



DEFENSE CENTERS  
OF EXCELLENCE

For Psychological Health  
& Traumatic Brain Injury

# **A Culture of Effectiveness: Integrating Program Evaluation and Improvement Activities into Program Practices**

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Carter Frank, M.A., M.S.

Lester Chavez, B.A.

November 17, 2015



# Webinar Details

- This webinar presentation has been pre-recorded
- A live question-and-answer session will be held at the conclusion of the presentation
- Questions may be submitted anonymously at any time via the Question pod
- Audio for this presentation will be provided through Adobe Connect; there is no separate dial-in
- Live closed captioning is available in the Closed Captioning pod through Federal Relay Conference Captioning

# Materials for Download

- Materials from this series and other program evaluation resources are available in the Files pod and at:

[http://www.dcoe.mil/About\\_DCoE/Program\\_Evaluation.aspx](http://www.dcoe.mil/About_DCoE/Program_Evaluation.aspx)

- For information on other DCoE webinar and training series, visit:

[http://www.dcoe.mil/Training/Monthly\\_Webinars.aspx](http://www.dcoe.mil/Training/Monthly_Webinars.aspx)

# Continuing Education Details

- This continuing education activity is provided through collaboration between DCoE and Professional Education Services Group (PESG)
- DCoE's awarding of continuing education (CE) credit is limited in scope to health care providers who actively provide psychological health and traumatic brain injury care to active-duty U.S. service members, reservists, National Guardsmen, military veterans and/or their families
- The authority for training of contractors is at the discretion of the chief contracting official. Currently, only those contractors with scope of work or with commensurate contract language are permitted in this training

# Continuing Education Details (continued)

- If you preregistered for the webinar and want to obtain CE certificates or a certificate of attendance, you must complete the online CE evaluation
- After the webinar, please visit <http://dcoe.cds.pesgce.com> to complete the online CE evaluation and download your CE certificate or certificate of attendance
- The CE evaluation will be open through December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

# Presenter

**Capt. Armen Thoumaian, Ph.D., United States Public Health Service (USPHS)  
Deputy Chief for Program Evaluation and Improvement  
Office of Integrated Services, DCoE**

Capt. Armen Thoumaian is a scientist director in the USPHS with more than 30 years experience in health and mental health program design and evaluation.

In January 2012, Capt. Thoumaian joined the staff at the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) to help design and implement program evaluation and improvement efforts in the Defense Department.

He holds a B.A. in psychology and sociology, an M.A. in general experimental psychology, and a Ph.D. in social welfare and social work, and has completed a National Institute of Mental Health fellowship in Community Mental Health.



USPHS Capt. Armen Thoumaian, Ph.D.

# Presenters

## **Debra Stark, M.B.A.**

### **Research Scientist, Contract Support for DCoE**

Ms. Debra Stark is a survey methodologist with more than 15 years of research experience. Her work includes program evaluation and monitoring, qualitative data analysis and survey instrument design. She has worked on public health services evaluation projects with various federal agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs and TRICARE Management Activity. Ms. Stark holds an M.B.A.



Ms. Debra Stark

## **Carter Frank, M.A., M.S.**

### **Research Scientist, Contract Support for DCoE**

Mr. Carter Frank has over 15 years of experience in program development and management at local, regional and national levels. The breadth of his 33-year career includes 11 years of military service, spans military and civilian environments, clinical and non-clinical mental health operations, training, human resource management, business development and government contracting. Mr. Frank holds a B.S. in mathematical sciences, an M.A. in counseling, and an M.S. in management information systems. He is a licensed clinical professional counselor.



Mr. Carter Frank

# Moderator

## **Lester Chavez, B.A.**

### **Project Management Specialist, Contract Support for DCoE**

Mr. Lester Chavez is an Information Technology Program Management Office professional with over 20 years of demonstrated public and private sector experience in strategic planning, business development, resource management, operations planning and program management, most recently with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Chavez holds a B.A. in business management and marketing.



Mr. Lester Chavez

# Overview and Objectives

This training presentation will provide an overview of the DCoE program evaluation and improvement effort, describe the uses and benefits of program evaluation and also explain DCoE's approach to program evaluation. At the conclusion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Understand why ongoing evaluation should be an integral part of program operations
- Identify important concepts from current program evaluation literature
- Describe important elements of the program evaluation process
- Identify strategies to address challenges involved in designing and executing a standardized protocol
- Obtain resource materials to execute an internal program evaluation process

# Agenda

- Introduction to DCoE Program Evaluation and Improvement (PEI) Effort
- DCoE Approach to Program Evaluation
- Working Toward a Culture of Effectiveness
- Common Challenges
- Conclusion
- References and Resources
- Feedback and Question-and-Answer Session

# **Introduction to DCoE Program Evaluation and Improvement (PEI) Effort**

# DCoE Vision and Mission

**Vision:** To be the leader of profound improvements in psychological health and traumatic brain injury prevention and care

**Mission:** The mission of DCoE is to improve the lives of our nation's service members, veterans and their families by advancing excellence in psychological health and traumatic brain injury prevention and care



*Photo by:* Cpl. Katherine Keleher, USMC, *DVIDS*

# Initiatives Driving DCoE's Program Evaluation Effort

DoD Agency  
Priority Goal  
(FY 2013)

Improve effectiveness of behavioral health programs

Presidential  
Executive  
Order 13625  
(FY 2013)

Review mental health programs to identify key areas that produce the greatest impact on quality and outcomes

NDA  
Sec 739 (FY 2013)  
Sec 728 (FY 2015)

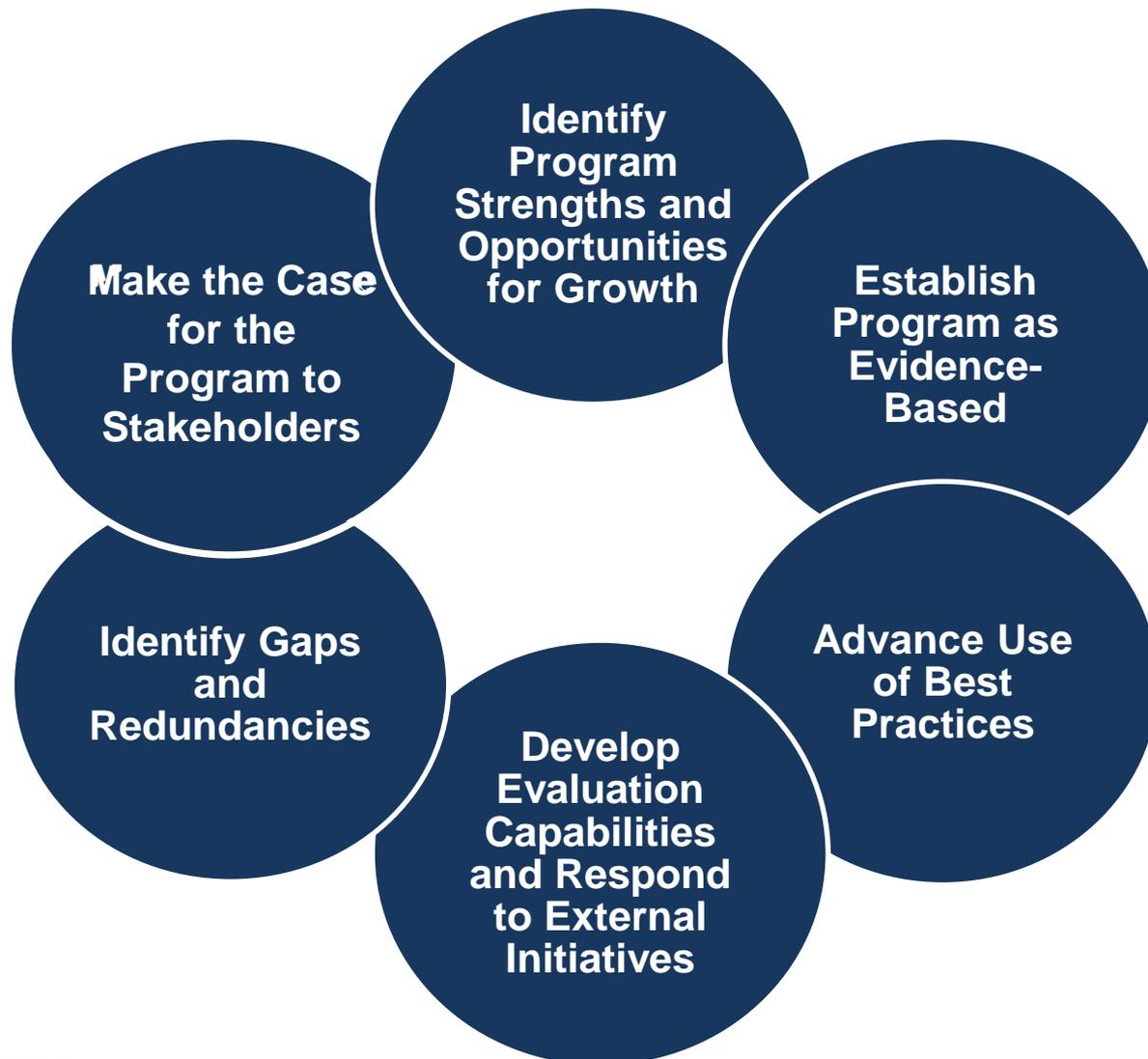
## 739

Eliminate gaps and redundancies of psychological health and traumatic brain injury programs

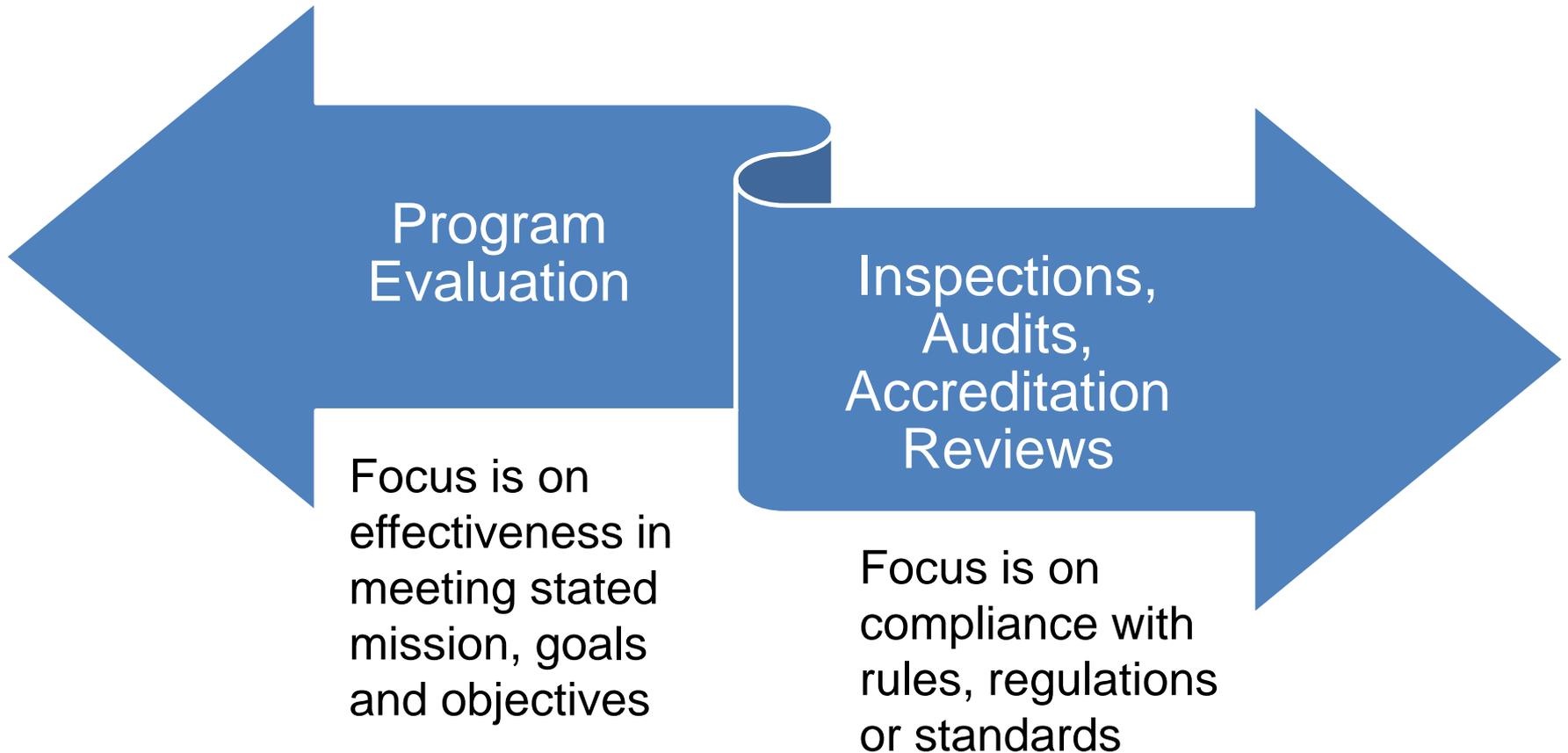
## 728

Conduct evaluations of peer-to-peer, training, suicide prevention, rehabilitation, and related psychological health and traumatic brain injury programs

# Key Benefits of Program Evaluation



# What Program Evaluation Is and Is Not



# Evaluation Tells the Story of Your Program

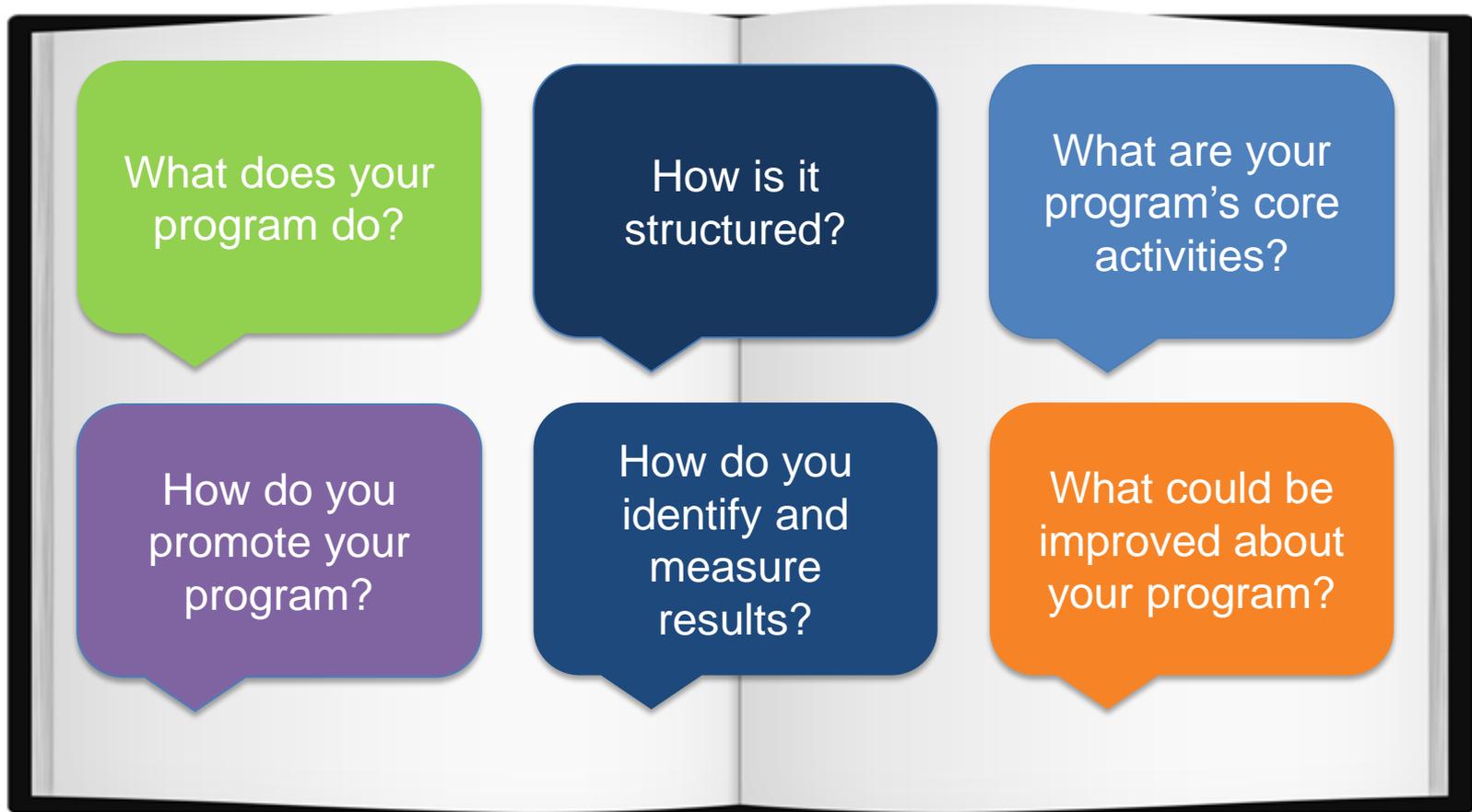


Image courtesy of: <http://www.psdgraphics.com/backgrounds/blank-open-book-template/>

# How DCoE Supports Programs to Enhance Program Evaluation Capabilities

DCoE training, tools and support services:

- Provide guidance to help programs consider program evaluation processes as a series of manageable steps
- Are designed to increase resources and readiness for program evaluation processes
- Can help program personnel select the best-fitting methods to address program evaluation needs
- Support program efforts to make improvements and work toward a culture of effectiveness

# **DCoE Approach to Program Evaluation**

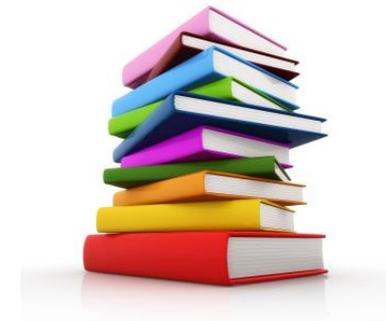
# Evaluation Types

<b>Program Stage</b>  <b>Evaluation Type</b>  <b>Questions Asked</b>	Before Program Begins	Recently-established Program	Established, Mature Program
	To what extent is the need being met? What can be done to address this need?	Is the program operating as planned? How satisfied are participants with program services?	Is the program achieving its objectives? Do outcomes differ among subgroups?

# Evidence Base for Program Evaluation

PEI protocol is based on

- Extensive review of existing methodologies
- Peer-reviewed documentation
- Proven models
- Validated assessment tools



# Five Dimensions of the PEI Framework

**NEED**

The Need dimension focuses on why the program was required and established

**STRUCTURE**

The Structure dimension focuses on how the program is organized

**PROCESS**

The Process dimension focuses on a program's operations, including how a program provides its services to target beneficiaries and adheres to regulations and standards

**OUTCOME**

The Outcome dimension focuses on how well a program meets its goals and objectives as well as changes in participants' knowledge, attitude, behavior, signs, and symptoms, and satisfaction from participants, staff and commanders

**FINANCE**

The Finance dimension focuses on the direct operating costs of the program over time and examines items such as costs associated with each activity documented and cost per beneficiary

# Information Collected Across Five Dimensions of Framework Informs Four Evaluation Areas

NEED

STRUCTURE

PROCESS

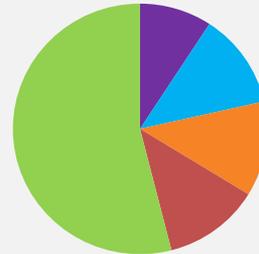
OUTCOME

FINANCE



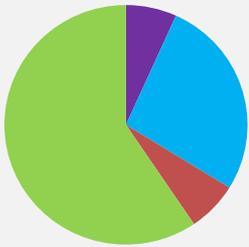
## Fidelity

The extent to which the program was implemented as planned



## Sustainability

Defined in terms of rules, values, adaptation and memory



## Program Characteristics

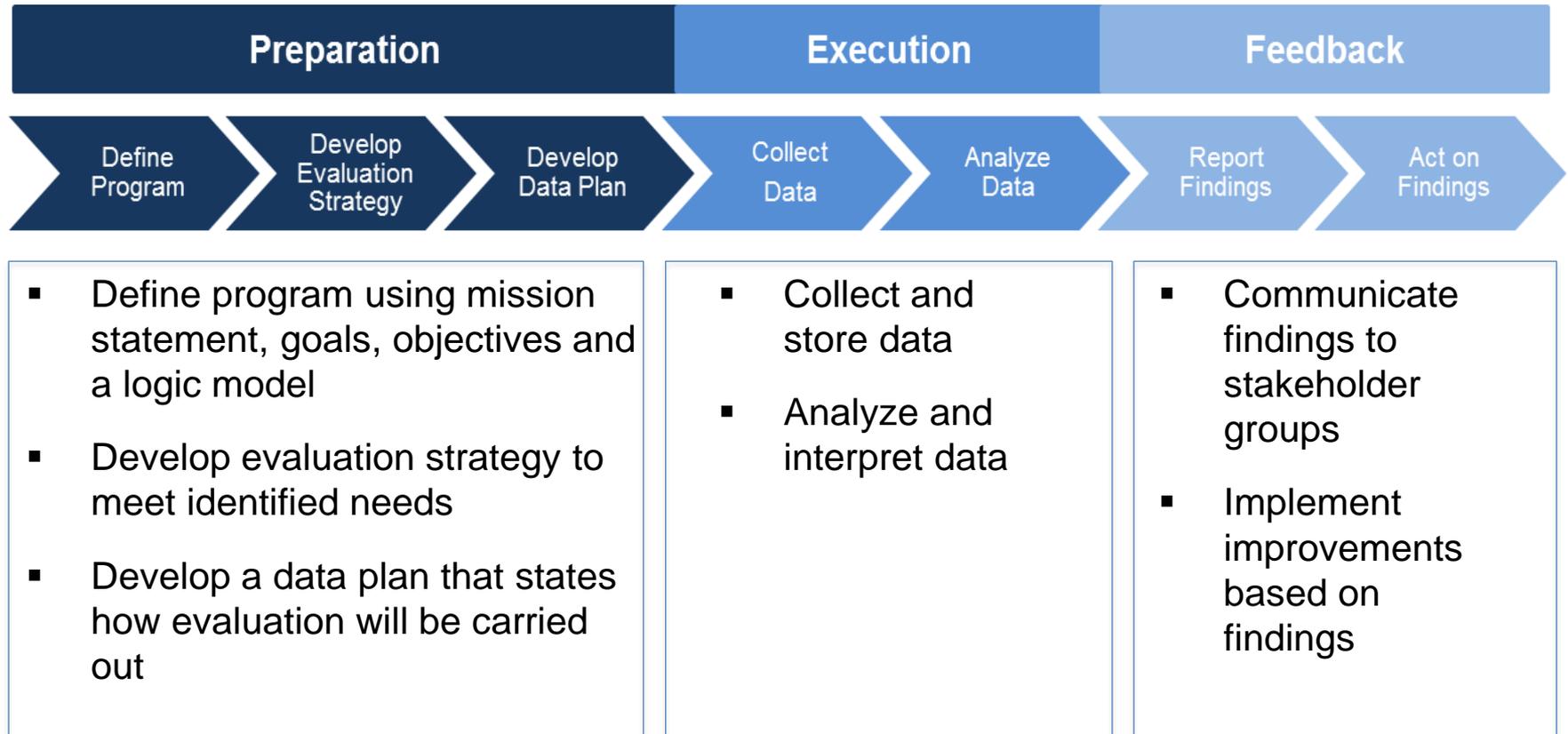
The program's activities and processes



## Changes

Changes in participants, practices and costs

# Blueprint for Program Evaluation



# Working Toward a Culture of Effectiveness



# What is the Culture of Effectiveness?

In a **culture of effectiveness**, programs:

- Apply evidence-based interventions and best practices
- Produce accurate, objective data to drive decision-making and improvements
- Assess performance on an ongoing basis as it relates to mission, goals and objectives
- Track cost factors and develop meaningful outcomes

# Building a Culture of Effectiveness from the Inside Out

Integrating PEI efforts into everyday program operations provide program personnel with more opportunities to:

- Identify training needs
- Assess adherence to best practices
- Make efficient and effective use of staff and resources
- Use feedback for program improvement
- Enhance service quality and effectiveness

# Five Steps Toward a Culture of Effectiveness

- Define and focus program intent
- Develop and refine logic model
- Determine data plan and collection methods
- Derive and administer outcome measures
- Distinguish and document key cost factors

# Step 1: Define and Focus Program Intent

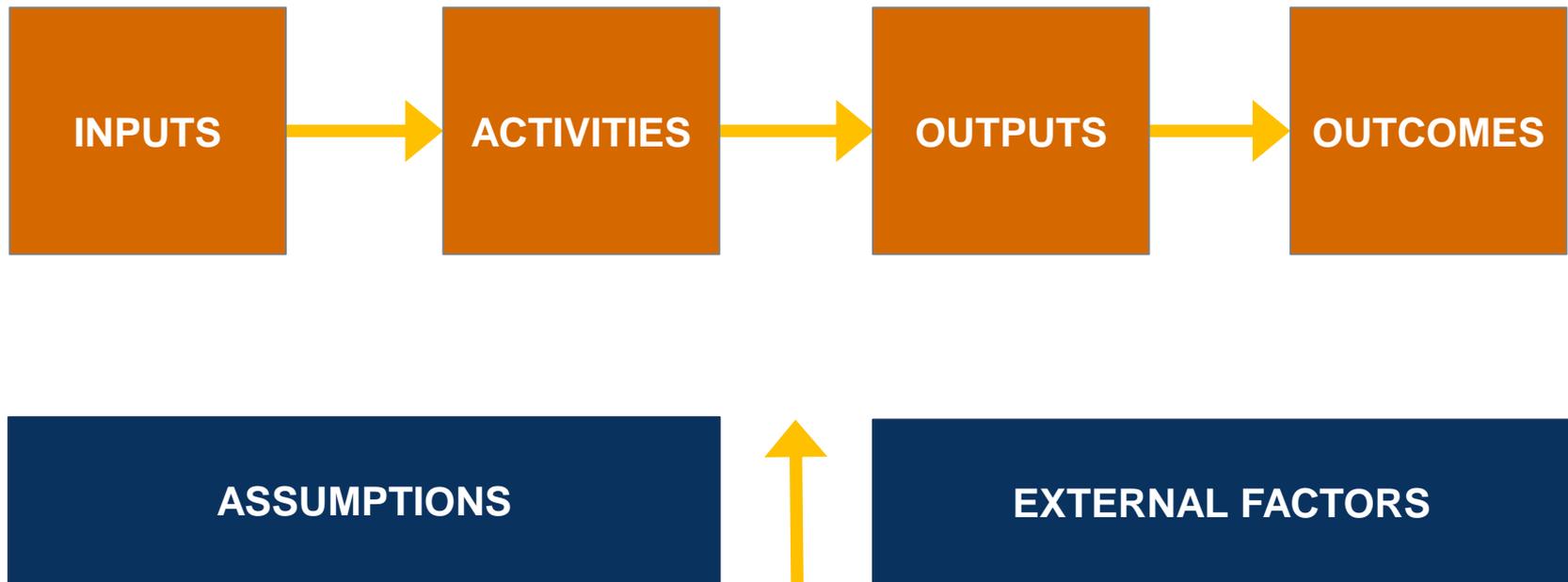
- Program mission and goals
  - Focus on identified needs of target population
  - Are based on actual needs assessment or external mandate
  - Include reassessment strategy to determine changing, evolving or emerging needs
- SMART objectives
  - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound statements establish links to program processes and logic model components

# Step 2: Develop and Refine Logic Model

## Document and translate program processes into logic model components

Program Process	Logic Model Component
Program mandates and governing regulations	Assumptions
Program resources	Inputs
Program services	Activities
Program products and participation	Outputs
Program results	Outcomes
Program support and challenges	External factors

# Core Logic Model Components



# Step 3: Determine Data Plan and Collection Methods

- Data plan components
  - Demographics and utilization/participation rates
  - Participant satisfaction ratings
  - Standardized assessments (pre- and post tests)
  - Costs linked to program processes and activities
- Data collection methods
  - Integrate data-gathering tools and procedures within program processes
  - Share data through strategic alliance with partner agencies and research-based service providers

# Step 4: Derive and Administer Outcome Measures

- Which outcome measures would demonstrate that program activities/services meet identified needs of target population?
- What outcome measures are stakeholders asking for?
- Do existing data support development of relevant outcome measures?
- What subject matter expertise is available to support development of relevant outcome measures?

# Step 5: Distinguish and Document Key Cost Factors

- Cost per beneficiary
- Cost per activity
- Cost effectiveness analysis
- Cost benefit analysis
- Cost to the community

# Program Evaluation Benefits

Results of program evaluation identify:

- Adherence to mission
- Effectiveness of program processes
- Areas for improvement
- Outcomes achieved
- Opportunities for growth

# Common Challenges

# Common Challenges

- What level of effort is required to integrate PEI processes into a program?
- What happens when a program lacks resources and personnel for PEI?
- Will programs be able to implement PEI changes that require resources and personnel?

# What Level of Effort is Required to Integrate PEI Processes into a Program?

- Program evaluation can indeed be time-consuming, and it may be difficult to estimate how much time it will take
- Careful planning and preparation can ensure that all the necessary activities can be integrated into normal program operations
- Program evaluation can be used to increase program efficiency, which may ultimately save time and money

# What Happens When a Program Lacks Resources and Personnel for PEI?

- Staff members may need additional training in how to administer measures, code data or conduct analyses
- Additional resources may be available within a program's broader environment, or by developing relationships with partners
- DCoE provides training and toolkits to assist programs with program evaluation efforts

# Will Programs Be Able to Implement PEI Changes That Require Resources and Personnel?

- Changes to a program will require close collaboration with leadership and funding agencies
- Data obtained through evaluation efforts can help enhance decision-making
- It is also important to consider how staff and participants may respond to those changes
- DCoE provides training on communicating with various stakeholder groups and implementing changes based on PEI activities

# Conclusion

# Key Takeaways

- ★ Program evaluation helps to ensure that military members, their families and veterans receive high-quality services
- ★ A structured approach is important to ensure that results are accurate and objective
- ★ Integrating program evaluation efforts into ongoing program processes plays an important role in supporting a culture of effectiveness



*Photo courtesy: Stewart Leiwakabessy*

# References and Resources

# References

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- W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1998). Evaluation Handbook. <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook> Accessed October 7, 2015.

# Resources

American Evaluation Association: <http://www.eval.org/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Program Performance and Evaluation Office:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/program/>

Congress: National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2013, section 739  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr4310/text>

Congress: National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2015, section 728  
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-112publ239/html/PLAW-112publ239.htm>

DCoE Home Page: <http://www.dcoe.mil/>

DCoE Program Evaluation Trainings and Program Evaluation Guide:  
[http://www.dcoe.mil/About\\_DCoE/Program\\_Evaluation/Resources\\_and\\_Training.aspx](http://www.dcoe.mil/About_DCoE/Program_Evaluation/Resources_and_Training.aspx)

Office of Management and Budget, DoD FY 2013: [http://goals.performance.gov/goal\\_detail/dod/433/print](http://goals.performance.gov/goal_detail/dod/433/print)

W. K. Kellogg Foundation (2006). Logic model development guide. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide>

The White House: Presidential Executive Order No. 13625, 2012  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/08/31/executive-order-improving-access-mental-health-services-veterans-service>

# Feedback and Question-and-Answer Session

# Feedback and Question-and-Answer Session

- We are now open for a live question-and-answer session. Please submit your questions via the Question box located in the center of your screen.
- Your feedback is important!
  - After the Q&A, please follow the displayed link to complete the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) card
  - Or, you may immediately access the ICE card via the Chat box
- Additional questions and comments may be directed to

Capt. Armen Thoumaian

[armen.h.thoumaian.mil@mail.mil](mailto:armen.h.thoumaian.mil@mail.mil)

# Save the Date

The next webinar in the DCoE PEI Webinar Series will be on December 15, 2015 from 1–2 p.m. (ET)

## Understanding Needs Assessments

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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