

# Sustainability Plan

Ohio's Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG)

**MAHONING COUNTY**

Ohio's Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) and administered by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS).

## Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG): Sustainability Module

### Introduction

“The key element of sustainability is providing continued benefits, regardless of particular activities delivered or the format in which they are delivered.” –Mancini & Marek (2002)

There are four clarifying questions that need to be answered in order for sustainability planning to move forward:

1. *What* are you trying to sustain? (or, *What* needs to be sustained?)
2. **Public Value:** What *evidence* do you have that what you are doing is *worth sustaining*? (or, Why does this initiative *deserve* to be sustained?)
3. **Authorizing Environment:** What *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* need to be in place to achieve sustainability?
4. **Operational Capacity:** What *capacity* is necessary to sustain this effort and *where* will that capacity come from?

### A. Building the Sustainability Team

Before these questions can be answered, it is essential that you *identify the key players*. It is very important to consider your authorizing environment (Moore, 1995).

Who are the individuals in your coalition or community that need to be involved in conversations about sustainability? Please do not list your entire coalition roster. Be purposeful and intentional about the individuals who need to be at the table to discuss sustainability. This group must be big enough to be inclusive but small enough to move forward quickly. Please also consider individuals from outside your coalition that could play a role in sustaining the work of the SPF in your community.

Our coalition has engaged a team consisting of the following to make timely, informed decisions regarding the SPF SIG initiative. Additionally, we have sought input from students to ensure cultural competency.

- Coalition Members: D. Wentz, M. Fortner, [REDACTED] (IHE), [REDACTED] (IHE), [REDACTED] (IHE), [REDACTED] (IHE student)
- Coalition CoChairs: R. Edwards, [REDACTED] (IHE)
- Director: Angela McClellan
- ADAS Board: B. Heidinger
- Board: D. Stewart (treasurer), additional members (TBD)

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**B. Sustainability Question #1: What are you *trying to sustain*? (or, What *needs to be sustained*?)**

Weiss, Coffman, Bohan-Baker (2002) identified four categories related to “initiative sustainability.” These categories are very broad and are very applicable to SPF initiatives. These categories may be helpful for your team as you plan for sustainability. If your team has already clearly articulated what you are trying to sustain, you may want to categorize your objectives. Please feel free to create your own category if you need to.

*Please remember that you do NOT need a sustainability objective/goal for each category. We are providing these categories as conversation catalysts, not as requirements.*

1. *Organizations and/or Projects*: securing additional funding for projects begun or supported under the initiative
2. *Ideas*: maintaining the initiative’s core principals, values, beliefs, and commitment
3. *Relationships*: maintaining connections among people and institutions
4. *Outcomes*: maintaining initiative results

Please choose the question that most appropriately applies to your project: What are you *trying to sustain*? (or, What *needs to be sustained*?) Please state your sustainability objectives/goals as bullet-point statements. Each objective/goal must be specific, measurable, and observable.

We are working to maintain current relationships and build new relationships to sustain the SPF SIG project with the intended outcome of continued low incidence of NMUPD of stimulants by 18 – 25 year olds attending the IHE.

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**C. Sustainability Question #2: Public Value - What *evidence* do you have that what you are doing is *worth sustaining*? (or, Why does this initiative *deserve* to be sustained?)**

We discussed the idea of *public value* (Moore, 1995). It may be helpful to frame this conversation among your planning team as such. For example, it may be useful to have your planning team respond to these questions (You do not need to write responses to these questions, these are just provided as conversation catalysts.):

- How is this SPF initiative positively impacting the community?
- What results from this SPF initiative are valued by the community?
- What results from this SPF initiative are valued by the leadership team?

Once you have answered these questions, please respond to the overarching question (whichever form is most applicable to your situation): What evidence do you have that what you are doing is worth sustaining? (or, Why does this initiative deserve to be sustained?)

The IHE values the project because it supports the positive message of non-use of prescription stimulants. The project's positive norming message, while not yet proven, believes maintaining low incidence of NMUPD of stimulants by IHE students is a worthwhile objective. The leadership team values the relationship with the IHE and the ability to impact a large number of students through that relationship.

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**D. Sustainability Question #3: Authorizing Environment - What *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* need to be in place to achieve sustainability?**

We discussed the idea of *authorizing environment* (Moore, 1995). It is important to determine who holds the ability to make key decisions regarding the sustainability of the project.

What *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* need to be in place to achieve sustainability of your SPF initiative? It may be helpful to frame your answer to this question using the following sub-questions:

- What current *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* support your SPF initiative?
- Of these structures, which could be strengthened to ensure sustainability of your SPF initiative?
- What structures are blocking or obstructing your SPF initiative?
- Which structures are still needed to ensure sustaining your SPF initiative?

The IHE has current institutional supports and structures in place that allow us to begin implementation. To strengthen sustainability, policies should be put in place at the IHE to specifically address prescription drug misuse, including NMUPD of stimulants.

There are currently no identifiable structures curtailing our efforts regarding the SPF SIG initiative. Campus-wide policies could ensure sustaining the SPF SIG initiative, particularly if any of the IHE's current SPF SIG project leadership were no longer involved with the project.

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**E. Sustainability Question #4: Operational Capacity - What *capacity* is necessary to sustain this effort and *where* will that capacity come from?**

We discussed the idea of *operational capacity*. In order for your sustainability goals/objectives to become reality, your SPF initiative must have the *capacity* necessary to achieve those outcomes. Capacity is defined in many ways, including (but not limited to): securing diverse resources and acquiring the appropriate expertise. Basically, the purpose of this question is to determine the resources (e.g., time, personnel, funding, etc.) needed to achieve each sustainability goal/objective.

What operational capacity is necessary to achieve sustainability and where will the capacity come from to sustain your SPF initiative? It may be helpful to frame your answer to this question using the following sub-questions:

- What *internal* operational capacity has your coalition built through the SPF SIG process? How will this increased internal capacity contribute to the sustainability of your coalition's SPF efforts?
- What operational capacity has your coalition built through *networks* (i.e., partnerships, collaborations, etc.) during the SPF SIG process? How will these networks contribute to the sustainability of your coalition's SPF efforts?
- What current resources are necessary to sustain your SPF initiative?
- Of these resources, which is insufficient or vulnerable?
- What current skills and expertise does your initiative rely on to sustain your initiative's positive outcomes?
- Of these skills and expertise, which could be strengthened to ensure sustained positive outcomes?
- Which skills and expertise are still needed to sustain positive outcomes?

The coalition has built an internal operational capacity throughout its history, including volunteers dedicated to supplying prevention messages. This internal capacity will allow the SPF SIG project to be sustained on the IHE campus. Operational capacity has been built through increased relationships with the IHE during the SPF SIG process. These networks will be vital for sustainability of the coalition's SPF SIG efforts. The IHE staff leading the SPF SIG project on campus is a major resource for the coalition.

The current resources necessary to sustain the SPF SIG initiative, will include: time, personnel, and funding. All of these resources are vulnerable to funding loss. The coalition plans to sustain funding for this initiative through local grants and sponsorships as well as contributions from the IHE. The initiative relies on both coalition prevention expertise and IHE expertise in graphic design, printing, and student outreach. These skills and expertise are sufficient to ensure sustained positive outcomes. There are no additional identified skills or expertise at this time that are needed to sustain the project.

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**F. Strengths/Challenges**

In any projects, there are strengths and challenges. The purpose of the following questions is to help you identify ways you can capitalize on your strengths and prepare for probable or potential obstacles.

1. In what ways do you believe your SPF initiative is positioned to achieve sustainability?

2. What are the probable or potential obstacles to sustainability?

We believe our SPF initiative is positioned to achieve sustainability because it is a positive norming message, it is simple to deliver and simple to understand, and it is complementary to other mass-media messages that stress responsible use and disposal of prescription medications. Additionally, the IHE’s support of the SPF initiative positions it to achieve sustainability on campus.

The challenge of funding the initiative will always be a reality. However, the coalition, in cooperation with the IHE, plans to look to local foundation and sponsorship by businesses to sustain the initiative.

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