Establishing A Research-Practice Partnership To Improve Early Care and Education Supports Within Quality Start Los Angeles

Example Rapid Feedback Memo Structure

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Preface

Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA) is a county-level quality rating and improvement system that supports center-based and family child care providers serving children from birth to age five. RAND partnered with QSLA as part of a developmental evaluation focused on three QSLA components—program coaching, assessment technical assistance, and quality tier rating perceptions. In this report, researchers describe the partnership and lessons learned, with the hope that information included here can help inform future research partnerships, specifically those that include early childhood education system leaders, such as local and state policymakers, and early learning providers. More information about QSLA is available at www.qualitystartla.org.

Appendix

We developed a series of seven rapid feedback memos (RFMs) to provide emerging findings to QSLA stakeholders. Each RFM had the same basic structure even though the content changed from one memo to the next. This appendix provides the RFM structure used throughout the QSLA developmental evaluation.

At the beginning of the memo, we provided the research questions specifically addressed in the memo, along with a broad overview of the data and research methods used to address the questions. Then we divided the memo into specific topics (e.g., coaching dosage or early learning provider perceptions of coaching) and provided key findings from the data analyses. Additionally, within each topic, we provided a set of sensemaking questions that we developed using the analysis of data and a review of our research findings. For example, we asked why a finding may be emerging in the administrative data but not in focus groups or how QSLA stakeholders could use the information to inform decisionmaking.

The memos were used for QSLA internal discussions and to guide the sensemaking meeting discussions. The sensemaking questions provided in the memo were intended to spark conversations among QSLA stakeholders within and across organizations.

QSLA Developmental Evaluation
Rapid Feedback Memo: [Overarching Topic]

Month Year
Submitted by the RAND Corporation

Topic and Research Questions

This memo provides data and findings focused on **Overarching Topic**. We address five research questions in this memo:

1) Question 1 written out
2) Question 2 written out
3) Question 3 written out
4) Question 4 written out
5) Question 5 written out

Data Overview and Analytic Methods

Findings in this memo come from three data sources—administrative data, focus groups, and interviews. Detailed information on data collection and analysis strategies is presented in Appendix A.

Administrative data—[briefly state sources, sample sizes, date ranges, and other relevant context] In the body of the memo, we present key findings from the administrative data analysis. The complete set of results can be found in Tables BX-BX of Appendix B.

Focus groups and interviews—[briefly state sources, sample sizes, date ranges, and other relevant context]

Topic 1

- [Provide first key finding. Reference figure or table, as appropriate. Use bolded text to highlight key point.]
  - [Include subbullets to convey additional key details or context. Reference Appendix B tables for additional details not provided in main text.]

<INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE>

- Second key finding
- Third key finding
- Fourth key finding

<INSERT OTHER FIGURES OR TABLES AS APPROPRIATE TO HELP VISUALLY DISPLAY FINDINGS>

Making Sense of Topic 1

- [Provide a list of 3–5 sensemaking questions for consideration based on findings presented above and to elicit thoughts on implications for recommendations and next steps. For example, "What might cause the Program Coaching dosage difference between FCCs and centers?" or "What recommendations, if any, do you have for refinements to the QSLA model based on these results?"]
- Question 2
- Question 3
- Question 4

Topic 2

Subtopic 1

- [Briefly state key finding; for findings based on qualitative data, quotes can be embedded as shown here.]
  - Additional information, such as subgroup analysis.
  - Additional information.
- Key finding statement
  - Additional information.
- Key finding statement
- Key finding statement

"[Insert relevant quote from interview or focus group here.]"
– Early learning provider

Subtopic 2

- Key finding statement
- Key finding statement
- Key finding statement

<INSERT TABLE OR FIGURE AS APPROPRIATE>

Making Sense of Topic 2
• Question 1 • Question 2 • Question 3

Topics 3 and On

- Follow framework above for each topic.

Making Sense of Topic 3
• Question 1 • Question 2 • Question 3

Appendix A: Data and Analytic Methods

Data Source 1 (e.g., Administrative Data, Focus Groups)

[Provide additional details here not provided in main memo text, such as more detail on sample sizes by subgroups, how variables are operationalized, definitions of terms that might not be known by audience, any data quality issues, and other details relevant to understanding and interpreting the data results. Describe how data were analyzed, such as use of statistical tests for administrative data or thematic coding for qualitative data.]

Data Source 2

Data Source 3

Appendix B: Data Results Tables

[In this Appendix, provide complete results from the quantitative data analysis reported in the main memo text.]

- Table B1. Title

- Table B2. Title
- Table B3. Title

Table B1. Title

SOURCE:

NOTE: