Maintaining Program Fidelity
A Guide to Strategies for Improving Program Quality in the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

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Foreword

This guidebook reviews key issues related to evidence-based programming, the role of treatment fidelity strategies and their place in a quality driven approach to the delivery of the Chronic Disease Self Management Program (CDSMP). The guide is a result of the collective experiences of the many T-Trainers, Master Trainers, Peer Leaders, Program Implementers, Stanford Patient Education Research Staff and program developer Dr. Kate Lorig. The guide combines standard components of a CDSMP program fidelity strategy with practice wisdom and practical advice. It is meant to assist you in assuring high quality programming to meet or exceed the needs or your program participants. The text is not exhaustive; rather, it proposes a number of approaches to maintaining program fidelity and a context for assessing the fidelity and quality of your program. We would like to thank all of the CDSMP participants, trainees, trainers and leaders who have shared their wisdom with us over the years and for whom this guide was written.

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Section A: Program Fidelity – Why it Matters

What is Program Fidelity?

At the organizational/agency level, program fidelity refers to how closely staff and others (i.e. peer leaders, trainers, and evaluators) follow the program that the developers provide. This includes consistency of delivery as intended as well as program timing and costs.

The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) is an evidence-based program that clearly defines core program elements and methods that, when followed closely, help to assure the quality of the program and enhance program outcomes for both individuals and organizations.

How does fidelity support evidence-based programming?

The popularity of “evidence-based” programs (EBPs) has increased dramatically since 1994 when there were approximately 86 officially coined “evidence-based” products known to the provider community (Hoagwood & Johnson, 2003). In 2006, The National Council on Aging identified seven components of an EBP including:

- a specific target population
- specific, measurable goals
- stated reasoning and proven benefits
- well-defined program structure and timeframe
- specific staffing needs/skills
- specified facility and equipment needs
- built-in program evaluation to measure program quality and health outcomes

Developing and monitoring program fidelity using strategies that are measurable and sustainable is crucial to both the effectiveness and quality delivery of an evidence-based program like the CDSMP.

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**Why is program fidelity a critical part of program quality?**

Program fidelity is crucial to the integrity of the program and quality outcomes. Program delivery that is not true to the empirical research that supports it decreases the likelihood that the program will deliver the desired outcomes; this may result in harm. Poor quality fidelity can result in a range of unintended effects for participants, leaders and trainers. To deliver the highest quality program faithful to the evidence supporting it, fidelity monitoring must be a thoughtful, comprehensive part of an overall Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) plan necessary to sustain high quality and effective programs.

Implementing a comprehensive fidelity strategy uses project resources. Allocation of resources to fidelity strategies requires careful consideration on a project-by-project basis. In general, consider the following:

- Resources devoted to poor quality fidelity strategies will not benefit your program or your participants. Resources for program fidelity must assure quality program delivery or the use of resources is without benefit and may greatly increase program costs unnecessarily and place the program out of the market of available programs. **Select strategies carefully.**
- An abundance of resources devoted to program fidelity strategies reduces available resources for other program implementation activities. **Allocate resources wisely.**

Program planners and implementers must consider the amount and purpose of resources allocated for program fidelity needed to deliver a quality program faithful to intervention design. This guide contains a compilation of program fidelity strategies available to planners and implementers of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program. It is not exhaustive and instead provides ideas to generate discussion and innovation. The guide uses “real life” scenarios from the field to prepare persons charged with maintaining the integrity/fidelity and quality of the program with situations they may encounter and possible responses.
What Strategies Can We Use to Assure Faithful and Quality Delivery of the CDSMP?

There are varieties of strategies that adhere to established standards and that can assist your pursuit of CDSMP delivery. When considering program fidelity as part of a wider quality implementation effort, consider using a multi-level approach as outlined below. This type of approach to QA/QI provides mechanisms to assure quality standards and address potential weaknesses to program fidelity and quality. Among them:

- Screening during recruitment for trainers/leaders
- Direct observation of trainers/leaders during training and in the field
- Monitoring participant attendance data and drop-out rates
- Calling leaders/trainers and participants during and/or after the workshops
- Review and comparison of participant satisfaction surveys or other feedback
- Review of program evaluation data
- Development of fidelity in-service training for trainers/leaders
- Establishing re-certification for leaders/trainers
- Trainer/leader self-evaluation
- Trainer/leader post-workshop peer feedback
- Trainer/leader mentoring
- And many more…

The next three sections of this guide discuss many strategies to assist your program fidelity efforts. The guide focuses on strategies ranging from front line approaches before and during training to ongoing methods used both during and after the workshop. In each section, you will find a list of red flags or likely indicators of problems with program fidelity that require follow-up. You will also find a list of strategies to identify and address fidelity issues ranging from minimum requirements to advanced opportunities for program improvement. In addition, advice on counseling out leaders/trainers is included along with brief discussions of cultural considerations and adaptations. Finally, we provide tools to assist in monitoring and tracking your efforts. These tools can be found listed on the Resources page at the end of each section.
**Section A: Resources**

Links to most resources can be found at [http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files](http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files)

### Websites

Websites of interest to those concerned with program fidelity:

- **Stanford Patient Education Research Center:**
  - [http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs/](http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs/)
  - [http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/training/](http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/training/)

- **Center for Healthy Aging, National Council on Aging:**

- **Center for Excellence in Aging & Community Wellness, Quality and Technical Assistance Center (QTAC):**

- **RE-AIM Framework:**
  - [http://www.re-aim.org/](http://www.re-aim.org/)

### Tool Box Documents

Links to these resources can be found at [http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files](http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files)

- **Effective Practice Standard (EPS): Program Fidelity as Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Narrative**
- **EPS Framework-Logic Model**

### Other Resource Documents

Links to these resources can be found at [http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files](http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files)

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NCOA Maintaining Fidelity Tool

Bibliography

Section B: Opportunities for Fidelity Before and During Training

**WHO:** Workshop/program coordinators; Master Trainers; T-Trainees.

**WHAT:** Ensuring minimum program quality and implementing quality improvement efforts.

**WHEN:** Leader recruitment and/or training.

**HOW:** Use of screening tools and formal screening process; following established training protocol.

The CDSMP uses well-established methods for evaluating the ability and willingness of trainees to maintain fidelity standards. Trainers use these standards along with their skills and experiences to model and enforce training fidelity. Good program fidelity begins with good training. And good training starts with good recruitment.

Trainers must enforce these standards during training or the result will be trainers/leaders unable or unwilling to follow standards when delivering workshops. This may do harm to participants, leaders and programs. Because training provides the first opportunity to assure good program fidelity, it is also the best and most efficient time to set the standard for your program.

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**Red Flags Before and During Training**

The following is a list of likely red flags that indicate poor fidelity during training. Observations and/or reports of any of the following require your investigation to assure program quality throughout implementation. (The term trainee refers to either a leader or master trainer in training).

- Trainer/leader pre-training screening indicates unwillingness to follow protocols (e.g. unwilling/unable to attend all training days, over-inflated sense of personal knowledge or skills, use of judgmental language or behaviors during pre-training interview or recruitment efforts, unwilling/unable to commit to training or leading classes, evidence of a personal agenda, etc.)
Observation or report of a trainee who does not “follow the script”
Observation or report of a trainee who exhibits poor training techniques (e.g. brainstorming, modeling, adding content to lecturettes, etc.)
Observation or report of a trainee who becomes defensive during feedback from peers, trainers or participants
A trainee who is not literate in the language in which they will lead workshops or train leaders; and in which the manual they will train from is written
Observations or report of a trainee who has ulterior motives or agendas (explicitly stated or unconsciously expressed) for the workshop (e.g. to advance a particular point of view regarding health/wellness, to sell products/services, etc.)
Observation or report of a trainee who spends too much time talking about him/herself (consider the One-minute rule)
Observation or report of a trainee who talks down to peers/participants during training
Observation or report of trainee who uses judgmental language or exhibits judgmental behavior (e.g. bullying behavior, sexual undertones or sexist remarks, racist remarks, condescending language, bursts of anger or anger-laced comments to trainers, co-leader and/or participants)

**Fidelity before Training**

Training Fidelity and all program fidelity begins with the people you select to lead your programs and train your leaders. Recruiting from a pool of people who have experience with the workshop can help. CDSMP workshop graduates are a rich source of quality leaders, as are strong leaders when recruiting for Master Trainers. This is not to say that this method is foolproof; however, trainees familiar with the workshop often make good leaders/trainers. It may be difficult to find experienced leaders or graduates when you are just starting your program. In any case, the following is a list of qualities to look for in trainees:

- Someone who has taken the CDSMP workshop as a participant
- Someone who has chronic condition, if possible; or has experience living with or caring for a friend or family member with chronic illness. At least one of the pair of leaders must have a chronic condition.
Someone who, as a leader, commits to leading at least one workshop within the first twelve (six is better) months after training, and at least one workshop annually thereafter.

- If the person is a Master Trainer trainee, a commitment to lead two workshops within the first twelve months (preferably the first within six months) after training, train a group of peer leaders within the first 18 months after training and delivering initial workshops, and who is willing to train a group of leaders every two years to maintain their MT status.

Someone who is comfortable with public speaking and leading groups

Someone who is comfortable with presenting the program strictly as written in the Leader’s or Master Trainer’s Manual (no personal agendas!)

Someone who is committed to helping others with chronic conditions, as a peer not a professional, to develop skills and knowledge to better self-manage their chronic condition

Someone with a willingness to learn and accept feedback and constructive criticism

Someone who is enthusiastic, accepting and supporting of persons with chronic conditions and open to new ideas, cultures and information

Someone who is literate in the language the workshop will be taught in and in which the manual is written

Someone from the same target group as the participants – this pertains not only to the cultural group but to the social class as well

Organizations implementing the CDSMP choose their leaders or master trainers in different ways but usually based upon the above characteristics. When considering how your organization will choose those that represent your workshop in your community, consider using all or some of these qualities based upon your capacity. Keep in mind that the ideal male to female ratio of leaders is 3:10.

One way of finding the right people to fit the workshop is to implement a screening process for prospective leaders or master trainers. Screening tools may consist of a welcome packet including a letter to confirm the person’s interest and to introduce you and your program/organization, CDSMP FAQ sheet, job description, and a contact information form to be completed by the prospective trainee.

A second tool to consider is a list of standard questions for the person to answer and mail back to you or bring with them to a pre-scheduled interview (generally lasting 30 – 45 minutes). The interview can include standard questions like:

- Why are you interested in becoming a leader or master trainer?
- Do you have a chronic condition and/or care for someone who does?
Can you meet the necessary time commitment (e.g. 4-4.5 day training, 2.5 hours/week for 6 weeks)?

Are you willing to provide us with a specific teaching commitment (numbers of workshop series) with specific time and place (if workshops are, as a matter of practice, established prior to the recruitment and subsequent training of leaders)?

Are you willing and able to follow a standardized manual?

What is your work/community background?

How comfortable are you with facilitating a group, maintaining confidentiality, etc.?

You may also consider asking for references as well as completing a background check on potential leaders/trainers depending on the needs of your program and established procedures within your organization.

Some organizations have asked potential leaders/trainers to sign an agreement or MOU with them as a measure of their commitment.

By committing some extra time on the front end of the recruitment process, you may find that you ultimately save more time and avoid the unpleasantness of managing challenging leaders or master trainers during trainings or in community workshops. You will also save resources as training is the likely the highest cost center/expense to program delivery.

### Leader Certification

- Must be able to attend all 4 days of training (24 hours) and successfully complete two practice teachings during training. This is the first of two requirements to obtain the Leader Certification. Success is determined by the Master Trainers according to specified criteria.

- Must satisfy the practice requirement (second of two requirements) by facilitating one 6-week workshop within 12 months from Training Date (Training Date = last day of training). Better if this happens within 6 months of Training Date. The date of the last session of the 6-week workshop series is considered the Leader Certification Date.

- To remain active as Leader, must commit to facilitating at least one 6-week workshop (all six sessions) every 12 months from the Certification Date (see bullet above).

- If Leaders become inactive, they may (if available locally) attend a refresher course (should not be more than once every 2 years).

- If Leaders become inactive and the option of a refresher course is not available, must attend a new 4 days training.
A Word about Recruiting Master Trainers

When recruiting Master Trainers, the preceding list should be considered along with some other important qualities including:

- A willingness to strictly adhere to the standardized manual by hyper modeling training/teaching techniques that are used in the CDSMP.
- The ability and willingness to tell a trainee that they cannot act as a leader, and the skills to “fail” a trainee by stating the specific reasons behind the decision, delivering the decision with tact by focusing on behaviors and not personalities.
- They are currently certified as a leader and have taught in the past year.
- The ability to provide references of where they have taught the workshop in the past year.

Master Trainer Certification

- Must have attended a 4.5 day Master Training. This is the first of two requirements to obtain the Master Trainer Certification.

- Must satisfy the practice requirement (second of two requirements) by facilitating two workshops as a Leader, either before attending the Master Training or within 12 months of the Master Training, to be certified as a Master Trainer.

- Must have returned their signed Master Training Certification Form to Stanford and must have received notice of certification from Stanford.

- To remain certified, every 12 months from Certification Date, must conduct either a 4-day Leader Training or a 6-week series of community workshops. Must facilitate the first 4-day Leader Training no later than within 18 months of completing Master Training.

- This applies to each program for which MT is certified. Every 2 years MT must conduct one full Leader Training in one (any) program for which MT is certified.

- If inactive in any program for a period of 12 months (have not facilitated community workshops or Leader trainings), MT’s need to be re-trained.
Fidelity during Training: Minimum Requirements

Training Fidelity in the CDSMP is supported by materials and protocols for trainings and workshops that all trainees, Peer Leaders and Master Trainers, must understand and be willing to follow. These include:

- A written train-the-trainer and workshop leader curriculum available to trained and certified Master and T-Trainers exclusively through Stanford Patient Education Research Center. This is a legal requirement of the licensing agreement between Stanford University and the licensee.
- As a license holder of a Stanford Self-Management Program, your organization will receive the relevant manuals for its leaders and trainers. It is the responsibility of the licensee to distribute hard copies of the manuals to its active leaders and trainers and to ensure that all involved are using the most up-to-date copy.
- The manuals have copyright dates and are indicated by the year of the most recent version of the program (e.g. Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, 2012). This date does not change until a revision of the program takes place.
- Manuals also have revision dates due to corrections in grammatical errors and typos, to clarify instructions and messages, or to update content according to recent disease specific guidelines. Revisions are indicated using month and year (e.g. April 2012 revision). The date can be found on the front page of the manual and in the footer.

- Established training protocols that include:
  - Four days of training for Peer Leaders and 4.5 days for Master Trainers. (Note: Training can take place in a single week or preferably spread over two weeks to enable trainees to enjoy a more realistic application of training concepts and skills such as Action Planning.)
  - Training must be successfully completed in full without exception for the trainee to be eligible to begin leading workshops/trainings.
  - Trainees must successfully complete the second practice teaching session. (Note: Successful completion of the first practice is also possible; but many trainees are unfamiliar with materials creating a
general nervousness that makes this difficult. The first practice teaching session is an opportunity for trainees to understand expectations and develop skills. For more information on guidance related to the successful completion of the practice teaching activities please see the Toolbox at the end of this guide.)

- Trainees must provide proof of affiliation with an organization licensed by Stanford University to deliver the program (this ensures ongoing support for workshop implementation).
- Trainees who are working under your organization’s license must enter into an agreed upon commitment such as an MOU or a written agreement.
- Scripted program-specific activities (action-planning, brainstorming, problem-solving, and decision-making) should be conducted according to training guidelines. (For more information on program activities please see the Toolbox at the end of this guide.)

Training in established program fidelity methods:

- The CDSMP Master and Leader Training introduce the topic of fidelity by stating “this Program is standardized and MUST be taught as written in the Leader’s Manual.” (Chronic Disease Self-Management Program Master Trainer’s Manual, 2012, Training Day 1, p. 6). This begins a process where trainers demonstrate the importance of fidelity to trainees by following the script during training and discussing the importance of the need for trainees to do the same both during training and throughout their delivery of the CDSMP as Master Trainers and/or Peer Leaders.
- The CDSMP training manuals for leaders and Master Trainers contain an activity on the last day of training that is specific to program fidelity. It lays out Stanford’s top 10 qualities or characteristics present in leaders and Master Trainers, such as:
  - Adheres to the curriculum (also includes appropriate presentation of charts)
  - Facilitates group contributions in the following types of activities:
  - Brainstorming
• Action Plan Formulation
• Action Plan Feedback
• Problem Solving
• Handles difficult group dynamics and problem participants effectively
• Speaks comfortably in front of a group
• Does not judge people and actions
• Models activities appropriately
• Sticks to time / agendas
• Is willing to complete required pre-requisites like teaching certain number of courses, giving evaluations, observe another leader, etc.
• Listens and incorporates feedback given by Master Trainers
• Works cooperatively with co-leader.
When things go wrong:

Problem: A trainee is unable or unwilling to complete training days/activities.

Response: Despite the best efforts of recruitment staff, sometimes one or more trainees have scheduling conflicts with some part of the training. This situation should be handled on a case-by-case basis. Trainers should seek to understand the circumstances surrounding trainee absence and consider the trainee’s:

- Current status (experienced leader, former participant, etc)
  - Training activities that will be missed
  - Time away from the training
  - Willingness to “make up” missed activities

Trainers may decide that the absence is acceptable and determine what conditions, if any, the trainee must follow to qualify as a leader/trainer. For example, trainers may:

- Spend time with trainee making-up missed activities before or after training that day.
- Decide make up is not necessary if the trainee is an experienced leader and practice teaches indicate sufficient skill level.
- Have trainee complete all possible training activities and make up the time missed during a subsequent training.
- Decide that it would be best for the trainee to register for the next available training.

Managing situations on a case-by-case basis is possible provided that your approach is rational, consistent and supports standard training methods and requirements. Training manuals support the need for all trainees to complete all 4 or 4.5 days of training without exception and applying this standard strictly is the preferred method for managing trainee absence. Very seldom is it acceptable to miss activities during the training – notable exceptions might include a sudden death in the family or a bad accident.
When monitoring for training fidelity, please also consider the following at Peer Leader Trainings:

- Observe Master Trainers to ensure that training activities are being conducted according to the approved training curriculum for Peer Leaders.
- Remember that periodic updates are made to training and/or workshop manuals, so be sure Master Trainers are using the current manual. Participating in Stanford Patient Education Research Center listservs will keep you informed when changes do take place. All licensed organizations receive updates through email communication from Stanford University.
- Observe leader trainees to be sure that they effectively participate in training activities including action planning, problem solving, brainstorming, role plays, making charts, practice teaches, etc.
- Observe the way leader trainees interact with one another and with trainers being sure to look for red flags and address any observed/reported red flags with the trainee promptly and constructively.

When monitoring for training fidelity during Master Trainings, please consider the above statements AND:

- Observe T-Trainers to ensure that training activities are being conducted effectively according to the approved training curriculum for Master Trainers. To be effective, T-Trainers should appropriately and completely model training and workshop activities, sometimes overemphasizing (or hyper-modeling) specific skills and techniques to ensure proper modeling.

- Observe Master Trainer trainees to ensure that trainees exhibit qualities of effective Master Trainers. Effective Master Trainer trainees will:
  - Demonstrate good facilitation skills including enthusiasm, non-judgmental attitude and language, appropriate group/time management skills and patience.
  - Follow the script, modeling workshop activities appropriately (e.g. making good action plans, using problem solving and brainstorming, supporting peers, etc.).
  - Ask questions to help improve their skills and respond non-defensively to feedback from peers/trainers.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills to effectively manage practice teaching and be responsive to leader trainee questions and concerns. Observe Master Trainer trainees during role-play activities and practice teaching to see that feedback is direct, behavior based and instructive.
- Demonstrate the skills and willingness to “fail” potential leaders from the training. Although difficult to do, a qualified Master Trainer must understand this is part of the role of a Master Trainer and be willing and able to “fail” or “counsel out” leader trainees. Many, but not all, leader trainees unwilling or unable to meet qualifications will self-select out of the training. Master Trainers should let all leader trainees know that completing the training does not guarantee that they will lead workshops. Master Trainers will assess their ability to lead workshops throughout the training and will determine whether they have qualified to lead workshops.

When making observations during training if you as a Master Trainer/T-Trainer have doubts about the ability of a trainee to lead workshops or train others, **DO NOT ALLOW THE TRAINEE TO LEAD WORKSHOPS** or **CONDUCT TRAININGS**! While it will almost always be awkward to “fail” a trainee, it is critical to good program fidelity. Remember, good training leads to good fidelity. Poor training leads to poor programming that reflects negatively on your organization and on the programs in your community and elsewhere. Although it can be very uncomfortable for everyone involved, counseling a trainee out of the program at this point is one of the most effective ways to ensure good program fidelity. There is more information, guidance, tips and strategies on methods to counsel out trainees in the Toolbox at the end of this guide.
**When things go wrong:**

**Problem:** A trainee does not successfully complete practice teaching opportunities.

**Response:** Trainers are responsible for assessing whether or not a trainee has demonstrated a minimum level of skill during the practice teach to assure that the trainee is prepared to lead workshops. Trainers should take this role very seriously as it is critical to program quality in the field. If trainers believe a trainee has not successfully completed the practice teach and/or is not otherwise prepared to lead workshops, trainers will counsel out the trainee(s). (Please see the Resources page at the end of this section.) Always confer with your co-trainer to discuss the trainee in question. Talk to the trainee as soon as you see a problem and do not wait to see if it will fix itself; it most likely won’t. The longer you wait the harder this becomes, and always be very concrete with your explanation of why he or she will not pass the training. Inform the trainee of your decision in private – either at a break or at the end of the day. Suggesting other ways the person may be able to assist with the program sometimes helps; for example, conducting community presentations, outreach, marketing, etc.

**A Word about Practice Teaching Sessions:**

The first practice teaching opportunity should provide some clues to trainers about whether or not a particular trainee may be having difficulty delivering content, managing workshop participants and/or demonstrating training techniques. The first practice teaching is a perfect opportunity to give constructive feedback to trainees and address any concerns. If, after the first practice teaching, there are any concerns about a trainee, the trainers should talk to that person privately. Remember to be very specific in your feedback. If there are any serious doubts about the person’s ability to lead the workshop, do NOT urge them to continue with the training.

Sometimes, trainees show a working knowledge and minimum skills during practice teaching that indicates they will likely be successful leading workshops or trainings in the field with a little more training or field experience. In this case, trainers should make suggestions to program management/implementation staff about how to assist
the trainee to achieve the desired skill level before they are permitted to lead workshops independently with a co-leader. Some suggestions include:

- If ever you are in doubt, **DO NOT ALLOW THE TRAINEE TO LEAD WORKSHOPS or CONDUCT TRAININGS!**
- Have the trainee assist an experienced pair of leaders as a third leader at a workshop. The experienced leaders can support the trainee and report to your team about their progress. Your team can decide if and when the trainee is ready to lead workshops independently with a co-leader.
- Pair the trainee with a very experienced leader/trainer and re-assess the candidate with input from the experienced leader/trainer.
- Have your trainers or other program fidelity experts observe the leader in the workshop setting and develop a plan to improve their skills.
- Recommend that the trainee needs more practice and register them for the next full training; a willingness to repeat the training is an encouraging sign but does not guarantee the trainee will develop needed skills to lead workshops even after repeating the training.
- Counsel the trainer out of the role of leader/trainer. Suggest other ways they might help the program.

**Best Practices for Trainers during Practice Teaching:**

- Practice teaching can be very intimidating. Support trainees with encouraging feedback. This is helpful but should not be a substitute for direct and constructive feedback that is behavior based.

- Sometimes trainees report outside appointments or commitments or suddenly become sick during the scheduled practice teaching times. This may be a sign that they are afraid or uncomfortable doing a practice teach. If this appears to be the case, it may indicate that the person is not ready to facilitate workshops.

- It is helpful to remind all trainees that the first practice teaching is generally more difficult than the second and that we are all here to learn from one another.
You might also remind trainees that workshop participants will not have a copy of the manual and therefore will not know if they have made an error; because of this, leaders can feel comfortable to return to the script to ensure delivery of all content. This will help some trainees to relax a bit.

You should provide the trainees with the Stanford practice teaching materials as instructed in the training manual. These materials will provide a sound understanding of what is expected of the trainee and an objective list of review items for the trainers.

Remember, training provides the best opportunity to assure good program fidelity in workshops in the field. When in doubt about the ability of a trainee to deliver high quality programming that adheres to fidelity standards, it is better to err on the side of caution and counsel out the trainee. This will prevent them from leading workshops/conducting trainings where their ineffective practice may do harm!

**Fidelity during Leader Training: Mid-Level Fidelity Opportunities**

Helping your trainees to understand fidelity and strategies to monitor and manage fidelity is an effective way to assure the quality of your programs. Beginning with the minimum fidelity requirements discussed, there are other ways during training that you can help your trainees to maintain fidelity.

Mid-level strategies during training include:

- Training leaders and trainers on how to keep fidelity in programs in the field (i.e. training about standard protocols and minimum workshop related fidelity strategies, see Section C)
- Defining and discussing your program’s fidelity system or practice during training. Generally program sponsors spend time at the beginning or ending of training days to discuss local program logistics (e.g. where to get materials, who schedules classes, what program evaluation tools are used, etc.). You can also use this time to explain to trainees:
  - how you monitor fidelity;
• what they can expect;
• when they can expect it;
• who they can expect; and
• why this matters to them or workshop participants.

When things go wrong:

Problem: During your observations of a training, one or both trainers use poor modeling of one or more training techniques (e.g. brainstorming, action planning, problem solving, etc.).

Response: There are several things you can do to address this concern.

During a break from training and away from the group of trainees, address your concerns directly to the trainer(s).

◊ Acknowledge the trainer’s experience and its value in developing practice wisdom (i.e. knowledge about program delivery that comes from leading many workshops/trainings to a variety of participants in varied settings).
◊ Explain your project’s program fidelity standards and the importance of conveying these standards throughout every phase of the program including training.
◊ Let the trainer know that you need their assistance in modeling every activity as it is written in the book.
◊ Remind the trainer that “many of us learn best what we learn first” and therefore the importance of “modeling sticking to the script” rests with training first!

If upon further observations you are still not satisfied with trainer modeling of training techniques and you are holding a Stanford sponsored training, please contact your liaison at the Stanford Patient Education Research Center as soon as possible.

If this training is a Non-Stanford sponsored off-site training held in the United States, you should know that your trainers are still authorized by the Stanford Patient Education Research Center and must conduct trainings according to established protocols. Therefore, you should contact the Stanford Patient Education Research Center to discuss your concerns.
**Fidelity during Leader Training: Advanced Fidelity Opportunities**

Perhaps the most sophisticated approach to program fidelity is to develop certification standards for leaders/trainers in your local program that enhance the standard CDSMP training protocol. This approach may require additional training or observations of trainees to assure program fidelity. Certifications should require all trainees to complete the standard CDSMP training successfully and include post-training workshops along with additional requirements, for instance:

- Successful completion of one or more workshop-based fidelity observations
- Successful completion of a stand-alone training on maintaining program fidelity
- Participation in ongoing trainings, in-services or other leader/trainer skills improvement activities
- Attendance and/or completion at semi-annual or annual booster trainings, re-certification events, etc.
- Completion of co-leader/co-trainer feedback forms
- Completion of self-evaluation feedback forms
- Participation in peer mentoring activities
- Individual feedback sessions with program implementers, etc.

If this is important to your program, development of these standards prior to recruitment and training will help to establish expectations early on. If additional training/certification activities are required in your program, training is the perfect time to introduce these activities and encourage greater adherence to program fidelity standards.

Finally, close observations during trainings are one of the best ways to ensure that trainees are correctly modeling workshop activities and to inquire about additional methods to help your trainees be successful in the field. When program management staff completes the training, even if they do not plan to lead workshops, they will have a better sense of what makes for good program fidelity and what it looks like when they see it. This can go a long way when choosing strategies to assure fidelity in your local program. T-Trainers and Master Trainers will be happy to have you there and to assist you.
How Do I Counsel Out a Leader or Master Trainer during Training?

Counseling leader/master trainer trainees out during training is the best time to manage the challenge of someone who simply is not able or willing to follow protocols. Although awkward and sometimes embarrassing for the person, it will save you and the trainee, time and hurt feelings in the future. Throughout the training, remind trainees that facilitating this program is not for everyone, nor should it be. Trainers will tell trainees that if they do not feel like the role of a leader/trainer is a good fit for them, they should talk to one or both of their trainers as soon as possible. If trainees decide to self-select out of the training, let them know that their decision will be respected.

There are times when trainees fail to recognize that facilitating the program is not a good fit for them and they may not know how to express this to their trainers. Or perhaps the trainee may simply want to avoid offending the trainers, program organizers or co-trainees.

If this happens in your training, it is essential that you counsel the trainee out of this role rather than allow them to proceed to the next step as a leader or a Master Trainer. Here are some guidelines to make this uncomfortable process easier:

1. Be honest with the person from the beginning. Usually the first practice teach is the time to do this, but you may find other appropriate opportunities during Q&A at the beginning of each morning or at the conclusion of each session during the session recap.

2. Always be respectful with the person; give him/her specific reasons why you are concerned with their performance and bring the conversation firmly back to the manual and the trainee’s behavior.

3. Be sure that you talk with trainees in private. It is good practice to include your co-trainer or another CDSMP qualified person in the conversation.

4. Tell the trainee what they did well, but also tell them what they are expected to improve upon and why it is necessary.

5. Tell the trainee what will happen if they do not improve so that they are not surprised later on.
6. If this is a Master Training, T-Trainers should discuss the situation with the Stanford Patient Education Research Center during the scheduled mid-training call for advice and guidance and to make them aware of the situation. If this is a Leader Training, be sure to discuss with your co-trainer and consult with program organizers. There can be circumstances when a person may be given further instructions or training opportunities to help them develop the needed skills to become a leader/trainer; however, this is something that requires the agreement of your co-trainer and Stanford personnel.

7. Offer the trainee, if available and you have access to this information, different opportunities to help out with the program other than as a program leader. They may excel at marketing or recruiting for the program.

**Cultural Literacy**

Regardless of the cultural or ethnic background of a trainee, all leaders/trainers must demonstrate literacy during training. A trainee will not be “passed” and allowed to lead workshops or trainings if they cannot adequately deliver the material as written in the leader’s manual.

**Culturally Humble**

There are many times during trainings and when facilitating workshops that trainers/leaders experience a situation where they are not the teachers/facilitators but the learners. This is especially true when the trainers/leaders are invited guests in a community and do not know the people, the culture, or the cultural microcosms that exist. It can be a very humbling experience and one that the trainers/leaders must accept, acknowledge, and come to agreement on before things can successfully move on. Best practice in these cases is to follow your script and listen and watch attentively to feedback from the group that will help you to better understand and facilitate the workshop. You might be surprised what you will learn!
When things go wrong:

**Problem:** Two leaders were facilitating a workshop in a local church whose cultural expression was very different from their personal experiences. At the first workshop, leaders noticed that unlike many previous workshops they had led where participants were often very animated and talkative with leaders after the closing, the participants of this workshop remained silently seated while the leaders cleaned up and exited the facility. The leaders were troubled by this and concerned that perhaps the workshop content or facilitation had offended some of the participants.

**Response:** Noticing their own discomfort, they discussed this after class in the parking lot outside of the facility. They decided to discuss their concerns with a local Master Trainer who asked them to consider their behaviors during the class and whether they recall any other “signs” from participants during the class that there may be a problem with either the materials or their facilitation. They both admitted that it was a relatively quiet group of participants, although they seemed engaged, were listening intently and nodded their heads and smiled throughout the class. The Master Trainer suggested that they return to the class next week and proceed as planned with their workshop paying close attention to the participants’ behaviors during the class.

The leaders went to the next class and proceeded as planned. The class was full and nearly everyone returned. As in the prior week, the group was largely quiet and again seemed engaged. At the end of the workshop class, again the group sat silently while the leaders cleaned up and left the room. Curious as to what this all might mean, the leaders contacted the Master Trainer again to report back on the class for that week. The Master Trainer assured them that returning participants was a good sign that there was not a serious offense and suggested that perhaps there might be a cultural reason for the group’s quiet after class. The Master Trainer suggested that perhaps rather than all of this guessing and assuming that the leaders might just ask one of the participants about this custom.

The following week, before the workshop began, the leaders did inquire about the group’s practice of sitting in silence while they packed up and left concerned that they might have offended members of the group. The participant smiled broadly and told the leaders that it was a custom of the group to “pray a quiet blessing for [the leaders’] safe journey home and back to them again.” The leaders thanked the participant and the group for their consideration and the rest of the workshop just packed up and left the meeting quietly without any further anxiety.
A Word on Managing Challenging Situations

One of the most consistent concerns during workshops and training is managing workshop participants or trainees whose behavior is disruptive to the group process or worse, offensive to other group participants. Managing these situations appropriately is a challenging skill for some leaders and requires a great deal of tact to manage properly. Often times the group process and/or other group members help to manage the situation or participant – but leaders and trainers should be prepared to lead/facilitate the group in a way that balances the needs of any one participant/trainee with the needs of the group. Poor management of these concerns can have a negative effect on training and workshop fidelity. Practice with managing challenging participants is addressed in training by:

- Good trainer modeling
- Practice teach experiences
- During “What If” scenarios
- In CDSMP leader and trainer manuals (see Handling Situations in Groups and Dealing with the Difference Types of People/Situations in the Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop)

Remember that these exercises and trainer modeling provide an opportunity for trainees to practice workshop management and to see good workshop management practices in action.

Many trainees are concerned about the impact of challenging participants on workshops they will lead in the community. Trainers should be watching for trainee responses to these circumstances. This is an important part of training and fidelity management because it provides a more complete picture of the underlying attitudes of trainees. It also gives trainers clues about how a trainee might manage in real life challenging circumstances. Following is a list of methods and strategies for managing challenging participants/trainees:

- First and foremost, keep your cool.
  - Feeling frustrated because your workshop is getting out of your control is a natural feeling; however, if you give in to those feelings and begin to
behave in ways that are hostile or otherwise inappropriate it will only make matters worse.

- If you are standing up, try sitting down – this has the double effect of calming you down and using body language to illustrate a non-aggressive posture and de-escalate a situation.
- Become aware of the tone and pitch of your voice and your breathing.
- Calm yourself first before you attempt to manage any challenging situation.

◊ Use your co-leader.
  - Your co-leader is there to support you in all activities of the workshop. This includes workshop participant management.
  - If a situation seems to be getting out of your control, be sure to signal your co-leader that you need help.
  - If you see that your co-leader needs your help or signals for it, be sure to assist.
  - We all have “hot buttons” or things that really upset us and so it is natural for some participants unknowingly to stir up negative feelings in leaders/trainers. The key is NOT to overreact to those feelings and instead self-monitor and use your co-leader to help.

◊ Body language can be a very effective workshop management tool. Some examples of how you can use body language to manage different personalities or situations in your workshop include:
  - Simply avoiding eye contact with a chatty participant will send the message that now is not the time to talk.
  - Sometimes standing near a participant who will not stop talking quiets things down. We do not recommend physically touching participants as a strategy as this can be seen as overly assertive and may actually make matters worse.
  - Turning your back on the group during a brainstorm will slow responses. Walking toward the group encourages ideas, walking away slows them.
  - Sitting down, lowering your voice and maintaining a relaxed body posture will de-escalate many situations.
• If you are facilitating from a seated position, sometimes standing up will refocus the group.

For more information on these techniques, please see the Progressive Participant Management handout.

♦ Establish rules for workshop sharing early on.
  • For example, perhaps you say that we need to hear from everyone who wants to speak or has an idea before folks get a second turn (Remember: DO NOT call on participants during brainstorming or group discussions during workshops, forced sharing can be very discouraging to some folks and may make them uncomfortable causing them not to return to the workshop).
  • Another example might be a 2 minute rule where everyone can share but with a 2 minute limit. Be sure to enforce the limit for all participants not just those you feel are monopolizing the conversation.
  • And then there is the “yes, but…” rule. If a participant continues to respond to ideas and discussion by giving all the reasons suggestions won’t work…after the third refusal or “yes, but”, tell them that you have to move on so everyone can have a turn and offer to talk with them more at the break….and then be sure to do that!
  • During brainstorming, remind participants of the brainstorming guidelines to help limit side conversations. If sidebar conversations do happen, simply remind people that the purpose of the brainstorm is to generate as many ideas as possible without comment and we will clarify/discuss the ideas once we have completed the list.

♦ When in doubt, refocus yourself and your workshop participants on the Workshop Guidelines (see Chart 3, Leader’s Manual). These guidelines are established at the very beginning of the workshop to assure participants that they will be valued and will treat themselves and one another with respect.

♦ Refocus workshop participants on the activity at hand reminding them that there is a great deal of material to cover and it is all important; tell them that you want to be sure to get to everything.
If all else fails and you and your co-leader are unable to bring the workshop back to order, simply call a five minute break. Talk with participants at the break away from the group. Always be respectful in your communications and give direct feedback that is focused on the person’s behavior and its impact on the group.

Remember that support for challenging situations can come from your immediate co-leader, other area leaders/trainers and program staff personnel. Debriefing particularly difficult situations with your co-leader, program staff, an experienced leader or trainer or someone at the Stanford Patient Education Research Center can be very helpful. They can all provide you with tips for managing these situations.
Section B: Resources

Links to most resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

CDSMP Manual

- CDSMP Leader's Manual Appendix IV “Teaching Techniques used in the CDSMP”
- CDSMP Leader's Manual Appendix V “Dealing with Different Types of People/Situations in the CDSMP”

Toolbox Documents

Links to these resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

- Sample Peer Leader Agreement Form
- Watch List and Guidance for Successful Practice Training
- Scripted Program-specific Activities
- Master Trainer Post Fidelity Check Evaluation Form
- Progressive Participant Management

Comment [MB2]: is this obsolete?
Comment [MB3]: Not on website

Revised July 2013
Section C: Fidelity during the Workshop

**WHO:** Workshop/program coordinators, Master Trainers, trained workshop observers, workshop leaders

**WHAT:** Ensuring minimum program quality and implementing quality improvement efforts

**WHEN:** Throughout the multi-week workshop

**HOW:** Direct and indirect strategies for program fidelity monitoring

Now that you are ready to begin delivering workshops, you need to think about how to deliver workshops that are faithful to the CDSMP design, that is, maintain fidelity. There are many ways to approach workshop fidelity but first you must consider resources.

As you try to make the most efficient use of fidelity monitoring resources, consider a variety of tools and the time and other resources each will use. Money is not your only resource, but every resource “costs” something. T-Trainees and Master Trainers are program resources. So are workshop leaders, program coordinators, staff, community partners and volunteers. Using each resource well is essential to developing an effective and affordable workshop fidelity strategy.

Next, consider the reason for workshop fidelity monitoring; understanding how closely workshops deliver the CDSMP as intended by the developers. Monitoring workshops helps you to see how well your leaders are doing this. But assessing how well you are doing does not make good fidelity – only acting on what you learn does.

If you are the person responsible for monitoring fidelity, you must be prepared to act on what you learn. Feedback without follow-up is not a good use of resources. Therefore, programs must prepare to invest additional resources in re-training, additional monitoring activities and dismissal of leaders/trainers if necessary.
Be sure to track your monitoring efforts. Keep records of everything that you learn and share with others who can use the information. Recognize that together we add to the wisdom of the group!

**Opportunities for Fidelity during Workshops**

After training, the second opportunity to affect program fidelity is focused on program delivery during workshops. If workshops do not deliver the CDSMP as intended then we need to ask whether or not we should continue providing workshops at all. By monitoring workshops through phone calls with leaders or other indirect or direct methods you can determine how well fidelity is maintained and develop plans to address any problems. In general, monitoring workshop fidelity has several purposes including:

- Supporting delivery of high quality programming
- Assessing leader field practice/performance compared to established standards (i.e. delivery is faithful to CDSMP core components and training protocols)
- Improving program delivery by identifying leaders in need of additional training, supervision or counseling out
- Providing information about the appropriateness of classroom space
- Identifying logistical issues at a given location
- Determining participant/leader satisfaction with programming
- Assuring program quality to funders, partners, etc
- Identifying needed improvements
- Identify reasons for both leader and participant dropout

There are many ways to monitor workshops and not all begin with direct observation at each community workshop. Calling leaders, participant and leader satisfaction surveys and attendance monitoring are all valuable low-cost strategies that can **red flag** areas of concern.
Red Flags during Workshops

The following is a list of likely red flags indicating poor fidelity during workshop delivery. Observations or reports of any of the following require your investigation to assure program quality throughout implementation.

- Participant attendance varies greatly throughout the duration of the workshop
- High participant drop-out rates after the first workshop (this may also be the result of ineffective recruitment efforts)
- Leaders who drop out or refuse to teach more than one workshop
- Problems and/or concerns that arise during phone calls to leaders
- Fidelity Monitors (e.g. Master Trainers, leaders, trained staff) observe poor training techniques used by leaders during workshops
- Fidelity Monitors observe several workshops with different pairs of leaders and see poor training techniques used by leaders
- A leader reports that the co-leader does not “stick to the book/script”
- Program leaders do not show up for their workshops, have frequent absences, or are consistently late or leave early or otherwise are not present for the entire workshop

Fidelity during Workshops: Minimum Fidelity Requirements

The CDSMP was developed and tested to be effective when delivered in specific ways in your community setting. The CDSMP has established identified non-negotiable core components for workshop delivery such as:

- Workshops must be delivered according to the currently approved leader workshop manual ONLY—adding or deleting materials is not an approved activity. Proposed changes or adaptations must have prior approval from the Stanford Patient Education Research Center and are generally only granted for purposes of population based, cultural and/or ethnic considerations.
Workshops take place over 6 weeks (7 weeks for the Positive Self-Management Program) and run for 2.5 consecutive hours including the scheduled break.

- At times, a workshop series may need to take a one week break for a holiday or bad weather. If this might be an issue for your program, we recommended that space for the workshop be reserved for an additional week or two.

- Workshops that are shortened or where the 2.5 hours is divided (by a meal for example) are not permitted. Shortening the number of weeks and/or the length of the workshop in any way leads to some material not being covered or to participant sharing time being decreased in favor of content. In either case, opportunities for participants to build self-efficacy skills will be affected by this practice and it should not be done.

Workshop group size stays within guidelines, between 10 and 16 participants for most urban and populated areas. The average workshop size is 12 to 14. Less than 10 participants will impact the group processing dynamic and sharing that make up the core of the program and are discouraged. Over-recruiting is suggested as some participants may not attend or not return after the first week (participant recruitment is discussed in the Toolbox at the end of this guide). However, success in over-recruitment may result in turning away some perspective participants. This is not as detrimental as you may think because it keeps the class size manageable for the leaders and the community learns that the workshop is a sought after commodity which creates demand; this also produces a start up group for the next workshop.

Each of these core components reflects a minimum fidelity standard. So how does your program determine if minimum fidelity requirements are being met in workshops? There are a number of strategies to help you assess how well your leaders are delivering programs. They include:

- Calling leaders and/or participants
- Calling dropouts
Monitoring participant attendance data and drop-out rates
Review and comparison of participant satisfaction surveys or other feedback
Direct observation of leaders during workshops
Leader self-evaluation
Internet surveys
Leader post-workshop peer feedback
Leader mentoring

Following are a variety of strategies to help you monitor the fidelity of your workshop delivery. Any one of these can help you to identify potential problems. Using more strategies increases your knowledge about your workshops, participants and leaders. Each of these strategies requires that you consider what you learn in a broader context...things are not always as they appear. Be sure not to overreact to information; rather seek to understand what is happening and why. Remember that knowledge alone does not maintain fidelity nor improve your workshops; acting on what you learn is the only thing that can do that!

**Indirect Strategies to Monitor Workshop Fidelity**

There are a number of things that indirectly identify potential problems in workshop delivery. Each method uses resources but some are easier to use and some use fewer resources than others. Indirect methods generally fall into three categories:

1. Phone Calls
2. Paper/Online Surveys
3. Program Records

All of these strategies have low direct costs (i.e. phones lines, paper or online survey instrumentation, existing records reviews) to gather information but they still use program resources. There are pros and cons to using each of these methods. Strategies with low direct costs will need to consider indirect costs (i.e. labor). As labor is generally a programming’s greatest expense – either in real money or opportunity cost.
Because of this reality, consider all the pros and cons to each of these methods and choose a strategy that can support both direct and indirect costs to your program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Pros (+)</th>
<th>Cons (-)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone Calls</td>
<td>+ Inexpensive</td>
<td>-Labor intensive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Easy to administer with some training</td>
<td>-Information varies based on who you can reach by phone</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Establish good rapport</td>
<td>-Hearing loss, language, generational and cultural barriers can impact quality of information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+ Provide an opportunity to give immediate feedback and correct or follow-up on problems quickly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper/Online Surveys</td>
<td>+ Can be inexpensive (online methods, in-person)</td>
<td>-Can be labor intensive depending on collection method (in-person, mail, online, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Easy to use</td>
<td>-Collection methods may affect quality of the information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+ Target questions and define responses within a range</td>
<td>-Return rates may affect quality of information learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Easy to analyze</td>
<td>-Literacy, language and culture may affect return rates and quality of information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Generally only reviewed after workshop ends so limited value for quick corrections</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Somewhat impersonal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Records</td>
<td>+ Inexpensive</td>
<td>-Limited information that requires thoughtful follow-up</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ If readily available, easy to use</td>
<td>-Can only be reviewed after the workshop ends so limited value for quick corrections</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+ Create a basis for program performance standards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+ Can be simple to analyze</td>
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</table>

**Phone Calls**

Who you call, for what purpose and your response to what you learn increases the effectiveness of this strategy. As with all strategies, you must be prepared to act on what you learn. Phone calls provide timely information about how workshops are being implemented. They also present opportunities to make mid-course corrections or problem solve identified issues for a quick response. Following are several ways to use phone calls to identify potential challenges during workshops.
Calling Leaders

Calling leaders as they are delivering workshops can provide information to help you understand to what extent leaders are delivering content with fidelity. Call all leaders at least twice during a workshop series. This will often help you to find out how the workshop is progressing and identify any potential areas for concern or red flags that need your immediate attention. You may be surprised at all you can learn from talking regularly with leaders.

It is a good practice to call leaders after workshop session 1 and session 4. Call both leaders separately and inquire as to how things are going and if there is anything more they need to be successful. Leaders are fairly honest about their co-leaders, participants and workshop logistics so if there is a problem, you will likely know right away. For consistency and ease, you may want to use the Quality Assurance Call Procedure and Documentation Form that is referenced in Section C: Resources.

Be sure to follow-up with anything that may indicate poor fidelity may be an issue; for example, leaders complaining about co-leaders, difficulty managing workshop participants or large drops in attendance. Any of these may indicate a problem with workshop fidelity and should be investigated. Please see the Toolbox at the end of this guide for more information.

Calling Participants

Calling participants that drop-out of a workshop can provide you with valuable information about the fidelity of the workshop series that he/she registered for, and later left. Carefully thought-out questions can uncover the nature of the participant’s decision to not return to the group. If you are calling drop-out participants from a certain cultural or ethnic group, please assure that the person making the calls is from the same background. This is important in getting open and uncensored feedback from persons.

Calling participants that completed a workshop can provide you with insight into the delivery of the program, the satisfaction of the participant with various aspects of the workshop, and the fidelity of the program. (More information about calling participants can be found in Section D.)
Calling Program Partners

Calling program partners can help you assess the success and strength of the partnership based upon their responses and their continued commitment to the community workshops. Partners who do not wish to offer additional workshops might indicate a problem with leaders or the workshop in general. In addition, calling partners can assure that logistical issues are handled promptly and appropriately.

When things go wrong:

Problem: A program staff person is calling leaders during the fourth week of a workshop. One leader reports that the co-leader is not “following the script.” The second leader claims the same thing. The program staff person reports this to staff responsible for program fidelity for a response.

Response: There are two sides to every story - and then there’s the truth. It is important to remain neutral and non-judgmental when managing leaders. However, you do need to find out exactly what is happening between the two by speaking with each separately. You might also speak with outside observers who have knowledge of the program. The staff person responsible for program fidelity should schedule a program fidelity visit at the next scheduled session.

During the fidelity visit, the staff person should look for the core elements of the program as well as watch the interaction between the two leaders. If, at the end of the session, the staff person cannot conclude that either leader has “strayed from the script”, then he/she should state this and ask the leaders probing questions about how well they work together. Based upon the outcome of the first fidelity visit, the staff person may need to attend the final sessions in order to “keep the peace.”

Once you piece together the issues or concerns, you will be able to make a decision as to whether the two leaders can finish the workshop and then never work together again, if you need to replace one or both of them with another leader(s), or if it was a huge misunderstanding and now they are the best of friends and your finest pair of leaders. Whatever the solution is, it takes a lot of communication between you and the leaders individually and facilitated communication between the leaders together before you can truly consider your work done. Ultimately, the group participants should be protected from the interpersonal difficulties of group leaders.
**Paper/Online Surveys and Program Records**

Satisfaction/program surveys and program records such as attendance and outcomes data are generally collected after the workshop ends. Although the information from these indirect fidelity monitoring methods can be very helpful to your efforts, because this data is collected late in the process, these are not useful methods for mid-course corrections; however, each of these strategies is potentially a part of your overall fidelity maintenance plan. A full discussion of these strategies is found in the Resource page at the end of this section.

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**Fidelity during Workshops: Mid-Level Opportunities Fidelity**

While indirect strategies to monitor fidelity are helpful, there is no better way to understand what is happening in your workshops than to attend and observe. Direct strategies include workshops observations by T-Trainers, Master Trainers, Peer Leaders or other trained personnel. What you learn from direct observation varies depending on a number of things including:

- The experience and training of the fidelity monitor.
- The comfort level of individual leaders under observation.
- The tools used to assess leader/workshop fidelity.
- The make-up of workshop participants.
- Cultural dynamics.

Some things observed in workshops will need immediate attention, where others may require further investigation and planning to correct. Direct strategies use program resources. Acting on what you learn may require you to invest additional resources as well. Consider direct strategies and your response thoughtfully to enhance ongoing program fidelity efforts.

**Direct Strategies to Monitor Workshop Fidelity**

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Workshop/site visits

Observing leaders/trainers delivering workshops to participants has many advantages including:

- Assessing leader use of training techniques in real life situations.
- Opportunities for real time feedback to leaders (e.g., content delivery issues, challenging situations or participants, etc.).
- Appraising logistical challenges at community program sites.

Workshop observations provide the information needed to quickly make mid-workshop corrections. This is helpful to leaders, community partners and participants because it assures that programs are faithful to core components.

As with anything, there are disadvantages to workshop monitoring visits. For example, fidelity monitors may:

- Disrupt workshop participant process.
- Make leaders nervous affecting delivery of program content and interactions with participants.
- Use more resources than is practical including staff/trainer time and project dollars.

In addition, consider that the leaders you are monitoring might hyper-model during your observation which may not be their standard style or practice, raising questions about the value of the visit and the resources spent.

When developing a fidelity monitoring strategy that includes workshop visits, answer these questions:

1. Who will monitor community workshops for fidelity?
2. What training will be provided to fidelity monitors, if any?
3. When or how often will fidelity monitors attend workshops?
4. What will fidelity monitors look for at workshops?
5. How will fidelity monitors record their observations?
6. Who will analyze fidelity monitor feedback?

7. How will feedback (positive and negative) be provided to leaders?

8. Who is responsible for follow-up if needed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fidelity Monitor Type</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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</table>
| T-Trainer             | + Extensive program experience  
+ Able to give direct feedback to leaders on site  
+ Well versed in strategies to assist leaders, manage participants and assist program planners/implementers | - Not always readily available  
- Can be expensive to hire for ongoing monitoring activities | |
| Master Trainer        | + May have extensive program experience  
+ Able to give direct feedback to leaders on site  
+ Depending on experience, versed in strategies to assist leaders, manage participants and assist program planners/implementers | - Not always readily available  
- Can be expensive to hire for ongoing monitoring activities  
-May not have scope of experience needed depending upon tasks | |
| Experienced Peer Leader | + May have extensive program experience  
+ May be more available than T or Master trainers  
+ Less expensive/lower resource output  
+ Depending upon experience, versed in strategies to assist peers and manage participants  
+ Monitoring may help their own practices at workshops  
+ May be comfortable giving feedback directly to peers | - May not be comfortable giving feedback to peers | |
| Other Trained Staff/volunteers | + Can be trained to observe workshops and give feedback using standardized tools  
+ May be less expensive  
+ May be more readily available | - Little program knowledge/experience  
- May be uncomfortable giving feedback directly to peer leaders  
-Little knowledge of workshop management strategies | |
**Who will monitor community workshops for fidelity?**

Fidelity monitors take many forms. They can be local T-Trainees or Master Trainers working with your project or on your staff. Fidelity monitors can also be experienced program leaders. Finally, fidelity monitors can be volunteers, staff or students trained to observe the CDSMP in community settings. The advantages and disadvantages of any particular type of fidelity monitor vary by program but each can be effective in supporting workshop site observations.

Each of the different types of persons to consider as fidelity monitors can do a good job in their observations. While some come with abundant experience, they also come with high resource cost – using trainers, even if they are in your organization, means that they are not available to conduct other activities – so consider their use carefully. There are clearly more up-front training costs with peer leader or other staff/volunteers, but resource use over time may be much less costly.

If you have the opportunity, using trainers and peer leaders at varying times will help to extend your resources while giving you a very clear picture of what is happening in your workshops.

**A word of caution:** If any person observing a workshop is NOT qualified or charged with providing feedback directly to leaders, contact information for a responsible and available program staff should be provided at the time of the monitoring visit. Placing leaders or others in this position without proper training can be detrimental to both the observer and leaders being observed.

**What training will be provided to fidelity monitors, if any?**

Depending on whom you choose as your monitors and what tools you use, some additional training for fidelity monitors may be needed. When using T-Trainees or Master Trainers, you should have some confidence that they come with the experience necessary to manage workshop monitoring. Trainers may need training on:

- Fidelity protocols for your program.
- Reporting mechanisms.
- Specific tools you are using, if any.
Working with leaders or populations where cultural considerations, language barriers, etc. may be an issue.

When using peer leaders or to train other staff/volunteers along with the items mentioned above, you also need to consider training on:

- Specific workshop training techniques.
- Feedback protocols.
- Providing feedback, if that is part of the role.

In both cases, preparing your fidelity monitors to carry out their role effectively will help to get the information you need from workshop observations and to address problems or concerns quickly and thoughtfully.

It has been our experience that persons without training in the Stanford Self-Management Programs make good fidelity monitors when provided with a brief training in content and procedure. The training may consist of review and importance of program fidelity, types of fidelity monitoring strategies, and specific measures taken within your organization to monitor program fidelity. The training should also allow for some practice with your organization’s chosen fidelity monitoring tools.

**When or how often will fidelity monitors attend workshops?**

Attending every workshop delivered in every site uses tremendous resources. While this may indeed maintain a high standard of fidelity, it is not practical in most settings. If you choose not to visit every single workshop, then you need to consider when you will observe workshops. Monitoring during the first workshop session that a new leader/trainer facilitates may be too threatening and may result in undue anxiety. During training it is important to set the expectation that leaders/trainers will be observed during workshops – in this way, you will find it much easier to manage the expectations of your leaders/trainers during fidelity monitoring visits.

Here are some general guidelines that may help in your decisions to monitor:

- Observe a set percentage of workshops on a random basis rather than each individual session. This lets you observe a variety of leaders, workshop settings and sessions.
Observe new leaders to be sure that they are effective, enthusiastic and demonstrate good modeling, problem solving, action planning and training techniques, and avoid the use of judgmental language or behaviors. Monitor new leaders at least once in their first and second workshop delivery. This provides them with extra support and helps build their confidence and skills for maintaining fidelity.

Observe experienced leaders to monitor for drift. As we grow accustomed to the curriculum it becomes easy to rely on our practice wisdom. Practice wisdom always needs to be balanced with reliance on and adherence to the leader’s manual. Monitoring experienced leaders at least once per year is recommended.

If you are in doubt of the abilities of any leader/trainer DO NOT let them continue to teach; replace them for the duration of the workshop as you decide whether re-training would be helpful or if permanent removal is warranted.

A word of caution on re-training – re-training is very seldom easily successful and always expends resources. Consider this option seriously before you conclude that it is the best course for your program.

What will fidelity monitors look for at workshops?

There are many check lists, survey forms and tools to help you monitor fidelity in your workshops. In general, the usefulness of any tool is somewhat dependent on the training/experience of the person using it and the balance between subjective (opinion) and objective (observed) reporting. For some suggested tools see the Toolbox at the end of this guide.

Some forms are best implemented by experienced trainers who can better judge some of the softer training skills used by leaders because they require observers to form opinions about what they see. Other tools can be used by new and/or experienced leaders or other trained personnel as well as trainers, particularly those that are more
objectively based. The more discrete the items in any fidelity checklist or form, the more likely monitoring efforts will be consistent across types of fidelity monitors.

Select or develop fidelity checklists or forms that are more objectively based. These tools can be used by more types of monitors and with some training will likely yield more consistent results. In an observation based fidelity monitoring visit, either something did or did not happen. The way it happened or did not happen is a separate issue. Observations can be very strong indicators of red flags at workshops (see sample observation forms in Section C: Resources of this manual). Using observation based fidelity checks means that you can reserve your higher cost resources (i.e. T-Trainers and Master Trainers) for more challenging workshop or leader problems.

Subjective questions answered by experienced Master and T-Trainers also have a significant role in workshop monitoring. Trainers performing fidelity checks can provide immediate feedback to leaders on both objective and subjective concerns. Finally, share fidelity forms with leaders. They will have a greater understanding of the value of fidelity and the ways in which fidelity is realized in workshop delivery. Hopefully, this will enhance their commitment to fidelity during workshops.

What to Include in Your Fidelity Monitoring Check List

General Workshop Observations and Logistics

- Observe the training space for things that might reduce the quality of the program (temperature, accessibility, lighting, etc.).
- Observe needed workshop materials: weekly agenda and charts are posted; pens/pencils paper, tissues, flip chart or white board, etc.; correct edition of the Leader’s Manual, Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions book and A Time for Healing cd-rom or tape.

General Leader Observations

- Note if leaders were on time, started the workshop on time, demonstrated enthusiasm and good facilitation skills, were respectful of participants and their ideas, avoided the use of judgmental language, and encouraged participants throughout the workshop.
**Observing Workshop Activities**

- Note if all workshop activities planned for the session were completed, was the agenda followed, were activities completed according to the manual, was content information skipped over or left out, and were there any challenging issues with participants.

**Leader Training Techniques**

- Observe to what extent leaders follow protocols for action planning, brainstorming, problem solving, and modeling, as well as their interactions with participants during these activities. (For more information on scripted workshop training techniques and activities see the Toolbox at the end of this guide.)

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**What happens when things go wrong?**

**Problem:** The Master Trainer or another trained fidelity monitor observes poor training techniques by a peer leader; or sees poor leader training techniques in a number of workshops over the course of several weeks.

**Response:** The earlier you catch poorly modeled training the better. When you’re there for a fidelity or program “check,” this is the best time to alert the leader(s) to your concerns and advise them on how to correct it. This takes only a few minutes. After the session is over and you are away from any participants, tell the leader about your concerns. Be direct and behavior based. Most of the time, the leader(s) will agree with you and take your suggestions and recommendations with appreciation. If not, see the “red flags” for more information.

You may have a bigger problem. If the observer notices a pattern among different leaders related to the same training technique, it is likely that leaders/trainers were improperly trained in the technique to begin with. Correcting a problem like this requires two steps: (1) you need to recondition the group of leaders that are affected (What better time for a booster training?) and (2) you need to reach out to the trainers to pinpoint the origin of the problem. Remember the saying, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”? It applies here.

**How will fidelity monitors record their observations?**

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This question is likely answered by your choice of tool. Fidelity monitors can be expected to use the fidelity tools you choose and to submit completed forms to your program staff. If you do not use a fidelity checklist, form or tool, your fidelity monitors will need guidance to be sure they provide you with needed feedback for your records. This can take many forms depending on your program needs and your overall fidelity strategy. In addition, you may have different tools for monitors in different circumstances. For example, a leader who is having difficulty with personalities in the workshop may be “sticking to the script” but perhaps issues with a particular participant are really the problem. This may require a much more subjective appraisal and your standard form may be of less value here.

Who will analyze fidelity monitor feedback?

Remember that monitoring workshops alone does not help you maintain fidelity. You must act on what you learn. Depending on your choice of form or checklist it may be possible to have someone with limited or no involvement in your workshops enter and analyze data. Reports based on observations can provide you with scores to help you determine if additional follow up is needed. If trainers are your main source of fidelity feedback, they can likely provide you with their analysis and recommendations.

The person responsible for reviewing feedback from fidelity monitoring ultimately decides if follow-up is indicated. The type of fidelity check list or reporting form used is less important than ensuring that a program decision maker sees monitoring feedback and acts on it!

How will feedback (positive and negative) be provided to leaders?

Trainers should have the necessary skills to provide feedback directly to leaders during monitoring visits. Feedback is essential to assuring fidelity and the sooner it is given, the better. Direct in-person feedback is very effective because leaders can learn what they are doing well, where they need to improve and ask questions to develop ways to improve. Fidelity monitors should always provide specific behavior based examples as part of their feedback structure. This applies to both written and verbal comments and recommendations.
If you are not using trainers as your fidelity monitors, direct in-person feedback at monitoring visits may be challenging. While leaders and others can be trained to deliver feedback, leaders receiving feedback may resent feedback from persons with little or no workshop delivery experience. A phone call soon after the fidelity visit can be effective too. Be sure if you use this approach that a qualified trainer/leader is available to answer questions. Finally, mailing or emailing reports to leaders is an option although not highly recommended. It is often difficult to capture important feedback in written form. In addition, a leader’s response to an unsupported delivery of feedback may be less than helpful to your program.

A word of caution: If any person observing a workshop is NOT qualified or charged with providing feedback directly to leaders, contact information for a responsible and available program staff should be provided before the visit. Placing leaders or others in this position without proper training can be detrimental to both the observer and leaders being observed.

Who is responsible for follow-up if needed?

Once your observations are complete you can use the information from workshop monitoring visits to identify and address areas for improvement, whether with particular leaders, community sites or your own program support efforts. If during a visit your fidelity monitor sees a red flag event that needs immediate action, be sure to address this discretely but directly. Some red flag events require real time feedback to leaders at the conclusion of the session or as soon as is practical after. Other events will require you to process information with staff or to consult with Master Trainers or the Stanford Patient Education Research Center staff. In all these efforts, be sure that you are direct, focus on behaviors and their impact, and use the opportunity to help leaders or the program to grow in quality.

Fidelity during Workshops: Advanced Fidelity Opportunities

Direct and indirect fidelity monitoring activities develop a comprehensive set of strategies to identify and address fidelity concerns during your workshops. Moving beyond minimum and mid-level strategies will require greater program resources and
focus on supporting your peer leaders, the real guardians of your program. Peer leader support approaches encourage leaders to develop personal fidelity maintenance strategies through self- and peer-monitoring activities. Self-monitoring uses self-reflection surveys and peer feedback to enhance personal skills mastery and add to practice wisdom.

**Peer Leader Support for Program Fidelity**

Supporting peer leaders is a crucial component of the CDSMP program because peer leaders are central to successful program implementation. Support approaches encourage leaders to participate in activities and reflect on their own practice and that of their peers in an action oriented learning environment. This is accomplished through several methods including:

1. Booster sessions and refresher training;
2. Leader satisfaction activities; and
3. Reflection activities (e.g. self evaluation and peer to peer monitoring/mentoring).

**Booster Sessions/Refresher trainings**

- Hold annual refresher programs or booster training events as a regular program quality improvement activity for all leaders and trainers.
- Observe at least one practice teaching per year for all leaders.
- Refresher programs help leaders to:
  - Share with other leaders.
  - Problem-solve community workshop scenarios.
  - Review *Skills Drills* videos
  - Troubleshoot challenging experiences with participants or other leaders.
  - Network with peers and trainers.
  - Obtain technical assistance from Master or T-Trainners and guidance from program management.

Refresher or booster training event agendas should focus on skills building Q & A and focus on program or leader challenges. Technical assistance with the coordinating staff
or a Master or T-Trainer is an opportunity to define fidelity standards and protocols and help leaders to understand and commit to fidelity. A block of time for leader networking is a must.

As part of the booster training you may want to consider: 1.) observing 2-3 sets of practice teaching and eliciting group critique and responses; 2.) soliciting challenges and technical assistance questions ahead of time to allow time in the agenda to accommodate them; 3.) review and critique the Skills Drills videos to reinforce the proper training techniques; and, 4.) reviewing workshop fidelity monitoring feedback, which provides additional guidance in developing an agenda for the event.

**Leader Satisfaction Activities**

Many peer leaders are challenged by their own health conditions or those of their loved ones. Peer leaders are usually volunteers as well. So ensuring that program burdens do not rest with volunteer peer leaders is critical to their continued involvement in workshops and trainings. Having satisfied leaders means they will return to lead workshops and experienced leaders will increase the fidelity of your program.

One simple way to understand leader satisfaction is to ask. In general, the information you are interested in is not whether or not leaders like what they are doing; rather it is understanding what is working or not in:

- Workshops.
- Support and retraining efforts.
- Interactions with program staff.

Asking such questions will provide you with needed knowledge to improve your program and to assure its quality in the field. An example of a leader satisfaction survey can be found in the Resources page at the end of this section; however, your efforts do not need to be that formal.

**Peer-to-Peer Feedback Activities**

Good co-leaders do more than show up to class on time and stay after to clean up after workshops end. Good co-leaders give one another feedback and help to improve one another’s practice and ultimately workshop fidelity. It is important to instill the value of peer feedback in your leaders. The routine practice of spending a few minutes
debriefing a workshop session with your co-leader can help with spot corrections resulting in immediate improvement in the workshop. You can also use peer feedback forms to gather information about leader behavior and better match leader strengths and personalities. Finally, consider peer mentoring as a way to help program fidelity. Peer mentoring is a non-threatening way of establishing an open environment where peer feedback is provided and accepted non-defensively and where peers can improve program practices by mentoring one another improving workshop fidelity. This practice is also useful for trainers and fidelity monitors.

**Self Evaluation Monitoring for Program Fidelity**

Self-reflection evaluation tools can identify areas where leaders (or trainers) may feel they need additional experience or training. Reviewing completed tools may identify skill areas to address during annual assessments and booster trainings. In addition, completed tools may indicate a systemic issue related to training and/or particular trainers. Comparing self-reflection surveys with fidelity observations can also shine a light on differences between the leader’s self-perception and the perceptions of others. Increasing awareness in your leaders and revealing new information about leader practices can help you to both monitor and maintain program fidelity. An example of a leader self-reflection tool can be found in the Toolbox at the end of this guide.

**When things go wrong:**

**Problem:** Upon review of a leader’s annual self-evaluation, program staff responsible for fidelity notices several red flags.

**Response:** This is probably the easiest of all the scenarios because the leader helped to identify where the difficulties lie. From there, you need to assess how egregious noted concerns are and whether “reconditioning” the leader in needed skill areas or counseling out is warranted. Often, providing one-on-one direction in the identified skill area or partnering the leader with a strong leader or trainer will get results; however, there are times when it is more an attitudinal or philosophical difference that may not be overcome. At that point, it is time to find a more appropriate program role for the person.
When to Remove Leaders:

Reports or observations of workshops where a leader or leaders attempt to sell products and/or services to workshop participants will almost always result in immediate dismissal of leader(s).

Use of language that is judgmental, belittling, offensive or otherwise inappropriate and/or behaviors that demonstrate prejudicial attitudes will almost always result in dismissal of leaders and/or trainers.

Be sure that a specific person is charged with this responsibility and that they are able to provide this feedback and/or dismissal in a timely, direct and discrete manner, assuring that participants and other leaders are not adversely affected.

When things go wrong:

Problem: The Master Trainer or another trained observer sees a leader handing out business cards to her hair styling shop to workshop participants at the break.

Response: This is an example of a leader behavior that needs immediate attention. Leaders using workshops for personal profit is NEVER allowed. As soon as this behavior is observed, take the leader aside and insist that they stop this activity at once. Be sure that you are clear why this activity is not appropriate and let the leader know that you or another program staff will follow up with them before they will be able to lead another session of this workshop. Assuming you were previously clear in your expectations of leaders during training, this will likely result in the leaders dismissal. If not, you might consider offering the leader a second chance with the clear understanding that this practice is strictly prohibited and will result in their dismissal if it continues.

Cultural Considerations

Every effort should be made to match program leaders and workshops that bring together people of the same ethnic/cultural background. Sometimes, given limitations on the quantity and availability of leaders/trainers, this is not possible. Therefore, it is vital that
trainers/leaders are sensitive to cultural and ethnic surroundings and issues and act appropriately at all times. If you do not know about the customs and values of a culture, ask the participants in an open and respectful way. Common sayings or phrases may be found to be inappropriate or disrespectful in that specific setting so it is always advisable to ask first! Participants are usually happy to inform you and appreciate your inquiry.

**When things go wrong:**

**Problem:** A team of leaders from a different part of the community was facilitating the Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop in a predominantly African-American neighborhood, when during a workshop session, one of the leaders referred to the group as “you people”.

The leader in fact was referring to the group as people with arthritis (the leader did not have arthritis); however, the statement was interpreted as a racist remark, and understandably so. Due to the leader’s lack of knowledge and understanding about the community that s/he was in, and the complete inappropriateness of the statement, it was extremely difficult to nurture the group and keep it intact for the remainder of the workshop.

**Response:** The program coordinator and other staff from the community center were brought together to determine an appropriate course of action. Both leaders were informed of the problem and it was brought to the workshop group, with the facilitation of the community center’s social worker, to discuss and resolve the following week. The leader apologized to the group for her remark and the group continued. As a result of this experience, leaders in the program were provided cultural sensitivity training as a prerequisite before going into unfamiliar communities.
Section C: Resources

Links to most resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

Websites

- Skills Drills Videos

Stanford Patient Education Research Center:


CDSMP Manual

- CDSMP Leader's Manual Appendix II “Teaching Techniques used in the CDSMP”

Toolbox Documents

Links to these resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

- CDSMP Fidelity Toolkit
- Sample Leader Satisfaction Form
- Watch List and Guidance for Successful Practice Training
- Quality Assurance Call Procedure and Documentation Form

Comment [MB5]: See above comment.

Comment [MB6]: Upload to website.

Revised July 2013
Section D: Opportunities for Fidelity after Workshops

**WHO:** Workshop/program coordinators; Master Trainers

**WHAT:** Ensuring minimum program quality and implementing quality improvement efforts

**WHEN:** In between workshop offerings

**HOW:** Develop and use various monitoring and review processes and tools

As the program administrator in your location, there are other tools available to you that can assist in program fidelity monitoring after workshops end. Attendance monitoring, satisfaction surveys, stakeholder/partner calls, review of outcomes data, and attention to diversity, cultural and program adaptation issues can all assist you.

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**Red Flags after Workshops**

The following is a list of likely red flags that indicate poor fidelity has taken place during one or more workshops. Observations and/or reports of any of the following require your investigation to assure program quality.

- Complaints from another leader about his/her co-leader.
- Low workshop recruitment.
- High rates of participant drop-out.
- High rates of leader burn-out, leader drop-out.
- The workshop presents poor data outcomes (this may or may not be related to workshop fidelity but always bears investigation).
- The host site is not interested in continuing to offer the program.
- Participant satisfaction survey data indicates there is a problem with the workshop or the leaders.
- Participant satisfaction survey data results are more than one standard deviation from the mean. This could point to problems within that particular workshop, or with a particular leader(s).
A leader or many leaders request not to teach with a specific leader.

Health professionals complain or make negative comments.

**Fidelity after Workshops: Minimum Fidelity Requirements**

**Attendance monitoring**

Attendance records are a tool to assist you in determining how your workshops are being received in the community. Workshop attendance records can tell you a great deal about what is happening in your programs. Consistently low attendance at workshops might indicate that there is a logistical concern at a particular site (access issues or transportation problems, even parking). It may also point to recruitment problems where more targeted recruitment efforts may be beneficial.

On the surface, it might seem that if only one or two participants dropped-out of a workshop that it is not worth a follow-up. It is true that more often participants leave or drop-out of workshops because of personal circumstances that have little to do with leaders or programming; however, this is not always the case.

Sometimes participants drop-out of workshops because one or both leaders:

- Did or said something that offended the participant.
- Caused participant to feel judged, unappreciated or somehow inappropriate for the group.
- Mismanaged the group in some way; allowing another participant to do or say something offensive, for example.

Following up by phone is a convenient and low-cost, although not resource neutral, strategy to help you understand why participants did not return to a workshop. By contacting participants who drop-out of workshops after attending one or more of the first few sessions but do not complete the workshop, you may learn that there barriers to participating in your program that you can change or address, thereby improving program quality.
When things go wrong:

**Problem:** The workshop experiences a high participant dropout rate after the second week.

**Response:** The problem is probably one of two things or sometimes a combination.

1. You will need to look at the way that the marketing of the workshop was done asking yourself if it accurately explained the workshop, what it is and is not, as well as the time commitment involved. Are there any glaring errors? If so, then the high dropout rate is likely due to poor recruitment. But don’t stop your investigation there.

2. You also need to look at the leaders.
   - Are they rude to the participants and/or each other; or do they act superior to the participants, in effect turning them off from the workshop?
   - Are they not sticking to the book leading to a sense of confusion or a waste of time?
   - Do they have poor workshop management skills allowing for wasted time or participants treating one another without respect?

All of these questions and more can be answered by observing a session run by these leaders as well as following up with other workshop drop-outs to determine why they did not come back. If you recognize a pattern of drop-outs with one or both of the leaders despite good review of first hand observation during workshops, you will need to dig a little deeper to uncover the issue. This may include calling participants who did complete workshops led by the leader(s) to gather more information about the workshops, participants and site.

**Tips for Outreach to Participant Drop-Outs**

Calls should be made by someone other than the leaders and are best conducted by someone outside of the day-to-day delivery of workshops – preferably someone specifically charge with program quality assurance and improvement.

- Identify yourself as being with the program quality assurance effort.
- Remind the participant where and when they took the workshop.
- Begin by asking why they decided not to continue the workshop.
Most people will give a personal reason such as, “My arthritis was really acting up and I just didn’t feel like going out.”

Respond with appropriate empathy and then continue by acknowledging that most people who do not return to the workshop have similar situations...however, sometimes something happened at the workshop that made them not want to come back again; perhaps one of the leaders or another participant did or said something hurtful or offensive. Ask them if anything like that happened at the workshop they attended.

If they begin to describe such circumstances be sure to write down what they say in as much detail as possible without probing inappropriately.

Apologize if appropriate. Thank them for their help and ask if they would be interested in attending another workshop in the future.

Finally, be prepared to act on what you have learned by attending and observing leaders or workshops where this or other monitoring raised red flags.

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**Fidelity after Workshops: Mid-level Fidelity Opportunities**

**Satisfaction surveys**

Surveys are used to gather opinions about how well leaders and workshops are meeting the expectations of participants. Satisfaction surveys and other types of surveys help to identify what went right in your workshops and what went wrong. Because survey methods are wholly subjective, based on the opinions of respondents, caution in using this information is reasonable.

Consider a leader who has a personality clash with their co-leader. Their assessment of the co-leader on a post-workshop satisfaction survey may be more based on emotion than behavior. While this information is important in terms of placing leaders in the future, it does not necessarily point up a problem with workshop fidelity. Or what about the participant who loved the workshop and leaders and answers all survey questions very highly. Does this really tell us anything about whether or not the leaders delivered the program according to the manual?

Participant satisfaction surveys can also help to uncover poor workshop fidelity. In general, administering satisfaction surveys at the end of the workshop will likely result
in very high levels of participant satisfaction. However, if you track satisfaction over time, even slight deviations in satisfaction might point to problems in workshop fidelity; particularly if one or more leaders consistently obtain lower scores, even if overall scores are high. In addition, even though most participants will be highly satisfied at the close of the workshop, they still may have good feedback to offer you and/or the leaders. Narrative feedback from satisfaction surveys can point to areas of improvement for fidelity and programming efforts.

The design and analysis of survey data helps to get the information you are interested in. There is an example on the Resources page of this section. Additional resources are available at the Web Resources listed in the Resources page at the end of each section.

**Calls to Stakeholders/Partners, Leaders and other interested persons**

As indicated in several sections of this manual, talking with people directly involved in program delivery and receipt can be very beneficial to your program fidelity and quality improvement efforts. As a matter of course, the following suggestions will guide your efforts:

- Talk to people who know what is happening in the workshop and/or in community host sites. You will learn a great deal if you approach the right people and are open to feedback about your programming and leaders.
- Do not assume that the opinions of those not directly involved in the workshops are correct, but do ask and listen to their feedback. Some folks to consider talking to are contacts at the community site, program funders and staff involved in coordinating activities.
- Do not assume the first answer to your questions is the only answer or all of the answer—dig and then dig some more to be sure you have the real story. Do not discount anyone’s input until you have the whole story.

Like all fidelity strategies, be prepared to act on what you learn; otherwise resources are used without benefit to the program.
**Fidelity after Workshops: Advanced Fidelity Opportunities**

**Program Records**

Using program records to identify workshop problems can be helpful. It is important to review these records for trends that may indicate a problem with specific leaders, locations or your general programming efforts. What you learn from review of program records can help to design and implement a quality improvement effort for your program. Alone, program records are only an indicator that a problem may exist. Combined with information from phone calls, survey data and other direct fidelity monitoring activities, program records are part of a comprehensive fidelity monitoring strategy.

**Comparison of participant outcomes to original study results**

If you are tracking participant outcomes over time and are using scales similar to those of the original developer study or other validated scales, as an additional quality measure it may be possible for you to compare participant outcomes for your program with previously reported findings. This can help you to understand whether or not your participants are experiencing expected outcomes and whether resources for the program are well spent.

The relationship between findings on participant outcomes and measures of program fidelity can be a little murky. It seems reasonable that delivering an evidence-based program with a high level of fidelity to the original design will likely result in similar outcomes, but it does not always hold true that comparable participant outcomes indicate good program fidelity, or that lower than expected outcomes are related to poor fidelity.

Participant outcomes that are less than expected when there is good program fidelity maintenance can happen for a number of reasons including poor quality or incomplete data collections, impact of specific participant health status at baseline and mitigating variables not present at baseline for which the statistical analyses chosen cannot control. Similarly other variables may explain participants experiencing comparable outcomes when reviews of fidelity efforts highlight serious red flags indicating departure from the intended program design.
Given the complexities of the relationship between outcomes and fidelity, your project will need to decide what outcome data if any to collect and how that information will or will not be used as an additional indicator of program fidelity.

**Cultural Considerations**

Take one look at the number of countries across the world that offer the CDSMP and the multiple languages in which it is delivered and you will be convinced that culture is considered in programming worldwide. No program is perfect and CDSMP continues to be adapted for cultural and ethnic purposes and appropriateness (with the approval and knowledge of the Stanford Patient Education Research Center). The CDSMP has worked for thousands of people in very diverse countries and communities. Program coordinators and organizers work hard to match communities with leaders who are like them. There is as much diversity within a culture as there is between cultures and we must be conscious and sensitive to it. This is a testament to the life-altering attributes of the program.

**Countries where the CDSMP is offered:**

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Lithuania, Netherlands, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, St. Lucia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Kingdom and more are being added almost daily. (Please contact the Stanford Patient Education Research Center for an updated list.)

**Languages the CDSMP is offered in:**

American English, British English, Spanish, German, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch, Arabic, Italian, Hindi, Turkish, Greek, Korean, Welsh….also updated daily. (Please contact the Stanford Patient Education Research Center for an updated list.)
Section D: Resources

Links to most resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

Tool Box Documents

Links to these resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

- Sample Peer Leader Post-fidelity Check Self-evaluation Form
- Sample Peer Leader Satisfaction Survey

Comment [MB7]: Changes needed
Comment [MB8]: Change needed
Section E: Diversity and Adaptations

For the CDSMP to be successfully disseminated to diverse audiences it is imperative that programming be thoughtful and respectful of the dynamics at work in any group setting. Language barriers, workshop timing and workshop content have all been the subject of some inquiry during national and international roll outs of the CDSMP. What follows are some things to think about when planning for implementation of the CDSMP with a variety of audiences.

In general, you may find two guidelines helpful:

1. Leaders should be from the same group as workshop members—be it gender, race, ethnicity or other cultural or group dynamic. Adhering to this guideline may save a lot of time and frustration, but it is not always feasible. Do your best to try to achieve this by planning ahead when you recruit partners, leaders and trainers.

2. To the greatest extent possible, group members should have similar gender, race, language or ethnicity.

Recognize that no matter how much or little diversity your programs have, culturally considerate, culturally sensitive and culturally humble leaders will more appropriately represent your program. Training on cultural dimensions in workshop delivery should be considered by program planners and are a great activity during booster sessions or quarterly reflection events.

Program Adaptations

If you want to make changes to the program:

1. First, deliver the program as written before you decide that it will not work in a specific community or with a specific group.
2. Contact Stanford Patient Education Research Center to discuss your concerns and any ideas regarding adaptation prior to convening a focus group.

3. Hold a focus group with participants who completed the workshop and ask for ideas to improve the workshop.

4. Seek advice and permission from Stanford Patient Education Research Center for proposed changes.

5. Make changes and deliver workshops. Repeat Step 2 (and 3 if additional changes are needed).

**Literacy**

Literacy skills are necessary for trainers and peer leaders of the CDSMP. The CDSMP is a standardized workshop that follows a written trainer/leader manual. To follow the program with fidelity, leaders and trainers need to be literate at a level commensurate with the currently approved Leader’s Manual.

Literacy levels in workshop participants will vary and there is no recommended literacy level for participants. Workshop materials can be used with persons from diverse backgrounds, abilities and literacy levels. Many participants have shared that they gather the appropriate knowledge and information from the workshop without reading the book; however, other participants indicate that the book is highly prized for its additional information. The book *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions, 4th Ed.* is also available via audiocassette tape and CD through the publisher.

Comment [MB9]: Is it the 4th Edition
Section E: Resources

Links to most resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

Websites

Websites of interest to those concerned with adaptations:

- Stanford Patient Education Research Center:
  
  http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs/

  http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/training/
Section F: Counseling People Out of Workshops

Counseling People Out of Workshops

One of the effects of monitoring workshop fidelity is that occasionally you will uncover extreme problems with leaders, trainers or even at times, participants that will require removing someone from a workshop. This can be challenging but is essential to assuring good program fidelity and protecting participants, other leaders and program resources.

The earlier you catch poorly modeled workshop activities the better. During fidelity or program “checks” is the best time to alert leader(s) to concerns and how to correct them. Sometimes, despite your best efforts, you are faced with the absolute need to remove someone from a workshop. This can happen for a number of reasons but generally is related to leader/trainer unwillingness to follow protocols or personal attitudes or judgments that impact workshop delivery.

You may also find similar problems with some participants and this can also have a great impact on workshops. As a leader/trainer, you need to balance the needs of any individual participant with the needs of the group. If you determine that a participant’s behavior is impacting the group negatively, you may need to counsel the participant out of your group. Generally, this is a last resort and often other participants will help to “manage” a challenging participant but it is your responsibility as a leader/trainer/program coordinator to assure that your program as a whole is not damaged – so you may need to consider the impact of participants on workshop fidelity as well.

How to Counsel Out a Leader/Trainer after Training

Counseling someone out of a leader/trainer position after training is much more difficult.

◊ First, you need to know that there is a problem. Unfortunately this does not always happen in a timely manner. This is why having a fidelity maintenance plan is so vital to the success of the program.

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Second, counseling out at this stage is almost always more time consuming. This is because you will personally need to investigate what is happening. You cannot take what others, including the co-leader/trainer, are stating as fact. An investigation into the matter will separate the facts from things that cannot be substantiated.

Third, there are also situations when personality differences between the co-leaders/trainers are contributing to problems. Inconsistencies in program fidelity in these circumstances will require replacement of one or both leaders/trainers for the workshop in question and assurances that they not teach together in the future.

Fourth, the person being counseled out often has hurt feelings and is disappointed because they passed the formal training and were given a workshop to facilitate.

Regardless of the situation, counseling someone out after training is never easy to do. Here are some guidelines to make this uncomfortable process easier:

1. Gather the facts, which may require you to observe the leader/trainer first hand.

2. Discuss the situation with the person swiftly and before they are scheduled to teach their next workshop session.

3. Always be respectful with the person, giving him/her specific reasons why you are concerned about their performance and bringing the feedback firmly back to the manual and behaviors. It is reasonable to include your co-trainer or another CDSMP qualified person in the conversation.

4. Tell the leader/trainer what you saw them do well, if applicable, but also tell them what needs to be improved and why it is necessary. Only do this if you are comfortable with giving them a plan for improvement and they are willing to accept it. Explain what will happen if they do not improve and follow through by setting up a timetable and change benchmarks.

5. If remediation or reconditioning is not an option, thank the person for their service, being clear about the reasons for their dismissal. ONLY if
appropriate, offer them different opportunities to help advance CDSMP other than as a program leader. They may excel at something else that is program related. It is vital that when you feel the need to counsel someone out of the program that you are not swayed to do otherwise; this will only delay the inevitable and cause more problems in the end.

Regardless, of whether you are counseling out someone during or after training, please remember that there are others available to support and advise you during these times including the program coordinator at your agency, your co-trainer(s), the Stanford community of trainers (via the Master Trainer Listserv), and the Stanford Patient Education Research Center. It is probable that others have experienced a similar situation and will offer guidance and advice.

**How Do I Counsel Out a Problem Participant?**

Counseling out problem participants is sometimes necessary to protect the group and to maintain the good name of the CDSMP. The first step in this process is to speak with the leaders to gather all the facts and information needed to speak with the participant. Generally, a program coordinator or someone in a similar role will take responsibility for this situation. In some cases, leaders feel confident to handle this situation, but in any case, leaders should make you aware of the situation as soon as possible. The practice of calling your leaders during the workshop series will help you to gather and give feedback that may help to avoid a situation with a participant from escalating to this point.

If you feel you have gathered all of the facts and asking the participant to leave the group is your only option, arrange a time to meet with the participant away from the group. State your concerns related to their participation and its impact on the larger group directly focusing on behaviors. This will allow for frank discussion and minimize potential embarrassment. Directly but gently present the participant with the reason why they are being asked to discontinue their participation in the group. Provide concrete examples that support your reasons. Expect the participant to react in a variety of ways including: anger, denial, sadness/crying, and shock. If appropriate, provide suggestions so that he/she may be able to attend another workshop in the future.
Section F: Resources

Links to most resources can be found at http://ceacw.org/qtac/q-files

Websites

Websites of interest to those concerned with counseling out leaders/trainers/participants:

- Stanford Patient Education Research Center:
  - http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs/
  - http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/training/
Section G: Conclusion

The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program is an exemplar in the field of evidence-based health programs. As the CDSMP is adopted by greater numbers of organizations and systems, the wisdom of these experiences will increase and inevitably build a stronger and higher quality program. It is the responsibility of the collective body of program implementers, leaders and trainers to assure that as the program continues to grow, it will faithfully maintain its core concepts and components.

The guidance in this manual is not meant to be all inclusive of the program fidelity methods available for the CDSMP, but rather to provide readers with a foundation for their own program fidelity maintenance protocol. We expect that as the interest in this subject grows and the CDSMP expands, more “best practice” information and examples will be added to those that are described here. We welcome that dialogue!