

## Attachment 6.f. Follow-Up SMI/SED Demonstration Implementation Interview Protocol

*Yellow highlighted and italicized text indicates instructional notes to interview team as well as items that need to be adapted for individual interviews.*

### PRA Disclosure Statement

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Thank you for making time to speak with us today. My name is *[LEAD INTERVIEWER]*, and I am joined by my colleague *[ANALYST]*. We are researchers from RTI International, conducting a federal meta-evaluation of the section 1115 serious mental illness (SMI) and children with a serious emotional disturbance (SED) demonstrations. This interview is a follow-up interview to understand how your section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration implementation has progressed since our first set of interviews in *[2020/2021]*.

This interview will be approximately 60-minutes. The interview will be in-depth discussion of implementation experience and programmatic changes for Medicaid beneficiaries in support of the section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration. We will also cover any other implementation challenges and facilitators, other relevant state initiatives, sustainability plans, and state lessons learned.

Your decision to participate in this interview is voluntary. You can stop the interview at any time and can refuse to answer questions you do not wish to answer.

There are minimal risks to you from participation, and every effort will be made to protect your confidentiality. Only members of the project team will have access to the data. We do sometimes use quotes from stakeholders in our reports for CMS; however, we de-identify the quotes and remove any attributable information. If a quote from you or your state is used, we will refer to you anonymously as a “state informants.”

Your insights on the section 1115 SMI/SED demonstrations are important. We believe your insights provided during today’s call will be valuable to federal and state policymakers as well as other Medicaid programs in developing program policies and guidance for current SMI/SED demonstrations and other future section 1115 demonstrations.

Finally, we would like to record our conversation, to ensure our notes from today are complete. Do I have your permission to audio record our conversation today? Do you have any questions before we begin?

## INTRODUCTIONS

*[Note to interviewer: Use probes only if needed to elicit additional detail.]*

1. Would you like to introduce yourself and your role in the organization?
  - a. **PROBE:** How long have you been in this role?
  - b. **PROBE:** Were you in this role when your state began implementing the section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration?

*[Note to interviewer: Prior to the interview determine (using Medicaid.gov) whether the state has obtained an extension for the demonstration or submitted an application for an extension. If information is not available, ask the state about plans to submit an extension.]*

## GENERAL PERSPECTIVES ON ACTIVITIES

To get us started, I would like to start with some high-level questions about SMI/SED treatment services in **[STATE]** and your SMI demonstration.

1. Which demonstration activities do you think are having the greatest impact on Medicaid enrollees with SMI or SED and why?
  - a. **PROBE:** *Improved access to IMD services? Crisis services? Community-based services? Integrated primary and behavioral health care? Integration with social services? Improved access to mental health care for youth? Any state reported changes in provider reimbursement for treatment?*
  - b. **PROBE:** What impacts have you seen? Are there specific components of these activities that are effective?
2. *[For states that also have a section 1115 SUD demonstration]* Your state also has a section 1115 substance use disorder (SUD) demonstration. Do you coordinate activities between the SMI and the SUD demonstration? If yes, how so?
  - a. **PROBE:** What challenges have you faced in coordinating efforts? How have you dealt with the challenges?

## CHANGES SINCE IMPLEMENTATION

Let's review the possible changes that have taken place since our first interview. We will review the coverage changes and the dates of those changes. We will also ask about any challenges you faced or facilitators that you experienced making each category of changes.

3. Changes to activities related to :
  - a. Milestone 1: Ensuring quality of care in psychiatric hospitals and residential settings (*such as using patient assessment tools, state's regulations, licensing criteria, or utilization review policies for SMI residential providers*) *[If no changes were made, the interviewer will confirm and will skip to the next set of potential activity changes.]*
    - When did these changes go into effect?
    - Looking across these changes, what challenges have you faced, if any, in making these changes?
      - **PROBE:** How have you managed these challenges?
    - What facilitated your ability to make these changes?
    - *[Note to interviewer: If state has an extension or has submitted application for extension, ask:]* Is this activity continuing as part of your extension?

- b. Milestone 2: Improving care coordination and transitions to community-based care (*such as activities to help coordinate with mental or physical health care services, SUD services, community-based treatment, and/or social service providers*)
  - *[Repeat the questions under 3a.]*
- c. Milestone 3: Increasing access to continuum of care (*including crisis stabilization services*)
  - *[Repeat the questions under 3a.]*
- d. Milestone 4: Early identification and engagement in treatment (*such as screening activities*)
  - *[Repeat the questions under 3a.]*

## OTHER IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND FACILITATORS

- 4. In addition to what you have already shared, what other challenges, if any, have affected your state's implementation of its section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration?
  - a. **PROBE:** How have these challenges affected implementation (*e.g., implementation timeline, provider experience, beneficiary experience*)?
  - b. **PROBE:** *[Interviewer: Ask about each challenge individually]* How have you addressed this challenge?
- 5. Likewise, in addition to what you have already shared, we want to ask about any other facilitators that have supported your ability to implement the section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration. What, if anything, has helped your state's implementation of the demonstration?
  - a. **PROBE:** *[Interviewer: Ask about each facilitator individually]* How did this facilitator affect the demonstration activities?

## OTHER STATE INITIATIVES

Now, we're going to talk about other initiatives in your state that were either in place before your SMI/SED demonstration or implemented alongside the demonstration that may impact the delivery of substance use disorder services for Medicaid beneficiaries.

- 6. Besides the SMI/SED demonstration, what, if any, initiatives in your state, such as programs or policies, significantly impact SMI/SED service delivery for Medicaid beneficiaries in your state?
 

*[Note to Interviewer: If key informant has difficulty answering the question, you can add detail. "Some programs or policies mentioned in the quarterly monthly reports or the interim evaluation reports include: List Federal Programs in QMRs and interim evaluation reports. Have these affected your demonstration?" A list of state initiatives will be created before each interview.]*

  - a. **PROBE:** *[Interviewer: Ask about each initiative individually]* When did the initiative begin?
  - b. **PROBE:** How were demonstration activities affected?
  - c. **PROBE:** What populations of beneficiaries may be affected?

## SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

Our next set of questions relates to the planned sustainability of demonstration activities. *[Interviewer will summarize/confirm understanding of the status of state's demonstration period and extension request, as applicable. Interviewer should choose the set of questions that are most appropriate to the*

*state's plans. If key informant has difficulty answering the question refer back to the categories of services in #3 and consider asking about changes within each category]*

#### ***States with a Demonstration Extension or That Have Submitted an Extension Request***

7. You mentioned earlier that [activities mentioned in #3] will not continue under the extension. For what reasons did the state decide to discontinue the activity? [Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually]
8. What [other] SMI/SED demonstration activities have changed/will change under the extension?
  - a. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each change individually] How will the demonstration activity change? Is this change specifically related to the SMI/SED activities (as opposed to general extension activity changes)?
  - b. **PROBE:** Why is this change being made?
9. What activities have been/will be added under the extension?
  - a. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually] For what reasons did the state decide to add the activity?
10. Going forward, what resources (e.g., technical assistance, training) would you find helpful as you continue with the demonstration?

#### ***States Intending to Submit an Extension Request***

11. Which demonstration activities are you planning to continue in your extension request?  
[Note to Interviewer: If key informant has difficulty answering the question refer back to the categories of services in #3 and consider asking about changes within each category.]
12. What demonstration activities, if any, will be discontinued in your extension request?
  - a. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually] For what reasons did the state decide to discontinue the activity?
13. What [other] demonstration activities will change in your extension request?
  - a. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each change individually] How will the demonstration activity change?
  - b. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually] For what reasons did the state decide to change the activity?
14. What activities will be added in your extension request?
  - a. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually] For what reasons did the state decide to add the activity?
15. Going forward, what resources (e.g., technical assistance, training) would you find helpful as you continue with the demonstration?

#### ***States That Are Not Intending to Extend at the End of the Demonstration Period (Or For Which Extension Status Is Not Yet Determined)***

16. [If applicable] How did you decide to discontinue the demonstration?
17. Which demonstration activities are you planning to continue after the section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration timeframe ends?
  - a. **PROBE:** [Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually] For what reasons did you decide to continue the activity?

18. Which activities will you discontinue?
  - a. **PROBE:** *[Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually]* For what reasons did the state decide to discontinue the activity?
19. Which activities are you planning to change after the section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration timeframe ends?
  - a. **PROBE:** *[Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually]* For what reasons did the state decide to change the activity?
20. Will your state implement different activities to address SMI/SED care after the demonstration timeframe ends?
  - a. **PROBE:** What are those activities?
  - b. **PROBE:** How will they differ from the demonstration?
  - c. **PROBE:** *[Interviewer: Ask about each activity individually]* For what reasons did the state decide to add the activity?

## LESSONS LEARNED

As we conclude today's interview, I would like to ask you to reflect on your experiences with the demonstration, including the planning, implementation, and sustainability.

21. What lessons have you learned that you would want to share with states currently considering or implementing a section 1115 SMI/SED demonstration?
22. What lessons have you learned about the demonstration that you want to let CMS know about?
  - a. **PROBE:** What changes would you recommend that CMS consider for the demonstration requirements or design?
  - b. **PROBE:** What additional resources (e.g., guidance documents, technical assistance) would help other states implementing a SMI/SED demonstration?

## WRAP UP

23. Before we wrap up this interview, is there anything we didn't cover or discuss that you feel is important for us as evaluators to know?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. Your insights are incredibly valuable to understanding how states are implementing the demonstrations, the challenges and facilitators they are experiencing, and the impact they are having on states' ability to meet the needs of Medicaid enrollees.