



January 11, 2018

Learning from Third Party Evaluations:

The Impact of Compass FSS

The January Outcomes Workgroup met at EMPath's downtown office and focused on an overview of the process and results of an outside evaluation of Compass Working Capital's Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program.



GEORGE REUTER

Director of Learning and Knowledge Management

The Impact of FSS

There can be a lot of pressure in evaluation for the an organization to complete a Randomized Control Trial. This strategy is an effort and time intensive process, that not every organization has the capacity to do.

George Reuter came to speak to the DWG regarding a different avenue to start to answer the question: "Is our program actually working?"

Working with Abt Associates, Compass Working Capital, starting in 2014, developed a retrospective cohort study. This used existing program data as well as publically available data sources (through HUD and Experian) to determine if FSS participant's were better off than a comparable general population sample in areas of:

- ◇ Earnings and benefits
- ◇ General assistance received
- ◇ FICO score and debt
- ◇ Debt
- ◇ And several other measures

Results of the study were encouraging. Significant differences were found for earnings, assistance received, credit card debt, and credit score.

The study also had several strengths. The use of a third party evaluator gives an additional level of validity, as well as allowing for a more robust methodology that what is often

possible internally. Additionally, this method didn't require additional data from staff or participants.

Perhaps most importantly is the impact this type of knowledge has on the organization and the work we do. Since this study was published, FSS has been able to use the results in advocacy efforts (recently, the FSS Act, in support of this type of programming received a near unanimous vote of support in the House of Representatives!).

Check out the slides from George's Workgroup session here!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bTAqvieCVVFgRIZSF392vXSnQoDkhvIr/view?usp=sharing>

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to attend this session of Outcomes Workgroup! We hope that the presentation and discussion prompted some reflection that you can take with you back to your respective organizations. We look forward to our next meeting!

THIS SESSION

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George Reuter —

Compass Working Capital

Happy New Year from
Outcomes Work Group!

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To see the full study on the FSS Program, click [here](#).