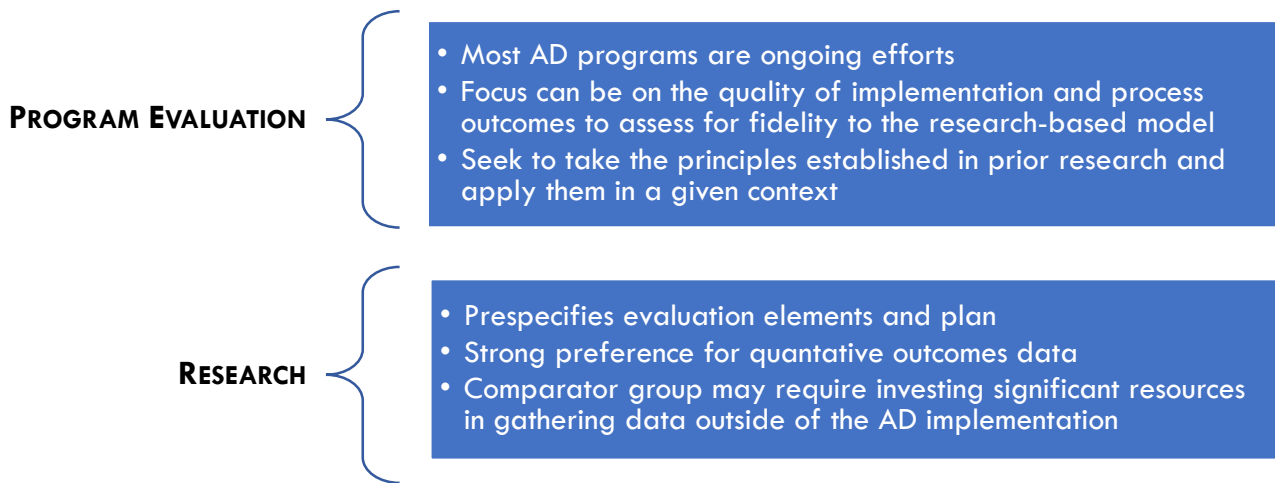


# NaRCAD'S Evaluation Quick Reference Guide

## I. GETTING STARTED: PROGRAM EVALUATION OR RESEARCH STUDY?

When starting to plan your evaluation, be clear about the type of evaluation you want to conduct. One of the initial distinctions to make is whether you are doing program evaluation as part of the applied work of managing ongoing academic detailing (AD) efforts or whether you are conducting a research study.

Most AD programs are part of a systematic effort to improve care, for which program evaluation is an important part of assessing how the program is going and making necessary adjustments over time. Sometimes a new AD implementation will be part of a research study that is evaluating an AD innovation, for example into a new topic area, using new technology, or in a new clinical setting. If you're doing a research study on AD, please consider reaching out to NaRCAD to collaborate. Both approaches are worthwhile endeavors, but the evaluation frameworks differ.



## II. WORKING BACKWARD

Whether you are doing a research study or looking to evaluate an ongoing AD program, it will help you to first think through what output you need from the evaluation. Sketch out the tables and figures that you would want in your final evaluation.

If there is an outcome you would want to assess, think carefully about how you will measure it and how you will eventually display it.

- ✓ **Are there key qualitative components that you need?**
- ✓ **Will you need a comparison group to be confident in your evaluation?**

In addition to enhancing your ability to successfully plan the evaluation, this exercise will also make your preparation of reports and analyses more efficient when it comes time to do them.

### III. UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE

Make sure the components of your evaluation are objectively high quality, but don't forget to be pragmatic and think about the audience who will be seeing your evaluation.

- ✓ **What stakeholders are involved?**
- ✓ **What outcomes do they prioritize** (e.g., *clinician experience and satisfaction, clinical effectiveness, clinical safety, cost*)?
- ✓ **How much detail will they want?**
- ✓ **What methodologies will be familiar to the anticipated audience?**

### IV. COLLECTING NECESSARY DATA

Consider the following when thinking about your final output and the stakeholders to whom you'll be presenting your evaluation:



#### **Time**

Time for planning, collecting, and analyzing data



#### **Money**

Resources for collecting and analyzing data



#### **Access**

Permission and hurdles to collecting data

### V. CONSIDERING QUANTITATIVE VS. QUALITATIVE DATA

Refer to NaRCAD's **DATA COLLECTION & TRACKING QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE** to learn more.

#### **QUANTITATIVE DATA**



Think about the data sources you have access to and understand how the data are collected and the incentives around data collection (e.g., *if data are collected for billing purposes, then the elements connected to payment will be very accurate and other elements may not be as accurate*). Don't assume your data are perfect just because they are quantitative.

#### **QUALITATIVE DATA**



Qualitative data can be more accessible, and a good choice if you are a small program and either don't have access to (or can't afford) quantitative data. Never overlook the power of personal narratives that can illustrate examples of clinician experiences.

Always think about what you are trying to assess and your intended audience for the assessment. Qualitative data requires work to collect and analyze, so be sure to allow for time for the process.

## VI. CONDUCTING YOUR ANALYSIS

Think about whether you or someone internal to your team has the skills to conduct an analysis, such as prior experience collecting and analyzing data, writing final evaluation reports, and other skills related to the sections above. It's important to consider your team's professional skills that may already exist and leverage those. Think objectively about your team and about who has exceptional organizational and verbal skills to conduct the analysis. If you don't have these skillsets within your team, you can hire an outside consultant if you have the financial means to do so.

*Please reach out to the NaRCAD team at [narcad@bmc.org](mailto:narcad@bmc.org) with additional evaluation questions.*