

## Area 3: Training, Supervision, and Career Development

*Since many home visiting personnel enter their roles with limited background and previous experience in child development, training (both pre- and in-service) and supervision are critical to imparting a core set of knowledge and skills and ensuring mechanisms for ongoing support. Career development opportunities are also essential for providing incentives for home visiting personnel to remain in their roles and for developing a strong workforce. The following questions provide an opportunity for you to reflect on the accessibility and relevance of existing training and supervision for home visitors and supervisors in your program, along with career advancement opportunities.*

### **Goals:**

1. Home visitors have adequate opportunities prior to entry to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support families.
2. Home visitors have adequate opportunities while in their roles to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support families and grow their careers.
3. Supervisors have adequate opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support home visitors and families, and grow their careers.



**Goal 1: Home visitors have adequate opportunities prior to entry to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support families.**

### **Measure 1: Pre-service training<sup>5</sup> is widely available and accessible.**

- Are pre-service training opportunities available and accessible to incoming home visitors?
  - Are training opportunities offered free of charge? If not, are scholarships available?
  - Are training opportunities held in locations and at times that make it easy for prospective home visitors to access them?
  - If transportation and accommodation are barriers for prospective home visitors in attending trainings, are there stipends available to cover such costs?
- Do prospective home visitors with limited formal qualifications have opportunities to enter pre-service training?
  - If they do not meet job requirements, can prospective home visitors with limited formal qualifications become eligible for pre-service training after gaining relevant work or volunteer experience or attending introductory training sessions?
- Do home visitors receive compensation to participate in training in the home visiting model if it occurs after hiring?

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<sup>5</sup> We are using the term pre-service training to refer to initial preparation programs at college and universities, those available through private providers, and training offered by a home visiting program prior to an individual's entry into a role.

**Measure 2: Pre-service training adequately focuses on the knowledge and skills most relevant for the day to day roles of home visitors, utilizing adult learning principles to maximize transfer of skills and knowledge.**

- Do pre-service training opportunities cover knowledge and skills most relevant to the day to day roles of home visitors?<sup>6</sup>
- Are pre-service training opportunities aligned with competencies for the home visitor role?
- Are pre-service training opportunities tailored to the learning level of home visitors?
- Do pre-service training opportunities incorporate opportunities for home visitors to apply skills learned (e.g., role play, mock home visits)?
  - Do prospective home visitors have opportunities to shadow those currently in the role during pre-service training?
- Are pre-service offerings regularly updated based on the needs and challenges of home visitors?
  - Do home visitors have opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences in pre-service training once they have assumed their roles?
- Is there a process in place to certify pre-service training which meets relevant criteria?



**Goal 2: Home visitors have adequate opportunities while in their roles to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support families and grow their careers.**

**Measure 1: In-service training is widely available and accessible, and adequately focuses on the knowledge and skills most relevant for the day to day roles of home visitors.**

- Are in-service training opportunities available and accessible to all home visitors? (e.g. offered on a regular basis, at a low cost or free of charge, held in easily accessible locations or offered virtually, etc.)
  - If transportation is a barrier for home visitors in attending trainings, are there stipends available to cover such costs?
  - If training is mostly online, are there opportunities for in-person interactions and support?
  - Are home visitors able to leave work to participate in these opportunities? Do they receive paid time off to participate?
- Are in-service training opportunities responsive to and reflective of the roles and responsibilities of home visitors?<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Depending on the content of the program, key topics may include: conducting developmental screening, child health and development, promotion of nurturing care and psycho-social stimulation, communicating with caregivers, working with families from different backgrounds (e.g. socioeconomic, linguistic, religious, ethnic, cultural), accessing community resources, parent mental and behavioral health, social support, economic support, and intimate partner violence.

<sup>7</sup> Depending on the content of the program, key topics may include: conducting developmental screening, child health and development, promotion of nurturing care and psycho-social

- Are topics relevant to their day-to-day roles?
- Do home visitors have the option to select training opportunities based on their particular needs?
- Does in-service training align with the competencies for their roles?
- Does in-service training offer opportunities for home visitors to apply skills learned (e.g., role play, mock home visits)?
- Does in-service training provide the opportunity for home visitors to interact with peers and share challenges, experiences and lessons?
- Are trainers knowledgeable about the processes and content of home visiting?
  - Do trainers have previous experience working in similar roles as home visitors?
  - Do trainers have opportunities to learn how to best impart new knowledge and skills to home visitors?
- Do home visitors have opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences in in-service training?
  - If so, are in-service offerings regularly updated based on their needs and challenges?
- Is there a process in place to certify in-service training which meets relevant criteria?

**Measure 2: Home visitors receive regular and relevant professional support from trained supervisors.**

- Are home visitors assigned to supervisors?
  - If not, do they receive support from others (e.g. mentor, peers, etc.)?
  - Do supervisors meet with home visitors individually, frequently, and on a regular basis?
  - Are supervisor to home visitor ratios reasonable?
  - Do supervisors facilitate group supervision opportunities that promote peer learning and sharing among home visitors?
- Are supervisors knowledgeable about the processes and content of home visiting?
  - Do supervisors have previous experience working in similar roles as home visitors?
- Do supervisors address the needs most relevant to frontline workers?
  - Are there opportunities in supervisory sessions for home visitors to reflect on their work and challenges they are facing?
  - Are supervisors available to address emergent issues with families?
  - Do supervisors accompany visitors in home visits and provide feedback on their work?
  - Are there facilitated opportunities for home visitors to watch or listen to recordings of their own home visits to aid in their reflection on their work?
  - Do supervisors have checklists/manuals available to be able to systematically reflect on what is happening in a visit?

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stimulation, communicating with caregivers, working with families from different backgrounds (e.g. socioeconomic, linguistic, religious, ethnic, cultural), accessing community resources, parent mental and behavioral health, social support, economic support, and intimate partner violence.

- Do home visitors participate in a formal performance assessment process where accomplishments and areas for improvement are identified, documented, and discussed with their supervisor?
  - Is this feedback considered in decisions about contract extensions, promotions, and pay increases?
  - Does the program clearly outline performance expectations for home visitors?

**Measure 3: Home visitors have appropriate opportunities and incentives for career development and advancement.**

- Are home visitors eligible for pay increases and promotions based on performance, length of time working with the program, or completion of additional training?
- Are career pathways defined within the program?
  - Are there regular opportunities for high-performing home visitors and supervisors to advance to different positions within the program?
  - Does the program recruit and hire supervisory personnel from within the ranks of the program?



**Goal 3: Supervisors have adequate opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support home visitors and families, and grow their careers.**

**Measure 1: Supervisors have sufficient opportunities to gain knowledge and skills to support their work with home visitors.**

- Are training opportunities (pre- and in-service) available and accessible to supervisors? (e.g. offered on a regular basis, at a low cost or free of charge, held in easily accessible locations or offered virtually, updated regularly based on needs and challenges, etc.)
  - If training is mostly online, are there opportunities for in-person interactions and support?
  - If transportation is a barrier for supervisors in attending trainings, are there stipends available to cover such costs?
  - Are supervisors able to leave work to participate in these opportunities? Do they receive paid time off to participate?
- Are training opportunities focused on important components of supervision (e.g., assigning roles and responsibilities, providing feedback, interpersonal relations, adult learning, organizational culture)?
- Do supervisors have the option to select training opportunities based on their particular needs?
- Do training opportunities incorporate opportunities for supervisors to apply skills learned (e.g., role play, mock home visits or supervision)?

**Measure 2: Supervisors receive regular and relevant support from program leaders<sup>8</sup>.**

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<sup>8</sup> We define “program leaders” as those managing the program at a government or non-government agency.

- Are supervisors assigned to program leaders or mentors who can offer support and guidance?
  - Do supervisors meet with an assigned program leader individually, frequently, and on a regular basis?
- Do supervisors have the opportunity to interact with peers and share challenges, experiences and lessons?
- Do supervisors participate in a formal performance assessment process where accomplishments and areas for improvement are identified, documented, and discussed with their assigned program leader?
  - Is this feedback considered in decisions about contract extensions, promotions, and pay increases?
  - Does the program clearly outline performance expectations for supervisors?
  - Do home visitors provide input in supervisor performance assessments?

**Measure 3: Supervisors have appropriate opportunities and incentives for career development and advancement.**

- Are supervisors eligible for pay increases and promotions based on performance, length of time working with the program, or completion of additional training?
- Are career pathways defined within the program?
  - Are there regular opportunities for high-performing supervisors to advance to different positions within the program?
  - Does the program recruit and hire program leaders from within the ranks of the program?