

Use Data to Inform and Reflect

Better use of data can help agencies, advocates, and others gain valuable insights about users. Without requiring significant investment in additional resources, collected data can help discern patterns and increase understanding about how users actually experience programs.

Analyzing data can help to identify gaps, patterns, and inconsistencies with user experience. Data analysis can inform approaches to address problems, measure success, and establish metrics for continuous improvement.

OBTAIN BASELINE DATA

Is there a set of data already identified about how the program is serving users? If not, can you collect current data in order to set a baseline for comparison?

Understanding and identifying the baseline data for how users interact with public benefits programs is important; it can help evaluate the efficacy of technology over time. A baseline assessment enables programs to measure any improvements that result from introduction of new technology. It does not need to be complicated or resource-intensive, so long as it allows for a before-and-after comparison. For example, measuring the percent of missed appointments before and after implementing text appointment reminders can give an indication of whether reminders make a difference.

ASSESS USER EXPERIENCE AFTER INTRODUCING NEW SOLUTIONS

What mechanisms are available to measure performance?

Analyze the feedback you are getting and issues users are having by looking at different communication channels, including chat and website analytics, email feedback, and call center activity. See how users are talking about their experiences through social media analysis. Talk to users directly by setting up focus groups or observing them as they use the system. Use customer satisfaction surveys to get direct feedback from users. And take advantage of solution analytics to start looking at usage patterns over time.

COLLECT DATA AFTER THE SOLUTION HAS BEEN DEPLOYED

What data can you collect about the program? About the use of the solution, itself?

Identify the target to measure – i.e., the number of users and the demographics of who fills out an application or receives an eligibility determination. Ensure that data is collected about demographics, eligibility determinations, renewals, terminations, cancellations and the like.

Data to track might include:

- Number of distinct daily active users
- Frequency of solution use
- Number of times users have logged in
- Length of user sessions (session time)
- Frequency that users click on internal or external resources or referral links within the solution
 - Options chosen the most/least when features/functionality include options (such as nutrition education lessons or recipe lists)
 - Messages users respond to the most/least when the solution sends users messages (such as text messaging services, or push notifications in

mobile apps)

- Number of downloads (if a mobile app)
- Number of uninstalls (if a mobile app)
- Last activity user performed (and when) before uninstalling (if a mobile app)

COMPARE AND ANALYZE DATA

How does the data collected after the solution has been introduced compare to baseline data?

Use baseline data to establish goals for improvements in the user experience. Observe and compare differences between new data and baseline data. Identify gaps or patterns in the data. Consider both policy and technology reasons that might explain the gaps or patterns. Discuss and implement changes that can help address the gaps or patterns.

CONTINUOUSLY EVALUATE METRICS

Is there a commitment to measuring performance to ensure continuous improvement over time?

Use data analysis to make improvements to the solution over time. Anticipate different points in time to collect and evaluate data and make time to reflect on the findings and adapt or change to address issues identified from the data.