



The Importance of Sustainability

Sustainability is the process of maintaining a new practice, such as treatment of Tobacco Use Disorder (TUD). Without strategies to sustain new practices, they may be discontinued and result in negative outcomes and a loss of resource investment¹. Sustainability should be a fundamental part of your plan to implement Tobacco Use Disorder treatment. This means that you will need to build in strategies to maintain treatment for tobacco use after successful implementation. Below are some recommended sustainability strategies you can include.

Strategies for Sustaining Treatment of Tobacco Use Disorder

- Ensure continued support by agency leadership to treat tobacco use
- Review and update organizational policies and procedures to reflect current, best practices in treating tobacco use
- Monitor program process and outcomes for people who smoke, and use results to improve how you treat tobacco use
- Maintain an adequate number of trained practitioners and supervisors for treatment of tobacco use
- Provide ongoing supervision and feedback to improve staff skill proficiency to treat tobacco use
- Orient all new staff to the knowledge and skills needed to treat tobacco use
- Make competencies in treating tobacco use part of staff evaluations
- Ensure continuation of groups to treat tobacco use
- Acknowledge staff who have contributed to the success of treating tobacco use (champions)
- Devote meetings to good news and celebrate personal success stories around tobacco
- Ensure continued agency buy-in at all levels and institutionalize the culture change by making it part of daily practice (e.g., screening form in electronic medical record includes questions about tobacco use)

Learn more about how to assess sustainability capacity with the Clinical Sustainability Assessment Tool developed by the Center for Public Health Systems Science, Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis: <https://sustaintool.org/>

¹ Shelton, R.C., et al. (2018) The Sustainability of Evidence-Based Interventions and Practices in Public Health and Health Care. *Annual Review of Public Health* 39:18.1–18.22