

Dear Evaluation Committee Members,

Below are instructions on how to complete your role in the prioritization process for evaluation activities that will begin in fiscal year 2014/15. We currently have funds allotted to begin three (3) new contracts¹ that can be awarded for up to \$500,000 each during that year. We are asking you to please use the process below to score all potential activities that could be contracted out in FY 14/15 using the attached Excel worksheet. These activities include those listed in the Evaluation Master Plan that have yet to be completed, as well as ideas put forth by Committee Members, stakeholders, workgroups, and contractors within previously completed MHSOAC evaluation efforts. Please provide your scores to us within the attached Excel worksheet by close of business on October 15th.

Between October 16th and October 22nd, MHSOAC staff members will use the same prioritization process to rate each of the evaluation activities. The averaged Evaluation Committee scores will be considered during this process and used to guide MHSOAC staff ratings of all activities. The top three highest scoring activities will be those that are contracted out in FY 14/15.

As you complete this prioritization process, please think about the relevance and usefulness of the criteria by which you will be asked to rate each potential evaluation activity. Per the Evaluation Master Plan, we will consider whether these criteria should be further refined or revised prior to use for the next prioritization process (i.e., when we set priorities for FY 15/16). A discussion regarding potential revisions to the criteria will take place at the October 24th Evaluation Committee meeting.

Please contact Brian Geary (brian.geary@mhsoc.ca.gov; 916-445-8749) if you have any questions about this request.

Thanks for your participation!

Priority Setting Process Overview

The Evaluation Master Plan, which was adopted by the MHSOAC in March 2013, describes a prioritization process by which various evaluation activities can be judged and prioritized. The process includes a set of criteria with which potential evaluation activities can be judged. An initial set of recommended activities was established in the Evaluation Master Plan based on this set of evaluation criteria. MHSOAC contractor and author of the Master Plan, Dr. Joan Meisel, used these criteria to determine which activities to include in the Master Plan and offer suggestions for which should be done first. At this time, the MHSOAC will use this same prioritization process and set of criteria to score potential evaluation activities that can be carried out in FY 2014/15. Please note that activities that do not rise to the top of the list during this year's prioritization process will be considered again next year.

Priority Setting Process Instructions

- 1) Please refer to the attached Excel worksheet, which contains a list of all potential evaluation activities that we are considering to be contracted out in FY 14/15 in column "A" (i.e., each row contains one activity).

¹ Please note that the MHSOAC has \$500,000 in contract funds allotted to data strengthening. Consideration for how these funds should be spent will take place via another process.

- 2) For each potential activity listed in the worksheet, please score each based on the set of criteria listed in the table below. These criteria are summarized in the worksheet in row “4”, columns “C” through “K”.
- 3) Each criterion should be rated using a 3-point scale: 1=low; 2=medium/moderate; 3=high. The criteria include items that we would like to achieve or strive for, so those activities that would enable us to achieve the criteria should be rated higher on this scale (e.g., for the “consistency with MHSa” criterion, a potential activity that is highly consistent with the language and values of the Act would be rated as a “3”; activities that are not consistent with the Act would be rated as a “1”).
- 4) You will note that the worksheet is set up so that all criteria ratings for each potential activity are summed to provide a total score for the activity in column “L”. Note: Please provide a rating for all criteria for each potential activity. If you do not provide a score for all criteria, your total rating for that potential activity will not be counted. If you provide ratings that fall outside of the 1-3 range, your total score for that potential activity will also not be counted.
- 5) As you finish the ratings and begin to see which activities you scored the highest, please look back and consider whether those top-scoring items should indeed be considered as a higher priority than the three at the top of the list that are currently scheduled to be completed in the coming FY (i.e., consider whether it would be worthwhile for us to revise our current implementation plan schedule so that other top-rated items will be done before those three currently slated to begin in FY14/15). As you will recall, these four items (three new contracts and the additional data strengthening funding) were approved to be carried out next year by the Department of Finance and the Legislature. If your top-rated activities do not appear to be a high enough priority to revise the schedule, then please revise your scoring to reflect what you think would be most appropriate.

CRITERIA	RATING ²
Consistency with MHSa: Are the research questions consistent with the language and values of the Act?	1-3
Potential for quality improvement: Will answers to the questions lead to suggestions for and implementation of policy and practice changes?	1-3
Importance to stakeholders: Are the questions a high priority to key stakeholders?	1-3
Possibility of partners: Are there other organizations that might collaborate to address the questions and/or partially fund the activity?	1-3
Forward looking: Are the questions relevant to the evolving health care environment?	1-3
Challenges: Do the questions address an area which is creating a challenge for the system?	1-3
Feasibility: How likely is the evaluation activity to produce information that answers the evaluation question(s)?	1-3
Cost: What resources are needed to do the activity well? (i.e., Can the activity be completed within a \$500,000 total budget?)	1-3
Timeliness: How long will it take to complete the evaluation activity? (i.e., Is it feasible to complete within a 2-3 year time frame?)	1-3
Leveraging: Does the evaluation activity build upon prior work of the MHSOAC or others?	1-3
Total Score (sum of above items):³	10-30

² Please note that the ratings in this column reflect the possible range of scores (i.e., 1, 2, or 3).

³ Please note that this total score reflects the possible range for total scores (i.e., 10 to 30).