

Performance Measures Review

Agency: Department of Human Services

Date: August 7, 2002

The mission of the Agency is assisting people to become independent, healthy and safe.

Summary

This represents a major step forward in condensing the vast and complex work of DHS to a few key performance measures that are outcome-oriented. These comments suggest areas needing some clarification so the layperson can easily grasp the story of DHS. This includes 1) listing performance measures in order of goals, 2) listing developmental measures separately on an attached page and 3) making sure the performance measures listed actually measure agency performance.

Comments and recommendations specific to criteria

1. Gauge progress towards goals and pertinent benchmarks

The agency presents approximately 25 performance measures that are well aligned with its goals, mission and numerous high-level outcome measures. The agency references two sets of high-level outcomes: a) 16 Oregon Benchmarks and b) 25 other high-level outcomes. However, it seems that 13 of the 25 high-level outcomes in list “b” are Oregon Benchmarks (A, B, C, F, J, K, L, O, S, U, V, W, and Y). To avoid confusion, the agency is encouraged to consolidate all Oregon Benchmarks into the “a” list and reduce the “b” list correspondingly.

Some of the agency performance measures seem very high-level. While the focus on ultimate results is laudable, these are so high level that they appear to reflect overall societal condition more than agency performance. The comments on the attached Links form provide alternative wording suggestions, designed to stay focused on outcomes but with narrowed scope to reflect agency performance.

2. A few key measures

Again, this set of external measures represents a giant leap forward in condensing everything that DHS does into a few key measures. In that there are measures for all four goals, it appears as if all key areas of agency responsibility are addressed, despite the fact that numerous individual units or program areas may not be represented in detail. This is why these are called “externally reported” measures – they represent the “big picture” for DHS as a whole. This does not diminish the importance the hundreds of additional program measures, which are critical for internal program management and continuous improvement.

The embedded comments in the attached Links form suggest things like disaggregating some measures that are lumped together (such as #12 and #13). There is one workload measure that is inappropriate as a performance measure because it measures demand rather than performance (#18) – the litmus test on this is whether you have a clear notion of whether the target should go up or down. If the answer is unclear, it is generally not a good performance measure. Turn on “track changes” for these and other suggestions.

3. GASB concepts and definitions

All performance measures submitted have an excellent results-orientation – all are outcome measures. However, some may actually be too high-level to measure agency performance. See comments above and in the Links form.

4. Targets

2000 values have been recorded. No new targets for 2003-2005 have been set yet – the agency has until January to finalize targets and adjust them based on funding levels.

5. Accurate and reliable data

Data sources are attached. Reliable data sources have been established and appear legitimate. It appears DHS has worked to remove the duplication of numbers in their data collection methods, which is especially important in understanding what those numbers represent.

In Measurement #1, Percent of TANF cases placed in employment, is it possible that TANF clients could report job placement and end up only working for a month or two and show up a couple of months later in the data by reporting a new job replacement? Would year-end data totals be duplicative?

Other Observations

DHS has devoted extensive time and effort to developing a sound set of performance measures.

DHS – Sub-committee feedback on specific key performance measures and DHS response – 9/30/2002

Measure #	Measure	Sub-committee feedback	DHS response
3	The number of female Oregonians ages 15-17 per 1,000 that are pregnant.	WAY beyond the direct influence of the Department. How about “% of female teens participating in DHS pregnancy prevention programs that become pregnant”.	There are many programs to impact this. This tells the whole story, as opposed to narrowing the measure down. Would be costly and intrusive to track the measure as proposed by the sub-committee.
4	The percentage of pregnancies that were unwanted or were terminated.	This is WAY beyond the direct influence on the Department.	DHS does have impact for all Oregonians. There are many programs in place to impact this measure.
5	The percentage of babies whose mothers began prenatal care within the first 4 months and received at least 80% of the expected number of health department visits.	Narrow down to “eligible” babies?	The intent of this measure is for clients served. Health Services will work on the wording to reflect this.
6	The percentage of child care providers who receive the 7% enhanced DHS rate for meeting certification requirements.	Unclear. What do you mean “enhanced”.	CAF will work on the wording so it is clear about what we are trying to measure.
7	The median number of months from date of latest removal to finalized adoption.	Removal from where?	CAF will specify
11	The percentage of women subjected to physical violence by an intimate partner during the most recent occasion of violence in the past year.	What does this mean	Health Services will work on the wording to simplify.
12	The a) percentage of engaged clients who complete alcohol and other drug use treatment and achieve abstinence, and b) the percentage of 8 th graders at high risk for alcohol and other drug use in the community.	This should be two different performance measures. Define “engaged”	This will be split into two measures: AOD engagement and 8 th grade substance use. Engaged will be defined in the endnotes (those who come into the system)

Measure #	Measure	Sub-committee feedback	DHS response
13	a) adult, b) youth, c) pregnant women tobacco use; and d) the number of cigarette packs sold per capita.	These should be separate measures	This will be separated into two measures: tobacco use (adult, youth, pregnant women populations separated), and cigarette packs sold per capita.
14	The rate of suicides among adolescents per 100,000.	Too high level	There are many programs and activities that support this for the entire population. Leave as is.
15	The percentage of two-year olds who are adequate immunized for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps and rubella based on ALERT registry records.	Move additional detail to endnote.	We will move the additional detail to an endnote.
17	The rate of HIV infection per 1,000 persons.	WAY beyond the Department's influence.	There is significant investment towards this issue for the entire population. Leave as is.
18	a) the proportion of OHP clients who receive health care services annually, and b) the percent of uninsured Oregonians served by safety net clinics.	Neither of these are performance measures. They are workload issues.	We believe these are performance measures. Access to health care is why OHP exists. We will add an endnote as to why we believe these are not workload issues, but are performance measures.
19	Racial and ethnic population data for access to health care, prenatal care, tobacco use, substance abuse, HIV infection, immunization, mental health, intended pregnancy, influenza, suicide and violence.	Needs work. This is just a listing of different rates. Perhaps a measure of parity might be better.	The intent of this measure is not necessarily to reach parity, but to reduce disparities. Difficult to show as an index. We need to make sure it's a true measure of performance.
22	The percentage of individuals with developmental disabilities that live in community settings of five or fewer.	Suggest adding "that are clients of DHS"	The intent of this measure is to limit congregate care. In order to bring the scope down, the phrase "that are clients of DHS" will be added.

Measure #	Measure	Sub-committee feedback	DHS response
23	The percentage of Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities who are living outside institutions.	Seems too high level	It is DHS' responsibility to provide alternatives for appropriate settings in the least restrictive fashion for all Oregonians. Leave as is.
24	The percentage of seniors and people with disabilities with an employment goal who are employed.	Should be narrowed to DHS clients	The intent of this measure is to measure seniors and people with disabilities who are employed (for those that desire this outcome). Leave as is.
26	The number of Oregonians receiving food stamp assistance compared to the number living in poverty.	Rewrite.	This measure is a ratio, not a percentage. CAF will re-write.