

## WRITING AND IMPLEMENTING EVALUATION QUESTIONS: AN EXAMPLE FOR TELESAFE CLINICIANS

For this example, the primary objective is to offer teleSAFE services to all patients seeking medical forensic exams (MFEs) from their local hospital, in an effort to increase the availability of comprehensive sexual assault care in the community. A concern is the amount of burden associated with extensive data collection with patients, and although other sources (e.g., advocates) may be leveraged for these questions, some of the teleSAFE spoke sites may be in the process of developing relevant partnerships (e.g., with advocacy groups). Although a teleSAFE program may not have enough staffing to do an extensive evaluation, a *successful* evaluation can still be conducted so long as the clinicians are committed to data collection and regular review of the data.

This snapshot accompanies *Writing and Implementing Evaluation Questions: Steps for TeleSAFE Clinicians* and provides relevant examples of each step in this process.

### Writing Evaluation Questions

Exhibit 1 presents example evaluation questions based on the primary objectives of the teleSAFE program. See *Writing and Implementing Evaluation Questions: Steps for TeleSAFE Clinicians* for a description of different types of evaluation questions.

#### Exhibit 1. Example evaluation questions

1	How many patients seeking MFEs were <i>offered</i> TeleSAFE services? ( <i>example process evaluation question</i> )
2	How many patients <i>received</i> MFEs through TeleSAFE services? ( <i>example process evaluation question</i> )
3	Has the number of comprehensive MFEs provided in the community increased since the initiation of the TeleSAFE program? ( <i>example outcome evaluation question</i> )
4	Has the number of patient referrals to appropriate agencies (e.g., advocacy) increased since the initiation of the TeleSAFE program? ( <i>example outcome evaluation question</i> )

Note that these questions identify target metrics (i.e., services offered, services received, number of exams, number of referrals) to be gathered and analyzed in subsequent steps. See *Considerations for Stakeholder Partnerships: Steps for TeleSAFE Clinicians* for more on how to incorporate partners' perspectives into the development of evaluation questions.

### Selecting Appropriate Data Collection Modes

Lower-burden methods (e.g., use of existing secondary data, brief surveys, and checklists) should be prioritized whenever possible and considered before implementing higher-burden methods (e.g., longer surveys with open-ended questions)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Information on additional evaluation data collection methods (i.e., interviews and focus groups) can be found in IAFN's *TeleSAFE Evaluation Handbook*.

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- First, consider whether you can use already-collected data to answer the evaluation questions. In the case of the example process and outcome evaluation questions identified in Exhibit 1, these data could include relevant service utilization measures from hospital or advocacy agency records.
- In the event that these data are not available, gather quantitative information (e.g., number of services offered and received, number of exams, number of referrals) via surveys administered to relevant stakeholder groups (e.g., on-site clinicians, teleSAFEs, advocates, or victims).
- When necessary, supplement survey responses with qualitative (e.g., open-ended survey questions).

Note that different evaluation partners may require differing data collection methods (see Exhibit 2).

### Exhibit 2. Considerations for method selection

Evaluation question	Surveys				Checklists			Secondary data
	On-site clinicians	TeleSAFEs	Advocates	Victims	On-site clinicians	TeleSAFEs	Advocates	Advocacy records
1	X	X	X	X				
2	X	X	X	X				
3					X	X		
4	X	X	X	X			X	X

### Developing Data Collection Tools

Start with your evaluation questions to develop relevant data collection tools. Note that different data collection modes or evaluation partners may require differing data collection tools. Exhibit 3 provides an example of how each evaluation question may be represented in a survey intended for on-site clinicians.

### Exhibit 3. Considerations for data collection tools

Evaluation question	Survey for on-site clinicians
1	Was the patient offered an MFE via TeleSAFE? (yes/no)
2	Did the patient receive a complete MFE via TeleSAFE? (yes/no; if no, why not?)
4	What community referrals were provided to the patient? (list all that apply)

### Selecting the Appropriate Data Analysis Approaches

Data analysis approaches depend on the type of data collected. For our first and second evaluation questions, quantitative data collected through surveys can be analyzed using simple descriptive statistics. The number of patients presenting for MFEs can be compared with the number of patients who were actually *offered* teleSAFE services. This number can then be compared with the number of patients who actually *received* teleSAFE services during the evaluation period. If you are collecting the same information from multiple sources (e.g., on-site clinicians, teleSAFEs, advocates, or victims), look for discrepancies between sources. Do all stakeholder groups report the same number of teleSAFE exams being offered and received? If not, what might differences be attributable to?

Our third evaluation question can be addressed entirely via checklists and as such, associated questions do not need to be included in a survey for on-site clinicians.

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Finally, for our fourth evaluation question, data from secondary data and surveys can be used to create a comprehensive picture of events. For example, surveys may reveal the numbers and types of referrals provided after teleSAFE services. Secondary data from advocacy records can indicate whether these referrals were utilized. This approach of using multiple methods often provides additional context and can play a strong part in the interpretation of findings.

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