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APPENDIX A: Evaluation/Research Proposal Template

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The purpose of this template is to assist staff to communicate the intent of their evaluation/research project. The aim is to ensure that there is alignment between the purpose of the evaluation/research and methods (e.g., demonstrating high quality research characteristics) and that the evaluation/research is conducted in an ethical manner. The template is based on the Public Health Ontario's ten steps for an evaluation organized[1] and their framework for the ethical conduct of public health initiatives.[2] These steps are organized into the three phases of evaluation/research: planning, implementation and utilization. If you have questions about completing this form, please contact your Department representative for further information.

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Phase 1: Planning

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Steps	Questions	Prompt / Response
Step 1: Clarify what is to be evaluated/ researched	Is this a newly developed or implemented program/project?	Newly developed or Implemented – Yes | No? Is this a change to the program/project?
	Please provide background information on the program/project.	Does the program exist elsewhere? Is the program evidence-based?
	Briefly provide a narrative description of the program/project activities and/or purpose.	Do you understand what the program/project is about? Are there clearly articulated populations of interest and activities?
	What is the goal of the program/project? Goals are broad statements about what the program/project hopes to accomplish.	Is there alignment among the description and the goal?
	What are the objectives of the program/project? Objectives should be specific (not vague), limited in	Is there alignment between the description, the goal and the objectives?

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[1] Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). At a glance: The ten steps for conducting an evaluation. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.2015. Available from: http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/At_A_Glance_Evaluation_2015.pdf

[2] Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario) . A framework for the ethical conduct of public health initiatives. 2012. Available from www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/PHO%20%20Framework%20for%20Ethical%20Conduct%20of%20Public%20Health%20Initiatives%20April%202012.pdf

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Steps	Questions	Prompt / Response
	number and congruent with the program/project design.	Is it reasonable to expect that the activities will lead to the objectives? Are the objectives specific?
	What aspects of the program/project are you interested in evaluating?	Is it clear what aspect of the program/project is to be evaluated?
	What are the reasons for conducting the evaluation/research at this time?	Does the reason for conducting the evaluation/research make sense?
Step 2: Engage stakeholders	Identify the staff (external agency, if applicable) who has primary responsibility for conducting the evaluation/research project. If an external agency, identify who within the health unit will be a contact person.	Has a health unit staff member been identified? If an external agency, has the name and organization been listed with contact information?
	Identify all other members of the team or agency who will be actively involved in conducting the evaluation/research and their skill and their role.	Do those who have been identified make sense? Is there anyone who is missing? Is it clear that the evaluation/research team includes people with the necessary skills to complete the evaluation or research?
	Identify other health unit staff/departments you anticipate needing to be involved in the evaluation/research and identify their role.	Do you have a good understanding of the staff and/or departments and their role? Does this seem reasonable?
	Are any team members in a situation where their interpretations, decisions or actions related to this evaluation or research project might be (or might be perceived to be) unduly influenced by another competing interest?	Does there or could there be the appearance of a conflict of interest, either internally or externally?

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Steps	Questions	Prompt / Response
Step 3: Assess resources and evaluability	Identify the resources (financial, human, structural) needed to implement this evaluation/research project. List time needed by staff person for this evaluation/research project. Has the evaluation/research project been identified in the department's operational plan? What is the priority of this evaluation/research project for the year? What will be gained by pursuing this evaluation/research project? Consider a cost benefit analysis/ for this evaluation/research project? Is this a reasonable use of resources? How committed to this program/project is your Department? The Health Unit?	Are all financial, human, and structural needs including impact on support services (including any computer programs) resources necessary to implement the research/evaluation project identified? What is the value to the Health Unit for pursuing this evaluation/research project? Has the evaluation/research project been evaluated in the literature or elsewhere?
	What is the proposed timeline for this project/research evaluation?	Is the proposed timeline for the evaluation/research project reasonable?
	Confirm that the resources needed are available (e.g., manager/director approval to access resources; program grant).	Has Appendix C been signed/completed by the Manager/Director?
Step 4: Determine your	Identify/state your evaluation/research question(s).	Are the questions aligned with the purpose of the evaluation identified in Step 1?

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Steps	Questions	Prompt / Response
evaluation/ research questions	What category below best describes the type of evaluation/research to be conducted? Choose as many that apply. ☐ *Needs assessment/formative evaluation* (e.g., how was an existing program developed?). ☐ *Process evaluation* (e.g., was the program/project implemented as intended?). ☐ *Outcome evaluation* (e.g., were the intended short-term and/or long-term outcomes produced?).	Do the evaluation question(s) align with the type of evaluation to be conducted?
Step 5: Determine appropriate methods of measurement and procedures **and** **Step 6: Develop an evaluation/ research plan**	Write a narrative to answer the following questions: What data will be collected and by whom? (Primary and/or secondary; see relevant questions below) What procedures, tools and techniques will be used to collect data? *Primary data collection*: • How will primary data be collected? (e.g., survey, focus group, interviews)? • What instruments (e.g., questionnaires, observation checklists, measurement scales, etc.) and procedures will be used? Please provide copies. • Will instruments or questionnaires be pilot tested and adjustments made based on the results? • Were the instruments/tools previously validated? • Provide the rationale of how the methods of	Has enough detail been provided so that you understand the methods of measurement and procedures? Can the methods be reproduced? Does the plan make logical sense? Are there existing data (e.g. administrative data) which could be used to answer the question, rather than collecting primary data? Has the use of validated data collection tools been explored? Do the methods of measurement align with the evaluation/research questions? Does the timing of data collection enable information to be captured to answer the

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Steps	Questions	Prompt / Response
	measurement and procedures answer the proposed evaluation/research question *Secondary data collection:* • How will secondary data be accessed? • If data will be used that have been collected and/or held by others/ other organizations, how will access to the data be obtained? • What information will be accessed? • Provide the rationale of how the methods of measurement and procedures answer the proposed evaluation/research question?	research/evaluation questions? Have the data collectors been identified? Are the procedures detailed enough to ensure that different people will collect data in a consistent way? Who will access secondary data and how? Was consent obtained or is it required for the use of the secondary data?
	If collecting primary data recruitment; informed consent, ethics and privacy considerations: • What strategies will be used to recruit participants? • How will they be selected? What are the inclusion and exclusion criteria? • If you are sampling the population, how will sampling occur? What is your required sample size? • Why are they your target population? • Will participants be assigned to groups (e.g., a control group or intervention group)? If so, what are the criteria for assignment to the groups? • How will informed consent be obtained? Who will obtain consent? How will consent be documented? • What is the process for withdrawing consent? • Will participants be paid for participation? If yes, how much? In what form of payment? • Will participants be paid and/or receive items or	Are you confident in the recruitment, informed consent, ethics and privacy considerations as outlined or are there ways these can be strengthened? Recruitment: Informed consent: • Is written consent warranted? • Is a confidentiality agreement warranted? • What is the process for withdrawing consent? Ethics and privacy considerations:

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Steps	Questions	Prompt / Response
	gift(s) for participation?	
	• Will interviews or focus groups be audio or video recorded?	
	• Explain how the privacy of the participants will be respected (e.g., no identifying information will be collected; codes will be used for participants and sites; only members of the research team will have access to the data).	
	• What identifiers will be included in any data collected (e.g., names of participants)?	
	• How will potential participants receive assurance that their decision regarding participation will not affect the service they receive or their relationship with the Health Unit?	
	• Will the project involve any vulnerable populations (e.g., children, individuals with mental illness, prisoners)? What risks might the project present to such populations and how will these risk be mitigated?	
	• Is it possible that participants will disclose abuse, neglect or intent to harm themselves? If yes, how will you respond to such cases?	

Phase 2: Implementation

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Steps	Questions	Response
Step 7: Collect data	Who will have access to the data?	Do they have authority to collect / access the data? Do they have authority to use the data?
	Describe the procedure to store and manage the data collected.	Does the data management plan, including the procedures outlined make sense?
Step 8: Process data and analyze results	Who will conduct the analysis of the data?	Has a person(s) been identified? Do they have the necessary skills or have they identified how those skills will be gained in advance of the analysis?
	What methods will be used to analyze the data (e.g., statistical methods; qualitative methods)?	Do the analysis methods align with how the data was collected? How will an improvement be measured? Should the Statistical or clinical/practical significance? Was a baseline measurement obtained or will one be?
	If requesting analysis from the Epidemiology and Evaluation Services team, what type(s) of products are being requested (e.g., data tables, graphs, descriptive/analytical interpretation, summaries, report)? How would you like the data analyzed and presented (e.g., graph, table, aggregate, report)?	Is the requested product and mode of presentation clear and specific?

Phase 3: Utilization

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Steps	Questions	Response
Step 9: Interpret and disseminate results	Who is responsible for interpreting the findings?	Has a person(s) been identified to interpret the findings? Does this appear to be an appropriate person (e.g., not the person who collected the data; has the skills to interpret the findings)?
	Will other stakeholders beyond the project team be involved in interpreting the results? If yes, provide details.	
	Will the findings be used internally and/or externally?	Is it clear how the results will be used? Does this make sense?
	Describe a dissemination strategy for communicating the results internally and externally.	Have the key stakeholders been identified? Does the dissemination strategy make sense?
Step 10: Apply evaluation findings	How will the findings be utilized (e.g., revise the program? Influence policy? Change practices?)?	Does how the findings will be used align with the purpose of the evaluation/research project goals and/or objectives?