Medicaid HCBS Grants Opportunity

How to Improve Your Grant Application

February 2023

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT *of* **HEALTH SERVICES**

Division of Medicaid Services

Introduction and Overview

Introductions

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT of HEALTH SERVICES

- Kevin Coughlin, Policy Advisor
- Taylor Prebel,
  Project Manager
- Laura Grulke-Rueter,
  Communication Specialist

PUBLIC CONSULTING GROUP

- Kacie Schlegel, Project Manager
- Phillip Parnell, Grant Review Lead

Webinar Overview

- Introduction and overview

- Information from round 1

- How to improve your grant application

Webinar Objectives

Participants in today's webinar will:

- Understand key scoring considerations

- Learn strategies and tactics for writing a higher-scoring grant application

Information from Round 1 of Applications

Round 1 Summary

August 11 - September 12, 2022

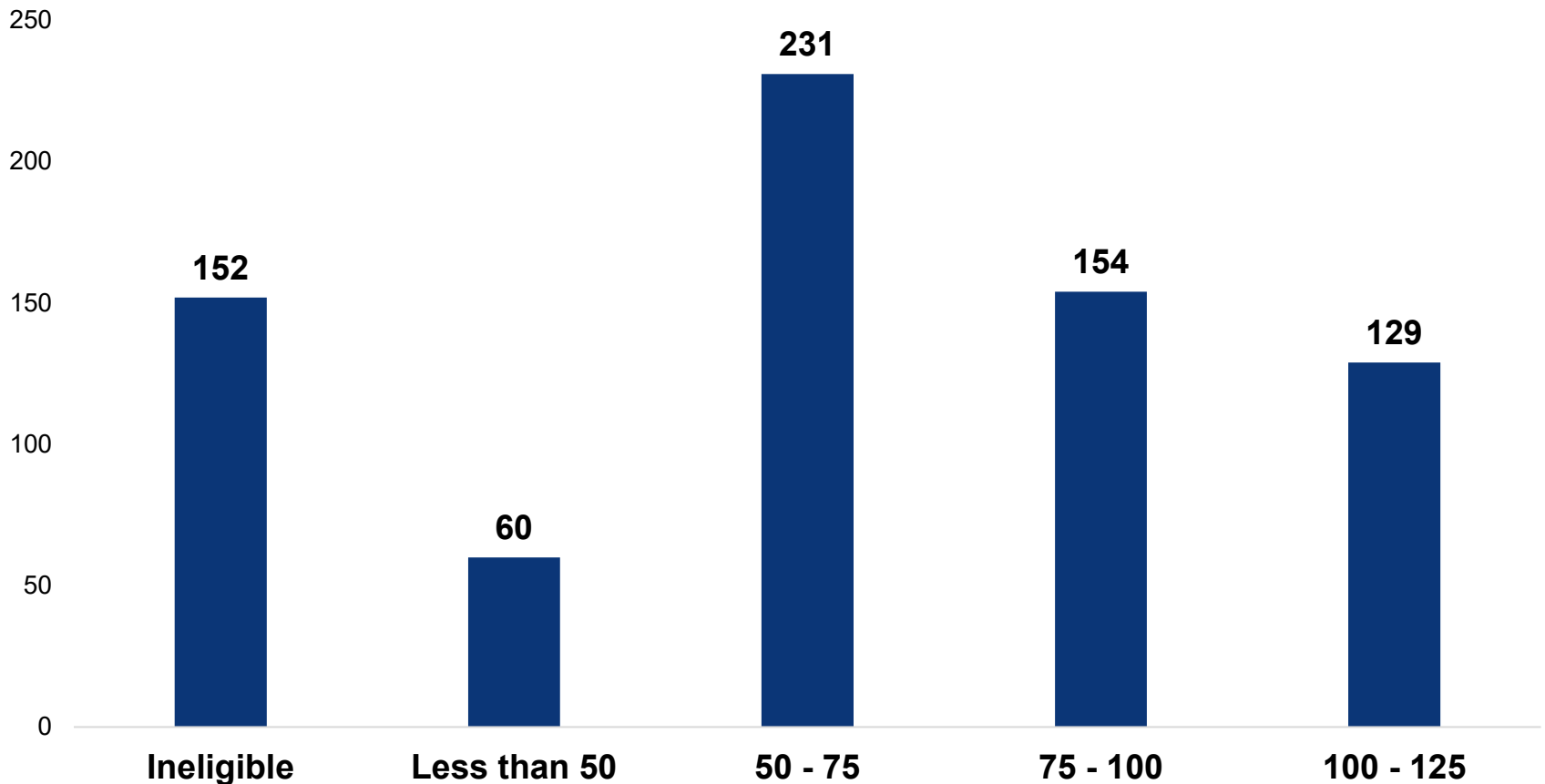|	
700+ applications	$200,000,000+ requested
69 grantees	$17,000,000 awarded

Scoring Results: *Final Application Scores*

69 applications were selected for award

Application Scores from Round 1

Ineligible	Less than 50	50 - 75	75 - 100	100 - 125
152	60	231	154	129

Survey Results*: Time Spent on Application*

Average Time to Complete Application

- More than 25 hours 15%
- 20-25 hours 8%
- 10-15 hours 20%
- 0-5 hours 33%
- 5-10 hours 24%
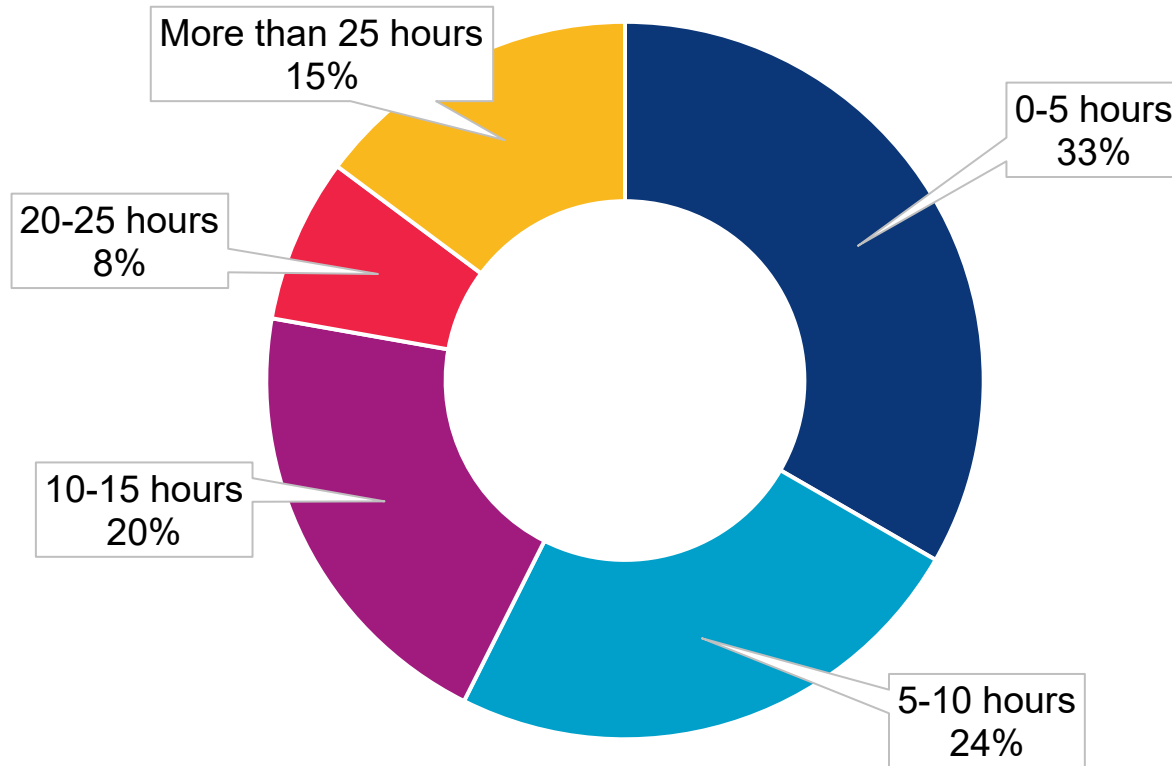
Application Scoring and How to Improve Your Grant Application

Scoring Breakdown

Section	Total Points Available
Administration	5
Project Overview	25
Project Impact	30
Timeline	5
Budget	20
Evaluation	15
Extra Credit	25
Attestations	Pass/fail
Total	125

Questions with Largest Scoring Impact

Question: Complete a logic model for your project
- **Scoring criteria**: Clearly identifies resources, products, deliverables, activities, metrics, and impact
- **Points available**: 25

Question: Provide the number of participants this project will benefit
- **Scoring criteria**: Strong benefit to HCBS participants or the overall system
- **Points available**: 15

Question: Project cost compared to the total number of HCBS eligible participants, families, and direct care workers
- **Scoring criteria**: Strong connection to the cost of project relative to impact
- **Points available**: 13.33

Questions with Largest Scoring Impact

Question: Describe your project
- **Scoring criteria**: Project is fully described, addresses community need, and fits within organizational strategy and vision
- **Points available**: 8.33

Question: Describe how your project will achieve the objectives in the CMS State Medicaid Director's Letter
- **Scoring criteria**: Strongly aligns with CMS requirements
- **Points available**: 8.33

Question: Complete a budget for your project
- **Scoring criteria**: Budget defines and justifies costs
- **Points available**: 6.67

General Guidance

- Ask someone unfamiliar with your application to proofread it before submitting. Ask them to describe back to you how they understand what you intend to do with the funds if you get the grant.

- Allow adequate time to complete a thorough application (at least 10 hours)

- Be specific and provide details

- Take the time to read through the guidance provided on the DHS website and the CMS Medicaid Director's Letter

- Make sure the application is consistent throughout. Each initiative should be clear and consistently discussed throughout the application

- A longer answer does not necessarily equate to a higher score

Eligibility

Project eligibility is based on the <u>CMS State Medicaid Director's Letter.</u> Of note:

- **Appendix C** (page 19) has examples of activities to support state COVID-related HCBS needs

- **Appendix D** (page 22) has examples of activities to support state HCBS capacity building and LTSS rebalancing reform

States must use federal ARPA funds **to supplement, not supplant**, state Medicaid HCBS spending. Examples:

- **Supplementing**: Using grant funds to provide an incentive payment to recruit and retain direct care staff. The incentive payment is an addition to their current wage billed to and funded by Medicaid HCBS. This **is allowable** with grant funds.

- **Supplanting**: Using grant funds to pay direct care staff wages instead of billing them to and having them funded by Medicaid HCBS. This **is not allowable** with grant funds.

Ineligible Projects

In addition to the guidance in the CMS letter, the following types of projects are **not eligible** per federal or DHS guidance:

- Building projects

- Room and board, including food

- Tickets for community activities

- Required training for direct care staff

- Capital expenditures

- Projects not focused on Medicaid HCBS

- Therapies currently covered through the CLTS Program (animal, aquatic, expressive, movement, and specialized medical and therapeutical supplies)

- Wages for direct care staff

Administration

Questions

- Describe your organization.

- Describe the ways your organization promotes equity and inclusion with staff and the people they serve.

Scoring criteria: exemplary score

- Describes the organization, when it was founded, its mission statement, service areas, and programs

- Describes several ways the organization promotes equity and inclusivity with staff and the people they serve

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Best practices for responses

- Address every aspect of the first question

- For the second, describe policies or initiatives your organization has that promote equity. Responses like "we are an equal opportunity employer" are not considered initiatives

Administration

Example: *Organization is fully described*

"We were founded in March of 2021."

"Our mission is to provide a safe, supportive, and organized living environment for residents who are mentally, emotionally, and physically disabled while instilling independence within residents and allowing residents the opportunity to exercise their rights."

"Our staff serves people in Family Care and PACE in urban Milwaukee."

Administration

Example: *Project clearly describes how the organization promotes equity and inclusion with staff and the people they serve*

"We actively work to ensure inclusive environments for clients through our policies, best practices, and methods of obtaining feedback. Bylaws are written with a commitment to provide care to individuals of all backgrounds."

"Staff have strong community connections to organizations with a diverse array of causes in the community which in turn provides help to continue to build a strong and diverse workforce."

Project Overview

Questions

- Describe your project.

- Describe how your project will achieve the objectives listed in the CMS State Medicaid Director's Letter

- Who are the key personnel that will be involved and what will their role be on this project?

- What are the potential barriers to success and alternative plans to ensure project success?

Scoring criteria: exemplary score*

- Project is fully described, addresses community need, and fits within organizational strategy and vision
- Project strongly aligns with CMS requirements
- Staffing plan contains ample staff
- Plan to address barriers

Best practices for responses

- Be specific and provide details
- Project steps described should match budget
- Reference the CMS State Medicaid Director's Letter and discuss which objective your project addresses
- Describe roles of key personnel

*Scoring criteria in red have the largest scoring impact

Project Overview

Example: *Project is fully described*

"Key milestones:
- By January 15, we…"
- By February 15, we…"

"We seek grant funding for assistance with recruitment, hiring, and employment of a part-time staff member to expand health and fitness services to individuals with disabilities in Wisconsin."

"We have a strong demand for community-based and home-based health & fitness programming for individuals with disabilities in Wisconsin."

Project Overview

Example: *Project is <u>not</u> fully described*

Key milestones without specific dates

"Our project is recovery and rebuilding staff education and ongoing training."

No detail about the project and how it will be administered

Project Overview

Example: *Project strongly aligns with CMS requirements for how ARPA funds can be used*

"This project will serve as the example of full community integration and participation."

"This project will diversify supports to reduce social isolation and increase connections due to COVID-19."

Project Overview

Example: *Project does <u>not</u> align with CMS requirements for how ARPA funds can be used*

"Our company will partner with health professionals on standby to offer home care services."

Does not demonstrate or reference the guidance of how ARPA funds are to be used.

Project Overview

Example: *Has a plan to address potential barriers*

"While barriers to success are a possibility for all business operations, we minimize risk of error or failure through enactment of a rigorous program sustainability plan."

"To address the first barrier, we propose strategic marketing…"

"To address the second barrier, we propose providing direct reimbursement…"

Project Impact

Questions

- Ratio of HCBS to non-HCBS entities who will benefit

- What is your plan to create awareness or promote your project?

Scoring criteria: exemplary score*

- **Provides strong benefit to HCBS participants or the overall system**

- Includes plan to create awareness

Best practices for responses

- Include all individuals who would be affected by the project in the first question

- Show evidence of the number of people you will benefit

- Certain groups listed in the project impact should also be shown in the logic model or project description

*Scoring criteria in red have the largest scoring impact

Project Impact

Example: *Project provides strong benefit to HCBS participants or the overall system (participants, families, direct care workers, etc.)*

"By engaging workers in ARDCs, MCOs, and CTLs, they will be better able to identify and refer targeted supports and services for this disability population."

"For Medicaid beneficiates, our initiatives will improve circumstances by educating family members or professionals and increase the number of recipients."

Project Impact

Example: *Project includes a complete plan to create awareness*

"Our project will be promoted via direct contact and advertising with community stakeholders, organizations, and local related providers as well as marketing with organizations that offer local advertising opportunities and social media ad campaigns."

"A well-advertised open house event is a great opportunity to demonstrate that we are a community organization that operates with integrity and values."

Project Impact and Evaluation: Logic Model

Questions*

- Complete the logic model for your project

Scoring criteria: exemplary score

- Shows the impact on the target population

- Clearly identifies resources, products, deliverables, activities, and metrics
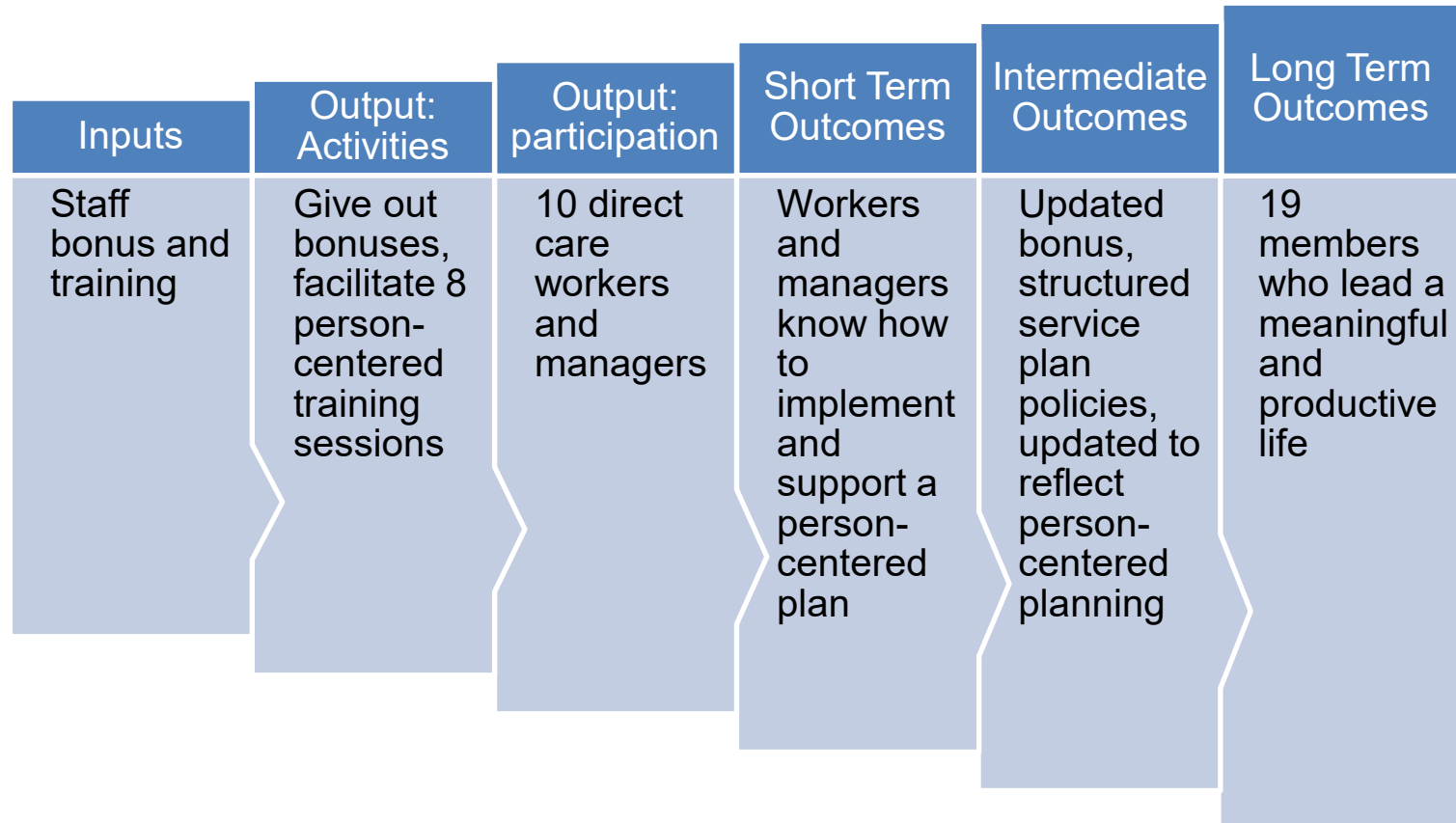

Best practices for responses

- The logic model should address each part of the scoring criteria bullet points

- Include specific metrics that will measure positive impact

*Scoring criteria in red have the largest scoring impact

Project Impact and Evaluation: Logic Model

Example: *Exemplary logic model*

Inputs	Output: Activities	Output: participation	Short Term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
Staff bonus and training	Give out bonuses, facilitate 8 person-centered training sessions	10 direct care workers and managers	Workers and managers know how to implement and support a person-centered plan	Updated bonus, structured service plan policies, updated to reflect person-centered planning	19 members who lead a meaningful and productive life

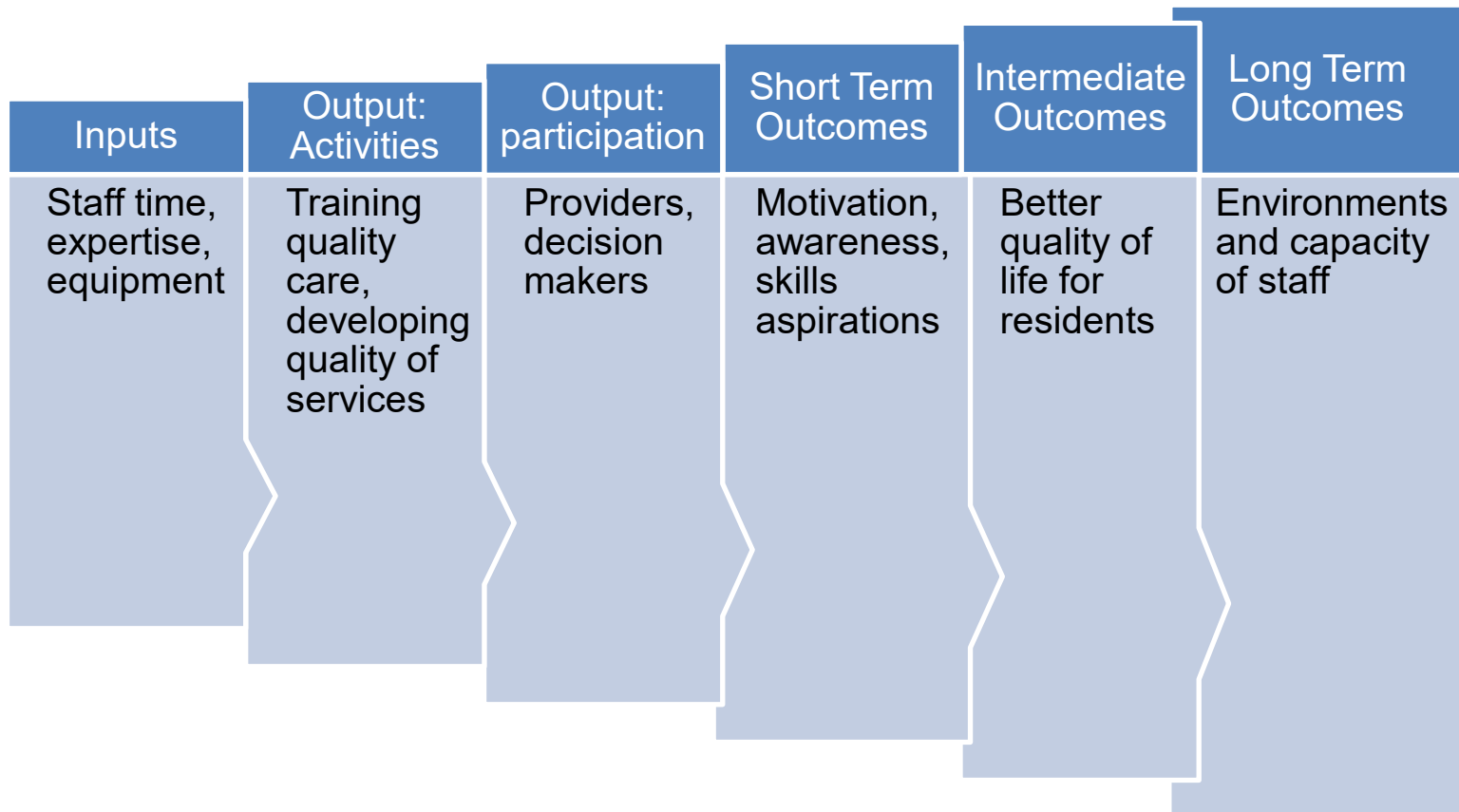# Project Impact and Evaluation

Example: *Exemplary Evaluation*

"External factors:
- Ability to hire self-employment staff
- Individuals' interest in self-employment
- Education of guardians and family"

"Evaluation: We will evaluate the number of people who pursue and achieve self-employment, and the success of our partnership with [the college]."

Project Impact and Evaluation: Logic Model

Example: *Developing logic model*

Inputs	Output: Activities	Output: participation	Short Term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
Staff time, expertise, equipment	Training quality care, developing quality of services	Providers, decision makers	Motivation, awareness, skills aspirations	Better quality of life for residents	Environments and capacity of staff

Timeline

Questions

- Include a detailed timeline of this project

- Provide any additional information regarding the project timeline and budget and describe any preparations you have already completed

- Will your project be completed by September 2024? If not, when could your project be completed by?

Scoring Criteria: exemplary score

- Timeline has specific dates, key milestones and deliverables, and preparations that are done

- Program start date is within a month of receiving grant

- Completed by September 2024

Budget

Questions

- Ratio: Compare total eligible participants served to versus total budget

- Provide a detailed budget, including your contribution or in-kind hours

Scoring criteria: exemplary score*

- Shows a strong connection to the cost of project relative to impact
- Clearly defines and justifies costs

Best practices for responses

- Each budget milestone should be discussed clearly in the project description

- Budget should detail the cost and its importance

- Include details related to other costs

- Each project step should include a projected completion date

*Scoring criteria in red have the largest scoring impact

Budget

Example: *Budget clearly defines and justifies costs*

"Start Date: March 1, 2023"

"End Date: April 30, 2023"

"Total Cost: $10,376"

"Project Step 2: We will create social relevant community-based training presentations for the service region. Community members expected to benefit include…"

Budget

Example: *Budget does not clearly define and justify costs*

No completion dates for step 1 or 2

Large amounts of "other" costs

No details to define costs

Extra Credit

Questions*

- Is your project part of a Governor's appointed taskforce recommendation or part of the Governor's budget request?

- Does your organizational leadership team include diverse leaders?

- How will your organization sustain the project once grant dollars have been exhausted?

- Describe how the project will be responsive to the needs of diverse populations.

- How does this project fit within your organizational strategy and vision? What issue or community need is this project addressing?

Scoring criteria: exemplary score

- Project is part of the Governor's appointed taskforce recommendation or Governor's budget request

- Leadership and key personnel include people with diverse backgrounds

- Project has strong sustainability

- Diverse populations will benefit

- Project captures innovative idea or concept

Extra Credit

Example: *Clearly describes that leadership and key personnel include individuals with diverse backgrounds*

"Training in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion takes place year-round."

"Our leadership board includes individuals that are Asian, African-American, Latino, and LTBTQ. Not all of the individuals are native English speakers, and they represent several different faith traditions."

Extra Credit

Example: *Project has strong sustainability after the grant funding concludes*

"More staff means that our clients themselves will become more self-sustaining with improvement and coordination of care."

"We have several ways to **sustain** the project once the grant dollars are exhausted…"

Extra Credit

Example: *Diverse populations will benefit from this project*

"The training features actors with disabilities and are based on common scenarios experienced by caregivers."

"The presenter has more than 25 years' experience working directly with individuals with challenging behaviors, including family members and paid caregivers from a wide range of diverse backgrounds."

"Training materials are available in Spanish and can be translated into other languages and accessible, alternative formats."

Questions and Additional Resources

Questions

Additional Resources

- Visit the [ARPA HCBS Grant Opportunities](#) page on DHS' website (find a program overview, FAQs, application instructions, and more).

- Read the [CMS Implementation of American Rescue Plan Act Medicaid Director's Letter](#).

- Review the Wisconsin ARPA HCBS Grant Round 2 Overview webinar recording and slides.

Thank you!