

Module 5. Build a Recommendation Plan

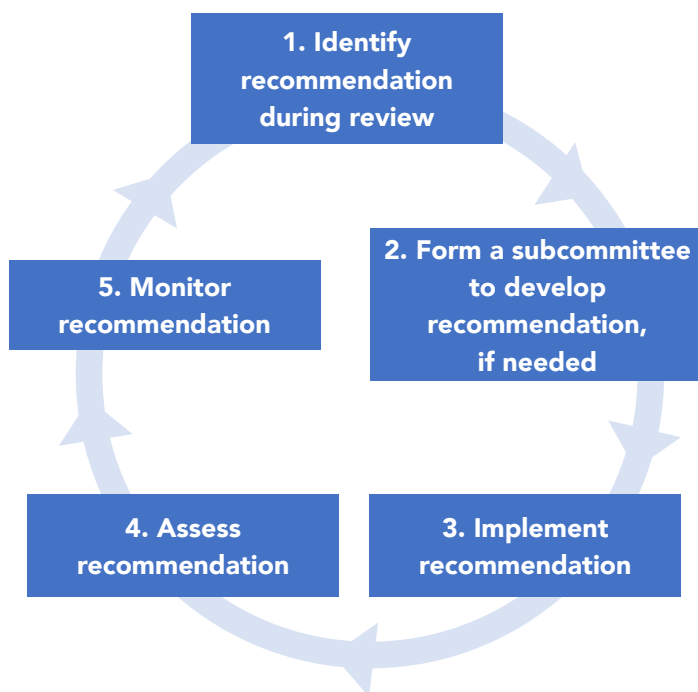


Build a Recommendation Plan



This section summarizes the types of recommendations that may be developed through the overdose fatality review process; provides an overview of the recommendation process, from developing to sustaining recommendations; and offers a method to track, monitor, and assess the implementation of recommendations.

Figure 5.1 Building a Recommendation Plan



5A. Identifying Recommendations During the OFR Review

The overdose fatality review (OFR) process is driven by an action-oriented partnership. Data comes from members representing multiple agencies. Each member gathers and provides potentially sensitive information to the team that informs the understanding of the overdose problem and potential solutions.

Successful OFRs rely on active engagement by members beyond the detailed case discussions, including formation, implementation, assessment, and continuation of prevention strategies. It is important that the OFR facilitator reinforce that recommendations can be identified and implemented through the OFR's collaborative, data-driven, problem-solving process. Learn more about this process in Section 3C. Meeting Agenda, Step 8. Formulate Recommendations.

Problem solving occurs during a collaborative process that fosters accountability and transparency. Identified solutions usually involve a cross-agency response that reduces duplication and information silos. The process is best served if it prioritizes addressing system issues and making recommendations for improvement.

Table 5.1 Recommendation Type

	Target Audience	Definition	Example	
Recommendations	Systemic	Professionals, agencies, and organizations	Addresses a gap, weakness, or problem within a system or across systems	Improve communication between inpatient treatment providers upon discharge to an outpatient, medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD)—formerly known as medication-assisted treatment (MAT)—provided by establishing an automated alert system.
	Agency-Specific	Only one sector or partner agency	Addresses a service gap or failure	Give naloxone to people who have been released from incarceration. Local health department to provide training to all hotel staff members on how to administer naloxone.
	Research	Academic organizations and agencies that research overdose deaths or evaluate programs or policies	Recommendation to research a topic or issue area	Determine the number of deaths from prescription opioids for those who had a prescription for an opioid Establish a process for case review outcomes to inform research priorities.
	OFR Quality Assurance	OFR team	Strengthen or improve the OFR process	Increase the length of meetings to allow for more time developing recommendations.
	Population-Specific	Individuals and groups at increased risk	Evidence-based intervention that will reduce a specific risk factor for overdose	Increase access to buprenorphine among incarcerated populations.

Types of Recommendations

OFR teams may generate a variety of recommendation types across the continuum of care or systems as outlined in Table 5.1 Recommendation Type.

5B. Documenting Recommendations

The OFR initial recommendations are captured in the meeting minutes and in the recommendations section of the OFR database. More detailed recommendation-related information captured in the OFR database includes:

- A public summary of the recommendation
- A working summary of the recommendation
- Date recommendation identified
- Cases related to the recommendation
- Data sources shared at the review meeting
- OFR members present at the review meeting
- Type of recommendation (e.g., agency-specific or research-related)
- Level of prevention
- Population or issue of focus
- Jurisdiction level responsible for implementing the recommendation
- Agency responsible for implementing the recommendation and contact information
- Status of the recommendation
- Recommendation strategies (short-, medium-, and long-term)
- Recommendation implementation accomplishments
- Notes regarding any media coverage

5C. Forming a Subcommittee to Develop Recommendations

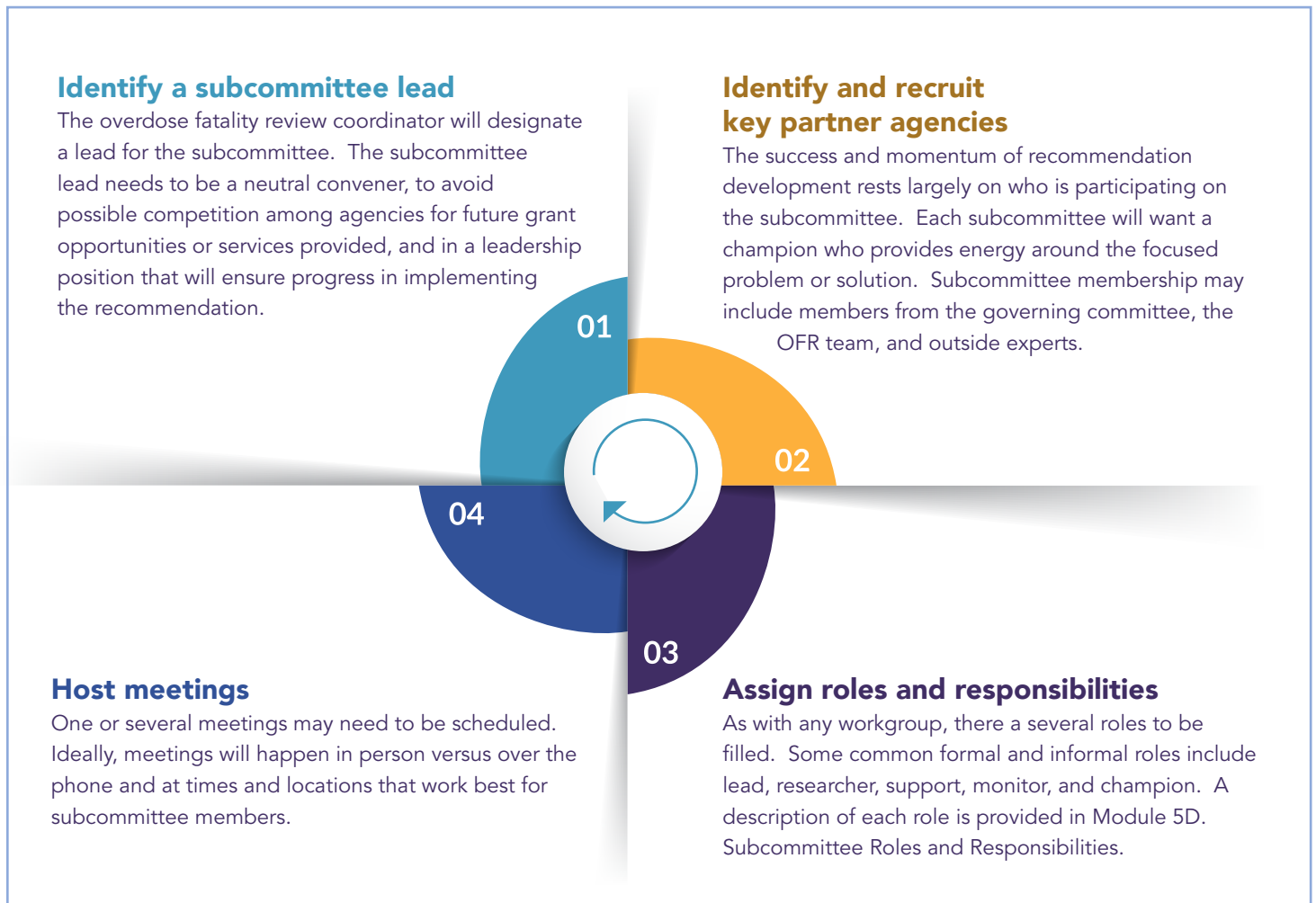
Recommendations can be diverse, and some are easier to implement than others. Planning and implementing recommendations is a very rewarding process that can have immediate and tangible results. Some recommendations maintain momentum, and others may slowly lose support. The process can be challenging when factors outside of the OFR team's control impact progress. Creating subcommittees to focus and implement specific recommendations can maintain momentum by building sustained internal and external support for the strategy.

Subcommittees assigned to lead the development and implementation of a recommendation will want to follow the steps outlined in Figure 5.2 Forming a Subcommittee:

Reminder:

Subcommittees meet separately from the OFR team and report out at case review meetings on their aims and progress. Subcommittees are formed and disbanded as needed, serving temporarily or on an ongoing basis.

Figure 5.2 Forming a Subcommittee



5D. Subcommittee Roles and Responsibilities

It takes multiple stakeholders to effectively develop, implement, and monitor recommendations. This section reviews the OFR coordinator's, facilitator's, and subcommittee members' roles and responsibilities regarding recommendations.

OFR coordinator and facilitator roles and responsibilities

The process for developing and implementing recommendations is collaborative and fluid. Success is possible only with open communication, timely information sharing, and trust building. Trust must be established in both the process and the other agencies involved.

The OFR coordinator must be able to manage competing agendas, interagency conflicts, and unpopular or criticized recommendations and to ensure partners that the process is fair, data-driven, and likely to produce results.

The OFR coordinator is responsible for designating the subcommittee lead, recruiting participants, supporting the subcommittee as needed, and checking regularly with the subcommittee on the status of the development and implementation of recommendations.



The OFR facilitator is responsible for developing trust and collaboration through the entire OFR process; both are crucial to successfully implementing recommendations.

Subcommittee members' roles and responsibilities

- **Lead**—The OFR coordinator assigns the subcommittee lead. The lead is responsible for setting the agenda, facilitating subcommittee meetings, taking notes, sending reminders, monitoring activities, and reporting to the OFR facilitator and others as identified (such as the governing committee or the OFR team).
- **Researcher**—The OFR coordinator designates a team member to present data trends such as overdose deaths, substances, hot spots, and related prevention and risk factors, as well as policy, practices, or procedures for a system or agency. This information helps inform decisions and guide the implementation of recommendations.
- **Supporter**—The OFR coordinator designates a supporter to provide minimal informal support as requested from the subcommittee. Examples of support may be connecting the subcommittee with an individual or an agency, finding meeting space, or reviewing draft materials.
- **Monitor**—The OFR coordinator works with the subcommittee lead to systematically monitor the implementation of a recommendation, ensure that it is addressing the problem it was intended to resolve, suggest refinements, ensure the status of the recommendation is tracked in the OFR database, and periodically report results to the OFR team and/or the governing committee.
- **Champion**—Any member who provides motivation, political will, and energy around the focused problem or solution is a champion.



5E. Implementing a Recommendation

Once the subcommittee has developed a recommendation, it needs to be implemented. It is important to do so strategically. The subcommittee lead may consider sharing recommendation materials with persons not on the subcommittee for their review and feedback.

The subcommittee must develop a work plan for implementing the recommendation.

Develop a work plan

The subcommittee is responsible for developing a work plan that:

- Identifies key action steps needed to implement and monitor the recommendation.
- Assigns responsibility to members and partners.
- Determines intermediate measures of success.
- Establishes a realistic timeline for completion.

A sample recommendation work plan is included in Appendix E.

5F. Assessing and Monitoring Recommendations

Plans for assessing and monitoring recommendations need to be developed at the beginning of the initiative. Steps for regularly updating and tracking the status of recommendations include the following:

1. Giving status updates

The subcommittee lead will check regularly with subcommittee members on the status of assigned tasks and implementation.

2. Reporting to the OFR coordinator

Prior to each fatality review and scheduled governing committee meetings, the subcommittee lead will provide the OFR coordinator with status updates on the implementation as well as ongoing plans to monitor and support recommendations. The subcommittee lead will likely provide a verbal progress report during OFR case review meetings.

3. Tracking the status of a recommendation

Documenting the implementation status of a recommendation is encouraged. The OFR coordinator, in partnership with the subcommittee monitor role, is responsible for systematically monitoring the status of recommendations. If the OFR coordinator is not involved throughout the recommendation implementation process, he or she will need to follow up with partners (for example, the subcommittee lead or monitor) to learn the status of the recommendation. The OFR coordinator will work with the OFR data manager to ensure the status of the recommendation is tracked in the OFR database. Recommendation data elements are included in the OFR database discussed in Module 4E. Data Collection System.