

Sustainment Planning Guide



Center for
Mental Health 
Implementation Support

Acknowledgments

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Developed by the Center for Mental Health Implementation Support

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Sustainment Planning Guide

Introduction

Purpose: This planning guide is designed to help you develop a practical roadmap for sustaining your program or practice. It walks you through how to develop, implement, and refine a sustainment action plan using guided worksheets for each step of the process. The guide also includes an example of a sustainment action plan with a completed set of worksheets.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINMENT PLANNING

Sustaining service delivery involves developing strategies to continue providing a mental health service or program over time while achieving consistent, positive client outcomes for all. It requires careful planning and continued attention to funding, partnerships, and resources.

WHAT ARE SUSTAINMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainment refers to the continued use of an effective practice given the resources available.

Sustainability refers to the extent to which an effective practice can continue to be delivered over time, is institutionalized within settings, and has the necessary capacity to support its delivery. This is a dynamic process.¹

Sustainability is the ability to keep something going; sustainment is when a practice is continued over time.

WHAT IS A SUSTAINMENT ACTION PLAN?

A sustainment action plan helps you think through the efforts needed to successfully sustain an effective program or practice by putting your ideas into a clear plan before taking action. This includes identifying barriers and facilitators to sustainment, selecting appropriate strategies, and determining how you will measure the effectiveness of your sustainment efforts.²

THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR SUSTAINMENT ACTION PLAN:

Throughout this guide, we'll keep coming back to three key pieces of the action plan:

1. What are the **factors (barriers and facilitators)** influencing sustainment of your program or practice?
 - *What challenges might you face in sustaining your work, and what assets can you build on?*
2. What are sustainment **strategies**?
 - *What actions can you take to address the challenges and leverage the assets?*
3. What is your desired **outcome**?
 - *How will you know you've succeeded in your sustainment efforts?*

Reflection: Take a moment to think about what sustainability would look like for your program or practice.



THE SUSTAINMENT PLANNING PROCESS:

This guide is organized into three phases that encompass 10 steps in the sustainment planning process. The phases focus on first understanding your capacity for sustainment, then developing your sustainment strategies, and finally implementing, reviewing, and adapting your sustainment plan. The figure below gives you a brief snapshot of the full sustainment planning process that we'll walk through.

Figure 1. The Sustainment Planning Process





Phase 1: Understanding Your Capacity

STEP 1 | DECIDE THE WHAT AND THE WHY

Decide what you want to sustain and why you want to sustain it

Goal: Clarify which components of your mental health program or grant you want to sustain and why sustainment is important.



What To Do: Use the [step 1 worksheet](#) to document your responses to the following questions

1. What are the key components that support your program currently?

- Services (services and activities being delivered) and practices (approaches, models, interventions, etc.)
- Funding (grants, contracts, internal funding, etc.)
- Capacity (individual, team, organizational capacity, staff knowledge and skills, leadership support, etc.)
- Infrastructure (data management/systems, facilities, technology, etc.)
- Staffing (number of professional, administrative, support staff, and who is involved at what capacity)
- Other resources (additional support/help, community partnerships, sister organizations, etc.)

2. What does sustainment mean for your program?

Sustainment may look different for every program/practice. Consider the prompts below to identify what sustainment means for you.

- **Maintaining service delivery for clients?**
 - What key components are essential for you to maintain services? (You can draw from the above list.)
- **Retaining trained staff?**
 - What would help retain trained expert staff? (E.g., stable funding, job security, supportive work environment, team cohesion)
- **Embedding practices into organizational policy/procedure?**
 - How can we go about doing that?

3. Why does sustaining this program/practice matter to your organization?

- To maintain client access?
- To improve mental health outcomes?
- To maintain or improve organizational capacity?
- Other reasons?



4. Set clear sustainment goals for what you intend to sustain and why.

- Clearly identify a program component, activity, or practice you intend to sustain.
- Explain why each goal is important and how it contributes to sustainment priorities identified in question 3.

STEP 2 | IDENTIFY SUSTAINMENT BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS

Use a validated instrument to identify potential barriers and facilitators to sustainment

Goal: Understand what factors help or hinder your organization's ability to sustain the program.



What To Do: Either individually or as a team, complete a validated instrument that measures barriers and facilitators to sustainment.

Complete the **Sustainment Measurement System Scale (SMSS)**¹ to help you identify and assess strengths and challenges in sustaining your practice/program. The SMSS is a 35-item rating scale that can be completed by an individual or a project team in a team meeting.

Complete the SMSS survey using either our [free online version](#) and saving the PDF report that shows your item ratings and domain scores, or the [step 2 worksheet](#):

1. Rate each statement as it relates to your practice/program using a scale from 1 to 5

- 1 = little or no extent
- 5 = to a great extent
- Select N/A if the statement does not apply
 - You do not need to include the statement in your calculations if selected as N/A
 - Several N/A responses, especially within a domain, may indicate that the items may be less relevant to your program sustainment

2. Calculate your score for each domain

- Add up all your scores in the domain area
- Divide by the number of items you rated

STEP 3 | PRIORITIZE THE BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS

Rank order your barriers and facilitators by level of concern



What To Do: Use the [step 3 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

1. Review your scores generated by the SMSS survey

- Enter your domain scores into a table (Figure 2) and use color coding to help visualize results.
- Interpret your scores:
 - 4.0 or above (Green): On track for successful sustainment
 - 3.0–3.9 (Yellow): Area of potential concern
 - Below 3.0 (Red): Major concern that should be addressed

2. Weigh Importance vs. Feasibility

- **For the areas you are most concerned about/want to focus on, consider:**
 - How **important** is this to sustaining your program/practice? What might happen if this is not addressed?
 - How easy or difficult would it be to address this? How **feasible** is it to change the status of this?
 - Then, consider your importance and feasibility ratings together

3. Based on your responses above, rank the domain areas you want to prioritize for sustainment

Figure 2. Sample SMSS Summary Scores Report

Agency	EBP/CDEP
Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavior Therapy	
SMSS Domain	Your Project Baseline Summary Score
Funding and Financial Support	1.8
Responsiveness to Community Needs	5.0
Responsiveness to Community Values	5.0
Coalitions, Partnerships, and Networks	1.57
Infrastructure and Capacity	4.57
Implementation Leadership	4.67
Evaluation, Feedback, and Evidence of Positive Outcomes	3.33
Sustainment Indicators	N/R
N/R = Not relevant to my program Green: On track for sustainment (average scores of 4 or higher) Yellow: Area of potential concern (average scores of 3–3.99) Red: Major concern that should be addressed (average scores below 3)	



Phase 2: Developing Your Strategies (Plan)

STEP 4 | IDENTIFY STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINMENT

Identify strategies for addressing your sustainment barriers and facilitators

Goal: Select activities designed to overcome barriers and/or strengthen facilitators to sustainment.

 **What To Do:** Use the [step 4 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

1. Start with the priority domain areas you previously identified. Assess each area by answering the following:

- What is the current status?
- What is missing or needs strengthening?
- What resources do you currently have?

2. Match strategies to your priority domain area

- Use the questions above to help you match strategies to your priority areas, as presented in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3. Sample Sustainment Strategies Matched to Barriers/Facilitators ^{1,3,4}

Domain Areas	Strategy
Funding and financial support	Identify funding and/or contracting sources for continued program activities/practices. Access new or existing money to facilitate sustainment.
Responsiveness to community/ target group needs	Systematically adapt program activities/practices to increase continued fit/compatibility. Engage in community outreach and education.
Responsiveness to community	Align agency priorities and/or program needs with activities. Continue monitoring of participant satisfaction with activities.
Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	Maintain and expand referral partnerships and networks. Engage in marketing of program activities to potential partners.
Infrastructure and capacity	Maintain workforce skills through continued training, booster training sessions, supervision, and feedback. Provide incentives to maintain staff buy-in.

Domain Areas	Strategy
Implementation leadership	Prioritize and support continued use. Communicate priority and support to staff and community.
Evaluation, feedback, and evidence of positive outcomes	Continue monitoring of program/practice outcomes.

Types of strategies you can use:

- **Single strategies:** One action (e.g., identify funding sources)
- **Combined strategies:** Two or more actions used together (e.g., identify funding sources and maintain workforce skills through continued training)
- **Multi-part strategies:** Several actions combined into a coordinated approach

STEP 5 | PLAN FOR EVALUATING SUSTAINMENT

Decide how you plan to evaluate the outcomes of your sustainment efforts

Goal: Decide how you'll know whether your sustainment plan is working and how it will be measured.



What To Do: Use the [step 5 worksheet](#) to complete the following. **For each sustainment strategy, define what success looks like. Consider:**

What would you expect to see in the near future if the strategy is to be considered successful?
 What are some trackable outcome indicators of success?

1. Select standardized outcome indicators for each of your sustainment strategies

For example:

If your strategy is to strengthen community coalitions, partnerships, and networks:

- How many outreach events or communications have you sent?
- How many partner meetings have you held?
- How many active partnerships do you have after implementing your strategy?

If your strategy is to identify new funding sources:

- How many funding sources/opportunities have you identified? (E.g., grants, foundations, government sources, etc.)
- How many funding or grant applications have you submitted?
- Have you been able to secure any additional funding resources?
 - How many? Do you have a funding goal (x number of funding sources, x dollars)



2. Decide how each outcome indicator will be tracked

- How often will you track it? (Weekly/monthly/quarterly)
- How will it be measured?

STEP 6 | DEVELOP YOUR ACTION PLAN

Visualize your sustainment barriers, facilitators, strategies, and outcomes, and translate them into an actionable plan

Goal 1: Create a sustainment support model (SSM) that clearly visualizes your sustainment barriers, facilitators, strategies, and outcomes (steps 1–5).

- This will help you understand why you apply certain strategies to strengthen sustainment facilitators or address sustainment barriers.

Goal 2: Using the SSM as a roadmap, develop a sustainment action plan that outlines what is needed to carry out your sustainment strategies.

- This will help you transform the strategies you’ve identified into an actionable plan.

 **What To Do:** Use the [step 6 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

1. Consolidate all the work you’ve done so far in steps 1–5 into a visual roadmap for sustainment. Using the SSM template, summarize the key information you’ve identified in earlier steps:

- Priority sustainment barriers and facilitators
- Existing resources and support
- Selected sustainment strategies
- Desired outcomes

The SSM is a practical planning tool to help you visualize how your sustainment strategies are expected to address the identified needs and anticipated outcomes of the identified strategies. It provides a bird’s-eye view of your sustainment efforts by connecting your sustainment goals and strategies as well as an overall structure. Keep the SSM visible during your sustainment activities and refer to it regularly to remain aligned with your sustainment goals.



Sustainment Support Model

Step 1 Decide What and Why What do you want to sustain, and why?	Steps 2–3 Barriers & Facilitators Draw from priority areas	Step 4 Sustainment Strategies What strategies have you identified?	Step 5 Short-Term Outcomes What are your immediate sustainment outcomes?
Key components of your program/practice you want to sustain What are your sustainment goals and why do you want to sustain them?	Barriers - What factors hinder the continuation of the program/practice? - What are the key gaps or risks? Facilitators - What factors support continuation? - What existing resources/infrastructure can you leverage?	Selected strategies - Which strategies from step 4 address your barriers? - What are some actionable steps for these strategies? - Which facilitators do these strategies build on?	Short-term outcomes - SMSS outcomes subscale - What are the immediate sustainment outcome indicators?

2. For each strategy in the SSM, develop a practical action plan for implementation. Outline the specific actions required to implement the strategy. Use this [step 6 worksheet](#) to create an action plan.

Outline your sustainment action plan:

- **Activities:** What specific steps will you take to implement your plan?
- **Who:** Who is responsible?
- **Timeline:** When will each activity happen?
- **Resources:** What funds, staff, or tools are needed?
- **Communication:** Who needs to be informed or involved?
- **Link outcomes:** Does this support short- or long-term outcomes?

Congratulations! You have now developed your sustainment action plan.



Timeout to Learn About Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycles

PDSA TESTING

Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) is a strategy used in process improvement. It’s a four-step process that tests one change at a time, rather than making large changes all at once. PDSA cycles are part of a continuous quality improvement process.^{5,6}

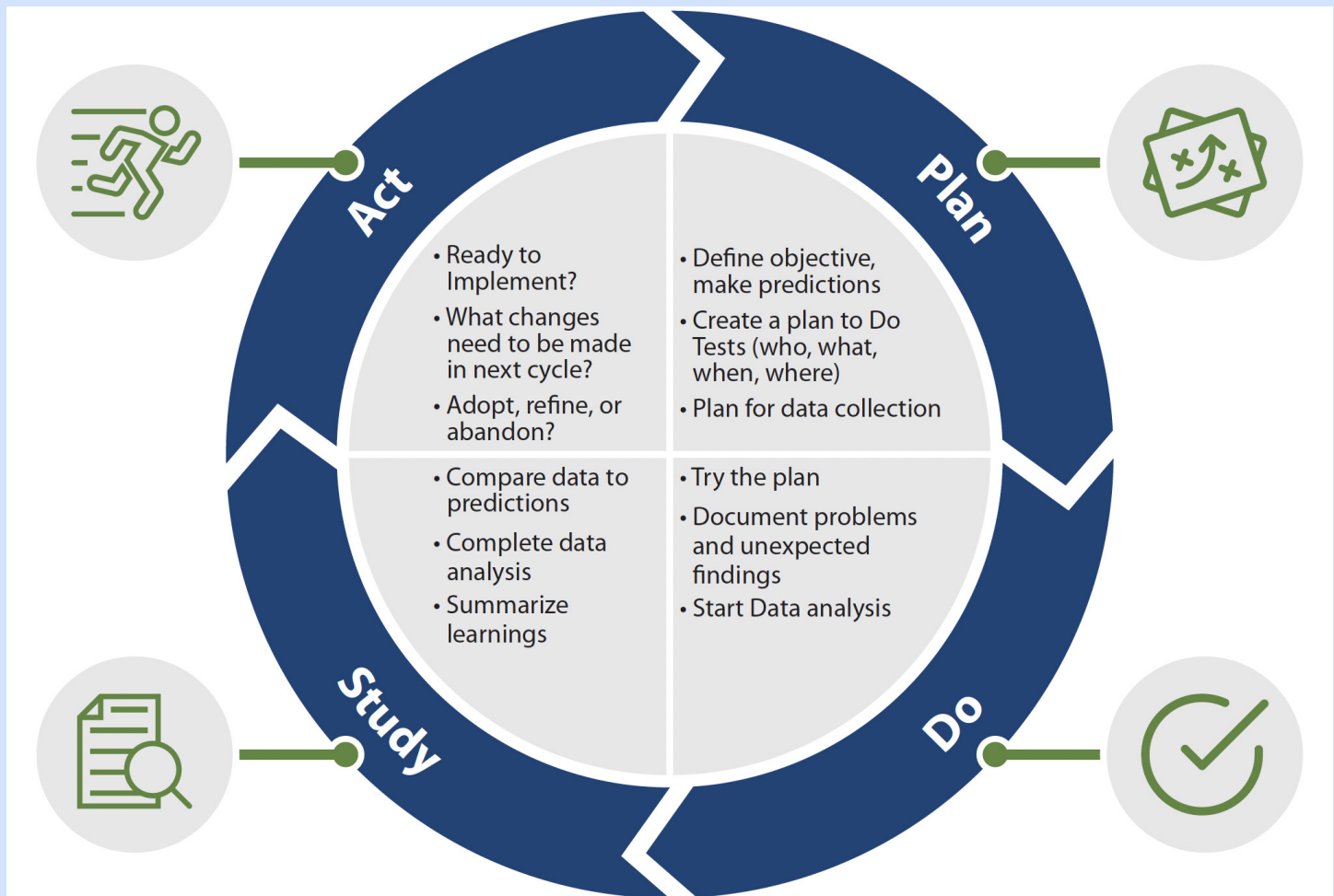
Key aspects of PDSA rapid-cycle testing:

- Pilot tests one change on a small scale for a short period
- Uses test results to inform additional PDSA cycles
- Compares each cycle’s results to baseline data
- Leads to one of three decisions: adopt, adapt, or abandon the change

For more information on PDSA cycles, please see [here](#)

Phases 2–3 of this guide will walk you through a PDSA rapid cycle test.

Phase 2: Developing Your Strategies (Plan) Select a sustainment strategy and determine how you will evaluate success	• Plan a change or test aimed at improving sustainment • Include how you plan to evaluate success and collect data • What is your prediction for the test?
Phase 3: Implementing, Reviewing and Adapting Your Plan (Do-Study-Act) • Implement the strategy on a small scale and document what happens • Review collected data to determine whether the strategy is working • Decide whether to adopt, adapt, or abandon the strategy	• Carry out the change or test on a small scale • Document your observations • Record data • Study the results — was your prediction correct? • Identify what worked and what went wrong • Summarize what was learned • Adopt the change, adapt the change, or abandon the change • If adapting the change, run another cycle • Move on to the next cycle

Figure 4. PDSA Cycle⁷**PDSA Planning Tip**

When using PDSA, start by testing one sustainment strategy at a time whenever possible. Small-scale testing makes it easier to understand whether a specific strategy contributed to improvement.

PDSA Evaluation Tip

Before implementing a strategy, collect baseline data whenever possible. During the study phase, these baseline measures will be compared to post-implementation results to assess improvement. Compare results from each cycle against baseline data to determine whether meaningful improvement occurred.



Phase 3: Implementing, Reviewing, and Adapting Your Plan

STEP 7 | IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN

Start carrying out the activities in your sustainment action plan

Goal: Put your plan into action by determining the “how”

What To Do: Apply the PDSA Cycle, focusing on the “Do” phase:

Do: Implement and monitor your plan.

Use the [step 7 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

With your sustainment action plan, you have all the key pieces in place to implement your plan.

Example

Sustainment priority area	Coalition, partnerships, and network
Selected strategies	Engage in marketing of EBI to potential partners and maintain and/or expand referral partnerships and networks
Currently available resources	Staff available for outreach, and digital tools available for communication, occasional community events
What actions can be carried out to operationalize the strategies?	- Send targeted outreach emails to local community organizations - Connect with programs offering similar or adjacent services - Build referral relationships with partner organizations - Participate in or host networking events - Maintain regular communication with existing partners

During implementation, create a checklist for monitoring and documentation:

1. Monitor implementation

- Are activities being carried out as planned?
- Are there delays or barriers?
- Are you reaching the intended population?

2. Document challenges and unexpected findings

- What challenges have you encountered in implementing your plan?
- What is easier or harder than expected?
- Have you made any adaptations to your sustainment strategies? If so, what are they?

STEP 8 | EVALUATE YOUR PLAN

Use your outcome measures to evaluate the impact of your sustainment action plan

Goal: Assess how well your sustainment action plan is working.

What To Do: Apply the PDSA Cycle, focusing on the “**Study**” phase:

Study: Review your results and feedback to understand what is working and what is not.

Use the [step 8 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

1. Revisit the outcome indicators identified in step 5

- Which sustainment strategies did you track?
- What are your primary outcome indicators for those strategies?
- How are you measuring your progress?

2. Revisit your checklist from the previous step (step 7), and look for patterns or trends

- Are your sustainment strategies being implemented as planned?
- Are you seeing progress based on your outcome indicator?
- Are there strategies that are challenging to implement/not moving forward?

3. Summarize key findings

- Summary of findings
- Successes
- Ongoing challenges

STEP 9 | REFINE YOUR PLAN

Make any revisions necessary to your sustainment action plan based on your evaluation

Goal: Use findings from step 8 to refine and strengthen your sustainment strategies.

What To Do: Apply the PDSA cycle, focusing on the “**Act**” phase:

Act: Adjust and improve your sustainment plan

Use the [step 9 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

1. Based on your findings from the previous step, decide how you want to move forward with each sustainment strategy

- Continue as planned
- Make changes to your sustainment strategies
- Select a different sustainment strategy



Adopt	Adapt	Abandon
The strategy achieved the desired outcome. Incorporate into routine practice and consider broader implementation.	The strategy showed promise but requires modification. Revise strategy and test again in the next PDSA cycle.	The strategy did not achieve the intended results or is not feasible. Document lessons learned and select a different approach.

2. Review your checklist and other related documents from steps 7–8 and make targeted revisions to your plan

- Challenges to implementation
- Results of implementation monitoring
 - Delays or barriers
 - Activities being carried out

3. Update your sustainment action plan and sustainment support model to reflect your revisions

STEP 10 | REPEAT THE PDSA CYCLE AND MONITOR YOUR PLAN

Repeat PDSA Cycle

Goal: Use a continuous learning process to improve your plan over time.



What To Do: Use the [step 10 worksheet](#) to complete the following.

1. Re-implement your revised sustainment action plan with your targeted strategies

- Implement the changes identified in step 9 into practice

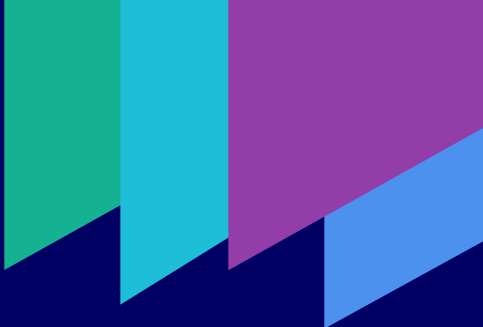
2. Continue monitoring your sustainment strategies

- Use your checklist (step 7) to ensure monitoring during implementation
- Track your outcome indicators regularly (steps 5 and 8) to monitor progress

3. Use findings from all previous steps to make continuous improvements

- Continue using the PDSA cycle to refine and strengthen your strategies over time

4. Schedule regular reviews to revisit sustainment progress



Worksheets



Step 1: Decide the What and the Why

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Clarify which components of your mental health program or grant you want to sustain and why sustainment is important.

1. What are the key components that support your program currently?		
Fill in each row below or write N/A if not applicable.		
Category	Describe the Current Status	Why Is This an Important Component To Sustaining Your Program?
Services & Practices <i>Activities and services being delivered & approaches, models, interventions</i>		
Funding <i>Grants, contracts, internal funding</i>		
Capacity <i>Multi-level, organizational capacity</i>		
Infrastructure <i>Data management/systems, facilities, technology</i>		
Staffing <i>Number, level of involvement, assigned roles</i>		
Other Resources <i>Community partnerships, sister organizations, additional support</i>		



2. What does sustainment mean for your program?

Sustainment may look different for every program. Use the prompts below to identify what sustainment means for you.

For our program, sustainment means...

Maintaining service delivery for clients?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What key components are essential to maintain services?

Retaining trained staff?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What would help retain trained expert staff? (E.g., stable funding, job security, supportive environment, team cohesion)

Embedding practices into organizational policy/procedure?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

How can we go about doing that?

Other(s):

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Describe below:



3. Why does sustaining this program/practice matter to your organization?

Check all that apply and provide brief notes for each.

Sustaining this program/practice is essential to...

Maintain client access?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

How will sustaining this improve or protect access for clients?

Improve mental health outcomes?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What outcomes are most important to protect?

To maintain or improve organizational capacity?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What resources are most at risk without sustainment?

Other reason(s)?

(check if applicable)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Describe:



4. Set clear sustainment goals on what you intend to sustain and why.

Based on your answers above, set clear and specific sustainment goals for your program.

Our sustainment goals	
Goal 1	What we want to sustain:
	Why we want to sustain it:
Goal 2	What we want to sustain:
	Why we want to sustain it:
Goal 3	What we want to sustain:
	Why we want to sustain it:

Additional Notes:

Step 2: Identify Sustainment Barriers and Facilitators

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Understand what factors help or hinder your organization's ability to sustain the program.



What To Do: Either individually or as a team, complete a validated instrument that measures barriers and facilitators to sustainment.

Complete the SMSS survey using either our [free online version](#) and saving the PDF report that shows your item ratings and domain scores, or the step 2 SMSS here in the worksheet.

Instructions on how to complete the SMSS survey:

1. Rate each statement as it relates to your practice/program using a scale from 1 to 5.
 - 1 = little or no extent
 - 5 = to a great extent
 - Select N/A if the statement does not apply
 - You do not need to include the statement in your calculations if selected as N/A
 - Several N/A responses, especially within a domain, may indicate that the items may be less relevant to your program sustainment.
2. Calculate your score for each domain.
 - Add up all your scores in the domain area
 - Divide by the number of items you rated

Example:

SUSTAINMENT INDICATORS	RESPONSES
1. The project continues to operate clinical services as described in the original application for funding.	1 2 3 (4) 5 N/A
2. The project continues to deliver clinical services to its intended population.	1 2 3 (4) 5 N/A
3. The project continues to deliver clinical services that are evidence-based.	1 2 3 4 (5) N/A
4. This project periodically measures the fidelity of the clinical services that are delivered.	1 2 (3) 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	$(4+4+5+3)/4 = 4$



SUSTAINMENT INDICATORS	RESPONSES
1. The project continues to operate clinical services as described in the original application for funding.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
2. The project continues to deliver clinical services to its intended population.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
3. The project continues to deliver clinical services that are evidence-based.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
4. This project periodically measures the fidelity of the clinical services that are delivered.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT	RESPONSES
5. The project is funded through non-profit, private, and/or non-governmental sources.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
6. The project has a combination of stable (i.e., earmarked) and flexible (i.e., discretionary) funding.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
7. The project has sustained funding.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
8. A broad range of community organizations are financially invested in the success of the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
9. The project is financially solvent.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	

RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY NEEDS	RESPONSES
10. The project delivered meets the needs of the intended target populations.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
11. The project addresses the behavioral health needs of the communities/populations being served.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	

RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY VALUES	RESPONSES
12. The project can be adapted to meet the needs of the communities or populations being served.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
13. The project is consistent with the norms, values and guiding principles of participating organizations.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
14. The project fits well with the values of the organization(s) responsible for sustaining it and the communities where it is being sustained.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	



COALITIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND NETWORKS	RESPONSES
15. The community members are passionately committed to sustaining the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
16. The community is actively engaged in the development of project goals.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
17. The community has access to knowledge and information about the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
18. The project is supported by a coalition/partnership/network of community organizations.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
19. Coalition/partnership/network members actively seek to expand the network of community organizations, leaders, and sources of support for this project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
20. The coalition/partnership/network is committed to the continued operation of this project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
21. There is a high level of networking and communication within the organizations responsible for sustaining the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
22. Community leaders are actively involved in the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPACITY TO SUPPORT SUSTAINMENT	RESPONSES
23. The project exhibits sound fiscal management.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
24. The project is well integrated into the operations of the organization and its partners.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
25. Plans for implementing and sustaining the project are developed in advance.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
26. The project is carried out or accomplished according to those plans.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
27. The project offers sufficient training to agency staff and community members.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
28. Staff possesses adequate knowledge and supportive beliefs about the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
29. Staff feel themselves to be capable of implementing the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	

IMPLEMENTATION LEADERSHIP	RESPONSES
30. The project has a formally appointed person responsible for coordinating the process of implementing and sustaining the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
31. The project is also supported by a champion who is actively engaged in the process of implementing and sustaining the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
32. We have a process in place to sustain the project in the event our champion leaves.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	



EVALUATION, FEEDBACK, AND EVIDENCE OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES	RESPONSES
33. There is ongoing evaluation of progress made towards sustainment.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
34. There is sufficient and timely feedback about the project delivery to maintain or improve quality.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
35. The project provides strong evidence of positive outcomes.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	



Step 3: Prioritize the Barriers and Facilitators

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Rank order your barriers and facilitators by level of concern.

1. Review your SMSS survey scores.

Enter your average domain scores from the [step 2 worksheet](#) or online SMSS report into the table below, using the color-coding guide to shade each cell and visualize your results:

4.0 or above

On track for successful sustainment

3.0 – 3.9

Area of potential concern

Below 3.0

Major concern that should be addressed

SMSS Domain	Baseline Summary Score
Sustainment indicators	
Funding and financial support	
Responsiveness to community needs	
Responsiveness to community values	
Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	
Infrastructure and capacity to support sustainment	
Implementation leadership	
Evaluation, feedback, and evidence of positive outcomes and sustainment indicators	



2. Rate the importance vs. feasibility of each domain area for your program.

Using the SMSS results summarized above, rank the importance to sustainment and feasibility to address for all domain areas scoring less than 4.0. Add notes to explain your ratings.

Importance (Column 2)	Feasibility (Column 3)
1 = Not at all important	1 = Not at all feasible
2 = Slightly important	2 = Slightly feasible
3 = Moderately important	3 = Moderately feasible
4 = Very important	4 = Very feasible
5 = Extremely important	5 = Extremely feasible

Domain Area	Importance to Sustainment <i>How important is this to sustaining your program/ practice? What might happen if this is not addressed?</i>	Feasibility to Address <i>How easy or difficult would it be to address this? How feasible is it to improve?</i>
	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:
	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:
	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:
	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:	1 2 3 4 5 Notes:

Consider both your importance and feasibility ratings. Importance should help you determine which domains are most essential to overall sustainment, while feasibility helps determine how and when they should be addressed. Select up to three priority domains.

Tips to help determine your priority areas:

- **High importance + high feasibility:** Prioritize for immediate action. These are likely your highest priority domains.
- **High importance + low feasibility:** Retain as a priority domain, but consider long-term planning (phased approach, gathering additional resources, building capacity, and other preparatory steps)
- **Low importance + high feasibility:** Consider this an achievable domain with a supporting action, particularly if it contributes to a higher priority sustainment goal
- **Low importance + low feasibility:** Continue to monitor but consider deferring to a later time.



3. Rank the domain areas you want to prioritize.

Based on your ratings above, rank the domain areas you want to prioritize for sustainment.

Rank	Domain Area and Rationale for This Priority
Priority #1	Domain:
	Rationale:
Priority #2	Domain:
	Rationale:
Priority #3	Domain:
	Rationale:

Additional Notes:



Step 4: Identify Strategies for Sustainment

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Select activities designed to overcome barriers and/or strengthen facilitators to sustainment.

1. Assess your priority domain areas.			
Start with the priority domain areas you previously identified in step 3, item 3 . For each priority area, answer the questions below.			
Assessment Questions	What Is the Current Status?	What Is Missing or Needs Strengthening?	What Resources Do You Currently Have?
Priority #1 Domain Area:			
Priority #2 Domain Area:			
Priority #3 Domain Area:			



2. Match strategies to your priority domain areas.

Use your assessment responses above to select the strategies that best fit your priorities. You may refer to the list of example strategies below.

Domain Areas	Strategy
Funding and financial support	Identify funding and/or contracting sources for continued program activities/practices Access new or existing money to facilitate sustainment
Responsiveness to community/target group needs	Systematically adapt program activities/practices to increase continued fit/compatibility Engage in community outreach and education
Responsiveness to community	Align agency priorities and/or program needs with activities Continue monitoring of participant satisfaction with activities
Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	Maintain and expand referral partnerships and networks Engage in marketing of program activities to potential partners
Infrastructure and capacity	Maintain workforce skills through continued training, booster training sessions, supervision and feedback. Provide incentives to maintain staff buy-in
Implementation leadership	Prioritize and support continued use Communicate priority and support to staff and community
Evaluation, feedback, and evidence of positive outcomes	Continue monitoring of program/practice outcomes

Domain Areas	Strategy
Priority #1 <i>Domain Area:</i>	Describe your selected strategy:
Priority #2 <i>Domain Area:</i>	Describe your selected strategy:
Priority #3 <i>Domain Area:</i>	Describe your selected strategy:



Additional Notes:



Step 5: Plan for Evaluating Sustainment

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: *Decide how you'll know whether your sustainment plan is working and how it will be measured.*

 What To Do

- 1. For each sustainment strategy ([step 4, item 2](#)), define what success looks like. Consider short-term indicators of progress and trackable outcomes.
- 2. Select standardized outcome indicators for each strategy (e.g., number of outreach events, partner meetings held, funding applications submitted, number of grants, dollar amount of funds, etc.).
- 3. Decide how each outcome indicator will be tracked: how frequently it will be measured and how it will be measured.

Strategy 1:				
Sustainment Strategy	What Does Success Look Like?	Outcome Indicator(s)	Tracking Frequency	How Will It Be Measured?
Brief description of selected strategy:				

Strategy 2:				
Sustainment Strategy	What Does Success Look Like?	Outcome Indicator(s)	Tracking Frequency	How Will It Be Measured?
Brief description of selected strategy:				



Strategy 3:				
Sustainment Strategy	What Does Success Look Like?	Outcome Indicator(s)	Tracking Frequency	How Will It Be Measured?
Brief description of selected strategy:				

Notes/Additional Observations:



Goal 2: Using the SSM as a roadmap, develop a sustainment action plan that outlines what is needed to carry out your sustainment strategies.

2. Develop a sustainment action plan.

- Transfer each strategy from your completed SSM into the first column.
- Break each strategy into specific, actionable activities.
- Assign responsibility, set realistic timelines, and note the resources required.
- Revisit and update this plan regularly as your sustainment effort progresses.

Strategy <i>Transfer from your SSM</i>	Activity <i>What specific steps will you take?</i>	Who is Responsible? <i>Name or role</i>	Timeline <i>Start date/ deadline</i>	Resources Needed <i>Funds, staff, tools</i>	Communication <i>Who needs to know or be involved?</i>	Linked Outcome <i>Does this support short- or long-term outcomes? Transfer from <u>step 5</u> worksheet</i>

**PDSA Planning & Evaluation Tip**

When using PDSA, start by testing one sustainment strategy at a time whenever possible. Small-scale testing makes it easier to understand whether a specific strategy contributed to improvement.

Before implementing a strategy, collect baseline data whenever possible. During the study phase, these baseline measures will be compared to post-implementation results to assess improvement. Compare results from each cycle against baseline data to determine whether meaningful improvement occurred.

Notes and Next Steps:

Step 7: Implement Your Plan

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Put your plan into action and document the process.

1. Document implementation progress.

Activity (Step 6)	Started?	Completed?	Notes
	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	
	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	
	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	
	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	

2. Use this checklist during implementation to track progress and document any implementation difficulties.

	Question	Notes/Response
☐	Are activities being carried out as planned?	
☐	Are there delays or barriers?	
☐	Are you reaching the intended population?	
☐	Is data being collected consistently?	
☐	Have staff been checked in with regularly?	
☐	What is easier or harder than expected?	



3. Record anything that came up during implementation that was not anticipated.	
Challenges Encountered	
Unexpected Findings	
Adaptations	



Step 8: Evaluate Your Plan

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Assess how well your sustainment action plan is working.

1. Revisit your outcome indicators (from step 5).

Review what you tracked and how you measured it. Add results in the table below.

Sustainment Strategy	Outcome Indicator <i>What Was Tracked?</i>	Data Source <i>How Are You Measuring Progress?</i>



2. Look for patterns and trends (revisit step 7).

Revisit your monitoring checklist from step 7 and answer the questions below.

Review Question	Yes/No/ Partially	Notes
Are your sustainment strategies being implemented as planned?		
Are you seeing progress based on your outcome indicators?		
Are there strategies that are challenging to implement or not moving forward?		

3. Summarize your key findings.

Use the space below to synthesize what you learned from this cycle.

Summary of Findings	
Successes	
Ongoing Challenges	



Step 9: Refine Your Plan

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

Goal: Use findings from step 8 to refine and strengthen your sustainment strategies.

1. Decide your next step.

For each strategy, decide whether to adopt, adapt or abandon.

ADOPT	ADAPT	ABANDON
Strategy achieved the desired outcome. Incorporate into routine practice.	Strategy showed promise but needs modification. Revise and test in the next PDSA cycle.	Strategy did not achieve intended results or is not feasible. Document lessons learned.

☐ Adopt? ☐ Adapt? ☐ Abandon?	Strategy:	Rationale:
☐ Adopt? ☐ Adapt? ☐ Abandon?	Strategy:	Rationale:
☐ Adopt? ☐ Adapt? ☐ Abandon?	Strategy:	Rationale:



2. Refine your plan.

If you made any changes to your strategy during implementation OR plan to adapt a strategy for your next PDSA cycle, record them here.

What Was Adapted?	Why Was This Change Made?	Date	Who Made The Change?



Step 10: Repeat the PDSA Cycle and Monitor Your Plan

Program/Practice:

Date:

Completed By:

Agency/Organization:

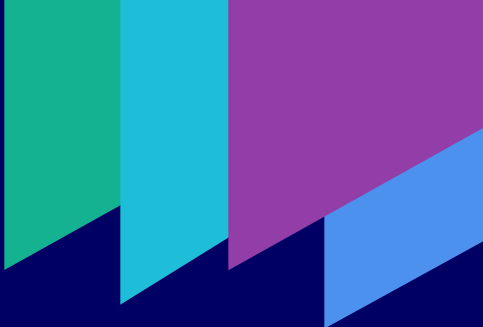
Goal: Use a continuous learning process to improve your plan over time.

PDSA Cycles	
Add more as needed.	
PDSA Cycle #:	
Cycle Begin Date:	Cycle End Date:
What is the change to be tested?	
P	PLAN: Plan the steps to carry out the cycle. Plan for data collection. What is your prediction for the test?
D	DO: Carry out the plan. Document observations. Record data.
S	STUDY: Analyze the data. Compare results to predictions and pre-change data. Summarize what was learned.
A	ACT: Will you adopt, adapt or abandon the change? Why? Move on to the next cycle.



PDSA Cycle #:	
Cycle Begin Date:	Cycle End Date:
What is the change to be tested?	
P	PLAN: Plan the steps to carry out the cycle. Plan for data collection. What is your prediction for the test?
D	DO: Carry out the plan. Document observations. Record data.
S	STUDY: Analyze the data. Compare results to predictions and pre-change data. Summarize what was learned.
A	ACT: Will you adopt, adapt or abandon the change? Why? Move on to the next cycle.

PDSA Cycle #:	
Cycle Begin Date:	Cycle End Date:
What is the change to be tested?	
P	PLAN: Plan the steps to carry out the cycle. Plan for data collection. What is your prediction for the test?
D	DO: Carry out the plan. Document observations. Record data.
S	STUDY: Analyze the data. Compare results to predictions and pre-change data. Summarize what was learned.
A	ACT: Will you adopt, adapt or abandon the change? Why? Move on to the next cycle.



Appendix: Example of a Completed Plan

Appendix: Example of a Completed Plan

This section provides an example of how an organization might complete the sustainment planning worksheets. The example organization begins by describing its current program and considering what sustainment means within its specific context. Throughout the following worksheets, the example organization assesses its sustainment barriers and facilitators, identifies funding and partnerships as priority areas, develops strategies to address those priorities, and monitors and refines its sustainment plan over time

Step 1: Decide the What and the Why

Goal: Clarify which components of your mental health program or grant you want to sustain and why sustainment is important.

1. What are the key components that support your program currently?

Fill in each row below or write N/A if not applicable.

Category	Describe the Current Status	Why Is This an Important Component To Sustaining Your Program?
Funding <i>Grants, contracts, internal funding</i>	The program is primarily supported through a five-year state behavioral health grant that funds behavioral health staff, training, and implementation activities.	As the behavioral grant wraps up, additional funds are necessary to retain staff positions and maintain patient services.
Staffing <i>Number, level of involvement, assigned roles</i>	Currently, the program has two behavioral health clinicians, one care manager, two primary care providers, consultants, administrative staff, and billing staff.	Maintaining trained staff is important to deliver continuous care for patients and minimizes disruption during staff turnover
Other Resources <i>Community partnerships, sister organizations, additional support</i>	Existing community referral relationships are limited and are not consistently maintained.	Strong referral relationships help connect clients to appropriate services, increase program visibility, and maintain a consistent referral network over time.



2. What does sustainment mean for your program?

Sustainment may look different for every program. Use the prompts below to identify what sustainment means for you.

For our program, sustainment means...

Maintaining service delivery for clients?

(check if applicable)

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What key components are essential to maintain services?

Behavioral health clinician availability, care coordination, psychiatric consultation.

Retaining trained staff?

(check if applicable)

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What would help retain trained expert staff? (E.g., stable funding, job security, supportive environment, team cohesion)

Long-term funding, clear career advancement opportunities, supportive leadership

Embedding practices into organizational policy/procedure?

(check if applicable)

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

How can we go about doing that?

Incorporate screening and referral procedures into clinic workflows and staff orientation

3. Why does sustaining this program/practice matter to your organization?

Check all that apply and provide brief notes for each.

Sustaining this program/practice is essential to...

Maintain client access?

(check if applicable)

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

How will sustaining this improve or protect access for clients?

Clients will continue receiving behavioral health services in a timely manner

Other reason(s)?

To ensure sufficient resources?

(check if applicable)

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Describe:

Maintain funding for staff, training, and program operations

4. Set clear sustainment goals on what you intend to sustain and why.

Based on your answers above, set clear and specific sustainment goals for your program.

Our sustainment goals

Goal 1

Sustain integrated behavioral health services beyond the current grant period by securing long-term funding.

What we want to sustain:

Behavioral health staffing and integrated behavioral health services

Why we want to sustain it:

To maintain uninterrupted access to services provided after the grant period ends



Step 2: Identify Sustainment Barriers and Facilitators

Goal: Understand what factors help or hinder your organization’s ability to sustain the program.

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT	RESPONSES
5. The project is funded through non-profit, private, and/or non-governmental sources.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
6. The project has a combination of stable (i.e., earmarked) and flexible (i.e., discretionary) funding.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
7. The project has sustained funding.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
8. A broad range of community organizations are financially invested in the success of the project.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
9. The project is financially solvent.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Average Score (sum of ratings ÷ number of items rated)	(3+2+3+2)/4 = 2.5

Step 3: Prioritize the Barriers and Facilitators

Goal: Rank order your barriers and facilitators by level of concern.

1. Review your SMSS survey scores.	
Enter your average domain scores from the step 2 worksheet or online SMSS report into the table below, using the color-coding guide to shade each cell and visualize your results:	
SMSS Domain	Baseline Summary Score
Funding and financial support	2.5
Responsiveness to community needs	3.2
Responsiveness to community values	4.3
Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	3.0
Infrastructure and capacity to support sustainment	4.0
Implementation leadership	4.2



2. Rate the importance vs. feasibility of each domain area for your program.

Using the SMSS results summarized above, rank the importance to sustainment and feasibility to address for all domain areas scoring less than 4.0. Add notes to explain your ratings.

Importance (Column 2)	Feasibility (Column 3)
1 = Not at all important	1 = Not at all feasible
2 = Slightly important	2 = Slightly feasible
3 = Moderately important	3 = Moderately feasible
4 = Very important	4 = Very feasible
5 = Extremely important	5 = Extremely feasible

Domain Area	Importance to Sustainment <i>How important is this to sustaining your program/ practice? What might happen if this is not addressed?</i>	Feasibility to Address <i>How easy or difficult would it be to address this? How feasible is it to improve?</i>
Funding and financial support	1 2 3 4 ☒ 5 Notes: Current funding expires next year	1 2 ☒ 3 4 5 Notes: Currently challenging to find a funding source
Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	1 2 3 ☒ 4 5 Notes: Community relationship needs to be strengthened	1 2 3 4 ☒ 5 Notes: The organization have the capacity (resource and manpower) to carry out outreach and engagement

3. Rank the domain areas you want to prioritize.

Based on your ratings above, rank the domain areas you want to prioritize for sustainment.

Rank	Domain Area and Rationale for This Priority
Priority #1	Domain: Funding & Financial Support
	Rationale: Without stable funding, staffing and services are at risk
Priority #2	Domain: Coalitions & Partnerships
	Rationale: Expanding referral partnerships can improve access to services



Step 4: Identify Strategies for Sustainment

Goal: Select activities designed to overcome barriers and/or strengthen facilitators to sustainment.

1. Assess your priority domain areas.			
Start with the priority domain areas you previously identified in step 3, item 3 . For each priority area, answer the questions below.			
Assessment Questions	What Is the Current Status?	What Is Missing or Needs Strengthening?	What Resources Do You Currently Have?
Priority #1 <i>Domain Area:</i> Funding	One grant supports most behavioral health services and staff positions	There needs to be a more diverse funding sources and expanded reimbursement.	Grant office and finance/billing team.
Priority #2 <i>Domain Area:</i> Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	Low referral partnerships, and low visibility in the community, limited community engagement	Stronger referral partnerships and formal collaboration with community organizations	Staff available for outreach, and digital communication tools available
2. Match strategies to your priority domain areas.			
Domain Areas	Strategy		
Priority #1 <i>Domain Area:</i> Funding	Describe your selected strategy: Diversify funding. Identify and pursue new funding sources and/or contracts and opportunities, expand reimbursement through billable behavioral health services. Develop long-term financial plans.		
Priority #2 <i>Domain Area:</i> Coalitions, partnerships, and networks	Describe your selected strategy: Maintain and expand referral partnerships, increase outreach and engagement with community organizations, engage in marketing of program services to potential partners		



Step 5: Plan for Evaluating Sustainment

Goal: Decide how you'll know whether your sustainment plan is working and how it will be measured.

Strategy 1:				
Sustainment Strategy	What Does Success Look Like?	Outcome Indicator(s)	Tracking Frequency	How Will It Be Measured?
<i>Brief description of selected strategy:</i> Identify and pursue new funding opportunities and expand reimbursement for billable behavioral health services.	Additional funding secured before the current grant ends. New reimbursement pathways for behavioral health services are being utilized	• Number of grant applications submitted • Amount (in dollars) of new funding secured • Percentage of program costs covered by different funding streams • Number of new billing pathways	Quarterly	Review grant submissions, funding awards, financial reports, and billing reports.

Strategy 2:				
Sustainment Strategy	What Does Success Look Like?	Outcome Indicator(s)	Tracking Frequency	How Will It Be Measured?
<i>Brief description of selected strategy:</i> Strengthen referral partnerships and increase outreach and community engagement	The program expands referral partnerships and increases community engagement to improve access to behavioral health services	• Number of active referral partners • Number of outreach/engagement communication • Number of outreach events • Number of referrals received from community partners	Quarterly	Review referral logs, partnership agreements, outreach records, and program reports



Step 6: Develop Your Action Plan

Goal 1: Create a sustainment support model (SSM) that clearly visualizes your sustainment barriers, facilitators, strategies, and outcomes (steps 1–5).

1. Create a sustainment support model (SSM).			
Step 1, Items 3 and 4 Decide What & Why <i>What do you want to sustain, and why?</i>	Steps 2–3, Items 1 and 3 Barriers & Facilitators <i>Draw from priority areas</i>	Step 4, Item 2 Sustainment Strategies <i>What strategies have you identified?</i>	Step 5 Short-Term Outcomes <i>What are your immediate sustainment outcomes?</i>
Key components of your program or practice you want to sustain: Integrated behavioral health services Additional funding	Barriers: • Reliance on a single funding source • Limited community partnerships Facilitators: • Experienced staff and leadership support • Grant office • Existing community partners	Selected Strategies Diversify funding through new grant opportunities and expanded reimbursement Strengthen referral partnerships and community outreach	Short-Term Outcomes • Diversified funding • New referral partnerships • Increased visibility in the community • Improved access to behavioral health services



Goal 2: Using the SSM as a roadmap, develop a sustainment action plan that outlines what is needed to carry out your sustainment strategies.

2. Develop a sustainment action plan.						
Strategy <i>Transfer from your SSM</i>	Activity <i>What specific steps will you take?</i>	Who is Responsible? <i>Name or role</i>	Timeline <i>Start date/ deadline</i>	Resources Needed <i>Funds, staff, tools</i>	Communication <i>Who needs to know or be involved?</i>	Linked Outcome <i>Does this support short- or long-term outcomes?</i> <i>Transfer from step 5 worksheet</i>
Diversify funding through new grant opportunities and expanded reimbursement	Identify and prioritize new grant opportunities	Grant Manager	Month 1-2	Staff time, high-speed internet, computer	Leadership, finance team	Additional funding opportunities identified
	Submit grant applications	Grant Manager	Month 2-6	Grant writing team, budget data	Leadership	Sustainable funding secured
Strengthen referral partnerships and community outreach	Send outreach emails to potential community partners.	Project Manager	Month 1-2	Staff time, community partner list	Community organizations	New referral partnerships established
	Schedule community meetings and/or presentations	Project Manager/ Clinic Staff	Ongoing	Staff time, referral templates	Community partners, clinic leadership	Increased community engagement



Step 7: Implement Your Plan

Goal: Put your plan into action and document the process.

1. Document implementation progress.

Activity (Step 6)	Started?	Completed?	Notes
Identify and prioritize new grant opportunities	☒ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☒ No	Three potential funding opportunities identified so far.
Send outreach emails to potential community partners	☒ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☒ No	Initial outreach sent to three community organizations; follow-up meetings scheduled.
Submit grant applications	☐ Yes ☒ No	☐ Yes ☒ No	In progress, submission will occur after funding opportunities are prioritized.
Schedule community meetings and/or presentations	☐ Yes ☒ No	☐ Yes ☒ No	Planning in progress, administrative and clinic staff prepping to coordinate meetings and presentations with community members/representatives

2. Use this checklist during implementation to track progress and document any implementation difficulties.

	Question	Notes/Response
☐	Are activities being carried out as planned?	Yes, they are being carried out according to plan.
☐	Are there delays or barriers?	No delays for current activities being carried out.
☐	Are you reaching the intended population?	
☐	Is data being collected consistently?	
☐	Have staff been checked in with regularly?	
☐	What is easier or harder than expected?	



3. Record anything that came up during implementation that was not anticipated.	
Challenges Encountered	Grant funding opportunities were more competitive than anticipated Some community partners required multiple follow-up contacts before engaging
Unexpected Findings	
Adaptations	

Step 8: Evaluate Your Plan

Goal: Assess how well your sustainment action plan is working.

1. Revisit your outcome indicators (from step 5).		
Review what you tracked and how you measured it. Add results in the table below.		
Sustainment Strategy	Outcome Indicator <i>What Was Tracked?</i>	Data Source <i>How Are You Measuring Progress?</i>
Diversify funding through new grant opportunities and expanded reimbursement	Number of grant applications submitted Amount of new funding secured	Grant tracking records Financial reports
Strengthen referral partnerships and community outreach	Number of active referral partnerships Number of referrals received from community partners Number of community events organized	Partnership tracking log Referral records Outreach records



2. Look for patterns and trends (revisit step 7).

Revisit your monitoring checklist from step 7 and answer the questions below.

Review Question	Yes/No/ Partially	Notes
Are your sustainment strategies being implemented as planned?	Yes	The strategies are being implemented as planned, grant applications are being submitted Community outreach (communication emails have been sent)
Are you seeing progress based on your outcome indicators?	Partially	New funding opportunities have been identified, and applied (2 completed, 1 in progress). Outreach emails (communication) sent to 4 different potential community partners. Two follow up meetings were completed, one more pending
Are there strategies that are challenging to implement or not moving forward?	Yes	Securing new funding has been challenging



Step 9: Refine Your Plan

Goal: Use findings from step 8 to refine and strengthen your sustainment strategies.

1. Decide your next step.

For each strategy, decide whether to adopt, adapt or abandon.

ADOPT	ADAPT	ABANDON
Strategy achieved the desired outcome. Incorporate into routine practice.	Strategy showed promise but needs modification. Revise and test in the next PDSA cycle.	Strategy did not achieve intended results or is not feasible. Document lessons learned.

☐ Adopt? ☐ Adapt? ☐ Abandon?	Strategy: Strengthen referral partnerships and community outreach.	Rationale: Outreach activities increased referrals and strengthened relationships with community partners. This strategy will be adopted into routine practice.
☐ Adopt? ☐ Adapt? ☐ Abandon?	Strategy: Diversify funding through new grant opportunities and expanded reimbursement.	Rationale: Additional grant opportunities have been identified but getting funded has been challenging. There is a need to refine the search strategy and criteria for selecting grant opportunities.

2. Refine your plan.

If you made any changes to your strategy during implementation OR plan to adapt a strategy for your next PDSA cycle, record them here.

What Was Adapted?	Why Was This Change Made?	Date	Who Made The Change?
Expanded the funding source search to include all federal, state, and local government, foundations, and more. Also looked into additional reimbursement pathways.	Additional funding sources were needed to ensure long-term program funding.		Program leadership and grant manager



Step 10: Repeat the PDSA Cycle and Monitor Your Plan

Goal: Use a continuous learning process to improve your plan over time.

PDSA Cycles	
Add more as needed.	
PDSA Cycle #: 1	
Cycle Begin Date: 9/20/2026	Cycle End Date: 10/20/2026
What is the change to be tested? Expand the funding source search and find additional reimbursement pathways	
P	PLAN: Plan the steps to carry out the cycle. Plan for data collection. What is your prediction for the test?
	The grant manager and project manager will expand their funding searches and identify additional sources that align with the program. We expect to find at least two new sources, one at the local government level and one at the federal level. The finance team will also review additional reimbursement pathways for behavioral health services.
D	DO: Carry out the plan. Document observations. Record data.
	The grant manager, project manager, and other relevant team members searched for additional funding on Grants.gov, SAMHSA, NIH, local government websites, and state government websites. Potential funding opportunities were discussed, documented, and reviewed for eligibility, fit with program services, application timeline, and funding amount. The finance team reviewed current behavioral health services and existing billing practices to identify services that may be eligible for reimbursement but are not currently being billed or fully reimbursed.
S	STUDY: Analyze the data. Compare results to predictions and pre-change data. Summarize what was learned.
	Although the team identified several funding opportunities, they were not a good fit due to eligibility requirements, timelines, or program priorities. The finance team also identified several reimbursement pathways that were not currently being utilized.
A	ACT: Will you adopt, adapt or abandon the change? Why? Move on to the next cycle.
	The team will continue searching for additional funding opportunities but will focus more heavily on local and state opportunities rather than more competitive federal grants. We will also pursue the feasible reimbursement pathways identified by the finance and billing teams.