The External Data Framework

Facilitating Greater Data Sharing with a Systematic and Streamlined Approach to Secondary Data

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So, why should we care about sharing data?
Barriers to Effective Data Sharing

• **Internal barriers**
  - Lack of staff resources for review
  - Skepticism about data quality, intentionally biased and/or conflicting data
  - Concerns regarding legal defensibility

• **External Barriers**
  - How will the agency use our data?
  - Is our data “good enough”
  - How much extra work is this going to take?
Key Features of the External Data Framework

- Three tiers, each associated with
  - Potential uses of the data by the agency
  - Specific information sufficiency and data quality requirements

- Written guidance and online tools to simplify submittals

- Streamlined process for internal review and data management
“Value-added” Features

• Data quality benchmarks for other, non-agency uses
  – Recommended data quality benchmarks that participants and nonparticipants alike can use in developing their monitoring plans and evaluating secondary data for their own needs

• Technical Assistance
Breaking Down Internal Barriers

- **Addressed through process design and policy**
  - Review processes streamlined with templates for data submittals
  - Setting a high bar for data quality for decisions with regulatory impact
  - Clearly stated policies regarding the agency’s use of the data
  - With “safeguards” in place, skepticism becomes moot
Removing Barriers to Participation

• **External concerns addressed with:**
  – Outreach that promotes participation and emphasizes voluntary nature of the program
  – General and technical guidance
  – A range of options for data submittal
  – External data coordinator and online technical assistance
Data Submittal

• All secondary data is submitted through one of two online portals
  – Secondary Data Portal
  – Hoosier Riverwatch Portal

• Three options for data submittal
  – Online data entry
  – Customize templates for uploading data
  – Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)
Data Management

• All data submitted through either portal are stored in the same database
• Email notification system built in to help the process run smoothly
• New data and/or new organization notifications trigger the data quality review
• Tier 2 and Tier 3 data also uploaded into the database that stores agency-collected data
Lessons Learned

• Identify the barriers to data sharing that exist within and outside your organization
• Look around at other states – good models already exist
• Start with what you already have
• Be cool with the fact that it may take a long time to pay off
Questions?

• External Data Framework
  – idem.IN.gov/cleanwater/2485.htm

• Hoosier Riverwatch
  – idem.IN.gov/riverwatch/2333.htm

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