

The Role of Administrative Data in Evidence-Based Policy and Innovation

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The Promises and Challenges of Administrative Data in
Social Policy Research
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Past Policy Priorities that Spurred Data Solutions

- 1990s: Deadbeat Dads: NDNH
- 1990s: Student loan requirements: National Student (Loan) Clearinghouse
- 2000s: No Child Left Behind: State Longitudinal Data Systems
- 2011: ED's Gainful Employment Rule: ED-SSA earnings match
- 2011: ACA implementation: A-87 waivers

Emerging Priorities: Evidence-Based Policy and Innovation

- Tiered Evidence Grants
- Pay for Success Initiatives
- Performance Partnership Pilots
- House Ways and Means Welfare Reform Discussion Draft
- Ryan-Murray Evidence-Based Policy Commission

Who Benefits from Integrated Data?

- Federal, State, and local policymakers
- Government program managers
- Service providers and practitioners
- Consumers
- Researchers
- Philanthropic funders
- General public

Challenges to Integrating Data

- Leadership vacuum
- Organizational silos and cultural barriers
- Outdated and unclear privacy rules
- Political barriers
- Technology lag
- Accountability for compliance rather than results
- Unfunded costs

A Path Forward

- Create a shared vision for integrating data to answer a broad range of important questions, building on existing models
- Foster development of common standards
- Implement exciting prototypes under current law
- Provide education and technical assistance to overcome myths and encourage widespread adoption of integrated data systems
- Identify remaining barriers requiring legislative change

Frame a Shared Vision Around Important Questions

- Predictive Analytics: Who will benefit from what services?
- Coordination: How can services be coordinated to achieve greater impact?
- Outcome Measurement: What are outcomes for program participants in multiple domains over the long term?
- Impact Evaluation: What are the impacts of alternative strategies?
- Burden Reduction: How can we reuse data that's already been collected for another purpose?

Foster Development of Common Data and Data Exchange Standards

- Utilize the National Academy of Sciences and other forums to convene experts from academia, government, and the private sector to vet model standards for integrating data (e.g., NIEM, AISP)
- Ensure standards allow for future innovation that will further lower cost and maximize security

Create Incentives for States and Localities to Integrate Data

- Through competitions, encourage governors and local government executives to implement integrated data systems to achieve important objectives.
 - Philanthropy: Target resources to jurisdictions using integrated data to tackle problems
 - Federal agencies: Give preference to applicants that will measure outcomes and analyze data from multiple programs

Devise New Prototypes

- Create data matching portals for national data sets
 - Link State, local government, or nonprofit organization data to the National Student Clearinghouse's (NSC's) post-secondary education data and SSA's or IRS's earnings data to measure college enrollment, graduation, and earnings.
- Embed researchers inside agencies with high-value data sets
- Apply new technologies developed by other sectors
- Encourage private sector vendors who manage State and local data sets to develop low-cost solutions for linking and analyzing data

Provide Education and Technical Assistance

- Debunk widespread myths impeding data and analytical capacity
 - Federal agencies should provide proactive technical assistance to State and local governments explaining how data can be shared without violating privacy statutes and regulations
 - OMB and agencies should clarify rules governing what funds grantees can use to finance data infrastructure and analytical capacity
 - Clarify that data capacity and analysis is a core function of a well-run program that can be financed with “program funds,” thus providing a stable source of funding

Identify Remaining Barriers Requiring Legislative Change

- Through focused efforts to develop and implement data solutions that are consistent with current law, identify remaining legal and financial obstacles the Congress will need to address.
- *This work can inform, rather than wait for, the Ryan-Murray Evidence-Based Policy Commission.*

If you have ideas for building capacity to integrate data . . .

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