

Evaluation and your Annual BFHI Action Plan

Audit is designed to answer the question: does this service reach a pre-defined standard? It measures against a standard such as the BFHI standard (criteria for assessment).

It is used to inform delivery of best care, check progress, take remedial action, and update plans. Audit may be part of on-going monitoring. An audit can provide a baseline showing the need for a project and be repeated to show an outcome measure useful as a part of the Action Plan evaluation. Auditing practice by counting numbers is normal routine work and not enough on its own as an annual Action Plan.



Monitoring is the ongoing, regular collection and analysis of agreed sets of data, and then the process of analysing what that data means. It can be a stand-alone activity or one part of an evaluation or audit.

Evaluation is designed to answer the questions: does this project, practice, or action function the way it was intended? Should it continue? Does it need to change? In short – what is its value?

It is an assessment, reflection and understanding of the efficiency of the process, usefulness, acceptability, impact, and sustainability of the project, or lack of these. An evaluation can look at both the process of how the project is working and the outcomes of the project. Outcomes may be clinical, behavioural or attitudinal, or relate to changed structures and processes. Evaluation provides broad learning applicable to other projects and provides accountability to the stakeholders. When the evaluation is planned in the development stage of the Action Plan it helps to clarify what the Action is about and facilitates putting simple evaluation indicators into every day routine.



Remember the difference when developing and evaluating your Action Plans.

Further reading: Department of Health and Ageing 2012, Evaluation Toolkit for Breastfeeding Programs and Projects, Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra.
<http://health.gov.au/breastfeeding> Note this publication refers to larger evaluations than are done for BFHI Action Plans, though the basic principles are the same.

BFHI in Ireland Action Plan Report form can be downloaded from

<http://www.babyfriendly.ie/resources.htm>

Indicators: The clearer the Action Plan objectives, the easier it will be to identify indicators of achievement. Your indicator should always relate directly to your stated objective, e.g. if your objective is to increase the proportion of babies for whom the duration of skin to skin contact is at least 60 minutes, then your Action Plan needs to have a means of collecting this data.

Data sources (examples)

Service documents, records, audit results, data recorded as routine part of clinical care, (e.g. start and finish times of skin to skin contact), observations (e.g. counting the number of women waiting to be seen in OPD, looking at posters displayed).

Survey of service users/stakeholders

Interviews/focus groups with key staff/stakeholders

Target population and stakeholders: may include pregnant women, new mothers, families, maternity staff, other staff, managers, wider public, Action Plan team etc

Examples of evaluation questions (questions to use will depend on your plan's aims, objectives, tasks and targets)

Was this project, practice, or action carried out with the intended population and the stated objectives and tasks? (If no, state what was different from the Plan)

Were the targets stated in the Action Plan met? (How do you know this?)

Were the Outcomes Sought achieved? (How was this achievement determined?)

Was this project, practice, or action acceptable to the stakeholders? (How do you know?)

Were there any barriers in relation to equitable care: (providing care that does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and socio-economic status; were there some mothers/infants who could not access the services?)

Were there any safety issues or adverse experiences reported?

Was there a specific survey, questionnaire, audit or other data collected for this Action plan? (If yes, describe)

What contributed to the Action Plan being able to carry out its tasks and achieve its targets?

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Management priority | <input type="checkbox"/> | Adequate resources | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Effective project leader | <input type="checkbox"/> | Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dedicated project time | <input type="checkbox"/> | Consultation with stakeholders | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Active project group | <input type="checkbox"/> | In-house expertise | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Training/skills provided | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What factors hindered the Action Plan being able to carry out its tasks and achieve its targets?

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Low management priority | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inadequate resources | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ineffective project leader | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor communication | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No dedicated project time | <input type="checkbox"/> | Limited consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inactive project group | <input type="checkbox"/> | Insufficient expertise | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of training/skills available | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Where there difficulties encountered and how were they overcome?

Was this action an effective and appropriate use of resources?

Staff time Financial Other

Did this action improve care for infants and their mothers? (How?)

Did this action improve links with other services and programmes?

What was learnt about action planning from this action (useful or to avoid – in further Action Planning)?

Will this Action (the new practice) continue in the same form or will there be modification or will it cease?

Was the process, outcomes and evaluation of this Action Plan shared with:

- Presentation to hospital committee, Report to hospital managers
- Presentation at event outside hospital (conference, publication)
- BFHI Link newsletter
- Media release
- Other