

## **Chapter Four**

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**Strategies for  
Performance  
Measurement, Quality  
Improvement and  
Financing Services**

## **Symposium**

# **Using Logic Models as a Framework for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Efforts: Results from the CMHS CQI Benchmarking Initiative**

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### **Symposium Introduction**

This symposium exemplified how logic models can be used as the framework for continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts. The symposium included three paper presentations, including (1) an overview of the logic model in Monroe County, NY and how it has led CQI efforts, (2) an overview of the logic model in Central Massachusetts Communities of Care program and their plans for using the logic to guide CQI efforts, and (3) a presentation of the CMHS CQI Progress Report and how at the national level the program logic model provided a framework for performance measurement and CQI efforts. Two local examples of how developing theories of change and how clearly defined logic models serve as the framework for continuous quality improvement efforts were presented. Project staff from two federally funded system-of-care communities presented their logic models and highlighted the purpose and process of their efforts as well as their actual and intended utilization. Following the local presentations, the national evaluators for the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program presented preliminary findings from the CQI Report and Benchmarking Initiative and discussed the utility of the program logic model in designing the report and interpreting the findings. Finally, Mario Hernandez and Sharon Hodges led a discussion that centered on the utility of logic models from various perspectives.

### **Chair & Discussant**

Angela K. Sheehan

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### **Discussants**

Sharon Hodges

Mario Hernandez

## **Theories of Change from a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Perspective: Integration of the Logic Model, CQI and Technical Assistance in Monroe County**

Jody Levison-Johnson

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### **Introduction**

The Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program provides funding to communities across the country to implement service programs that meet the emotional and behavioral health needs of children with severe emotional disturbance using a system of care model.

In 2005, Monroe County was awarded cooperative agreement funding by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to develop ACCESS: Achieving Culturally Competent Effective Services and Supports. An initial step in the planning efforts was to effectively articulate the community's theory of change which would establish the foundation for system of care development. Using several components of the logic model process outlined in *Crafting Logic Models in Systems of Care: Ideas Into Action* (Hernandez and Hodges, 2003), Monroe County used the original grant narrative submission to delineate levels of focus, population context, strengths and resources, strategies and actions, and intended short and long-term outcomes.

By engaging in this logic model process, ACCESS staff, both newly hired and established, were compelled to clearly define the intended purpose of the grant activities and assure that these activities were outlined for each level of intended impact—system, organization and practice. The process

of committing an initial logic model to paper was a very valuable exercise for the community, and encouraged a dialogue between those involved in the original submission for grant funding and those who had joined the community's team as a result of the funding. It also encouraged participants to engage in interactions which resulted in further clarification and a deeper understanding by all.

Throughout the process, Monroe County committed to use the logic model as the basis for continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities including the identification of technical assistance needs. Because the logic model provides the foundation for all grant activities by articulating the community's theory of change, it requires frequent revisiting and revision as the community learns about the impact of strategies on outcomes and seeks to implement technical assistance in areas of identified need.

## **Methods**

Continued concern regarding the community's ability to meet the complex needs of cross-systems children and youth, particularly those of African-American and Latino descent and those later in the age spectrum (14-21), was the foundation for Monroe County's cooperative agreement application. Prior to submission, Monroe County conducted an extensive needs assessment and planning process which involved multiple stakeholders from across the county. This forum, the "Children's System of Care Task Force," served as the initial agent to gain cross-community input and buy-in to what would ultimately culminate in the ACCESS Logic Model. The Task Force membership was broad-based, and included representation from all of Monroe County's formal child-serving systems (mental health, juvenile justice, child welfare, education, development disabilities, alcohol & substance abuse, health); it also incorporated the voices of families, youth and grassroots and community-based efforts. Because Monroe County was committed to formulating a theory of change that incorporated the views of representatives from the population of focus and the communities in which they live, the outreach beyond the traditional systems and providers was intentional.

Once funding was received, the ACCESS Project Team, which is comprised of a diverse group of individuals from a variety of backgrounds, set about to articulate what had been proposed by the Task Force into the ACCESS Logic Model. This logic model currently serves as the basis for Monroe County's emerging system of care and will be further refined as the community progresses through system of care development.

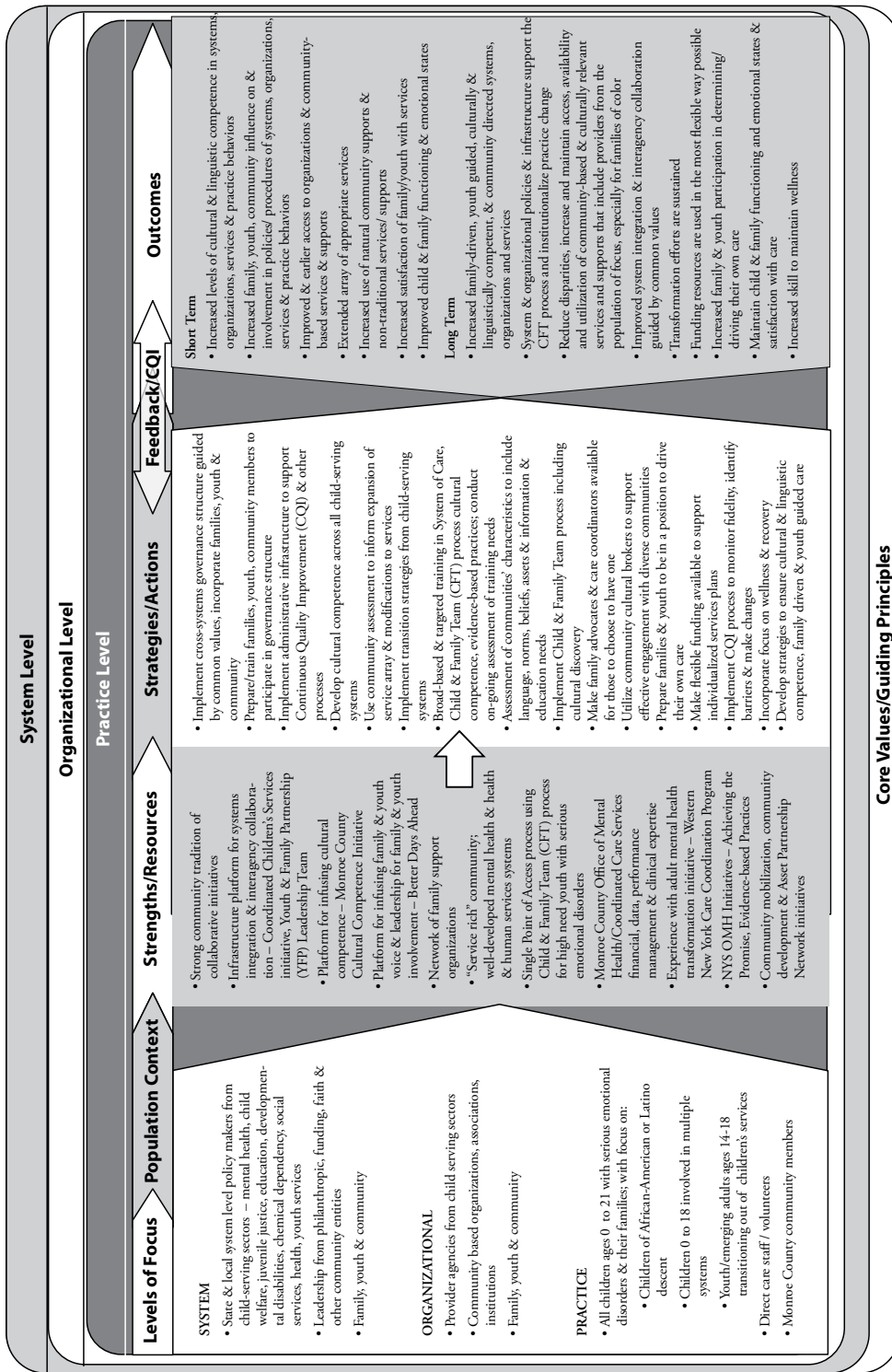
The logic model serves as Monroe County's "roadmap to success" by clearly articulating the theory of change and by setting the stage for the community's CQI process. Intended outcomes of this transformation initiative have been defined at all levels: system, organizational and practice (see Figure 1). The ACCESS evaluation team, together with the core project team, has worked to identify indicators for areas that will be assessed by the national and local evaluation. Through the input of the community's five Council governance structure (i.e., Transformation Leadership Council, Family Council, Youth Council, Cultural and Linguistic Competence Council, and Research to Practice Council and other workgroups, and constituent groups), the logic model will be adapted and modified to assure that defined strategies result in the intended outcomes. This will also allow the opportunity for refinements to the theory of change and logic model based on the community's progress to date. The process will establish the expectation that the logic model is not merely a document, but rather a living and evolving process which effectively and efficiently integrates new information to assure that Monroe County is successful in achieving its vision: to assure that all and youth within Monroe County facing emotional and behavioral challenges and their families attain their full potential and achieve success, as they define it, in an environment based on system of care values and principles. This process also will support the community in the identification of technical assistance needs in a coordinated manner and allow the community to seek support for areas of identified need in a data informed manner (see Figure 2).

# ACCESS

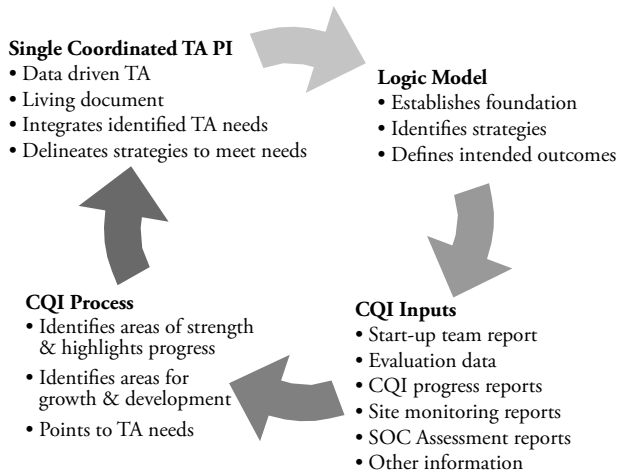
Achieving Culturally  
Competent and Effective  
Services and Supports

**ACCESS Vision:** All families and youth within Monroe County facing emotional and behavioral challenges attain their full potential and achieve success, as they define it, in an environment based on System of Care values and principles. Families and youth are active participants in the collaborative process of transforming the way the community responds to the needs of children and their families in Monroe County.

**Figure 1**  
**Monroe County ACCESS Logic Model—Summary View**



**Figure 2**  
**The Monroe County ACCESS CQI Approach**



## Results

Monroe County has articulated its initial theory of change into the ACCESS Logic Model. The logic model process has served as a useful tool for bringing together the staff of the ACCESS project. The logic model has been shared with ACCESS Councils, workgroups and other constituent groups as an orientation to purpose, proposed strategies and intended outcomes for Monroe County's system of care.

## Conclusion

The initial ACCESS Logic Model represents the community's "best guess" at articulating a theory of change at the beginning of grant funding. The logic modeling process served as an important exercise in developing critical understandings and moving toward uniting around a common vision for Monroe County's system of care. Moving forward, the ACCESS governance structure, workgroups and other constituent groups will use the logic model and data from the local and national evaluations to both refine the theory of change and to use it as a basis for CQI efforts, including the identification of technical assistance needs. This process is critically important for systems of care aspiring to realize their vision and ultimately attain sustainability and will result in a dynamic, data-informed and evolutionary system of care in Monroe County.

## Reference

Hernandez, M., & Hodges, S. (2003). Building upon theory of change for systems of care. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 11(1), 19-26.