Oh yes, here it is: will on-site training for nFORM be provided by OFA to all grantees?

The answer to that is no. On-site training will not be provided, but training will be provided to grantees.

The next question is: Will we be able to pull reports such as all client emails?

The answer is yes. Yes, you will be able to pull reports. I'm not sure whether you will be able to pull reports such as all client emails, but we think so. But there will be a set number of reports that will be accessible to all grantees at the touch of a button. In addition to those reports, data will be exportable so that if grantees want to do additional analyses or if they want to send the data to their local evaluator for analysis they can do that.

The next question: Is who developed the NFORM system? It looks like it will be very user-friendly and a useful tool.

I appreciate that. We have been working very hard on nFORM. Mathematica Policy Research developed the nFORM system based on guidance and parameters from the Administration for Children and Families. Let me be a little more elaborate. As part of the parents and children together evaluation, which is an evaluation that Mathematica is overseeing for the Administration for Children and Families of a small handful of healthy marriage and relationship grantees from the second cohort, Mathematica developed a management information system which we called PACTIS (Parents and Children Together Information System). PACTIS was developed for both responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage grantees that are participating in the PACT evaluations. So staff at the Administration for Children and Families in both the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation and the Office of Family Assistance, wanted to create a user-friendly management information system that would be available free-of-charge to the next round of grantees. We have had quite a few meetings to talk not just about what the performance measures would be, but also what the, in IT language, what the requirements for nFORM will be. That means, what will it look like? What are the different drop-down menus? What is the internal infrastructure of the nFORM tool? We've had quite a few meetings about that. So the short answer to your question is Mathematica has created it but the longer one is that they have created based on the guidance and parameters that the Administration for Children and Families has given to them.

The next question is: Can the director review case manager's case notes at any time?

The answer is yes. nFORM will enable supervisors to look at case manager's case notes.

The next question is: Can clients register through nFORM for a workshop?

The answer is no. The case managers are the ones that will need to register clients for workshops.

The next question is: Can we set automatic email reminders to clients?

The answer is I don't think so. I don't think that nFORM is being created to send set email reminders to participants.

All right. The last question is: Will this part of the webinar be available for future use?

The answer is yes. So this entire webinar including this Q&A session, will be posted to the FaMLE Cross-Site website. And all of the webinars from OFA when they presented on the four funding opportunity announcements those are posted on the responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage website. All of the webinars that Mathematica has led, the one on Friday on developing a strong program, the one yesterday on performance measures, the one today on nFORM, the one tomorrow on local evaluations and then a fifth one which will be led by MDRC and Mathematica on federally-led evaluations. All of those will be posted to the FaMLE Cross-Site website and again, a frequently asked questions document with answers to all of your questions, will be posted most likely next week.

I sincerely appreciate your participation. I am excited by the excitement in the field, and I look forward to answering questions tomorrow afternoon.

Kansola, I will hand it back to you.

This concludes the webcast for today. Thank you.

[Event Concluded]