

Informing Decision Making Following the Implementation of the *Policy on Results*

PPX Community of Practice for Performance Measurement and Evaluation
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Purpose

- To reflect on how performance results and evaluations are leveraged in making decisions at Health Canada
 - Current State vs. Ideal State
- To discuss challenges which might impede the use of performance measurement and evaluation information to inform decision-making.
- Potential approaches to improve the use of performance and evaluation information.

How performance results and evaluations are leveraged in making decisions at Health Canada

Current State

- Indicators vie for senior management attention (e.g. DRF, GC InfoBase, Health Accord, Mandate Letter Tracker).
- Focus in on compliance with Policy on Results, without capitalizing on the opportunities.
- Decisions are made instinctually.
- Indicators have piled up year after year, with little reconciling.

Ideal State

- Performance measurement information enables senior management to articulate desired results, and show whether or not results are being achieved.
- A learning culture exists, where senior management have the information needed to make improvements.
- Best available evidence along with instinct helps shape decision-making.
- Indicators are streamlined and retired, as appropriate.

Key Challenges as Head of Performance Measurement

- Striking the right balance.
 - *To what extent should decision-makers be nudged toward greater reliance on performance measurement and evaluation information to make decisions?*
- Getting the data.
 - *Will the indicator(s) selected elicit data that could, or should, inform decision making?*
- Maintaining momentum.
 - *How can we maintain momentum and create a culture that embraces continuous improvement?*

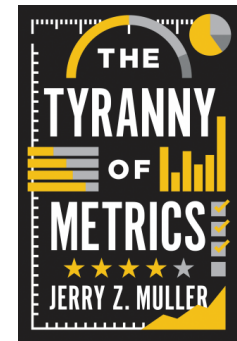
Striking the right balance

How far should decision-makers be nudged to increase reliance on performance measurement?

- Treasury Board Secretariat is nudging. Key objectives within the Management Accountability Framework include that:
 - Departments use performance measures and evaluations to make better decisions.
 - Treasury Board has accurate performance measurement and evaluation information to effectively scrutinize new funding requests.
- Given these objectives, MAF solicits information on:
 - Availability of performance information data for decision-making.
 - Use of performance information in decision-making.
- The Minister of Health’s Mandate Letter states “I expect that our work will be informed by performance measurement, evidence, and feedback from Canadians.”

Nudge, yes, but not too hard ...

- Professor Jerry Muller, whose recent work is the subject of many recent reviews, contends that the current focus on performance data can be counterproductive, especially in cases where:
 - it appears to be attached to rewards and punishment;
 - the results are to be made public in the interest of transparency or accountability;
 - people within the program focus their attention and efforts on what is being measured rather than what is most important, or incite gaming, where the measures are manipulated. He notes this could cause “goal diversion”.
- Our Deputy Minister is confident that Health Canada is a well-managed Department, and that senior managers are already vested in performance improvement, and are having their information needs met.



Getting the data

Will the indicator(s) selected elicit data that could, or should, inform decision making?

- The Head of Performance Measurement oversight role with respect to the TB Submission Results Annex will allow us to track whether performance indicators in TB Submissions are integrated into Performance Information Profiles (PIPs), and whether data is being collected and monitored. This will provide a broader view of a program's performance story in preparation for evaluations or requests for funding renewal.
- Developing an approach that maps the relative strength of the methodology, and readiness of data.
 - Approach can be applied to a cluster of PIPs, or to indicators in a given PIP, in order to help to focus on those that present the greatest challenges in terms of methodologies or the implementation of data strategies.
- Tracking improvement as a coordinated system may be the basis of the Head of Performance Measurement Annual Report. (Other approaches also being considered).

Maintaining momentum

How can we maintain momentum and create a culture that embraces continuous improvement?

Creating a culture focused on results is multi-faceted and includes:

- Engaging and communicating to socialize the principles of performance measurement and results to a broad audience, and to seize opportunities to drive culture change. A key message is: “keep it simple”.
- Lightening the perceived burden of performance measurement.
 - Focus on ensuring that indicators are useful. If an indicator is not being implemented and monitored, retire it. If the data it elicits is not being used, consider whether resources should be redirected.
- Establishing a training package that will help make performance measurement easy. Target training to the people who deliver the program as well as those responsible for performance measures.

In Closing

- While headway has been made, more work needs to be done before performance measurement will be a “go to” source to inform decisions as well as program and policy learning and improvement.
- Managing culture change will require ongoing attention over time, a range of tools and supports, and collaboration within Health Canada, but also, across government departments.

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