

MetroWest Evaluators Institute (MWEI) – UPDATED 1/2015	
Project History & Context	The leadership of MetroWest Health Foundation in Framingham, Massachusetts wanted to help its grantees develop meaningful, rigorous measures of success. One of the recommendations for consideration from the Board of Directors was to develop a program for more in-depth training rather than the existing strategy of offering one-day workshops. The MWEI was designed to inform participants about evaluation planning, data collection, and analysis, and to provide participants with opportunities to immediately apply their skills to programming challenges encountered in their organizations.
Duration	< 6 Months
Participants & Selection Process	The Metrowest Foundation identified two cohorts of existing grantees that met certain criteria: 1) health services providers in the region; 2) a minimum number of staff, stable leadership; and 3) commitment of at least one senior manager to attend training. Five of nine invited organizations signed on for training for the first Institute and four organizations signed on for MWEI 2013. Foundation staff participated in all sessions as trainees.
Project Design	<p>Core program (25 hours total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation design and evaluative thinking training (four 5-hour training sessions over a 4-month period, readings and homework) • Reporting and sharing (final session to present evaluation designs with colleagues & community stakeholders) • Coaching, consultation, and support via phone for each organization as they developed their designs • Completion of an organizational evaluative thinking assessment • Completion of one required evaluation design per team. <p>No required implementation of evaluation design One hour of follow-up evaluation coaching after Institute completion.</p>
Alumni Study Group	Not established
Funder	MetroWest Foundation, a regional foundation, www.mwhealth.org
Costs	\$60,000 for all direct costs. Administrative support and space provided by funder.
Key Capacity Building Components	Basic Evaluation Training, Advanced Evaluation Training, Applied Learning: Evaluation Design or Implementation, Technical Assistance and Coaching, Networking
Evaluation Consultants	For MW2011 each session was led by Anita Baker, Evaluator , with an evaluation team including Victoria Dougherty, Tony Hall, and Jodi Paroff . Evaluation Services, www.evaluationservices.co MW2013 was conducted by Anita Baker and Jodi Paroff.
Prior Experience with Evaluative Thinking	Individual exposure to evaluation varied. Some participants had prior knowledge of some training concepts, especially logic models, surveys and interviews.

Key Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of the training, all participants demonstrated understanding of and ability to conduct key evaluation-related skills. • Participants successfully developed evaluation designs which conformed to standard professional evaluation practice (see final reports for details about projects). • As of winter 2012 (6 weeks post-training) all but one MWEI 2011 participant indicated their evaluation designs were being implemented. • By mid-February 2014, two teams from MWEI 2013 had initiated their evaluation work and were actively collecting data, a third team had not yet initiated their design but planned to do so during the first quarter of 2014. One team had not yet planned when to initiate their design. • Evaluative thinking was enhanced. All participating organizations indicated that the training helped them use evaluative thinking skills in multiple aspects of their work.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without a required evaluation project implementation, participants had to learn how to plan for and conduct evaluation data analyses using only training examples. • Due to the condensed, four-session format there were limited opportunities to help those who were ill or had to miss a session, master the content and skills. • Some participants found it challenging to stay focused on their assignments and projects while also managing other organizational demands.
Evaluation Products	<p>Read METROWEST EVALUATION INSTITUTE FINAL REPORT</p> <p>Read METROWEST EVALUATION INSTITUTE FINAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</p> <p>Read METROWEST EVALUATION INSTITUTE 2013 FINAL REPORT</p>
Related Resources	<p>See METROWEST EVALUATION INSTITUTE 2013 PRESENTATION SLIDES</p> <p>Read PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION ESSENTIALS: A GUIDE FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR PARTNERS.</p> <p>See BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY: A Powerpoint Presentation to be used in conjunction with our guide.</p> <p>Read INTEGRATING EVALUATIVE CAPACITY INTO ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICE.</p>