Action Planning for Sustainability

Rural Network Allied Health Grantees

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Rural Health Innovations (RHI), LLC, is a subsidiary of the National Rural Health Resource Center (The Center), a non-profit organization. Together, RHI and The Center are the nation’s leading technical assistance and knowledge centers in rural health. In partnership with The Center, RHI connects rural health organizations with innovations that enhance the health of rural communities.
Aspiring for Sustainability

A framework provides structure to help understand the parts AND the interactions between the parts.
Sustainability is defined as the ability to achieve desired outcomes through implementation and deployment of the organization’s business plan.
3 Planning Steps Toward Sustainability

1. Organizational Profile
2. Sustainability Assessment
3. Action Plans
Understand Your Business

With an Organizational Profile

- Strategic
- Marketing
- Financial
- Operations
Sustainability Assessment
Opportunities for Sustainability (OFS)
OFS Action Plans

- **What**: Initiatives that will address OFS?
- **Who**: Who is responsible?
- **When**: When will the action start and finish?
- **Resources**: What resources are needed for the action to be successful?
- **Monitor**: What does success look like and how are we doing?
• Opportunities for Sustainability: A Guide for Action Planning
• Opportunities for Sustainability: A Template for Action Planning
3 Steps:
1. Understand your business
2. Find opportunities for sustainability
3. PDSA
Purpose and Background

- Understanding Sustainability
- Purpose, Background, and Components

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Rural Health Innovations (RHI), LLC is a subsidiary of the National Rural Health Resource Center (The Center), a non-profit organization. Together, RHI and The Center are the nation’s leading technical assistance (TA) and knowledge centers in rural health. In partnership with The Center, RHI enhances the health of rural communities by providing products and services with a focus on excellence and innovation. RHI is providing TA to the Allied Health Workforce Training, Development, Planning, and HIT Workforce Network grantees through a contract with the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy.

UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability of rural health networks is determined by how productive the organization is in achieving its objectives and goals and how successfully it has positioned itself for the future. For this rural health network sustainability plan guide, sustainability of rural health networks and network projects is defined as the ability to achieve desired outcomes and financial viability through implementation and deployment of the organization’s business plan.

Using a multi-faceted approach is a key success factor for identifying and solving sustainability challenges. The Baldrige framework was widely accepted as the de facto standard for performance excellence. As Patrice Spath wrote in her excellent book, Leading Your Healthcare Organizations to Excellence, “Rather than an ill-defined fad whose use-by date has expired, the Baldrige criteria represent an interrelated collection of time-tested principles, procedures, and techniques that turn performance excellence from an abstract (and empty) notion into an operationally useful management model.” Spath identifies that using a multi-faceted systems approach is critical and necessary for sustained performance.

PURPOSE, BACKGROUND AND COMPONENTS

The purpose of this Opportunities for Sustainability Action Planning Guide is to act as a tool for rural health networks to actively plan for sustainability as network leaders deploy their networks’ business plan. The goal is to create specific action plans that will address identified opportunities for sustainability (OFS). Sustainability can be addressed through careful consideration and assessment of an organization’s efforts with specific guiding questions based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework, “Is your organization doing as well as it could?”, “How do you know?”, “What or how can your organization improve or change?” Patrice Spath, Leading Your Health Care Organization to Excellence, prescribes using a management framework, such as the Baldrige framework, for effectively diagnosing opportunities for sustainability. This guide provides a management tool to assess components of a sustained organization and then identify actions to continue progress toward sustainability.

The Opportunities for Sustainability Action Planning Guide, is designed to support rural health network leaders in both developing and writing action plans for network sustainability. There are three components within this guide for sustainability:

- Organizational Profile: understanding the systems of the network organization by summarizing the network’s business plan components of strategy and leadership, marketing and communication, operations and
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following are terms you will find throughout the sustainability materials. They are terms from the Baldrige criteria, as the following sustainability materials are built off of the Baldrige Performance for Excellence Framework. Taking time to read through these terms creates a better frame of reference for your network’s sustainability work. (National Institute of Standards and Technology, Baldrige Performance Excellence)

**Action plans**: Specific actions that your organization takes to reach its short-term and longer-term strategic objectives.

**Alignment**: A state of consistency among plans, processes, information, resources decisions, workforce capability and capacity, actions, results, and analyses that support key organization-wide goals.

**Approach**: The methods your organization uses to carry out its processes.

**Collaborators**: Organizations or individuals who cooperate with your organization to support a particular activity or event or who cooperate intermittently when their short-term goals are aligned with, or are the same as yours.
REFERENCE LIST


Step 1: Understand Your Business

• Organizational Profile
  ◦ Summarizes the network’s business plan
  ◦ SUMMARIZE key aspects
Organization Profile

Strategic

Marketing

Financial

Operations

Rural Health Innovations
NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER
## Always Start with Mission and Vision

### ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision: A vision statement articulates your network’s aspirations. It outlines where your network wants to be or wants to achieve; communicating your network’s purpose and values. It is future-oriented and part of the Strategic and Business Plans.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission: A mission statement articulates your Network’s purpose for being; communicating what the network does. It is present oriented and describes how the Network will achieve its vision in relation to customer needs. It is part of the Strategic and Business Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Analysis:</strong> part of the Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blocks:</strong> The top six events and happenings going on in healthcare, your community, and your organization that are hindering the network from moving toward its vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Levers:</strong> The top six events and happenings going on in healthcare, your community, and your organization that are helping the network move toward its vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Objectives:</strong> Goals that convert your mission statement into reality (located in the Strategic Plan and Business Plan) and include a high-level statement of each. Titles should be descriptive and action-oriented, i.e., 3-5 words: verb + adjective + noun. Example: Improve operating efficiency, provide outstanding customer service, and deliver timely and effective care. This is part of the Strategic, Evaluation, and Business Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing Thinking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market Analysis:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment: Health care and other determinants that are influencing your network and members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Needs: Identifying those that drive service development. This is part of the Business Plan; Value Proposition Member Needs Assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Propositions: Articulate the value that the network provides to its current and potential members/customers, answering the question, “what benefit does this network service provide to our members or customers?” Articulate value propositions for each network product and service with a focus on specific members or customers. Keep this description at a summary level. This is part of the Business Plan; Value Proposition Business Product and Service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion and Communication: The approach and methods of the network’s value propositions; such as, message, audience and mode of communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership:</strong> Briefly describe the leadership skills and attributes that contribute to the success of the network. On organizational chart may be helpful. The key here is to show that you have the people resources in place to support network success. This is part of the Business Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Resources and Infrastructure:</strong> Describe the fundamental resources and infrastructure of the network that supports operations, (i.e. the ‘guts or inner workings’ that make the products/services possible to create and deliver). Provide just enough detail to show that the operations are effective, reliable, and stable. This is part of the Business Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Results:</strong> This is an executive level summary of the top 3-5 measurements that help tell the story of network progress and impact. Include comparative data or trend information as appropriate. This is part of the Business Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Financial Outlook

3-Year Net Income Forecast: Show the net income forecast for your network. If appropriate, illustrate the net income forecast (pro forma) for network products or services, i.e. individual value propositions or scenarios. If appropriate include assumptions that develop different scenarios about your network’s future. For example; Changing the number of members: Scenario 1 = no growth, Scenario 2 = increasing members each year by a specific number or % increase, etc. This is part of the Business Plan.
Understanding Your Business Leads toward Sustainability

Diagram showing the integration of Strategic, Marketing, Financial, and Operations aspects for sustainability.
## Step 2: Find Opportunities for Sustainability

### Use a Sustainability Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Thinking</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network mission and vision are complete and have been communicated organization wide.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The network has a formal strategic plan in place that it updates at least annually.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network leadership uses a systems framework for planning to ensure a holistic approach.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The network has gathered information on member needs and community health needs and incorporated this knowledge into its decision making strategies.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network leadership includes non-traditional health care organizations as members, partners, or advisors, such as, schools, allied health organizations, public health and community development organizations.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing Thinking</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network leadership is aware of regional and national trends in the health care industry that could impact the network organization or its members.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The network communicates the organization’s strategic plan organization wide and to its partners.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The network utilized planned communication to capture and share network activities with members, partners, and the community.</td>
<td>5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Select Three OFSs

Conversation to select three OFSs for action planning:

- Identify the questions that were rated 3 or lower. Read those questions aloud and / or post them to a flip chart for consideration.
- Ask: Of all of the low rated OFSs;
  - Which ones are you surprised that they are rated at a 3 or below?
  - Which ones make sense to you to be rated low?
- Ask: In considering these low rated OFSs;
  - Which ones have we already been working on?
  - Which ones do we think are not significant or we don’t need to consider for our sustainability?
  - Which ones may be important to consider for our sustained work?
- Ask: In considering these low rated OFSs;
Step 3: PDSA

OFS Action Planning

The “Actions Plan Summary” is a tool designed for helping a network track progress. Please use the included form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected OFS</th>
<th>Key Actions for change:</th>
<th>When/ Date:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### [Network Name] Opportunities for Sustainability

#### OFS Action Plan #1

**Business Plan Category:** *(for selected OFS, list business plan category)*

**Selected Key Opportunity for Sustainability (OFS):** *(write out OFS question)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions to change this OFS: <em>(3-5 actions over 6-12 months)</em></th>
<th>Who will implement:</th>
<th>Start Date and Anticipated Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Template for Sustainability Action Planning

Organizational Profile → Sustainability Assessment → Action Plans

Sustainability Action Plans Due 3/30/2018
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