



Washington Families Fund Systems Initiative Evaluation: 2012 Interim Report

III: The Role of the Evaluation

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Overview

The Washington Families Fund (WFF) Systems Initiative is a \$60 million comprehensive systems change intervention aimed at ending family homelessness. Implemented in three counties in the Puget Sound region of Washington State (King, Pierce, and Snohomish), the Initiative is guided by a theory of change that builds on proven and best practices as well as emerging new concepts from a number of communities across the United States. The Initiative, created over the course of several years by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), was approved in October 2007 and officially launched in 2009. Building Changes, a local nonprofit organization with a long history of working on homelessness issues at local, state, and federal levels, was designated in 2009 as the intermediary to operate the Initiative. The three communities were funded to conduct a three-stage planning process, culminating at the end of 2010 in five -year implementation plans that are currently being put into action.¹

Westat, a national research firm with extensive background in the evaluation of program and system-level interventions for homeless families, has been commissioned to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of both the implementation and outcomes of the Initiative. This first set of coordinated reports documents both the baseline status of the systems for homeless families in each of the counties prior to the Initiative and the implementation of the Initiative in its first two years after the launch (2009–2011). The reports are intended to provide a foundation of understanding of the Initiative and to provide formative feedback to BMGF, Building Changes, and stakeholders in the individual counties.

The eight brief reports, all under the title, *Washington Families Fund Systems Initiative Evaluation 2012 Interim Report*, are available on BuildingChanges.org. They include the following:

Executive Summary

Summary of Key Baseline and Early Implementation Findings

- I. The Role of the Funder
- II. The Role of the Intermediary
- III. The Role of the Evaluation
- IV. The Role of the Counties: Promising Practices
- V. Interagency Collaboration and Data-Driven Decision Making
- VI. Advocacy

This report describes the Initiative's evaluation, conducted by Westat (the authors of this report). The report outlines the evaluation methodology, the progress to date on each component of the evaluation (i.e., systems study, organizational study, family impact study, and cost study), the role the evaluation

¹ Due to changes in the economic climate since the strategy was initially approved in 2007 and the length of time it took for the Initiative to unfold, BMGF has decided to extend the timeframe of the Initiative for an additional three years to allow for economic recovery. The projects now will be implemented over the course of eight, rather than five, years.

has played in the ongoing implementation of the Initiative, study challenges Westat has encountered thus far, and next steps for the evaluation.

Overview of Washington Families Fund Systems Initiative Evaluation

Westat, a national research firm with extensive background in the study of program and system-level interventions, has been commissioned to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of both the implementation and outcomes of the Initiative. The overall purpose of the evaluation, initiated in 2009, is to provide BMGF with a mechanism to learn systematically about the process and outcomes of the Initiative in order to make mid-course corrections where warranted, as well as to contribute to understanding at local, state, and national levels. By design, the evaluation is highly formative, with many opportunities built in for sharing findings and feedback to the Foundation, to Building Changes, and to the individual counties.

Table III-1 displays the research questions that drive the design. The guiding formative questions focus on understanding, on an ongoing basis, how the Initiative as a whole and each of its components is being implemented, the extent to which it appears to be having the desired effects, and the factors affecting both its implementation and ability to have the desired effects. The outcome questions represent a focus on understanding, over time, the extent to which changes occur as a result of the WFF Systems Initiative at the systems level, and in turn, for individual homeless families. The cost question focuses on examining the costs and cost shifts that are associated with moving from services as usual to a change brought about with the WFF Systems Initiative.

Table III-1. Research Questions and Framework

Guiding Formative Questions

- How is the WFF Systems Initiative being implemented?
- What are the factors that are influencing implementation?
- What are the challenges and opportunities?
- Which aspects of the model/strategy need refinement?

Core System Outcome Questions

- How is the WFF Systems Initiative effecting changes in the systems of housing and service delivery for homeless families and the organizations within them?
 - Shifts in ideas, funding, capacity, and power?
 - The nature of and increases in coordination and integration of services?
 - Shifts in the availability, quality, and use of data?
 - Reductions in regulatory barriers?
 - Increases in the availability, nature, and quality of housing, services, and economic opportunities for families?
 - Better matching of services and housing to family needs?
- How and why changes are or are not occurring?

Core Family Outcome Questions

- What effect is the WFF Systems Initiative having on:
 - Rates of family homelessness (both first time and relapses)?
 - Lengths of time families are homeless?
 - Rate of housing stability for families who were formerly homeless and at risk?
 - Self-sufficiency (employment) for families formerly homeless and at risk?
 - Family preservation and reunification?
 - Improvements in the well-being of the adults and children in the family?
- How and why changes are or are not occurring?

Core Cost Outcome Question

- What are the costs and cost shifts at the family level that are associated with moving from services as usual to changes brought about with the WFF Systems Initiative?

To address these questions, the overall design involves a systems study component, an organizational level component, a family level component, and a cost study. Table III-2 outlines the design and sources of data for each of these components, described below.

- A systems study component, consisting of a multiple comparative case study design, is intended to provide an understanding of the implementation of the Initiative and its individual components, and the effects of the pillars, focus areas, and overall Initiative. In-depth case studies of the three WFF demonstration counties are being conducted, involving data collection over the course of the next eight years to track the implementation of the Initiative and the system changes that occur. Finally, in-depth case studies of two contrast counties (i.e., Spokane and Multnomah) also are being conducted and analyzed to determine the extent to which changes in the WFF counties appear to be a result of the Initiative rather than other factors at the state or federal levels;
- An organizational level component involving case studies of the key provider organizations in each of the three Initiative counties is designed to discern the extent to which each organization is affected by the Initiative; the role it plays, if any, in the changes that take place in the broader system; and the factors within the organization that either block or inhibit its ability to change; and
- A family impact component assesses the impact of the system changes on families entering the homeless service system by comparing a baseline/early implementation cohort of families with a cohort of families selected when the Initiative is further underway. Data are being collected through standardized interviews with families over the course of an 18-month period after entering shelter. To control on the extent to which changes in the families' experiences could be due to factors other than Initiative, a comparison group of families from other counties in Washington State is being constructed from state data; and a cost study component is assessing the costs/cost savings and cost shifts related to serving families in a coordinated system in comparison to the status quo.

In each of these components, the evaluation incorporates an approach that has some elements of developmental evaluation, especially in its first two years. A developmental approach to evaluation is highly formative (Patton, 1994), with the evaluators working closely with the program developers and intermediaries and obtaining, analyzing, and reporting data frequently to provide direction. This approach is consistent with the Foundation's learning questions and desire to obtain data that can inform and refine the Initiative strategy.

Table III-2. Study Components

Component	Design	Data
<p>Systems Level Track implementation of Initiative, changes in each system, and aggregate outcomes</p>	<p>Comparative longitudinal case study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three WFF counties • Two contrast counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual site visits • Ongoing • Documents • Web-based provider surveys • Existing data
<p>Organizational Level Examine impact of Initiative on providers in the system</p>	<p>Case studies of one shelter provider and one other provider in each county</p>	<p>Enveloped within systems data</p>
<p>Family Level Assess system’s effects on families and outcome</p>	<p>Longitudinal comparative cohort design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early cohort (2010) of 150 families in each county • Intervention cohort (2013) of 150 families in each county • Constructed comparison groups of families in non-WFF counties (from state data) 	<p>Cohorts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person interviews conducted by Westat (baseline, 4, 12, 18 months) • State data <p>Control group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State data
<p>Cost Component Assess costs of implementing pillars and system</p>	<p>Gross and net costs of selected areas within each pillar</p>	<p>Enveloped with systems, organizational, and family-level data collection</p>

Progress Report on Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting as of February 2012

Systems Level

During the summer of 2009, we conducted week-long site visits to King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. They were the first comprehensive visits to the three counties since the start of the Initiative. The purpose of these visits was to gain information from multiple perspectives on the nature of the homeless service delivery system in each of the counties, information about leadership and collaboration within the systems, the status of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and other data, funding sources and priorities, and the current political and economic context. The

information learned on these site visits, combined with extensive document reviews, provided baseline data on each of the three demonstration counties.

In February 2011, we conducted an additional round of systems-level site visits to the demonstration counties to understand how the Initiative was being developed in each of the counties. During the second round of visits, the evaluation teams met with approximately 20 key informants in each county, including the county leads, city and county officials, housing authorities, advocacy groups, school districts, funders, providers, and consumers. We also conducted interviews with state-level stakeholders from a variety of organizations, such as the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Commerce, the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington State Coalition against Domestic Violence, and the Children's Administration.

In addition to these two official site visits, we have implemented a system of ongoing data collection of systems-level changes through a series of additional visits to the three counties as needed, regular attendance at monthly tri-county calls in which each of the counties provides an update on recent development and discusses issues of common interest, and routine biweekly meetings with BMGF and Building Changes. We have also conducted ongoing reviews of the existing literature on homeless families and key county-level and state-level documents, and information on the "context" of the Initiative, including local, regional, and national events that may have a direct effect on the evaluation.

To strengthen the analytic power of the evaluation to detect system effects of the Initiative, We have selected two contrast counties to include in the systems-level study. The use of contrast communities helps sharpen the "lens" to see if and where change may be taking place in the WFF counties that is due to the WFF Systems Initiative and not to other changes happening in the broader environment. In 2011, we selected Spokane, Washington and Multnomah, Oregon as the two contrast counties, to provide both an in-state and an out-of-state comparison, respectively, to the three demonstration counties. In June 2011, we conducted initial site visits to these counties to collect data on the nature of their homeless service delivery systems, information about leadership and collaboration within the systems, the status of the HMIS and other data, funding sources and priorities, and the current political and economic context. As with the three demonstration counties, the information learned on these site visits is being supplemented with ongoing reviews of relevant documents and information about the political and economic climates in each of the counties. A report providing the contrast county data will be produced later in 2012.

Organization Level

The purpose of the case studies is to gather information from the organizations in the three county systems implementing the Initiative to understand how it is being implemented; the role that the organizations are playing in the Initiative; what if any impact the Initiative is having on the organizations; other changes in the system; and other environmental and contextual factors. The goal was to select two homeless service-providing organizations for each of the demonstration counties, one a provider of shelter and housing services and one a provider of non-housing services.

In 2011, we selected the following six organizations:

King County

- Solid Ground
- King County Housing Authority

Pierce County

- Catholic Community Services
- Tacoma Public Schools

Snohomish County

- YWCA
- Everett Community College

For each of these organizations we conducted organizational case studies that included site visits, document reviews, and interviews with the executive directors and other individuals who oversee the respective organizations, interviews with case managers and front-line staff who implement various programs within the organizations, and focus groups with families who are clients of these organizations.

For each organization we drafted a brief report of findings about the structure of the organization, its knowledge of and involvement in the Initiative, and any preliminary effects of the Initiative on the organization. These reports are provided in Appendices III-A through III-F.

As the evaluation unfolds, semi-annual site visits will inform these case studies and help to highlight organizational changes that have occurred as a result of the Initiative and, in particular, the organization's progress in implementing changes based on the five pillars—coordinated entry, prevention, rapid housing, tailored services, and economic opportunity.

Family Level

The goal of the family impact component of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the system changes on families in the system over time by comparing a baseline/earlier implementation cohort of families with a cohort of families selected when the Initiative is further underway. Each cohort will be composed of 150 families from each county who are requesting emergency shelter. They will be administered in-depth, in-person interviews at baseline (upon entry into shelter), and at 4 months, 12 months, and 18 months following baseline.

We spent much of the first year of the evaluation developing and refining a specific study design for the family impact study. This included developing a sampling strategy in each of the demonstration counties, working with shelter providers to solidify recruitment strategies at each organization, and developing the necessary interview instruments, consent forms, and data collection procedures. We

also hired and trained a field coordinator, a centralized interview scheduler, and group of interviewers to conduct the family level interviews.

Table III-3. Family Recruitment and Status of Baseline Interviews (as of 2/20/2012)

	Total	King	Pierce	Snohomish
Consent to Contacts Received	676	290	169	217
Consented (and eligible)	514	204	126	184
Did not consent (eligibility unknown)	84	46	24	14
Ineligible	78	40	19	19
Eligible Families				
Baseline interviews scheduled	10	-	2	8
Baseline interviews completed	399	156	97	146
Baseline interviews not completed	59	22	19	18
Declined baseline	25	13	5	7
Unreachable before baseline	21	13	3	5
TOTAL	514	204	126	184
Ineligible Families				
Previous shelter	39	15	7	17
Language barrier	28	23	3	2
Did not enter shelter	11	2	9	0
TOTAL	78	40	19	19

Recruitment of families began in November 2010. Table III-3 summarizes the recruitment figures for the family data collection, as of February 20, 2012. Of the 676 consent to contact forms received, 514 families were found to be eligible for the study. Among the reasons that 78 families were not eligible for the study were the following: they came directly from a previous shelter; they never entered shelter (and the consent to contact form was distributed before the intake process began); they entered shelter prior to the start of the recruitment period; or they did not speak either English or Spanish sufficiently to participate in the interviews. We also have received 84 consent to contact forms from families that did not consent to be contacted by Westat staff and did not provide any other information about their eligibility.

At this point, we have completed recruitment in King County, and is nearing completion in Snohomish County. Fifty-nine families in the study have not yet completed their first interview, though some have interviews scheduled. Several families have been difficult to reach for reasons including phone numbers having gone out of service, families having moved out of shelter and thus out of contact with their case managers, and families repeatedly missing scheduled meetings with the interviewer. The Field Coordinator, centralized scheduler, and interviewers are working closely with case managers to track down these difficult-to-reach families.

As shown in Table III-4 and Table III-5, as of February 20, 197 4-month interviews and 37 12-month interviews have been completed. The first 18-month interviews are scheduled to be completed in May 2012.

Table III-4. Status of 4-Month Interviews (as of 2/20/2012)

4 Month Interviews	Total	King	Pierce	Snohomish
Eligible as of 2/20/12				
4-month interviews completed	197	81	40	76
Interviews scheduled	14	7	3	4
Declined 4-month interview	7	5	0	2
Overdue (by more than 30 days)	74	39	16	19
Overdue (by less than 30 days)	48	19	10	19
Due within the next 30 days	39	16	9	14
Not due for at least 1-2 months	25	10	8	7
Not due for at least 2 months	100	21	40	39

Table III-5. Status of 12-Month Interviews (as of 2/20/2012)

	Total	King	Pierce	Snohomish
Eligible as of 2/20/12				
12-month interviews completed	37	15	6	16
Interviews scheduled	9	7	0	2
Declined 12-month interview	1	1	0	0
Overdue (by more than 30 days)	26	12	5	9
Overdue (by less than 30 days)	23	11	4	8
Due within the next 30 days	28	11	8	9
Not due for at least 1-2 months	32	14	8	10
Not due for at least 2 months	337	123	92	122

Another component of the family impact study includes the client-level data maintained by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). These data will be used (1) to supplement the data collected through the in-person interviews to provide a richer understanding of families' experiences accessing housing and services in the system, including information on costs of services received; and (2) to construct a comparison group of families for each of the cohorts discussed above. These groups will be constructed through the use of DSHS and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data from other counties in Washington State that are not part of the WFF Systems Initiative. Propensity score matching, a technique widely used for statistically created matched samples from existing data sets, will be used to construct one or more comparison samples.

We have been working closely with the Research and Data Analysis (RDA) department of DSHS to draft the appropriate release forms for the families in the primary data collection effort, to determine the

available data and timeframes, and to determine the optimal criteria for selecting families from non-Initiative counties.

Cost Study

The goal of the cost component of the evaluation is to identify the costs/costs savings and cost shifts that are associated with moving from services as usual to the new systems in each of the three counties. As with the family study, data for the cost component will be provided by DSHS and will be provided on families in the three demonstration counties as well as on a constructed comparison group of families from non-Initiative counties. We have been working closely with RDA to determine what data are available, when they are available, and the optimal criteria for selecting families from non-Initiative counties. We will initiate the cost study when the baseline cohort of families is complete.

Role of the Evaluation in the Implementation of the Initiative

As one of the key roles of the evaluation is to provide a mechanism for the Foundation, Building Changes, and the individual counties to understand how the Initiative is being implemented and to guide mid-course corrections, we have developed a system of providing frequent feedback on what is being learned through the various data collection methods. For example, following each site visit we develop short summaries of the systems data collection and provide brief snapshots on emerging issues for the counties. We also produce interim modules for each wave of the family data collection so that the county leads can review the data to better understand the composition of the families they are serving and the nature of the problems they face.

There have been some changes made to the way the Initiative is being implemented in each of these counties as a result of this feedback.

Pierce County Initiative Leadership

In 2009, the evaluation team found a lack of leadership with regard to family homelessness in Pierce County. There was a core group of community agencies that did not coordinate in terms of funding or service delivery. In 2009, the Department of Community Services and Department of Human Services worked together to develop the plan for the WFF Systems Initiative, however, allocation of WFF Systems Initiative funds for implementing the Initiative would be administered to the Department of Community Services. Unfortunately, several stakeholders reported that the Department of Community Services was difficult to work with. A few stakeholders believed that the Department often chose favorites when awarding funds, and sometimes even discouraged some agencies from applying for funds. The evaluation team noted these perceptions had an effect on provider buy-in and participation in county-wide initiatives.

The evaluation findings confirmed the experiences and concerns of BMGF and Building Changes and brought the issue to the attention of the County Executive. Since then she has taken an interest in

ensuring the Initiative is thoroughly implemented in Pierce County, and she has directed several organizational changes. First, the Homeless Programs Administrator from the Department of Human Services was appointed the county lead for the Initiative, and he reports directly to the County Executive. Then, in 2010, the County Executive also directed the merger of the Department of Human Services and the Department of Community Services to form the Department of Community Connections. As a result of this merger, the Homeless Programs Administrator became the manager of a new division, Mental Health and Homeless, and continues to lead the Initiative planning efforts. Multiple interviewees during our site visit referenced the change in leadership in the county as having a positive impact. With the Homeless Programs Administrator's guidance, committees and workgroups reported having a better understanding of the overall Initiative and the underlying components necessary for systems change. Interviewees, especially providers, reported that the new leadership fostered collaboration, and that they were informed of development efforts and asked to provide feedback and guidance on a consistent basis.

Improvements to the HMIS

We also regularly participate in the Data Solutions Workgroup, which is a group convened by BMGF, and composed of Building Changes, the county leads, representatives from DSHS, the Department of Commerce, provider organizations, and the HMIS administrators for each county. The goal of the workgroup is to discuss data-related issues, including needs and challenges, and to identify ways to improve data availability, quality, and uses within the Initiative.

Following our baseline site visits in August 2010, Westat provided feedback to the Data Solutions Workgroup on the status of HMIS in each of the counties, including problems with data quality, the number of organizations complying with HMIS federal reporting requirements, and the limited utility of the existing HMIS systems for individual providers to access data on the families they served. This feedback helped to focus attention on the problem and led to increased enforcement of reporting requirements by the Department of Commerce and further development of the HMIS systems for accessing records.

Development of Common Screening and Assessment Tools

At another meeting of the Data Solutions Workgroup, the county leads presented their preliminary plans for a coordinated entry process and the intended role of HMIS in supporting the process. It became apparent, that while each county is developing its own coordinated intake process, there are common data elements that could be captured in the initial and follow-up screening instruments. Given Westat's previous experience in developing such tools and status as a third-party to both Building Changes and the individual counties, it took the lead on creating the instruments. Westat reviewed the screening forms that are currently being used and/or piloted in the respective counties, as well as reviewed required HMIS data elements and other screening instruments to develop draft initial and follow-up screening forms. These drafts were shared in a follow-up meeting the county leads, Building Changes, and BMGF and were subsequently finalized based upon their comments and feedback. These screening tools have since been adapted by each of the three counties to fit their specific needs for coordinated entry.

Supporting DSHS Data Integration Efforts

We have also worked to support the Foundation's involvement in DSHS's efforts to integrate education data and public housing authority data into the DSHS Integrated Client Database. We have participated on calls, reviewed proposals, and outlined the way potential new data might enhance the evaluation.

Challenges of Data Collection

The nature and size of the WFF Systems Initiative, the comprehensiveness of the evaluation, and the multiple levels of data collection and analysis (i.e., system, organizational, and family) have created a number of challenges.

Quantity of Data and Timely Feedback

Because the evaluation is intended to understand both how the Initiative is being implemented and the consequences of systems changes, very large quantities of data are being collected. The data needed to guide a formative evaluation are often not the same data needed to judge short-term and long-term outcomes. We have been challenged with not only collecting the data, but also with organizing it and reporting back to the BMGF and other organizations in a timely fashion. As our internal data computerization, storage, and analysis systems become more established, it becomes more nimble in its ability to feedback key findings. With this initial set of reports as a foundation for the evaluation, We expect to create shorter interim reports and other dissemination vehicles moving forward that can build on this work and provide updates more quickly.

Knowing How to Focus Data Collection

Another challenge we have faced is determining how to focus data collection without knowing exactly where the systems changes will take place. For example, none of the counties currently has a coordinated system for prevention services and none systematically collects data on families who receive prevention assistance or whether that assistance was effective at avoiding homelessness. As a result, it has been challenging to measure, at baseline and in later years, what prevention services are available in each of the counties, what changes are being made, and whether those changes are effective.

Targeting a Diverse Population

Immigrant and non-English speaking populations will likely be underrepresented in the evaluation. Interviews for the family impact study are conducted in both English and Spanish, but there were not sufficient resources to translate the data collection materials into the array of languages that are native to homeless families in the three-county region and to hire interviewers fluent in these languages. In addition, we initially planned on completing a third organizational case study in King County on an organization that served a minority or immigrant population to help address this underrepresentation. Our attempts to secure the commitment with such an organization have been unsuccessful thus far; however, we will continue to pursue this option.

Challenges in the Recruitment of the Baseline Cohort of the Family Impact Study

We have also experienced a number of challenges in implementing the family impact study. Recruitment of the baseline cohort has extended significantly beyond our projected six month period due to unforeseen problems at the provider level, the family level, and the interviewer level.

Although we did extensive preparation with providers prior to launching the family impact study, a number of organizations remained confused about who was eligible for participation in the study and what the procedures were for recruiting them. Some organizations, such as the Salvation Army in Pierce County, had to seek permission from their national headquarters before they could begin to participate. Others who participated in multiple WFF programs (i.e., the WFF supportive housing programs that predate the Systems Initiative), such as Volunteers of America in Snohomish County, were confused about which families should be included in this study. Finally, a number of providers in Pierce County were inconsistent in providing their signed consent to contact forms to Westat so that we could contact families and invite them to participate in the study. Pierce County recruitment consequently lagged behind King and Snohomish Counties until recently. In particular, some provider staff have been reluctant to provide us additional contact information for families in their shelters, even with a signed consent to contact form. We have had several meetings with the directors of the organizations and at times have had to enlist the assistance of the county and the Foundation to review the importance of the study and determine the barriers that block our ability to invite families to participate in the study. These efforts have resulted in a renewed energy in Pierce County for the family recruitment.

Families have proven to be harder than expected to recruit and contact for interviews. Their cell phone numbers are often temporary or run out of minutes. Some leave shelter with no forwarding information. Many families have complicated schedules and some have experienced significant life events (e.g., childbirth, death in the family, etc.) that made it difficult for them to schedule interviews with us during the target recruitment window. Once interviews were scheduled, families frequently cancelled at the last minute or did not show up for the interview; although we planned for these situations, they continued to present scheduling challenges. Once baseline interviews were completed, many families have been harder to track than expected despite an extensive set of tracking strategies. At the end of each interview, we ask for extensive information about alternative ways to contact them through family, friends, and other organizations, but some families at times do not provide reliable or complete answers to these questions. A number of additional strategies were in place to track these more difficult-to-locate families. In addition to trying to connect with families through mailing letters, emailing, contacting them through Facebook, and going to their last known addresses, we are searching a range of databases for any current knowledge of their addresses or other contact information. We have also hired a team of trackers from DSHS that are able to access up-to-date contact information for families who have signed a DSHS Release of Information and are currently receiving DSHS services.

We have also experienced a greater amount of interviewer turnover than expected, especially among interviewers with conflicts of interest (i.e., being hired by DSHS or a shelter provider) that

emerged through the course of the study. We have had to hire and train additional interviewers throughout the recruitment period. Though not an unusual or unforeseen challenge, it continues to be one that requires consistent attention.

Next Steps for the Evaluation

This first set of reports, as noted above, provides a foundation upon which to build for the next six years. A primary purpose of these efforts is to inform the “learning journey” of the Foundation, as well as to measure the outcomes of the efforts. This document has described the variety of ways in which we will continue to learn about the implementation and effects of the Initiative as well as other developments in the contexts (local, state, federal) in which the Initiative unfolds. We plan to feed back this information to the Foundation and other stakeholders in several ways:

- Rapid feedback from annual site visits, generally in the form of bulleted findings, updates, concerns;
- Analytic reports, with one coming this fall contextualizing the findings from this report (and our summer update information) with data from two comparison sites and the broader literature; and
- Modules presenting baseline data on the families from the first cohort throughout 2012, with a more complete report of the findings in the fall for a large convening of stakeholders.

These types of reports and feedback will continue throughout the study, with major integrated reports (with data from all sources) scheduled for the winter of 2013–2014 and the summer of 2016, and a final report in 2018.