

White Paper #4: Summary and recommendations

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This is the fourth and last white paper in the series describing an implementation science evaluation of Utah's Care About Childcare (CAC) QRIS program. CAC is a voluntary, strengths-based program wherein providers report the quality criteria met by their child care program. CAC is administered by the Utah Office of Child Care (OCC) and the regional CCR&R offices. OCC staff and CCRR directors and staff involved in CAC were interviewed for this white paper series. Their responses are organized according to an implementation science framework. Methods are reported in the first white paper. In this paper we report on CAC's measures of success as summarized by CCR&R interviewees. We then summarize overall strengths and opportunities for growth noted during the interview.

CAC is in the initial implementation stage, and regional and state leadership is actively seeking to adjust infrastructure, protocols, and policies to best support the program. The program faces some difficulties including resistance on the part of anti-government groups, but interviewees were hopeful that these will decrease as the program becomes more stable. Already as parents use it more to find childcare, providers who originally felt no need to use CAC have become involved.

Measures of CAC success

CCR&R staff identified the types of data that could be collected to measure program success. These included:

- The number of providers participating in CAC and the retention of providers in CAC
- Number of parents who have used the system successfully to locate a provider; parent satisfaction with the self-reported quality criteria
- Site hits from parents, providers, and others
- Assurance that providers' reports of program quality are valid
- Sustainability and institutionalization of CAC

Strengths

☑ Leadership provided by OCC

☑ Adaptive leadership at all levels

☑ Input from stakeholders is welcomed; a concerted effort has been made to get feedback from as many stakeholders as possible.

☑ CCR&R offices work hard to develop provider friendships

Areas for Improvement

- ☐ Clarify process for reporting quality and validating quality criteria
- ☐ Clarify if grants are available for individual providers to work on CAC criteria
- ☐ Determine if CAC methods are reliable and valid
- ☐ Some CCR&R offices would like specific goals relative to CAC implementation
- ☐ Develop a method (blog, newsletter) for CCR&R offices and providers to share strategies that have worked successfully in their own regions

Conclusion

Care About Childcare has many strengths. With the improvement of weak drivers identified above, Care About Childcare will make a positive effect on the lives of an increasing number of providers, parents, and children.