



NASHIA Tip of the Month!

Sustainability

by:

Amy Flaherty, MA

Pennsylvania Department of Health

May 2014

Sustainability. The concept has become an imperative in these days of shrinking state and federal budgets. How do we build programs whose roots will be sustained regardless of the availability of funds?

Here are some key factors to consider when building a sustainable program:

- During the initial planning phases of program development be thinking about how the initiative can live on even if the funding doesn't. *What are other possible funding streams? Other state agency resources? Is block grant funding a possible option?*
- Find collaborative partners, state/federal agencies or community partners whose mission and goals align with yours. To the extent possible, **share responsibilities across agencies.**
- Foster the development of a brain injury champion in these partners – people who truly get the issue and can advance your cause. Don't be afraid to look high up in the organization. Target the leaders who can make things happen.
- Entrench your initiative in policy. Is there a way to institutionalize the activities (ie: TBI screening) into an overarching rule change? *Is legislation a viable option?*
- **Brag about your successes.** Demonstrate the impact your program has had on the TBI population in your state by articulating measurable outcomes.

In Summary

It can be a daunting task to build maintainable initiatives and to constantly seek out and develop alternate funding options. And obviously there are some direct service programs that will never survive without associated funding. But many programs **CAN** survive past the infrastructure building phase with some creative strategies. By initiating programs with inherent sustainability we can assure that the seeds we plant will bear fruit long after we're gone.

For further information contact NASHIA at info@nashia.org.