

Housing First Toolkit

Principles of Evaluation

The evaluation profession has developed a series of principles that should be followed when doing evaluation or performance assessment. When going through the steps of planning and conducting the process, these principles should be kept in mind. (Link includes all material below)

Utility

The endeavour should be useful to the program and its stakeholders, and aid their decision making about the program, facilitating continuous quality improvement. Utilization-focused evaluation is an approach for ensuring utility, which emphasizes the clear articulation of purpose and ongoing participation, guided by the key stakeholders who will be using the data, including people with lived experience of homelessness. In order to be useful, the findings of the evaluation should be translated into action.

Feasibility

This principle emphasizes that your approach should not disrupt the program, that there are adequate resources to carry it out, and that the organization has the capacity to use the results effectively.

Ethics

This principle emphasizes that the process should be carried out ethically, with respect to respecting participants' rights, and with respect to providing an analysis that accurately reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention. Ethics also involves ensuring that participants are provided access to the results. A helpful document for working with people with lived experience can be found in the appendices.

Learn more:

How do investigators conduct ethical research with people who are homeless? - Homeless Hub Research Summary Series

<http://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/how-do-investigators-conduct-ethical-research-people-who-are-homeless-homeless-hub-research>

Accuracy

This principle means that the intervention should be clearly described, that the methods should be transparent and replicable. Quantitative measures should be valid and reliable and relevant to the program. Similarly, qualitative evaluation approaches should uphold appropriate standards of rigour. The findings should be presented adequately and with enough detail so that decision-makers can understand the interpretations, and see that the conclusions are justified.