



CVM Implementation Assessment:
Service Delivery Choices

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

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Survey design, administration, and analysis was funded by Community Voice Mail National and conducted by Trisha Matthieu, MPA.

Project Highlights

CVMN conducted a widespread implementation evaluation designed to illuminate how CVM is delivered to clients at the local level by host and participating agencies and to examine how these service delivery choices impact the overall program. This assessment was conducted via web surveys and interviews with three separate audiences from 33 sites throughout the nation: executive directors and CVM managers at host agencies and CVM leads at participating agencies. A total of 359 web surveys¹ and 44 interviews² were used in the analysis. The full report includes a thorough description of methodology, findings and analysis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were examined for this project.

- ◆ Discover the service delivery choices made by host and participating agencies.
- ◆ Assess the impact of these choices on program quality, organizational capacity and client outcomes. Explore the CVM model and solicit feedback about the model and CVMN. Learn what types of host and participating agencies are most effective.

Service Delivery Choices: Key Findings

Eight topic areas were examined as “service delivery choices”: program structure, personnel, funding, voice mail boxes, outreach, training, communication and data. These topics were explored using survey and interview findings, an analysis framework of indicators, and feedback from host and participating agencies. A few findings from each topic area have been included below along with a listing of all of the subjects that each topic included.

1. Program Structure

The full report covers the following subjects in the program structure section: host support and mission, host ED involvement, characteristics of CVM manager position, characteristics of agency lead position, distribution of CVM services, co-delivery of CVM with non-CVM services and the existence of CVM-specific boards/committees. Some key findings are:

- ◆ Over half of all CVM managers deliver CVM directly to end-user clients.
- ◆ Only 14% of leads report that clients “sometimes” or “frequently” receive CVM as the only service they receive from the agency. 23% of hosts have a CVM-specific board or committee.

2. Personnel

The full report covers the following subjects in the personnel section: CVM manager/host agency hours and tasks, agency lead hours and tasks, CVM manager decision-making authority and agency lead turnover. Some key findings are:

- ◆ 61% of CVM managers spend at least 20 hrs/wk on CVM. Only 16% spend 40 or more. CVM managers spend the most time (25%) on data entry/reporting.
- ◆ 67% of EDs reported that community organizing/outreach is the most critical element of success in the CVM manager position.
- ◆ Of all the key program areas listed in the survey, CVM managers are given:
 - the greatest decision-making authority regarding communication with participating agencies and agency eligibility requirements.
 - the least authority regarding budgeting and fundraising.

¹ 30 ED, 31 CVM manager and 298 agency lead surveys were returned. There were an estimated 1,369 agency lead surveys sent, resulting in an agency lead survey response rate of 24%.

² 11 ED, 12 CVM manager and 21 agency lead interviews were conducted, primarily via phone.

3. Funding

The full report covers the following subjects in the funding section: funding sources, agency fees, and host fiscal responsibility. Some key findings are:

- ◆ Most hosts do not have diversified funding for CVM.
 - Only 23% have at least half of their funding from more than one source.
 - 46% have CVM funding from 3 or more sources.
- ◆ 29% of hosts are currently charging fees to participating agencies. Over half (56%) support charging fees if needed.
- ◆ EDs are mixed about host fiscal responsibility due to funding instability.

4. Voice Mail Boxes (DIDs)

The full report covers the following subjects in the DID section: number of DIDs, DID distribution, usage time limits, serving end-user clients, DID monitoring and subscriber reports. Some key findings are:

- ◆ Agency lead interviewees said that their agency is not able to serve as many clients as desired because of CVM fees, not enough DIDs, or lack of communication w/host.
- ◆ 59% of agency leads review their DIDs for use at least once a month. 11% not at all.
- ◆ 46% of host sites are currently using 75% or more of their DIDs.

5. Outreach

The full report covers the following subjects in the outreach section: participating agency need and demand, end-user client need and demand, recruitment of agencies and clients, host and participating agency eligibility requirements, and participating agency variety. Some key findings are:

- ◆ 50% of CVM managers report there is participating agency need and demand and they need more resources to meet this demand. 30% feel they could serve more with current resources.
- ◆ 37% CVM managers reported trouble recruiting new agencies.
- ◆ 59% of participating agencies ask if a client has a safe place for messages as part of intake.

6. Training

The full report covers the following subjects in the training section: frequency of participating agency training, organizing participating agency training, and training content. Some key findings are:

- ◆ 17% of agency leads did not receive any of the training topics listed in the survey. 51% received 6 or more (out of 11).
- ◆ Agency leads are trained most on: enrolling clients, resetting DIDs. They are trained least on: reading/acting on subscriber reports, client outreach, special features.
- ◆ Lower DID utilization at participating agencies corresponds with agency leads receiving only an initial training or information.

7. Communication

The full report covers the following subjects in the communication section: frequency of host-participating agency communication, methods/types of communication, host-participating agency relationship and satisfaction, and participating agency internal communication. Some key findings are:

- ◆ 57% of all CVM managers reported using the phone as their primary method of communication with participating agencies.
- ◆ 96% of agency leads are satisfied with amount of communication from host.

- ◆ Higher participating agency DID utilization corresponds with CVM managers communicating with agency leads twice monthly or more often.

8. Data

The full report covers the following subjects in the data section: data collection, data sharing, and data decision-making. Some key findings are:

- ◆ 66% of CVM managers collect data from agencies via paper and fax and enter into electronic database. Some enter it into 2-3 databases.
- ◆ Most CVM managers reported they would like to collect data electronically.
- ◆ 77% of CVM managers share data with management at their site. 37% share with participating agencies.

Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity refers to the benefits an organization receives by having the CVM program at their agency. For hosts, it was found that CVM fits the mission of most host organizations, many hosts are not taking advantage of cross-sector collaboration, and very few have CVM-specific boards or committees that could add additional resources to the organization.

For participating agencies, many agency leads report that they use CVM to do their jobs better. Some report that having CVM saves time and allows them to serve clients that would have fallen through the cracks and it acts as an additional communication tool for such things weather warnings, or “get out the vote”.

Outcomes

Agency leads report that they are satisfied with amount of support and communication they receive from their hosts and are happy with the service overall. They also report that clients are satisfied and happy with CVM overall.

CVM Model Feedback

All respondents provided feedback on how they felt the program was working. The majority of feedback was positive, although there were some issues with the model, the largest of which include the lack of sustainable funding and technology issues. 90% of EDs, 93% of CVM managers and 98% of agency leads reported being “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the CVM model.

CVM National Office Feedback

Executive directors and CVM managers provided the following feedback on their view of what they perceive to be the role of a National Office.

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| ◆ Provide funding assistance | ◆ Develop/improve infrastructure |
| ◆ Support individual sites | ◆ Work on national policy |
| ◆ Help with media/marketing | ◆ Facilitate collaboration/idea-sharing |
| ◆ Lend credibility to program | |

A few CVM managers expressed concerns that CVMN may be becoming too bureaucratic, and would like them to avoid wanting too much control over the individual programs.

Key implications/recommendations

The following key implications and recommendations to CVMN from the evaluator, emerged from the findings:

- ◆ Recommend that hosts get/maintain agency lead buy-in.
- ◆ Maintain flexibility and simplicity in CVM service delivery.

- ◆ Recommend increased CVM manager hours.
- ◆ Assist sites with sustainable funding.
- ◆ Research implications of charging fees.
- ◆ Support higher use of DIDs.
- ◆ Assist with securing affordable 1-800 message retrieval numbers.
- ◆ Promote more CVM manager time spent on outreach.
- ◆ Promote more frequent and varied training for participating agencies.
- ◆ Suggest opportunities for community networking among participating agencies.
- ◆ Streamline data collection; reduce CVM manager data entry.

Conclusion

The full report findings along with the analysis framework, demographics and feedback, work together to provide CVMN a clearer picture of the mix of elements and service delivery decisions that combine to create a quality CVM program. This assessment illustrated that most components of the model are working well for host and participating agencies and are being implemented in relatively similar ways throughout the country, and with similar outcomes. Furthermore, this assessment affirms that while there are actions that can be taken to strengthen and expand CVM, the service is very much desired, needed and used throughout the country.

“This program is invaluable to our agency and our clients! We appreciate the level of support and commitment from our local agency.” –Agency Lead