



Technical Assistance Assessment and Evaluation Report

Summary of Results

Overall, 10 out of 11 grantees participated in a semi-structured interview on past services and future needs for technical assistance (TA). Interviews averaged 20 minutes. The one grantee who did not participate did not apply for continuation funding.

Each grantee used at least three TA services since June of 2001. With the exception of the newsletters, grantees generally reported that the services they received were very helpful. All attended the RFP/Visioning retreat, but each grantee reported a different combination of other services. Most reported receiving TA by phone contact, and half mentioned participating in training (youth access and/or American Indian Life Skills), being on the TA conference calls, using the slides for community education, and/or accessing materials from the Clearinghouse. Several noted that activities focusing on youth involvement (youth access conference, theatre group site visits) were particularly helpful and productive.

The availability of staff for phone contact and the quick response time was a critical service mentioned by grantees. They also appreciated orientation site visits, the ability to review materials from the Clearinghouse, and having a copy of the slides for use in community education projects. The TA conference calls were not reported to be particularly helpful for 2 of the respondents, but 3 others felt that they were helpful. All reported that IPTF staff was always responsive and courteous.

Grantees appreciated TA responsiveness, particularly quick turnaround and follow-up activities, whether after trainings, site visits, or phone requests.

For the future, grantees would like to see more training and materials available on cultural issues, especially the historical context of moving from traditional use to abuse of tobacco, the cultural exploitation of Indian tobacco and issues for GLBT youth that shape the context for high smoking rates. A special effort should be paid to two issues: 1) providing high quality training on how to be more effective working with youth and "what works" with youth activities, and 2) finding speakers or establishing a training specifically on GLBT issues. Sometimes this group felt like an "add on" to the training rather than a focus in and of themselves.

Grantees would benefit from TA on working with youth, particularly "what works" and ways to increase effectiveness in communication, education and group activities.

Grantees would also like to have more materials on secondhand smoke and policy change strategies, either for tribal councils or business owners. While Fact Sheets or handouts were the most commonly mentioned, respondents had limited feedback on the types of materials that would be the most helpful in their work.

Background and Methodology.

In late May and June of 2002, the Indigenous Peoples Task Force (IPTF) conducted a telephone interview with American Indian and GLBT tobacco endowment grantees to assess their use of and satisfaction with technical assistance (TA) services provided by IPTF. The IPTF also assessed perceived future technical assistance needs. An independent consultant working with IPTF conducted semi-structured interviews to allow for more anonymity and freedom to respond to questions regarding interaction with primary staff (Project Coordinator). The IPTF chose a semi-structured, interview format for several reasons. The previous written survey in 2001 had yielded a limited response rate (n=6) and no written qualitative comments were provided outside the predetermined content of the structured questions. The IPTF wanted to try a new method that would allow for using verbal cues and probing techniques in interviews to elicit information to improve services and delve deeper into issues that emerged from the grantee perspective.

Sample. All grantees, with the exception of Prairie Island, spent 20 to 30 minutes on the assessment interview. In all but 2 cases, the interviewer made several contacts before the interview was conducted. Making scheduled call appointments was often ineffective.

Results*Helpfulness and Satisfaction with Past Services*Technical Assistance, Training and Written Materials

All of the grantees had used several technical assistance or clearinghouse services during the past year. As would be expected given that the TA was tailored to individual grantee needs, the services used by grantees varied with one exception: all attended the RFP training in Mille Lacs, and several gave it high marks (“superb”, “very helpful”). Other services received included phone contact, site visits (3 grantees noted they were very helpful) and the youth access training (2 grantees noted that the youth really enjoyed attending this event). Several mentioned that they used the transparencies/slides provided by the IPTF for presentations within their community and for youth at Indian conferences. Most did not remember the TA conference calls, and 2 felt that they were not very useful because folks were at different places. However, two grantees did mention that they were good for networking. Most also did not recall the *Tobacco Talk* newsletters.

Two grantees who had received a visit from the IPTF adult and youth theatre staff praised this opportunity. One shared how the time that the IPTF spent working with the youth in her community had helped to galvanize the youth in a very positive way as the IPTF staff and youth peer educators provided positive role models. They felt that the time adult staff worked with youth was well spent in that it helped youth to generate their own ideas for integrating tobacco into their peer education message.

One interesting point: many of the grantees did not have immediate recall of TA that they had received from IPTF. Often the interviewer needed to probe and remind grantees of services that they had received; once reminded, the grantees were able to comment upon these activities. One grantee stated “Well, to be honest at first I didn’t understand their (IPTF) role” and it took time to figure it out. This implies that perhaps the Task Force

should continue to identify and clarify available services to the grantees (i.e., market their services), and also to use the current method (phone interview) to get better information about grantee perspectives on services provided through the TA grant. The neutral probing brought up much more detailed feedback than would otherwise be available. It is also perhaps an indication that the grantees are unclear about what technical services would be the most helpful, so a proactive approach may be required. Most of them are new at the work of tobacco. While a few seemed quite confident, several also expressed the sentiment "anything and everything is helpful".

Interaction with Staff

All grantees reported that staff was always responsive and courteous. Many made additional comments on how helpful the Project Coordinator proved to be throughout the project and noted that she would go the extra step of calling back several times to make sure that she got through. One grantee stated that she liked the Project Coordinator being proactive ("calling first") to help them get their needs met. Several noted that the Coordinator was "very organized" and got back to them with the information they requested. Several grantees also mentioned that they really appreciated the follow-up, giving examples of 1) the Youth Access conference, where the results of surveys were shared, compared and discussed with all grantees together and 2) the RFP training where a request made for a list of future conferences was fulfilled immediately and the grantees were able to incorporate the information into their next year budget request.

In one area, cultural knowledge, several grantees noted that the Project Coordinator was not "100%" knowledgeable. However, they noted that they either did not use the IPTF for this information or that the Coordinator had learned a lot and really tried to find the information even if she did not know it herself. Detailed results of these questions in a quantitative format are provided below:

Results of Questions on Staff Interaction

Question	Yes	No	Some
Staff always responsive	100%	-	-
Staff followed up and provided assistance needed or requested	100%	-	-
Staff always courteous	100%	-	-
Staff ever rude or abrupt	-	100%	-
Staff knowledgeable re: tobacco issues in Native community	60%	-	40%

Future Technical Assistance

Training and Technical Assistance

Grantees shared ideas for helpful future TA, including training and general assistance. Five of the grantees specifically discussed a need for training on youth activities and working with youth, with two mentioning that training workshops should be for both youth and adults, as well as for youth alone. Given the highly positive feedback on the theatre presentations, this training could be done as individualized technical assistance provided to youth groups in each community, or as a larger training or workshop.

The GLBT group was specifically interested in help working in public schools, e.g., how to network and connect with Gay/Straight Alliance groups. Several of the grantees also specifically mentioned wanting help with "what works" when it comes to youth activities. Several were struggling with trying to make their youth work focus more on tobacco or getting their staff more ideas for creative and engaging methods.

Cessation was the only other specific training request, mentioned by two of the grantees. They were interested in finding out "what works" with youth in general, as well as any specific cultural information that may apply to GLBT and/or American Indian youth. Orientation (on-site visits for new staff) and networking were specifically requested for TA service by 2 of the grantees.

Materials

Seven of the grantees requested information and/or materials on culture: for GLBT, the culture and context that supports and/or leads to high smoking rates and for American Indian, the cultural "exploitation" of traditional tobacco and the genesis of how tobacco abuse became the "norm" in the community. The conversation with several American Indian grantees led to a discussion of the talk by Lawrence Shorty at the RFP training in Mille Lacs. Several felt that a deeper discussion of traditional issues and history would appeal to both youth and adults.

Three grantees stated the fact sheets, brochures or handouts would be helpful, two grantees mentioned visuals or overheads, and one grantee each mentioned: materials for tobacco free schools, such as posters or alternatives to suspension curricula and PSAs with impact or rave cards.

Topics of Interest

As mentioned above, deeper discussion about cultural context are of great interest to the majority of grantees. Additionally, 6 stated they needed to know more about secondhand smoke, with 3 mentioning tribal policy (including compliance with existing policy) and 2 mentioning "how to approach" businesses. Four grantees wanted to learn about smoke free homes, 3 cessation, 2 marketing to youth and 1 Alternatives to suspension.

Other topics brought up by grantees themselves included TA on how to use STEPES, more effective presentation and communication skills, databases for tracking youth. Two grantees mentioned design issues: help with graphic design of brochures to make them more appealing to youth and website design.

Summary comment. While grantees do exhibit a range of skill and readiness to tackle critical tobacco issues, many were on the "new" end and showed limited ability to identify the technical services that they needed for future programming. A more "proactive" approach is often necessary in program development with such staff, i.e., those new to tobacco control and/or working in communities with less readiness to tackle an environmental (policy) approach to change.