MANAGING FOR SUCCESS

Strengthening the Federal Infrastructure for Evidence-based Policymaking

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September 2017

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Acknowledgments

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INTRODUCTION

As funding falls shorter and bipartisanship becomes rarer, federal officials and advocates are increasingly looking to evidence-based policymaking as a source of hope for advancing more effective and efficient solutions for children, youth, and families.

Just like successful businesses invest in data analytics and research and development to improve their products and processes, so too can government, by practicing what is known as "evidence-based policymaking." As the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative explains, "evidence-based policymaking uses the best available research and information on program results to guide decisions at all stages of the policy process and in each branch of government. It identifies what works, highlights gaps where evidence of program effectiveness is lacking, enables policymakers to use evidence in budget and policy decisions, and relies on systems to monitor implementation and measure key outcomes, using the information to continually improve program performance."[1]

Evidence-based policymaking generally enjoys support across party and ideological lines. In *Evidence-based Policymaking: A Primer*, the Heritage Foundation makes the case that "the political process of deciding public policy should be informed not only by values but also by rigorous evidence."[2] Likewise, the Center for American Progress notes that "evidence-based policymaking should be a vehicle for finding common ground," and "the nation would welcome a bipartisan commitment to truly use evidence in support of policymaking to cut poverty."[3]

Bipartisan support, however, is not enough to ensure success. To be successful, evidence-based policymaking requires evidence to be funded adequately, developed rigorously and independently, and used effectively.

Funded adequately

Learning what works (and what could work better) takes dedicated resources. Researchers need to be hired, studies need to be designed, data need to be collected, databases need to be created, analyses need to be run, and findings need to be written.

There always will be a tension between spending money on direct services and spending it on evaluating the services being provided. But without dedicated funding for research and evaluation, the federal government will never have the information it needs to ensure the programs it funds are as effective and efficient as possible.

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>
> **— Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative Evidence-based Policymaking: A Guide for Effective Government**

Developed rigorously and independently

Evidence-based policymaking can be only as successful as the quality of the evidence on which it relies. Study methodologies must match the questions being addressed, and the methods must be applied rigorously. As the Department of Labor Evaluation Policy notes, "rigor is required

for all types of evaluations, including impact and outcome evaluations, implementation and process evaluations, descriptive studies, and formative evaluations. Rigor requires ensuring that inferences about cause and effect are well founded (internal validity); requires clarity about the populations, settings, or circumstances to which results can be generalized (external validity); and requires the use of measures that accurately capture the intended information (measurement reliability and validity)."[4] Rigor is important not only for evaluation but for all other types of evidence as well. For example, *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency* stresses the importance of a "commitment to quality and professional standards of practice."[5] Likewise, the Performance Improvement Council's (PIC's) *Performance Principles & Practices Playbook* calls for "capturing qualitative, quantitative, and customer information, using consistent processes to ensure information is valid and accessible," and using "the best available evidence to rigorously and credibly document program effectiveness, make hard choices, and learn more systematically what works, for whom, under what circumstances."[6]

A necessary prerequisite for developing evidence rigorously is ensuring that the people creating the evidence do so independently from any stakeholder who may have a vested interest in the results. In a policy context, such stakeholders include policymakers themselves.

If evidence plays a larger role in higher stakes decisions, it will inevitably increase the likelihood that policymakers will want to influence which types of evidence are collected, how they are collected, and how the findings are crafted and shared.

Using evidence to inform high-stakes decisions and ensuring the independence of the evidence need not be tradeoffs. It is possible, and preferable, to simultaneously ratchet up both the use of evidence at the highest levels of government and the level of independence among the people creating and sharing the evidence.

Used effectively (frequently, meaningfully, appropriately, and accurately)

Even well-funded and rigorously created evidence will not make any difference in the world if it is not used. Ideally, evidence will be used frequently (to inform most policy decisions), meaningfully (granted substantial weight in decision-making processes), appropriately (its influence on decisions calibrated to the size and quality of the evidence base), and accurately (decisions are based on a correct interpretation of the evidence).

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About this report

This report focuses on what it will take for the federal government to ensure that evidence is funded adequately, developed rigorously and independently, and used effectively. What kind of federal infrastructure needs to be in place to achieve these goals?

As the Heritage Foundation puts it, "while emotions and beliefs will always strongly influence political decisions, the degree to which these decisions are based on rigorous evidence may be the difference between creating public policies that fail or succeed. The question is whether policymakers in the executive and legislative branches can create an environment where rigorous evidence informs political decisions."[7]

This report attempts to provide a working model of the elements that can foster such an environment. We refer to these elements or components as the "building blocks of the federal infrastructure for evidence."

The report has three primary sections.

The *Overview* outlines our model of the building blocks of the federal infrastructure for evidence-based policymaking, summarizes the current status of each building block (as of the beginning of the new administration), and provides a summary of recommendations to strengthen the building blocks.

The *Full Landscape Scan and Recommendations* presents the detailed status of each building block along with more specific recommendations to strengthen it.

The *Appendix* provides additional details about each office, interagency collaboration, or policy referenced in this report.

Our working model for the building blocks of the federal infrastructure for evidence, our landscape scan, and our recommendations are based on information compiled from numerous sources.

The forum gathered information from the Cross-Agency Learning Community on Federal Investments in Research and Evaluation, a group comprising federal officials in agencies focused on research and evaluation related to children, youth, and families. The forum also conducted detailed online research on the status of each building block. The recommendations for each element of infrastructure was further informed by interviews with current and former federal agency staff and White House officials spanning five administrations as well as with a bipartisan set of national organizations deeply involved with evidence-based policymaking. A number of these individuals reviewed and provided feedback on earlier drafts of this report as well.

It is important to note that most of our sources of information came from agencies that do work related to children, youth, and families. While this report is written broadly so as to apply to all federal agencies, it is likely that it will be particularly relevant to agencies that are focused on children, youth, and families.

We designed this report to be complimentary to the work of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and we released our paper on the same day that the Commission issued their report *The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking*. Our hope is that these two reports, taken together, will help the federal government continue to improve the building blocks of its infrastructure for evidence and, in so doing, help ensure evidence is funded adequately, developed rigorously and independently, and used effectively. This will in turn help policymakers become better informed, more effective, and more efficient at delivering results.

OVERVIEW

Overview of the building blocks of the federal infrastructure for evidence-based policymaking

Ensuring evidence is funded adequately, developed rigorously, and used effectively doesn't happen on its own. It requires dedicated people, processes, and policies.

Our landscape scan of federal efforts related to evidence-based policymaking identified the five types of evidence and six types of infrastructure described below, which collectively comprise the building blocks of the federal infrastructure for evidence-based policymaking discussed in this report. While these building blocks are not necessarily definitive or complete, we believe they provide a solid foundation for understanding the current infrastructure and ways to strengthen it.

Five types of evidence

1. Data
2. Statistics
3. Evaluations
4. Behavioral sciences
5. Performance metrics

Six components of infrastructure

1. White House leadership positions
2. Interagency coordinating bodies
3. Agency-level offices and actions
4. Guidebooks detailing principles and best practices
5. Policies governing the creation and use of evidence
6. Mechanisms helping states and localities

This report provides a landscape scan of the status of each of the six building blocks for each of the five types of evidence as of January 2017, summarized in the chart on the following page.

Overview of the Building Blocks of the Federal Infrastructure for Evidence-based Policymaking (as of January 2017)

Component of infrastructure	Cutting across multiple types of evidence	Statistics	Data	Performance improvement	Evaluation	Social and behavioral sciences
White House leadership positions	• Special advisor for evidence-based policy, evidence team, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) • Director, White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation	• Chief statistician of the United States/Office of Statistical and Science Policy, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB	• U.S. chief technology officer/White House Office of Science and Technology Policy • Federal chief information officer	• Deputy director for management or federal chief performance officer/OMB	• Closest is the Office of Evaluation Sciences in the General Services Administration (GSA)	• Social and Behavioral Sciences Team / National Science and Technology Council (with GSA staff support)
Interagency coordinating bodies		• Committee on National Statistics • Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Policy • Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Methodology • Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics	• Chief Information Officers Council • White House Data Cabinet • Chief Financial Officers Council	• Performance Improvement Council • President's Management Council	• Interagency Council on Evaluation Policy	
Agency-level offices and actions	• Some agencies have a centralized office that deals with multiple types of evidence. OMB identifies 7 such offices.	• More than 100 federal agency statistical units deal with statistics, with 13 principal statistical agencies primarily engaged in statistical work.	• At least 42 federal entities have chief information officers.	• Performance improvement officers are in all related agencies.	• Most agencies do not have centralized evaluation offices. The FY2016-enacted budget for 7 of the most prominent agencies that do was lower than the budget for statistical agencies.	
Guidebooks detailing principles and best practices		• *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*	• *Open Data Policy— Managing Information as an Asset*	• *Performance Principles & Practices Playbook*	• Department of Labor Evaluation Policy • Administration for Children and Families Evaluation Policy • Common Guidelines for Education Research and Development	
Policies governing the creation and use of evidence	• OMB annual fiscal budget guidance • The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 • Evidence-based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016 • Information Quality Act • Privacy Act of 1974	• Statistical Policy Directive, Fundamental Responsibilities of Federal Statistical Agencies and Recognized Statistical Units	• Open Data Policy— Guidance M-13-13 • Open Government Directive—M-10-06 • OMB Guidance for Providing and Using Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes – M-14-06 • Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014	• Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 • e-Government Act of 2002 (includes Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act and Federal Information Security Management Act)	• Increased Emphasis on Program Evaluations M-10-01, 2009 • Evaluating Programs for Efficacy and Cost-efficiency M-10-32, 2010	• Executive order—Using Behavioral Insights to Better Serve the American People • Implementation Guidance for executive order 13707
Mechanisms helping states and localities	<u>What Works Centers</u> • Regional Educational Laboratories • Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center <u>Web sites</u> • OMB evidence and evaluation	<u>What Works Centers</u> • Federal Statistical Research Data Centers • Center for Statistical Research and Methodology • National Center for Health Statistics <u>Web sites</u> • FedStats • usa.gov • ChildStats	<u>What Works Centers</u> • State Data Centers • Census Information Center • Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications • Privacy Technical Assistance Center • Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services(CMS) Virtual Research Data Center <u>Web sites</u> • data.gov • healthdata.gov	<u>Web sites</u> • performance.gov • pic.gov (Performance Improvement Council)	<u>Web sites</u> • youth.gov Guide to Evidence and Innovation • clinicaltrials.gov <u>Clearinghouses</u> • youth.gov Interagency Program Directory shows 8 in Department of Health and Human Services , 3 in Justice, 1 in Labor, 1 in Education, and 1 in the Corporation for National & Community Service	

Overview of recommendations

The good news is that as illustrated in the chart on the previous page, each of the building blocks already exists in some form, at least for one type of evidence. Yet the overall infrastructure for evidence is still very much a work in progress.

As we reviewed the current status of the infrastructure, we identified three overarching recommendations for improving the infrastructure as a whole: integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes; elevating evaluation; and focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence.

Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes

Instead of having a unified, cohesive infrastructure supporting all types of evidence, the federal government currently has what may be described as series of separate infrastructures. While there are plenty of exceptions, in general, there is one infrastructure to support statistics, a separate infrastructure set up to support performance management, and yet another infrastructure set up to support evaluation.

As we spoke to people inside and outside of government about the need for, and opportunities to, align the various infrastructures for evidence, they were quick to point out that alignment should not be seen as an end in and of itself. Instead, several suggested that the goal for infrastructure alignment should be *aligning processes whereby evidence is brought together and used to make better-informed policy decisions.*

Evidence-based policymaking works best when multiple types of evidence are created, collected, and presented to policymakers as a coherent package to be used in key decision-making processes. Unfortunately, the fragmented nature of the infrastructure for evidence can frustrate efforts to provide policymakers with a complete picture. As John Bridgeland, President George W. Bush's domestic policy advisor, testified to

Congress, we need to "create a stronger culture of using evidence to inform decision-making, and help coordinate data, evaluation and performance management so that agencies and Congress could learn more about the effectiveness of programs over time."[8]

We suggest, therefore, that any proposed change to align evidence-related efforts within the federal government should be judged based on how likely it is that it will help align processes whereby evidence is brought together and used to make better-informed policy decisions.

For example, several key stakeholders noted that making changes to the organization chart of evidence-related offices (such as merging the Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, PIC, the White House Data Cabinet, and the Interagency Council on Evaluation Policy) would be worth doing only if doing so would align processes whereby evidence is brought together and used to make better-informed policy decisions. Otherwise it could be a time-consuming distraction that reduces rather than improves the effectiveness of the federal infrastructure for evidence. One can certainly envision ways that such a merger could happen that would not yield the desired aligned processes. Likewise, one can envision ways that processes could be aligned without needing to merge offices.

The more the building blocks of the federal infrastructure of evidence integrate multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes, the stronger the infrastructure will be.

Elevating evaluation

In general, the infrastructure supporting evaluation appears to be less robust than the infrastructure supporting statistics, data, and performance improvement: its leadership positions less prominent, its interagency coordinating bodies less formalized, its best practices less codified, and its legislative

foundations less sturdy. As detailed in this report, work is currently under way to shore up some, but not all, of these areas.

Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence

Perhaps the most visible uses of evidence can be found in calls to increase funding for effective programs and in calls to decrease funding for ineffective programs. Both approaches, however, have drawbacks that limit the scale of evidence-based policymaking.

The extent to which funding for effective programs can be increased is limited by the size of federal appropriations. Any effort to do across-the-board budget increases for every program that has a strong evidence base demonstrating success is neither possible nor practical. Therefore, using evidence to increase funding for effective programs can happen only at the margins.

On the other hand, using evidence to decrease funding for ineffective programs comes with drawbacks of its own. Champions of the population or issue the program sought to address will fight the proposed budget cut, arguing that even a program that is not great is better than no program at all.

Perhaps more problematically, such use creates a backlash against evidence itself. There are cases in which Congress has responded to a negative evaluation of a popular program by passing legislation prohibiting any future evaluations of it.

As one federal official noted, "we have a history in which negative results on an evaluation can mean that the money goes away. But the problem you are trying to solve has not gone away. The 'fear factor' is real for programs—if anyone fears that the information will be used to kill their program, the learning won't happen."[9]

To scale the use of evidence-based policymaking across government, it is essential to create an environment within which the creation and use of evidence is embraced instead of avoided. Therefore, the use of evidence to decrease funding for ineffective programs can happen only at the margins as well.

Fortunately, there are two approaches to using evidence that are revenue neutral and therefore have the potential to be scalable.

The first is shifting funding from programs that evidence suggests do not work to programs that evidence suggests do work, *for the same population and issue area*. Transferring funds from programs that evidence suggests are ineffective to programs that evidence suggests are effective seems on its face to be a common-sense bipartisan approach that would lead to, as the Heritage Foundation puts it, "improved allocative efficiency."[10]

Doing so will allow evidence-based policymaking to be scalable in a manner that could be pervasive across government because it (1) is not limited by the need to increase overall funding caps and (2) by showing advocates that this new way will get better results for the people and issues they care about, it significantly lowers the political backlash against evidence that generally accompanies its use in justifying budget cuts.

The second approach is to use evidence to spend the exact same amount of money on the exact same program but to encourage or require changes to the program that will make it more efficient and effective.

A leading figure in performance management in a previous administration even went so far as to say, "I would be hesitant to support calls for more research funding unless that funding was dedicated to studies that are useful for improving programs."[11]

Likewise, as John Bridgeland testified before the House Ways and Means Committee, "Congress should create an environment of continuous learning, not simply an 'on-off switch' when the evidence is unclear."[12]

Conclusion

The following chart summarizes the paper's recommendations for improving each component

of the federal infrastructure for evidence by integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes, elevating evaluation, and focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence.

Taken together, these recommendations have the potential to transform the federal infrastructure for evidence in ways that will help ensure evidence is funded adequately, developed rigorously, and used effectively. And in so doing, these changes will likely help policymakers become better informed, more effective, and more efficient at delivering results.

Summary of Recommendations for Strengthening the Federal Infrastructure for Evidence-based Policymaking

Component of infrastructure	Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	Elevating evaluation	Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence
White House leadership positions	The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) deputy director for management should align the work of the federal chief performance officers, the chief statistician, the U.S. chief technology officer (in his or her role overseeing data), the federal chief information officer (in his or her role with Project Open Data), and the chief evaluation officer (if such a position is created).	Create a federal chief evaluation officer to play a role in advancing the creation and use of federal evaluations similar to the role played in advancing statistics by the chief statistician of the United States.	The OMB director for management/chief performance officer, chief statistician, U.S. chief technology officer, and chief information officer should create a culture of partnering with agencies to use evidence to help programs improve.
Interagency coordinating bodies	The OMB deputy director for management/chair of the President's Management Council, or a similar-level official, should align the various interagency coordinating bodies that are focused on specific types of evidence.	The Interagency Council on Evaluation should be formalized through an executive order or legislation.	Each interagency coordinating body should convene members to develop jointly agreed-on methods for scaling the use of evidence through revenue-neutral approaches.
Agency-level offices and actions	Agencies should integrate multiple types of evidence into agency decision-making processes in ways that protect independence, transparency, and rigor.	Agencies should create or enhance Chief Evaluation Offices. Agencies should invest at least 1 percent of program funds in evaluations. Agencies should double down on tiered evidence initiatives.	Agencies should include revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence in their budget submissions to OMB.
Guidebooks detailing principles and best practices	Identify common themes across the full range of types of evidence activities and include them consistently in each guidebook.	Publish the emerging principles and practices for federal evaluation agencies. Develop a set of principles and practices for using administrative data for evaluations.	Guidebooks should include information about not only how evidence should be created but also how it should be used—including when and how it could be best used to increase and decrease funding and for revenue-neutral approaches to improve programs.
Policies governing the creation and use of evidence	Congress, in partnership with OMB, should craft policies that provide a clearer vision for how multiple types of evidence should be integrated into decision-making processes, including putting in place safeguards to preserve the independence of those who create, compile, and present evidence. Congress and OMB should implement the Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking's recommendations.	Congress, in partnership with OMB, should codify key components of the evaluation infrastructure.	Congress should establish revenue-neutral approaches to scale the use of evidence. OMB's annual budget guidance should promote revenue-neutral approaches to using evidence.
Mechanisms helping states and localities	Create a network of Using What Works Centers to help states and localities integrate multiple types of evidence into decision making. Create an evidence.gov Web site comprising the full complement of types of evidence that are currently siloed in sites like FedStats, data.gov, and performance.gov.	Create an evaluation.gov public-facing Web site compiling all evaluations conducted and/or funded by the federal government. Evaluation.gov should include an interface to search all federal clearinghouses at once.	Provide states and localities guidance and technical assistance for implementing revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence.

MANAGING FOR SUCCESS: STRENGTHENING THE FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING

6 INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENTS
- White House leadership positions
- Interagency coordinating bodies
- Agency-level offices and actions
- Guidebooks detailing principles and best practices
- Policies governing the creation and use of evidence
- Mechanisms helping states and localities

5 TYPES OF EVIDENCE
- Data
- Statistics
- Evaluations
- Behavioral sciences
- Performance metrics

THE FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EVIDENCE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING THE INFRASTRUCTURE
- Integrate multiple types of evidence into decision-making
- Elevate evaluation
- Focus on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING
- Funded adequately
- Developed rigorously and independently
- Used effectively:
  - Frequently (to inform most policy decisions)
  - Meaningfully (granted substantial weight in decision-making processes)
  - Appropriately (its influence on decisions calibrated to the size and quality of the evidence base)
  - Accurately (decisions are based on a correct interpretation of the evidence)

MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT POLICIES

FULL LANDSCAPE SCAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A Review of the Building Blocks of the Infrastructure for Evidence-based Policymaking (as of January 2017) and Recommendations for Strengthening Them

COMPONENT 1: WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

White House Leadership Positions: The Landscape

There is no substitute for great leadership. Perhaps nothing is more important in managing for success than having the right leadership positions created to oversee an administration's efforts to create and use evidence to inform decision making and filling them with the right people. The table below presents an overview of the landscape (as of January 2017) of positions dedicated to the creation and use of evidence; Appendix I provides additional detail about each position and office.

Title	Office	Authority	Primary goals	Primary related strategies
Cutting across multiple types of evidence				
Special advisor for evidence-based policy	Evidence Team, Office of Economic Policy, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	OMB	To integrate evidence and rigorous evaluation in budget and management decisions	• Assist agencies with data collection, promoting low-cost evaluations, adopting more evidence-based programs, and fostering evidence-building and evaluation capacity in agencies
Director, White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation	White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation	Created in 2009, appointed by the president.	To facilitate social innovation by supporting human and financial capital as well as increasing the use of evidence in policymaking	• Create transparency regarding federal databases • Increase the use of evaluations • Increase data availability and analytics • Strengthen agency capacity to use evidence
Statistics positions				
Chief statistician	Office of Statistical and Science Policy, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), OMB	Paperwork Reduction Acts of 1980 and 1995, appointed by the administrator of OIRA	To ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the federal statistical system as well as the integrity, objectivity, impartiality, utility, and confidentiality of information collected for statistical purposes[13]	• Establish statistical policies and standards • Identify priorities for improving programs • Evaluate statistical agency budgets • Review and approve federal agency information collections involving statistical methods • Coordinate U.S. participation in international statistical activities[14]
Data positions				
U.S. chief technology officer	White House Office of Science and Technology Policy	United States Chief Technology Officer Act, appointed by the president	To encourage the use of technology and data when providing government services at the federal level	• Work to increase public access to federal data • Coordinate interagency efforts to utilize science and technology
Federal chief information officer	Office of e-Government and Information Technology	e-Government Act of 2002; appointed by president, Senate confirmable	To encourage the use of information technology by government agencies to support government-public interactions	• Establish an interagency working group supported by the Federal Chief Information Officers Council to help with the development of tools that support information interoperability and data openness through repositories such as Project Open Data
Performance improvement positions				
Deputy director for management/federal chief performance officer	OMB	Chief performance officer position created by the president in 2009; appointed by president, Senate confirmable.	To develop a management agenda that includes information technology, financial management, procurement, performance, and human resources	• Oversee 5 OMB offices focused on oversight of agency actions • Facilitate agency strategic planning, goal setting, performance measurement, evaluation, and policy research
Evaluation positions				
None	Closest is the Office of Evaluation Sciences in General Services Administration (GSA)		To evaluate the effectiveness of evidence-based interventions on program outcomes	• Provide technical support on designing pilots • Identify opportunities for rigorous, rapid pilot testing
Social and behavioral sciences positions				
None	Closest is the Social and Behavioral Sciences Team in the National Science and Technology Council (with GSA support)	Created by the president in 2015 via executive order	To utilize behavioral science research to increase access and understanding of federal programs	• Provide assistance to agencies looking to change how their programs interact with the public

White House Leadership Positions: Recommendations

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) deputy director for management should align the work of the federal chief performance officers, the chief statistician, the U.S. chief technology officer (in his or her role overseeing data), the federal chief information officer (in his or her role with Project Open Data), and the chief evaluation officer (if such a position is created).

Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes will require aligning the leadership positions that oversee each type of evidence. Currently, there is little articulation of how the chief statistician of the United States, the OMB deputy director for management/chief performance officer, the U.S. chief technology officer, and if created, a federal chief evaluation officer all are supposed to relate to each other. As one official who has served in the White House under both Republican and Democratic presidents put it, "what's needed is a complete re-envisioning of how the federal government could re-align and coordinate activities that are designed to improve program effectiveness so they work in concert to make a tangible difference in improving outcomes. For starters, the Performance Improvement Officer activities led by the OMB Office of Performance and Personnel Management, the evaluation activities led by the OMB Evidence Team, and the data-linkage and analysis activities led by the OMB Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs need to be integrated into a coherent strategy."

The OMB deputy director for management is often well positioned to create and execute such a coherent strategy that integrates firmly into decision-making processes. The OMB deputy director for management could be assisted in this task by the administrator of the General Services Administration (GSA), an arrangement that has been used in the past with success.

Alternatively, as the Brookings Institution suggests, the director of OMB could play this role directly, with the president charging him or her with "coordinating and integrating efforts around evidence and evaluation, data analytics, performance management and innovation."[15]

Another option, as suggested by the Beeck Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, is that the White House deputy chief of staff could be given this coordination role, which would allow multiple types of evidence to be aligned with decision-making processes not only within OMB but also within the Domestic Policy Council, National Economic Council, and National Security Council.[16]

> **❝ What's needed is a complete re-envisioning of how the federal government could re-align and coordinate activities that are designed to improve program effectiveness so they work in concert to make a tangible difference in improving outcomes. For starters, the Performance Improvement Officer activities led by the OMB Office of Performance and Personnel Management, the evaluation activities led by the OMB Evidence Team, and the data-linkage and analysis activities led by the OMB Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs need to be integrated into a coherent strategy."** —Former Federal Official

Create a federal chief evaluation officer to play a role in advancing the creation and use of federal evaluations similar to the role played in advancing statistics by the chief statistician of the United States.
The federal government currently has high-level officials running offices providing leadership and accountability for the creation and use of certain specific types of evidence: the chief statistician of the United States (for statistics), the OMB deputy director for management/chief performance officer (for performance measurement and improvement), and the U.S. chief technology officer (for data).

Currently, evaluation as well as social and behavioral sciences do not have the same level of leadership. OMB has a special advisor for evidence-based policy and an Evidence Team that support the creation and use of evaluations, and GSA has an Office of Evaluation Sciences, but neither is codified in statute or has sufficient authority and resources to live up to its potential. Social and Behavioral Sciences has a team but no equivalent high-level leadership position. Social and Behavioral Sciences is still a relatively new

addition to the federal landscape. Evaluation has a longer history that warrants the creation of a federal chief evaluation officer position to provide leadership and ensure accountability for the creation and use of evaluations. The office could be created in, or parallel to, the Office of Performance and Personnel Management or potentially reside in the OMB's Evidence Team.

The OMB director for management/chief performance officer, chief statistician, U.S. chief technology officer, and chief information officer should create a culture of partnering with agencies to use evidence to help programs improve.
These leadership positions are essential for setting the direction of work across agencies. Just like effective business leaders create a carefully crafted corporate culture, these government leaders will need to advance a carefully crafted culture for how evidence is viewed and used in the administration. Leaders who focus on revenue-neutral approaches to using evidence will create an environment through which agencies, OMB, and Congress can be fully aligned in the shared goal of scaling the use of eviden

White House Leadership Positions: Summary of Recommendations

White House leadership positions		
Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	**Elevating evaluation**	**Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence**
The Office of Management and Budget deputy director for management should align the work of the federal chief performance officers, the chief statistician, the U.S. chief technology officer (in his or her role overseeing data), the federal chief information officer (in his or her role with Project Open Data), and the chief evaluation officer (if such a position is created).	Create a federal chief evaluation officer to play a role in advancing the creation and use of federal evaluations similar to the role played in advancing statistics by the chief statistician of the United States.	The Office of Management and Budget director for management/chief performance officer, chief statistician, U.S. chief technology officer, and chief information officer should create a culture of partnering with agencies to use evidence to help programs improve.

COMPONENT 2:
INTERAGENCY COORDINATING BODIES

Interagency Coordinating Bodies: The Landscape

A second component of infrastructure includes interagency coordinating bodies that regularly convene related federal agency offices to share best practices, tackle common challenges, and align their activities, procedures, protocols, and structures so that they are more consistent and achieve economies of scale. As Speaker Paul Ryan noted in his "A Better Way" agenda, sometimes "agencies fail to share data with each other in ways that might improve program outcomes."[17] Interagency coordinating bodies can also facilitate cross-departmental research partnerships to support large-scale studies that would be difficult for one agency to conduct alone. As one federal research official put it, "What would it take to develop and prioritize a common research agenda, and have different agencies each contribute a couple million ... to studying the most essential questions? How could we most efficiently have cross-departmental partnerships in evaluations? And government-foundation partnerships?"[18] A coordinated federal infrastructure can provide dedicated support to enable the collaboration needed to help agencies better integrate their activities with each other as well as to improve their activities' relevance, timeliness, accuracy, and cost-effectiveness while retaining their ability to respond to their distinctive missions and needs.

Our landscape scan identified one or more collaboratives for each type of evidence except for social and behavioral sciences. The following table presents an overview of such collaboratives (as of January 2017); Appendix II provides additional detail about each.

There are important variations in the extent to which each collaborative is structured and operated. Some use a top-down approach (wherein a centralized office drives change across the participating agencies) while others use a horizontal process (wherein agencies develop and share their own challenges and solutions). Most collaboratives produce reports or briefs with the intent of improving member practices but leave it up to individual member agencies to use this information to improve their practices as they best see fit.

These interagency collaboratives are generally not housed within a single host agency that is likely to preserve parity among its members. Several collaboratives are housed within OMB and GSA. One is housed by a nonprofit. Most are chaired by the high-level officials detailed in the previous section of this paper.

Experience suggests that sometimes such collaboratives work best when they are driven by the agencies themselves rather than OMB. For example, the Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business was created at the request of these directors, and funding is contributed by partner agencies. Any tools or guidance provided by the collaborative are to be used strictly voluntarily; individual agencies can decide for themselves whether to use them. The group manages the very popular max.gov to help federal budget directors navigate their agencies and improve processes such as budget formulation, execution, planning, and performance. The site provides tools to support collaboration, data sharing, analytics, and document sharing. This site is password protected so that only federal staff and contractors have access to it. Their online community grew rapidly from 5,000 users in 2007 to more than 100,000 users in 2014. Interagency coordinating bodies can assist government workers by promoting best practices, discussing common challenges, and serving as a springboard for new ideas. Government officials interested in evidence should use interagency coordinating bodies to further their work.

Interagency Coordinating Bodies: The Landscape (as of January 2017)

Coordinating Body	Chairperson	Authority	Sources of funding/staffing	Members	Primary goals	Primary strategies
Statistics						
Committee on National Statistics	An academic who has served on the committee	Established in 1972 at the National Academies of Sciences	Staffed by the National Academies of Sciences, funded by a consortium of federal agencies through a National Science Foundation grant	Academics from universities across the country	Improve statistical methods and information on which policy decisions are based	• Publish *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*, updated every 4 years • Carry out studies, workshops, and other activities to foster better measures and fuller understanding of public policy issues • Evaluate ongoing statistical programs and track the statistical policy and coordinating activities of the federal government
Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Policy	U.S. chief statistician	1995 Paperwork Reduction Act	Staffed by OMB career staff	Members from 13 principal statistical agencies	Plan federal statistical programs and policies	• Coordinate statistical work • Exchange information about agency programs • Provide advice and counsel to OMB on statistical matters.
Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Methodology	Appointed by U.S. chief statistician	Created by OMB in 1975	Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs' Statistical and Science Policy Branch	Members from 13 principal statistical agencies	Advise Interagency Council on Statistical Policy on methodological issues that affect federal data quality	• Provide recommendations about statistical measurement, analysis, data collection, and technology
Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics	Planning committee of members oversees operations and coordinates work of other committees	Founded in 1994 and formalized in 1997 under executive order 13045		Members from federal offices that collect or use child and family data	Foster coordination and collaboration to enhance and improve consistency in the collection, reporting, and dissemination of federal data on children and families	• Publish *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-being*, and childstats.gov
Data						
Chief Information Officers Council	GSA				Improve practices related to agency information resources	• Develop OMB recommendations for federal information technology management policies • Share best practices across agencies • Promote data consolidation and optimization efforts
White House Data Cabinet	White House chief data scientist			Approximately 70 experts from inside and outside of government	Determine best practices and responses to common data challenges	• Convene experts from multiple agencies and nongovernmental organizations to discuss data issues
Chief Financial Officers Council	Deputy director for management at OMB	CFO Act of 1990	Staffed by OMB	Agency chief financial officers	Improve financial management in the U.S. government	• Develop financial management workforce and systems • Effectively implement Government Performance and Results Modernization Act • Improve data standards and grants policy.

Interagency Coordinating Bodies: The Landscape (as of January 2017), continued

Coordinating Body	Chairperson	Authority	Sources of funding/staffing	Members	Primary goals	Primary strategies
Performance improvement						
Performance Improvement Council	Federal chief performance officer/deputy director for management at OMB	Government Performance and Reporting Act	Selected activities funded by the Performance Management Line of Business, staffed by GSA	Performance improvement officers and associated staff from federal agencies	Foster coordination and collaboration of federal agencies on issues of performance management and improvement	• Facilitate development of cross-agency and agency goals • Support implementation planning and coordination on cross-cutting performance areas including working with OMB, policy councils, and agencies on the Cross-agency Priority Goals • Deliver services for federal agencies that deepen performance improvement capability and facilitate sharing of effective practices • Lead cross-agency working groups on areas such as goal setting, agency performance reviews, and capability building to improve agency performance management capacity • Establish a collaboration studio to bring teams together and facilitate engagements that can spark cross-cutting performance improvements
President's Management Council	OMB's deputy director of management	Established by a 2001 executive order	Staffed by the GSA's Office of Executive Councils	Chief operating officers from federal departments and other directors from GSA and Office of Personnel Management	Provide performance and management leadership throughout executive branch and oversee implementation of management policies	• Establish cross-cutting performance and management initiative to identify and adopt best practices governmentwide, particularly related to cross-functional coordination • The President's Management Advisory Board adapts the best business practices related to productivity, workforce engagement, and custom service from the private sector
Evaluation						
Interagency Council on Evaluation Policy	Special advisor for evidence-based policy at OMB and director of one of the agency evaluation offices		OMB's Evidence Team serves as staff	Evaluation offices from across federal government	Learning community to establish best practices, increase capacity, and confront challenges	• Convene evaluation officers for informal learning sessions, allowing for increased informal communication between agencies • Foster and strengthen the federal evaluation community of practice

Note: GSA = General Services Administration; OMB = Office of Management and Budget.

Interagency Coordinating Bodies: Recommendations

The OMB deputy director for management/chair of the President's Management Council, or a similar-level official, should align the various interagency coordinating bodies that are focused on specific types of evidence.
Each interagency coordinating body that we identified focused on a single type of evidence, such as evaluations or performance improvement. We did not find any interagency collaborative that regularly convenes agencies across multiple types of evidence. A model worth consideration is the approach used by the U.S. GSA's Office of Executive Councils. This office provides dedicated analytical, management, and administrative support to a number of separate federal interagency management councils, increasing their effectiveness in solving challenges across agencies, spurring innovation, and improving policy outcomes. The office collaborates with OMB and each federal management council to identify governmentwide performance improvement initiatives based on proven practices, lead working groups to advance these initiatives across agencies, establish performance goals, and facilitate implementation of new processes and programs across government. Such an approach—which seeks to balance independence and alignment by having a common set of staff support each separate council—is one possible avenue to support and align infrastructure setup to support data and statistics, performance improvement, evaluation, and behavioral sciences.

The Interagency Council on Evaluation should be formalized through an executive order or legislation.
The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that "promoting information sharing in professional networks and engaging program managers and staff in evaluation studies and priority goal reviews offer promise for building capacity in a constrained budget environment."[19]

Yet OMB found that "many government functions (e.g., performance management, statistical functions) have a formalized statutory structure that enables interagency exchange of information and best practices, and coordination and collaboration on areas of common interest. Federal evaluation offices currently have no such formalized statutory mechanism for coordination." While some previous administrations have taken steps to fill this void temporarily, none have put in place a long-term solution through executive order or by advancing legislation. The most recent effort is the Interagency Council on Evaluation Policy, which convenes informal learning sessions. A new, formalized council would support individual evaluation offices in a way similar to that of the Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Policy. The council would develop cross-agency principles and practices for evaluation, build a common evidence framework and research guidelines for agencies, and strengthen the capacity of evaluation staff across the federal government to consume and use research and evaluations skillfully.

Each interagency coordinating body should convene members to develop jointly agreed-on methods for scaling the use of evidence through revenue-neutral approaches.
In general, efforts that are developed by a group of agencies and then shared with OMB get better buy-in than those that are developed by OMB and then shared with agencies. Interagency coordinating bodies should take the lead on convening members to discuss revenue-neutral approaches for scaling the use of evidence. Then they should develop model language that could be used by all agencies interested in pursuing such an approach. Then they should work with OMB to advance this approach across government.

Interagency Coordinating Bodies: Summary of Recommendations

Interagency Coordinating Bodies		
Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	**Elevating evaluation**	**Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence**
The Office of Management and Budget deputy director for management/chair of the President's Management Council or a similar-level official should align the various interagency coordinating bodies that are focused on specific types of evidence.	The Interagency Council on Evaluation should be formalized through an executive order or legislation.	Each interagency coordinating body should convene members to develop jointly agreed-on methods for scaling the use of evidence through revenue-neutral approaches.

COMPONENT 3: AGENCY-LEVEL OFFICES AND ACTIONS

Agency-level Offices and Actions: The Landscape

The greatest leverage point for transforming the federal infrastructure for evidence-based policymaking is inside each related federal agency, not in the White House.

As the OMB white paper *Overview of Federal Evidence-building Efforts* notes, "Federal evidence-building is highly decentralized, and while many departments and agencies have some capacity to undertake at least some of these [types of evidence-based] functions, not every department and agency currently has the capacity to take them on."[20] The table below presents an overview of such agency offices (as of January 2017); Appendix III provides additional detail about each.

Agency-level offices and actions	
Cutting across multiple types of evidence	
Evidence offices	While there isn't an official designation or even term to refer to them, some agencies have offices that deal with multiple types of evidence. These offices might work with research, program evaluations, performance measurement, or descriptive statistics all at once and are distinct from offices with a specific mission of supporting only one type of evidence use. The Office of Management and Budget identifies 7 such "evidence" offices, with a FY2016-enacted budget of $375 million.
Statistics	
Federal agency statistical units	Federal agency statistical units are agencies whose principal mission is to produce official federal statistics that can inform policymakers throughout government. More than 100 agencies or units deal with statistics on a regular basis, of which 13 are primarily engaged with statistical work. The FY2016-enacted budget for these 13 agencies was $3.149 billion.
Data	
Chief information officers	At least 42 federal entities have chief information officers. The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 assigns agency chief information officers statutory responsibility for promoting the effective and efficient design and operation of all major information resource management processes within their agencies, including data. Officers have increasingly focused on how information technology systems can be used to encourage open data platforms and other accessible services.
Performance improvement	
Performance improvement officers	The Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 creates the position of performance improvement officer within each agency.
Evaluation	
Federal evaluation offices	Only a small proportion of federal agencies have evaluation offices. The FY2016-enacted budget for 7 of the most prominent evaluation offices was $329 million.

Agency-level Offices and Actions: Recommendations

Agencies should integrate multiple types of evidence into agency decision-making processes in ways that protect independence, transparency, and rigor.

While most agencies have separate offices for separate types of evidence, a few have formed centralized offices or created leadership positions that support the development and use of multiple types of evidence in a cross-cutting manner. For example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research deals with statistics, program evaluation, and performance management. The OMB white paper noted eight such offices that "perform multiple evidence-building functions" (see Appendix VII, Table VII.1). Similarly, Results for America's Federal Invest in What Works Index recommends that all agencies have "a senior staff member(s) with the authority, staff, and budget to evaluate its major programs and inform policy decisions" (see Appendix VII, Figure 1).

A report from the CIO Council similarly recommended that there be clearly defined responsibilities and authorities so that the governance of evidence is not overly complicated. A central leadership position for the integration of multiple types of evidence in each agency can ensure that staff members are held accountable and that their efforts fit into the broader agency agenda.[21]

It is important that any integration efforts do not undermine the principles of independence, transparency, and rigor that govern many agency evidence-building efforts. As evidence is used in higher-level decision-making processes, it is vital that evidence remain independent of any undue political influence that could undermine its credibility and rigor.

Agencies should create or enhance Chief Evaluation Offices.

In a survey conducted by the GAO, only 11 agencies reported "committing resources to obtain evaluations by establishing a central office responsible for evaluation of agency programs, operations, or projects, although only half these offices were reported to have a stable source of funding. Seven agencies reported having a high-level official responsible for oversight of evaluation."[22] The GAO survey also found that "evaluation coverage was greater in agencies that established centralized authority for evaluation."[23]

In comparison, the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 created the position of performance improvement officer within each agency. At least 42 federal entities also have chief information officers, with statutory responsibility for, among other things, promoting the effective and efficient design and operation of data. Finally, more than 100 agencies or units deal with statistics on a regular basis.

It is important to note that in addition to having a centralized office focusing on evaluations across an entire agency, it is valuable to embed work on evaluations throughout a range of smaller offices within an agency.

Agencies should invest at least 1 percent of program funds in evaluations.

A GAO report found that only 37 percent of federal managers reported that an evaluation of their program had been completed in the past five years.[24] Another GAO report found that "two-thirds of the agencies reported evaluation coverage of less than half their performance goals; including 7 that reported having evaluations for none of their performance goals."[25]

Looking across agency efforts to advance research and evidence, funding for evaluations in

particular stands out as being relatively limited. The FY2016-enacted budget for seven of the most prominent offices was $329 million. In comparison, federal funding for statistical agencies is more robust. Funding for the top 13 "Principal Statistical Agencies" alone is $3.149 billion (see Appendix VII, Tables 2 and 3). But even at these levels, which have been reduced over time, capacity is strained.

The lack of funding for evaluations also stands in stark contrast to funding in the private and philanthropic sectors. Mature industries regularly invest 2–3 percent of their sales revenues into research and development, while high-growth industries invest anywhere from 10–20 percent.[26] A report by the Hewlett Foundation found that philanthropies regularly invest anywhere from 1.2–7 percent of their budgets on evaluations. The private and philanthropic sectors understand that investments must lead to outcomes. The federal government should follow their example by investing more in its own evaluations.[27]

Agencies should work to measure how much of their resources are governed by evidence-based policies and how many of their programs are evaluated. This should include not only competitive grant programs but also those based on a funding formula, which comprise a large portion of federal nondefense discretionary funding. When dealing with formula-funded programs, it is particularly important to view the proposed 1 percent set-aside as a guide, not a fixed rule. Trillion dollar programs do not necessarily need billion dollar evaluations, and not all programs need to be evaluated in the same way.

Agencies should double down on tiered evidence initiatives.
Speaker Ryan's "A Better Way" agenda calls for a tiered evidence approach—where grant programs with more evidence of success receive more funding—so that "federal dollars will be directed to the development and support of programs that truly promote opportunity."[28] Tiered evidence approaches allow for policymakers to support evidence building, wherein promising ideas can receive funds to test their ideas and then scale up into larger programs once they have demonstrated various levels of effectiveness. This approach was expanded recently with the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act and has been adopted by individual agencies for various grant programs as well. Agencies should look for opportunities to use tiered evidence initiatives to address additional topics over time.

Agencies should include revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence in their budget submissions to OMB.
Ultimately, revenue-neutral approaches come down to budgets. And while OMB and Congress are the ultimate decision makers on budgets, agencies have an important role to play through their budget submissions to OMB.

Since Congress and the White House are political bodies, and hence may be focused on ideological perspectives about the role and size of government, it may well be agencies that lead the way in crafting revenue-neutral approaches. By starting to embed such approaches in their annual budget submissions to OMB, agencies might first be allowed to pilot such approaches in specific areas and then might be allowed to broaden the use of such approaches across their agencies; ultimately OMB and Congress may come around to endorsing these approaches across government.

Agency-level Offices and Actions: Summary of Recommendations

Agency-level offices and actions		
Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	**Elevating evaluation**	**Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence**
Agencies should integrate multiple types of evidence into agency decision-making processes in ways that protect independence, transparency, and rigor.	Agencies should create or enhance Chief Evaluation Offices. Agencies should invest at least 1 percent of program funds in evaluations. Agencies should double down on tiered evidence initiatives.	Agencies should include revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence in their budget submissions to the Office of Management and Budget.

COMPONENT 4: GUIDEBOOKS DETAILING PRINCIPLES AND BEST PRACTICES

Principles

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PIC.gov
Performance Improvement Council

The PIC's P3 Playbook

In 2015, the Performance Improvement Council (PIC) staff set out to define the foundational aspects of performance management in government. Using our experience working with diverse Federal agencies, we clarified our point of what it takes to not only achieve mission results, but actively manage ambitious and sometimes cross-government also went back into our archive of interviews, summits, and working groups to reflect what we've repeatedly hear professionals who have given their careers to understanding, improving, and driving their agency's performance.

We developed the P3 (Performance Principles & Practices) construct to go beyond the legal requirements, and capabilities and spirit of performance management and improvement. We've turned P3 into a playbook for any has a role in implementing programs, initiatives, and missions. Performance is a tool to help you achieve your right things, and build the capabilities you need to evolve.

The P3 Plays

1. Make Specific Commitments
2. Determine a Path Forward

3. Assess Success
4. Capture Valid Information

5. Generate Insights
6. Understand what to Track

8. Share Information

10. Power Play: Enable and Invest in C

See the Rules

PLAY 1
Make specific commitments: Goal Setting ar Prioritization

What is it? Making specific commitments to a limited number of actions and results in order for maximum impact. Because if everything is a priority, then nothing is a priority.

What are we aiming for? While our priorities may fluctuate and shift over time, our program steady purpose. This is articulated in clear goals that speak to the mission outcomes we are they do and how it relates to our overall priorities easily. Regardless of our level in an orga headed in the same direction.

Key Questions (Ask yourself "why/why not" or "how" after each):

- Do we have clear goals that we are trying to achieve?
- Are goals too limited in number or are there too many to remember?
- Can we easily show how we are achieving our goals
- Are there senior leaders who help us prioritize and who enforce our priorities?

ath forward: Planning

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Guidebooks Detailing Principles and Best Practices: The Landscape

Guidebooks detailing principles and best practices for creating and using evidence are instrumental to ensuring agencies maintain a high level of quality and are consistent across agency lines.

Our landscape scan identified codified, governmentwide sets of principles and practices for statistics (*Principles and Practices for Federal Statistical Agencies*, created by the National Academy of Sciences' Committee on National Statistics), performance management (*Performance Principles and Practices Playbook*, created by the interagency PIC), and data (*Open Data Policy—Managing Information as an Asset*). The following table presents an overview of such guidebooks (as of January 2017); Appendix IV provides additional detail about each.

	Developed by	Apply to	Summary
Statistics			
Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency	National Academy of Science's Committee on National Statistics	All federal statistical agencies	Recommended practices for statistical agencies for defining mission, communication, and data limitations and strengthening evaluation, standard of practice, and dissemination and coordination of data
Data			
Open Data Policy—Managing Information as an Asset	Office of Management and Budget	All chief information officers	Actions agencies shall take to improve the management of information resources throughout the information's life cycle and reinforce the government's presumption in favor of openness, including specific practices to collect or create information in a way that supports downstream information processing and dissemination activities, build information systems to support interoperability and information accessibility, strengthen data management and release practices, strengthen measures to ensure that privacy and confidentiality are fully protected and that data are properly secured, and incorporate new interoperability and openness requirements into core agency processes
Performance improvement			
Performance Principles & Practices Playbook	Performance Improvement Council	All federal performance improvement officers	"P3 Plays": make specific commitments, determine a path forward, assess success, capture valid information, generate insights, understand what to track, manage and deliver results, share information, and drive needed changes; enable and invest in culture
Evaluation			
Department of Labor Evaluation Policy	Department of Labor	Department of Labor	Key principles that govern the Department of Labor's planning, conduct, and use of program evaluations
Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Evaluation Policy	Department of Health and Human Services, ACF	Department of Health and Human Services, ACF	Key principles to govern ACF planning, conduct, and use of evaluation

Guidebooks Detailing Principles and Best Practices: Recommendations

Identify common themes across the full range of types of evidence activities and include them consistently in each guidebook.

It is helpful to have guidebooks for creating each type of evidence. It would be even more helpful for these guidebooks to be aligned with each other—and perhaps even to become a single guidebook that addresses all types of evidence.

There are early signs that such alignment may be possible. The Institute of Education Sciences and the National Science Foundation worked together to develop the Common Guidelines for Education Research Development framework to "provide a broad framework that clarifies research types and provides basic guidance about the purpose, justification, design features, and expected outcomes from various research types." Building on this work, an informal federal interagency workgroup[29] came together to begin drafting *Cross-agency Platform for Judging Evidence*[30] to "show how different types of research and evaluation studies (not limited to randomized control trials) are part of a multi-step process and learning agenda that build and use evidence about what works, how to improve, and where to innovate,"[31] and to create "quality guidelines for a variety of types of research and evaluation studies including foundational, design and development, implementation, and impact studies."[32] The work should be a priority moving forward.

Publish the emerging principles and practices for federal evaluation agencies.

Once again, evaluation agencies lag behind their counterparts in statistics and performance management (but are working quickly to catch up). As OMB noted, "while individual agencies have developed their own policies and practice for evaluation activities, establishing a common set of government-wide principles and practices could help to ensure that Federal program evaluations are more comparable, meet scientific standards, are designed to be useful, and are conducted and the results disseminated without bias or undue influence."[33]

Fortunately, work to fill this gap is already under way. The Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families both published formal evaluation policies that were intentionally similar. Building on this work, a group of federal evaluation offices is funding the National Academy of Sciences to begin to develop principles and practices for federal evaluation agencies. The fact that this work is emerging from the agencies themselves, working together voluntarily rather than as a reaction to a top-down directive, suggests that the principles and practices are likely to be adopted by participating agencies with a high degree of buy-in. This group should complete its work, and the OMB should be ready to lend its endorsement to the principles and practices once they are developed.

Develop a set of principles and practices for using administrative data for evaluations.

Guides should address ways to connect multiple types of evidence. One example generating attention recently is looking at programs that have waiting lists (of individuals requesting services) and administrative data on outcomes. These situations occur when more people were eligible for services than can be served with existing resources. In such situations, by randomly assigning which individuals get accepted off the waiting lists and tracking how their outcomes—as reported in existing administrative data sets—compare to the outcomes of those who do not receive services, agencies could conduct evaluations that are in theory quicker and cheaper than traditional evaluations. Federal officials we spoke to noted the potential of such "faster, cheaper studies," but they also noted that given the uneven quality of administrative data and difficulties in linking data

systems, this approach could actually sometimes be slower and more expensive. Interviewees expressed interest in fine-tuning criteria for when faster, cheaper studies should be recommended. Agencies should develop a set of principles and practices for using administrative data for evaluations in a process similar to that used with the emerging principles and practices for federal evaluation agencies.

Guidebooks should include information about not only how evidence should be created but also how it should be used—including when and how it could best be used to increase and decrease funding and for revenue-neutral approaches to improve programs.

While some of the existing guidebooks focus only on the creation of evidence, it is important that they also provide recommendations about how evidence should be used. As one federal official notes, recent studies about how and when research evidence is and is not used in policymaking "complicate the common conception of research users as … actors who have questions, go in search of research to answer them, and then apply it to their decisions.

… In none of their cases does research use easily boil down to a single moment or an isolated decision. … It is not a simple process whereby research 'facts' are passed from researchers to research users and then applied in a linear decision making process. Instead, research use is contingent, interactive, and iterative. It involves people individually and collectively engaging with research over time, bringing their own and their organization's goals, motivations, routines, and political contexts with them." This growing literature demonstrates that getting evidence used is every bit as complicated as conducting the research in the first place. Fortunately, there are tips that could be captured in guidebooks. For example, it is often helpful to construct evidence use not as a one-time activity but instead as an ongoing process of engagement between policymakers and researchers over time, in which the needs of decision makers help shape research questions and findings are delivered in an accessible and timely fashion through relationships of trust and mutual understanding.[34] Such guidebooks should explore when and how evidence should be used to increase funding, decrease funding, and improve programs.

Guidebooks Detailing Principles and Best Practices: Summary of Recommendations

Guidebooks detailing principles and best practices		
Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	**Elevating evaluation**	**Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence**
Identify common themes across the full range of types of evidence activities.	Publish the emerging principles and practices for federal evaluation agencies. Develop a set of principles and practices for using administrative data for evaluations.	Guidebooks should include information about not only how evidence should be created but also how it should be used—including when and how it could be best used to increase and decrease funding and for revenue-neutral approaches to improve programs.

COMPONENT 5: POLICIES GOVERNING THE CREATION AND USE OF EVIDENCE

An United States of America in Congress assembled,

...poses.

...licymaking, and for other pur-

Mar. 30, 2...

[H.R. 1831]

Evidence-Based
Policymaking
Commission Act
of 2016.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established in the executive branch a commission to be known as the "Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking" (in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

SEC. 3. MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be comprised of 15 members as follows:

(1) Three shall be appointed by the President, of whom—

  (A) one shall be an academic researcher, data expert, or have experience in administering programs;

  (B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization; and

  (C) one shall be the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (or the Director's designee).

(2) Three shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of whom—

  (A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

  (B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(3) Three shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, of whom—

  (A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

  (B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

(4) Three shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate, of whom—

  (A) two shall be academic researchers, data experts, or have experience in administering programs; and

  (B) one shall be an expert in protecting personally-identifiable information and data minimization.

Three shall be appointed by the Mi...

President.

Policies Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence: The Landscape

No consideration of government infrastructure could be complete without a discussion of policies. In this section we focus on OMB guidance, presidential memoranda, executive orders, and legislation that focus primarily on advancing one or more types of evidence and delineate related roles, processes, offices, and responsibilities (agency-level policies, while essential, are outside the scope of our landscape scan, which focuses on policies that Congress and a presidential administration can change more directly). The White House Policies Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence table presents an overview of such policies (as of January 2017); Appendix V provides additional detail about each.

Legislation is the primary mechanism to ensure that evidence creation and use are sustained across presidential administrations. Legislation is also a way in which the independence of research can be maintained, by providing statuary authority to research agencies granting them safeguards that cannot be changed by a presidential administration. By its nature, legislation is less frequent and generally less nuanced than are executive branch policies. A few core pieces of legislation in particular have great relevance to the creation and use of evidence. These are summarized in the Legislation Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence table. Appendix V provides additional information about each.

White House Policies Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence:
The Landscape (as of January 2017)

Policy	Summary
Cutting across multiple types of evidence	
Preparing, Submitting, and Executing the Budget A-11	This document provides guidance to federal agencies about how to prepare their FY2018 budget requests. Agencies are asked to identify their current efforts to build and use evidence, barriers to progress, and program reauthorizations, which may include an evidence-building component. The guidance also discusses the government's efforts to use performance improvement and management strategies to create a culture of evidence in the federal government.
Analytical Perspectives: Budget of the U.S. Government FY17	This document contains the budget message of the executive branch for FY2017 and includes information about the president's priorities. One of the chapters deals with building the capacity to produce and use evidence, and another chapter focuses on delivering a high-performance government.
Analytical Perspectives: Budget of the U.S. Government FY16	This document contains the budget message of the executive branch for FY2016 and includes information about the president's priorities. One chapter deals with building evidence with administrative data, and a second chapter looks at delivering a high-performance government.
Annual Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Budget Guidance	For the past four years, OMB has encouraged agencies to build and use evidence to improve programs through their annual budget guidance to each department. In FY2014, OMB launched a series of discussions about evidence-based initiatives with senior policy officials and research experts within federal agencies. OMB also pledged to restart an interagency evaluation working group to focus on common issues affecting evaluators. In FY2015, OMB encouraged agencies to draw on existing evidence to formulate their budget proposals and performance plans as well as develop plans to develop new evidence relevant to emerging policy challenges. In FY2016, agencies were advised to embed evaluation and improvement into new and existing programs as well as to identify high priorities for using evidence, evaluation, and data as tools for program improvement. In FY2017, agencies were asked to submit "proposals that scale-up interventions or policies that have been tested and shown to work" and "proposals that will further develop agencies' capacity to use evidence, evaluation, and data as tools to improve program outcomes." All of this guidance is included in the appendix.
Statistics	
Statistical Policy Directive, Fundamental Responsibilities of Federal Statistical Agencies and Recognized Statistical Units	The directive affirms fundamental responsibilities of agencies in the design, collection, processing, editing, compilation, storage, analysis, release, and dissemination of statistical information. It also details principles and practices that agencies should follow when using statistical information. The directive also requires statistical agencies and units to adopt certain policies and best practices that will support these responsibilities.

Data	
Open Data Policy—Guidance M-13-13	This policy establishes a framework to institutionalize the principles of effective information management to promote interoperability and openness. It requires agencies to collect and create information in a way that supports processing and dissemination activities. Agencies should use data standards, common core, and extensible metadata for information creation and collection efforts; ensure information stewardship through confidentiality restrictions; and modernize information systems to maximize information interoperability and accessibility.
Open Government Directive M-10-06	This directive establishes a framework to create a more open and accessible government, particularly in terms of data policies. In response to the President's Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government, the directive requires agencies to publish more information online in open and accessible ways. The directive requires agencies to increase the amount of high-value data sets available to researchers and directs OMB officials to create an interagency process for sharing and coordinating open data policies.
Guidance for Providing and Using Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes M-14-06	This document calls for agencies to ensure greater collaboration between program and statistical offices, encourages agencies to promote the use of administrative data for statistical purposes, provides guidance on privacy issues, and requires agencies to develop strong data stewardship policies.
Evaluation	
Increased Emphasis on Program Evaluations M-10-01	This document announces that as part of the FY2011 budget process, OMB will work with agencies to make information readily available online about all federal evaluations and that together with the Domestic Policy Council, National Economic Council, and Council of Economic Advisors, OMB will establish a new interagency working group to promote stronger evaluation across the federal government.
Evaluating Programs for Efficacy and Cost-efficiency M-10-32	This document announces that OMB will continue for FY2012 the governmentwide efforts started in the FY2011 budget process, with some modifications.
Social and behavioral sciences	
Executive order 13707—Using Behavioral Science Insights to Better Serve the American People	This order instructs agencies to identify policies and programs that can utilize behavioral science insights. The order also instructs the Social and Behavioral Sciences Team at the White House to advise and support agencies as they execute this work.
Implementation Guidance for EO 13707	This document details how agencies can identify new opportunities to use behavioral science in their work. The guidance encourages agencies to consider changes to program access and enrollment procedures, the presentation of information to the public, the presentation of options and choices for program beneficiaries or enrollees, and how their programs incentivize certain actions.

Legislation Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence: The Landscape (as of January 2017)

Legislation	Summary
Cutting across multiple types of evidence	
The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995	This act establishes guidelines and rules for agencies' interactions with the public and requires the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to oversee agency requests to gather public information. Agencies are required to establish senior officials or offices responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of information policies and information resources management responsibilities. These officials must work to increase program efficiency and improve the quality and utility of information gathered. This information includes information gathered for program evaluation and performance management purposes.
The Evidence-based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016	This act establishes the Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking, a 15-member commission that will review the data inventory, infrastructure, security, and statistical protocols related to federal policymaking. The commission will make recommendations related to administrative data, program evaluation, and the need for clearinghouses related to program and survey data in September 2017.
Information Quality Act	This act requires OMB to issue guidance to federal agencies for ensuring the information disseminated by these agencies meets quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity standards.
The Privacy Act of 1974	This act establishes standards for agencies when collecting, maintaining, using, and disseminating personally identifiable information about individuals. The law requires agencies to receive consent when disclosing information about a specific individual.
Data	
Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014	This act requires the Treasury Department and OMB to establish government-wide data standards for spending information that agencies report to Treasury, OMB, and the General Services Administration. This act requires the Treasury Department and OMB to publish this spending information on USASpending.gov. This will begin in May 2018. This act requires OMB to pilot publishing additional spending information related to federal contracts and grants.
Performance improvement	
Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010	This is a framework for agencies to communicate their progress on agency-wide goals to the legislative branch and the broader public. The framework includes strategic planning, performance planning, and reporting processes. The director of OMB is required to • work with agencies as they develop their performance plans and • conduct internal progress checks with appropriate lead officials in each department. Agencies are required to • create multiyear strategic plans and report annually on their progress, • update the public on their annual progress toward their performance goals, • designate a chief operating officer responsible for improving management and performance within the agency, and • create the position of performance improvement officer to assist the agency head in selecting and overseeing agency performance goals.
e-Government Act of 2002	This act establishes new regulations and requirements governing the government's use of electronic services and processes. Section 208 of the act requires Privacy Impact Assessments from federal agencies that collect and disseminate certain information. Agencies that utilize information in an identifiable form must analyze how this information is collected and managed to ensure adequate privacy protections are used. The Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 is part of this broader legislation. The act established new standards for U.S. statistical agencies to follow related to the confidentiality of the information they were collecting. The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 is part of this broader legislation. The act requires each federal agency to develop and implement an information security program for its information systems. The act is largely a response to the threat of cybersecurity.

Policies Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence: Recommendations

Many of the recommendations throughout this report require, or would be enhanced by, congressional action. Since Congress controls the purse strings, it dictates the amount of funding that is allocated to each component of the infrastructure for evidence. Congress should increase funding across the board for each piece of the infrastructure for evidence. Additional specific recommendations follow.

Congress, in partnership with OMB, should craft policies that provide a clearer vision for how multiple types of evidence should be integrated into decision-making processes, including putting in place safeguards to preserve the independence of those who create, compile, and present evidence.

Congress has passed a number of disparate policies related to the creation and use of various types of evidence and components of the infrastructure for evidence, such as the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Evidence-based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016, Information Quality Act, Privacy Act of 1974, Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, and e-Government Act of 2002. Congress, in partnership with OMB, should advance legislation that aligns each of these acts into a coherent overall framework for the creation and use of all types of evidence. For example, the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 specifies ways performance management data should be used in decision-making processes (such as the act's section on the "Use of Performance Information to Achieve Federal Government Priority Goals"). Such processes should be aligned across other statutes and types of evidence.

Such legislation about the use of evidence needs to be coupled with safeguards to preserve the independence of those who create, compile, and present evidence. For example, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 provides specific definitions of "scientifically based research standards," "scientifically valid education evaluation," and "scientifically valid research," which must be followed (and therefore prevents studies from being designed and conducted in ways that would deliver a result that supports any particular administration's views); establishes a six-year term for the Institute of Education Sciences' director, ensuring that he or she transcends any one presidential term; and requires that its activities are "objective, secular, neutral, and non-ideological and are free of partisan political influence and racial, cultural, gender, or regional bias."[35] Congress should put in place similar safeguards for all federal agencies involved in evidence building.

Congress and OMB should implement the Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking's recommendations.

We recommend implementing the recommendations developed by the bipartisan Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking that was created by Congress to "determine the optimal arrangement under which administrative data, survey data, and related statistical data series may be integrated and made available to facilitate and encourage program evaluation, continuous improvement, policy-relevant research, and cost-benefit analyses by qualified researchers and institutions while weighing how integration might lead to the intentional or unintentional access, breach, or release of personally-identifiable information or records."[36] As Speaker Ryan noted in his "A Better Way" agenda, "the first step in creating a culture of evidence-based policymaking is to determine what data is available and how policymakers can use it."[37] The commission's recommendations, which were released in September 2017, include: improving secure, private and confidential data

access; modernizing privacy protections for evidence building; implementing the national secure data service, and strengthening the federal evidence-building capacity. (See Appendix VII, Figure VII.4, for the Commission's specific recommendations.)

Congress, in partnership with OMB, should codify key components of the evaluation infrastructure.

Congress also has the ability to put in place initiatives that transcend any one presidential administration. For example, one of the purposes of the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 was to "codify and strengthen existing resources for performance management, including the Chief Operating Officer (COO), Performance Improvement Officers (PIOs) within the federal agencies and the interagency Performance Improvement Council (PIC)."[38] Congress should similarly codify key components for the infrastructure for evaluation as called for throughout this report.

Congress should establish revenue-neutral approaches to scale the use of evidence.

Congress is best positioned to establish revenue-neutral approaches to using evidence. Perhaps the single action Congress can take to scale the creation and use of research across the federal government is creating—through norm, custom, or statute—an expectation that when presented with evidence that a program is underperforming, Congress (1) will seek to spend the exact same amount of money on the exact same program but to encourage or require changes to the program that will make it more efficient and effective or (2) will shift funding from that program to one that evidence suggests does work for the same population and issue area. Doing so will remove resistance to the creation of evidence that stems from the fear that if the evidence shows suboptimal results for a particular program, Congress will shut that program down. A commitment to revenue-neutral approaches to the use of evidence also removes concern from

fiscal budget hawks that successful results will necessarily lead to budget increases.

OMB's annual budget guidance should promote revenue-neutral approaches to using evidence.

As our landscape scan reveals, OMB's annual budget guidance is one of the most frequently used policy vehicles for advancing an evidence agenda. Using budget guidance to drive an evidence agenda is not without risks, however. As one former White House official pointed out, previous administrations have done a poor job putting together a balanced set of incentives: "the work on performance management has been clear that linking evidence and data to budgets will just stifle people being honest about what is working and what isn't."[39]

There are some positive examples to build on, such as when OMB budget guidance has called on agencies to "use evidence, evaluation and data as tools to improve program outcomes," take on a range of related activities such as increasing access to high-value administrative data sets and using them for statistical purposes, "scale-up interventions or policies that have been tested and shown to work," and prioritize evidence-related activities, evaluation, and data in their budget submissions. OMB guidance also has asked agencies to submit tiered evidence proposals in line with Speaker Ryan's recommendation from the "A Better Way" agenda.[40] This budget guidance at times has been supplemented by other types of OMB memos, which often focused on one particular type of evidence at a time, such as the Open Data Policy, the Statistical Policy Directive, and the Increased Emphasis on Program Evaluations memorandum.

Policies Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence: Summary of Recommendations

Policies		
Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	**Elevating evaluation**	**Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence**
Congress, in partnership with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), should craft policies that provide a clearer vision for how multiple types of evidence should be integrated into decision-making processes, including putting in place safeguards to preserve the independence of those who create, compile, and present evidence. Congress and OMB should implement the Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking's recommendations.	Congress, in partnership with OMB, should codify key components of the evaluation infrastructure.	Congress should establish revenue-neutral approaches to scale the use of evidence. OMB's annual budget guidance should promote revenue-neutral approaches to using evidence.

COMPONENT 6: MECHANISMS HELPING STATES AND LOCALITIES

Mechanisms Helping States and Localities: The Landscape

So far this paper has focused on the use of evidence by federal policymakers. But there are significantly greater opportunities for using evidence at the state and local levels. A critical part of the federal infrastructure for evidence, therefore, is focused on helping state and local decision makers access and use evidence effectively. As one federal official shared, "We need to build into agencies' infrastructure a way to bring in the use of evidence. … We are not particularly well-equipped to provide implementation assistance to practitioners who want to adopt evidence-based programs and practices that we've studied. And our sister program agencies are not always well-suited to the task of translating evidence into practice."[41]

In addition to federally funded technical assistance efforts, there are three primary types of infrastructure set up to support this.

Federal Using What Works Centers, which help states and localities use evidence
A few federal centers support local capacity-building and professional development efforts so that state and local partners can better use the various types of evidence to inform their own decision making. For example, the Department of Education's Regional Education Laboratories work in partnership with school districts, state departments of education, and others to use data and research to improve academic outcomes for students. The Regional Education Laboratories provide support for a more evidence-reliant education system by conducting applied research that seeks to solve practical problems and advances fundamental understandings of education problems and processes; facilitating the flow of actionable, credible, up-to-date research evidence (and information, ideas, and approaches that are clearly based on credible research evidence) among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers; and providing technical assistance related to the application and use of scientifically valid research through extensive, ongoing, or customized support to meet the needs of particular stakeholders. Similarly, the Department of Justice runs the Diagnostic Center to support local law enforcement organizations in understanding their community's challenges and to assist them in developing tailored solutions.

The Department of Education also runs the Privacy Technical Assistance Center, which works as a "'one-stop' resource for education stakeholders to learn about data privacy, confidentiality, and security practices related to student-level … data." The center works to provide tools and resources to state and local officials to promote compliance with privacy restrictions and provide tools and resources to assist state and local leaders with these efforts.

The Census Bureau is also active in promoting the use of data and evidence at the local level. The agency's Census Information Center works to provide data to organizations supporting traditionally underserved populations. The Census Bureau's Center for Administrative

> " **We are not particularly well-equipped to provide implementation assistance to practitioners who want to adopt evidence-based programs and practices that we've studied. And our sister program agencies are not always well-suited to the task of translating evidence into practice."**
>
> **—Federal Agency Official**

Records Research and Applications as well as its Federal Statistical Research Data Centers work to provide bureau data to researchers and academics who are trying to solve local problems. Another potential model is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Virtual Research Data Center, which provides access to Medicare and Medicaid program data virtually through a contractor. This information is freely available to academic, government, and nonprofit researchers. The contractor employs a number of public health specialists and researchers to support the project.

These types of centers democratize the use of data and put them in the hands of local communities seeking local solutions. The first table on the following pages presents an overview of such offices; Appendix VI provides additional detail about each.

Federal Web Sites about evidence

The federal government manages a variety of Web sites (and in a few cases eNewsletters) that provide information to government officials, advocates, and the public about the creation and use of various forms of evidence. The second table on the following pages presents an overview of such Web sites; Appendix VI provides additional detail about each. In addition, there are interagency Web sites that focus on evidence related to a specific subpopulation, such as the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics' childstats.gov. Most agencies have their own Web sites that address evidence in various ways as well. We did not attempt to capture these in our landscape scan.

Clearinghouses of evidence-based programs

A number of agencies manage program directories providing lists of programs that have strong evidence of their effectiveness. States and localities could choose to implement one or more of these in their jurisdictions. The most sophisticated of such clearinghouses provide information to help state and local officials select programs that are most likely to work for their local populations and contexts, include evidence of not only branded proprietary programs but also their generic equivalents, and share evidence-based staff practices that could be used with success within a range of programs. Some clearinghouses also provide practice guides whose recommendations are not dependent on branded programs. Nongovernmental actors also have developed resources to assist policymakers with navigating these clearinghouses. Results for America and The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative worked with The Bridgespan Group to articulate the current "market" for evidence-based policy and recommend ways to increase both the supply and demand of evidence-based policy.[42] The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative also created the Results First Clearinghouse Database to serve as an online compilation of data from eight clearinghouses in one space.[43] The third table on the following pages presents an overview of federal clearinghouses; Appendix VI provides additional detail about each.

Mechanisms Helping States and Localities (as of January 2017)

Federal "Using What Works Centers," which help states and localities use evidence				
Mechanism	Who runs it?	Who is the audience?	What information is on it?	URL
Cutting across multiple types of evidence				
Regional Educational Laboratories	Institute of Education Sciences	School districts, state departments of education	Data, research, and technical assistance tools	http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/
Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center	U.S. Department of Justice	Local law enforcement	Training and technical assistance resources	http://www.ojpdiagnosticcenter.org/
Statistics				
Federal Statistical Research Data Centers	Census Bureau	Federal statistical agencies, research institutions	Confidential data that can be used by researchers at secure centers across the country	https://www.census.gov/fsrdc
Center for Statistical Research and Methodology	Census Bureau	Government employees and academics	Research on statistical design, modeling, and analysis	https://www.census.gov/srd/csrm/
National Center for Health Statistics	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Researchers	Health statistics information and data from surveys, indexes, and the CDC's record linkage program	https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/index.htm
Data				
State Data Center Program	Census Bureau	State and local government	Census data and products	http://www.census.gov/about/partners/sdc.html
Census Information Center	Census Bureau	Nonprofits, research organizations, civil rights groups, tribal governments, and so forth	Census data (provides access to traditionally underserved groups)	http://www.census.gov/about/partners/cic.html
Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications	Census Bureau	Researchers, government, and academics	Administrative data from federal, state, and other sources	https://www.census.gov/srd/carra/
Privacy Technical Assistance Center	Chief privacy officer, U.S. Department of Education	Researchers, government officials, and other stakeholders	Information and guidance about data privacy, confidentiality, and security practices related to student data	http://ptac.ed.gov/
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Virtual Research Data Center	CMS Research Data Assistance Center	Academic, government, and nonprofit researchers	Medicare and Medicaid program data	https://www.resdac.org/cms-data/request/cms-virtual-research-data-center

Federal Web sites about evidence				
Mechanism	Who runs it?	Who is the audience?	What information is on it?	URL
Cutting across multiple types of evidence				
OMB— Evidence and Evaluation	OMB	Federal officials and policymakers	Policy guidance, past budget materials, and other resources	https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/evidence
Statistics				
FedStats	Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, OMB	Researchers, education groups, and private sector	Statistical information produced by the federal government	https://fedstats.sites.usa.gov/
usa.gov	General Services Administration	Public	Information about available government services	https://www.usa.gov/statistics
ChildStats	Forum on Child and Family Statistics	Child well-being agencies	Data, trends, and other indicators related to child well-being	www.childstats.gov
Data				
data.gov	General Services Administration	Agency officials and the broader public interested in utilizing federal evidence	Data collections, applications, and visualizations	https://www.data.gov/
healthdata.gov	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Entrepreneurs, researchers, and policymakers	Data collections, applications, and visualizations	https://www.healthdata.gov/
Performance improvement				
performance.gov	Performance Management Line of Business	Public, media, and agencies	Program information from each department and agency	https://www.performance.gov
pic.gov	Performance Improvement Council	Agency performance improvement officers and other federal officials	Information and consultation for agencies looking for new performance improvement strategies	https://www.pic.gov/

Federal Web sites about evidence (continued)				
Mechanism	Who runs it?	Who is the audience?	What information is on it?	URL
Evaluation				
youth.gov (Guide to Evidence & Evaluation section)	Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs	Youth-serving organizations	A section about investing in evidence, which includes common standards for research and a listing of major evidence-based policy initiatives across the federal government, and a listing of evidence-based program directories	http://youth.gov/evidence-innovation
clinicaltrials.gov	U.S. National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine	Healthcare professionals and researchers	Registry and results database of publicly and privately supported clinical studies of human participants conducted around the world—database provides information like the type of condition researched, interventions studied, and trial results	https://clinicaltrials.gov/

Note: OMB = Office of Management and Budget.

Clearinghouses of evidence-based programs			
Clearinghouse	Who runs it?	What information is on it?	URL
Interagency			
youth.gov Program Directory	Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs	This searchable directory features evidence-based programs whose purpose is to prevent and/or reduce delinquency or other problem behaviors in young people. This directory filters by key word, risk factor, and protective factor.	http://youth.gov/program-directory
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services			
Teen Pregnancy Prevention Evidence Review	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation	This searchable database lists evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention program models or programs that have shown impacts on teen pregnancies or births, sexually transmitted infections, or sexual activity. The model programs are also included in the youth.gov directory.	http://tppevidencereview.aspe.hhs.gov/EvidencePrograms.aspx
National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	This searchable online registry lists more than 280 interventions supporting mental health promotion, substance abuse prevention, and mental health and substance abuse treatment.	http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/
Guide to Community Preventive Services	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	The Guide to Community Preventive Services is a free resource to help choose programs and policies to improve health and prevent disease in communities. Systematic reviews are used to answer questions such as these: Which interventions have been proven effective? Are there effective interventions available that are right for my community? What might effective interventions cost, and what is the likely return on investment?	http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html
Prevention Research Synthesis	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	The Prevention Research Synthesis Project identifies evidence-based HIV behavioral interventions to help HIV prevention planners and providers in the United States select interventions most appropriate for HIV prevention within their communities.	http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/dhap/prb/prs/
Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness	Administration on Children and Families	The Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness initiative provides a thorough and transparent review of the home-visiting research literature and an assessment of the evidence of effectiveness for home-visiting program models that target families with pregnant women and children from birth to age 5.	http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/
Self-sufficiency Research Clearinghouse	Administration on Children and Families	The Self-sufficiency Research Clearinghouse provides access to materials related to self-sufficiency programs, practice, and research. It can be searched by key word, topic, category, area of interest, publisher, year, reference type, research methodology, geographic focus, and target population.	https://www.opressrc.org/
Proven and Promising Responsible Fatherhood and Family Strengthening Initiatives	Administration on Children and Families	The initiative includes evidence reviews that catalogue the quality of the evidence from studies of programs serving low-income fathers and couples from 2010 to 2012.	http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/proven-and-promising-responsible-fatherhood-and-family-strengthening

Clearinghouses of evidence-based programs			
Clearinghouse	Who runs it?	What information is on it?	URL
U.S. Department of Justice			
Crime Solutions	National Institute of Justice	This directory covers topics including drugs and substance abuse, juveniles, crime and crime prevention, victims and victimization, law enforcement, technology and forensics, corrections and reentry, and courts. Programs and practices are assessed and assigned an evidence rating of effective, promising, or no effect.	http://www.crimesolutions.gov/
National Reentry Resource Center What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse	Bureau of Justice Assistance collaboration with the Council of State Governments	The clearinghouse offers access to research on the effectiveness of a wide variety of reentry programs and practices. Information is categorized by focus area, and a customizable search feature is available. Beginning in 2017, the National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Assistance are collaborating to rescore the programs in the What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse using the crimesolutions.gov evidence standards, scoring instrument, and process. Once this process is complete, all rated reentry-related program ratings will be available on crimesolutions.gov as well as the National Reentry Resource Center Web site.	https://whatworks.csgjusticecenter.org/
Model Programs Guide	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Model Programs Guide contains information about evidence-based juvenile justice and youth prevention, intervention, and reentry programs. It is a resource for practitioners and communities about what works, what is promising, and what does not work in juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, and child protection and safety. The Model Programs Guide uses expert study reviewers and crimesolutions.gov's program review process, scoring instrument, and evidence ratings. The two sites share a common database of juvenile-related programs.	http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/
U.S. Department of Education			
What Works Clearinghouse	Institute of Education Sciences	The What Works Clearinghouse reviews research on a range of education topics, including students with disabilities, dropout prevention, education technology, school organization and governance, student behavior, and teacher and leader effectiveness. The site includes a searchable research directory of interventions that can be filtered by outcome domains, grade, effectiveness rating, extent of evidence, and delivery method.	http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/
U.S. Department of Labor			
Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research	Chief Evaluation Office	Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research reviews research on labor topics including descriptive, implementation, and impact studies. The site includes a searchable citation database of all identified research and produces profiles for research that has the highest potential to help practitioners implement a program or provide evidence of effectiveness.	http://clear.dol.gov/
Corporation for National and Community Service			
Evidence Exchange	Office of Research and Evaluation	The exchange is a digital repository of research, evaluation reports, and data related to the Corporation for National & Community Service grant programs and other Corporation for National & Community Service issue areas.	https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange

Mechanisms Helping States and Localities: Recommendations

Create a network of Using What Works Centers to help states and localities integrate multiple types of evidence into decision making.

The United Kingdom has successfully created a What Works Network of seven independent What Works Centres and two affiliate members. Together these centers cover policy areas that receive public spending of more than £200 billion. These What Works Centres are different from standard research centers. They enable policymakers, commissioners, and practitioners to make decisions based on strong evidence of what works and to provide cost-efficient, useful services. While the United States currently has similar centers focused on education and on data, it needs more such centers to cover a broader complement of issues.

Create an evidence.gov web site comprising the full complement of types of evidence that are currently siloed in sites like FedStats, data.gov, and performance.gov.

Few if any federal government Web sites address the various types of evidence and provide interconnections. Creating evidence.gov is one way to align efforts across multiple types of evidence.

In the meantime, a good start would be to have each of the existing Web sites related to a particular type of evidence add prominent links to each other. As the following chart demonstrates, Google searches conducted on August 28, 2017, revealed a paucity of interlinks between FedStats, data.gov, and performance.gov.

Prominent linkages between evidence web sites

		Number of links to each of these sites		
		FedStats	**data.gov**	**performance.gov**
Web site	**FedStats**	—	No links.	No links.
	data.gov	Links to FedStats once on educational resources for youth. Links to FedStats in individual data dashboards but not on notable spot on Web site.	—	data.gov links to performance.gov on the bottom of every page of its Web site.
	performance.gov	No links (rarely mentions FedStats throughout the Web site).	performance.gov links to data.gov on the bottom of every page of its Web site.	—

Create an evaluation.gov public-facing web site compiling all evaluations conducted and/or funded by the federal government.

performance.gov, data.gov, and FedStats serve as public-facing, government wide compilations of all federal efforts related to their respective types of evidence (performance improvement, data, and statistics). No equivalent Web site exists for evaluations. (The closest is clinicaltrials.gov, which serves as a registry and results database of publicly and privately supported clinical studies of human participants conducted around the world. youth.gov has a dedicated section focused on evidence-based initiatives and links to evidence-based program directories.)[44]

Evaluation.gov should include an interface to search all federal clearinghouses at once.

The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative has demonstrated the value of the Results First Clearinghouse Database, a one-stop online resource that provides policymakers with an easy way to find information about the effectiveness of various interventions as rated by eight national research clearinghouses. This project is too important to be left to foundation funding and should be supported directly by the federal government to ensure its sustainability.

Evaluation.gov should also provide information to help state and local officials select programs that are most likely to work for their local population and context, include evidence of not only branded proprietary programs but also their generic equivalents, and share evidence-based staff practices that could be used with success within a range of programs.

Doing so would match emerging best practices for clearinghouses, echoing, for example, how the What Works Clearinghouse allows users to filter results to "Find Research with Students Like Yours" (noting that "student, school, and setting characteristics can affect the effectiveness of an intervention"), provides intervention reports that summarize the results of review of both branded and generic program types, and includes evidence-based staff practices.[45]

Provide states and localities guidance and technical assistance for implementing revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence.

States and localities have a role in implementing most federal programs as well as the use of evidence. States and localities will need help understanding the implications of revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence and, potentially, help for them to use similar approaches in their own grant making.

Mechanisms Helping States and Localities: Summary of Recommendations

Mechanisms helping states and localities		
Integrating multiple types of evidence into decision-making processes	**Elevating evaluation**	**Focusing on revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence**
Create a network of Using What Works Centers to help states and localities integrate multiple types of evidence into decision making. Create an evidence.gov Web site comprising the full complement of types of evidence that are currently siloed in sites like FedStats, data.gov, and performance.gov.	Create an evaluation.gov public-facing Web site compiling all evaluations conducted and/or funded by the federal government. Evaluation.gov should include an interface to search all federal clearinghouses at once.	Provide states and localities guidance and technical assistance for implementing revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence.

Conclusion

Throughout the course of this paper, we have provided a working model of the building blocks for the federal infrastructure for evidence-based policymaking, comprising five types of evidence (data, statistics, evaluations, behavioral sciences, and performance metrics) and six components of infrastructure (White House leadership positions, interagency coordinating bodies, agency-level offices and actions, guidebooks detailing principles and best practices, policies governing the creation and use of evidence, and mechanisms helping states and localities).

We also detailed the status of each of these building blocks (as of January 2017); and offered recommendations to strengthen the infrastructure for evidence-based policymaking. First, multiple types of evidence need to be integrated into decision-making processes. Policymakers should have access to the very best evidence, of all kinds, when making decisions that can affect millions of lives. Second, support for evaluation functions needs to be elevated. Compared to some other types of evidence, the role of evaluation is relatively under-utilized and insufficiently resourced. Third, revenue-neutral approaches to scaling the use of evidence need to be utilized. Tying evidence to cutting or increasing funding for programs will only be politically possible at the margins. By focusing on using evidence to improve government programs and to reallocate funding from ineffective to effective programs for the same population and issue area, we can gain bi-partisan support to scale the production and use of evidence so that its use to inform decisions becomes the norm, not the exception.

We designed this report to be complimentary to the work of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and we released this paper on the same day that the Commission issued their report *The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking*. Both reports include recommendations for strengthening the evidence-building capacity within the federal government.

Our hope is that this report, in conjunction with the Commission's findings, will help the federal government continue to improve the building blocks of its infrastructure for evidence and, in so doing, help secure the requirements for successful evidence-based policymaking: evidence-creation is funded adequately, developed rigorously and independently, and used effectively: frequently (to inform most policy decisions), meaningfully (granted substantial weight in decision-making processes), appropriately (its influence on decisions calibrated to the size and quality of the evidence base), and accurately (decisions are based on a correct interpretation of the evidence).

In so doing, policymakers will become better informed, more effective, and more efficient at delivering results for the American people.

APPENDIXES

Additional Details about Each Component of the Landscape for Evidence

Appendix I: White House Leadership Positions

Cutting across Multiple Types of Evidence

Special Advisor for Evidence-based Policy

The special advisor for evidence-based policy oversees the Office of Management and Budget Evidence Team, which is housed in the Office of Economic Policy. The team is charged with supporting agencies as they use evidence and evaluation tools in their budgeting and decision-making processes. The team accomplishes this by

- helping agencies make better use of already collected data;
- promoting the use of high-quality, low-cost evaluations and rapid, iterative experimentation in addition to larger evaluations examining long-term outcomes;
- adopting more evidence-based programs and policies across government; and
- fostering agency evidence-building capacity, including that for program evaluation, and developing tools to better communicate what works, for which populations, and in what contexts.[46]

The team has produced a variety of fact sheets and other primers on evidence use as well as materials supporting the integration of evidence use into the federal budget. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) also issues a variety of policy guidance and other resources to better prepare agencies to use evidence throughout their work.[47] In so doing, the special advisor for evidence-based policy has a role that cuts across the various types of evidence detailed below.

White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation

The office has a director appointed directly by the president. The office's primary function is to facilitate social innovation by facilitating the use of human and financial capital for social good as well as increasing the use of evidence in policymaking. In terms of data and evidence, the office focuses on four tasks: creating transparency regarding federal databases, increasing the use of low-cost evaluations, spurring the use of outcome-focused grant designs, and strengthening agency capacity to use evidence. The office is also heavily involved in working with community and corporate partners outside of government to expand the use of evidence-based policies.

Statistics

Chief Statistician of the United States

The chief statistician runs the Office of Statistical and Science Policy, which is housed in OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs is one of OMB's four statutory offices. The role of chief statistician was codified in the Paperwork Reduction Acts of 1980 and 1995.

The chief statistician is tasked with establishing and enforcing statistical policies and standards, ensuring that resources are secured for priority statistical programs, approving statistical surveys conducted by the federal government, and administrating the OMB's government-wide Information Quality Guidelines, Peer Review Bulletin, and Risk Analysis Memorandum. The chief statistician provides oversight, coordination, and guidance for approximately 100 federal agencies. Every three years, the chief statistician also approves the information collections (generally surveys) performed by agencies as these collections often inform policy decisions across the federal government.[48]

The chief statistician can convene interagency discussions and working groups to develop standards and guidance for statistical policies as well as utilize peer reviews and public comments to inform agencies' work. The chief statistician then uses these standards to guide the work of other agencies. The office also focuses on ensuring that budget proposals reflect government priorities and that data dissemination meets high quality standards.[49]

Data

U.S. Chief Technology Officer

The U.S. chief technology officer oversees the Office of Science and Technology Policy, which focuses on how technology policy and data can help support government services across the federal government. The position of chief technology officer is appointed directly by the president. The Office of Science and Technology Policy was first established in 1976 as an advisory office to the president and resides in the Executive Office of the President. The office is the central interagency office and coordinates efforts to utilize science and technology within federal policies and budgets. The office works with the private sector as well as state and local governments to encourage the use of new technologies and recent scientific discoveries in policymaking. The office is heavily involved with promoting the president's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education efforts as well as increasing access to data through the My Data initiative, which works to increase the public's access to services that utilize the public's own data. The office also works to make government data more accessible for research and entrepreneurship purposes.[50]

Federal Chief Information Officer

The federal chief information officer oversees the Office of e-Government and Information Technology, which is part of OMB. The position was created in 2002 and is appointed by the president. The office works to encourage the use of Internet-based technologies by government agencies to help the public more easily interact with the government. The office frequently provides memorandums to federal agencies, guiding them on how to implement information technology–related legislation such as the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act. The office is also responsible for reporting on the implementation of information technology–related legislation to Congress. The office creates a number of guides for federal officials on topics such as the Digital Government Strategy, the Federal Cloud Computing Strategy, and the Federal Information Technology Shared Services Strategy. Finally, the office promotes and publicizes the federal government's efforts to support information technology–related activities through the federal budget process.[51] Since many evidence initiatives require the use of information technology, this office can be relevant to many such efforts.

Performance Improvement

Deputy Director for Management/Federal Chief Performance Officer

The federal chief performance officer holds a dual position, also serving as the deputy director for management at OMB, and is charged with overseeing the government's management agenda, which includes a diverse range of topics such as information technology, financial management, procurement, performance, and human resources.[52]

The federal chief performance officer oversees the Office of Performance and Personnel Management, which encourages agencies across the federal government to use performance information to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. The office primarily focuses on helping agencies set and review their performance goals as well as guide their strategic planning efforts.[53] The office furthers these efforts by working with the performance improvement officers at each agency and by working with the Office of Personnel Management to ensure effective personnel policies.

In his or her dual function as deputy director for management at OMB, the federal chief performance officer also oversees the Office of Federal Financial Management, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, the Office of e-Government and Information Technology, and the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. These offices work with agencies to tackle issues like financial system improvement, the use of procurement practices, increasing the ability of citizens to interact with the federal government, and providing guidance on regulatory policies.[54]

Evaluation

Office of Evaluation Sciences

The Office of Evaluation Sciences is located in the General Services Administration. The office conducts numerous rigorous evaluations to ensure effective and efficient government operations. The office is staffed by a diverse group of experts and works to design low-cost changes that can improve outcomes for agency partners. The office also provides technical assistance to support agencies in implementing evaluations and works to integrate evaluations within current agency constraints.[55]

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Social and Behavioral Sciences Team

The Social and Behavioral Sciences Team is part of the National Science and Technology Council. It is supported and staffed by the General Services Administration. The team works to increase access to and understanding of federal programs by utilizing behavioral science research. The team primarily focuses on policy changes that can increase public engagement or improve the presentation of choices so that the public makes better-informed decisions when working with government agencies. The team has focused on a variety of issues such as rural access to credit, college enrollment, access and enrollment in savings plans, and student loan repayment plans. By changing small parts of these programs, such as when and how information is sent to potential beneficiaries, the team seeks to demonstrate how government can increase enrollment and improve outcomes for the public at large.[56]

Appendix II: Interagency Coordinating Bodies

Statistics

Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT)

CNSTAT, established in 1972, provides an independent, objective resource for statistics and improvement of federal statistical methods and operations. The committee's work is supported by a consortium of federal agencies through a National Science Foundation grant.[57] CNSTAT is made up of 16 academics from across the country who work in a variety of social science fields such as economics, healthcare policy, international affairs, sociology, and statistics. The committee is supported by a number of federal staff members.

CNSTAT carries out a number of studies, workshops, and projects to ensure better measures and statistical methods. The committee publishes *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*, updated every four years, describing fundamental principles and practices that position a federal agency to provide accurate and credible statistical information to policymakers and the public.

The committee also publishes a number of reports related to improving or modernizing statistical methods. These reports vary from work on improving measurement efforts to modernizing statistical systems. The committee's workshops allow for committee members to present their work and to hear from other researchers on their uses of federal data.[58]

Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Policy

The Interagency Council on Statistical Policy is chaired by the U.S. chief statistician and is made up of 13 principal statistical agencies. The council first began as an informal operation in the 1980s before being authorized by statute in 1995 as part of the Paperwork Reduction Act. The group allows the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to work with various statistical agencies when planning federal statistical programs or policies. The council is a "vehicle for coordinating statistical work, particularly when activities and issues cut across agencies; for exchanging information about agency programs and activities; and for providing advice and counsel to OMB on statistical matters."[59] The group members also use the council as a forum to discuss recent experiences or proposed solutions to numerous statistical topics.

Federal Interagency Council on Statistical Methodology (FCSM)

The council is an interagency committee focused on improving the overall quality of federal statistics. OMB created FCSM in 1975[60] to inform and advise its Interagency Council on Statistical Policy on methodological issues that affect federal data quality. The council also compiles information about statistical and survey methods for federal statistical agencies and provides recommendations about statistical measurement, analysis, survey methods, data collection methods and technologies, record linkage, and data quality. The council is made up of career staff, and the chair of the council is appointed by the chief statistician. The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs' Statistical and Science Policy Branch provides support to FCSM.[61]

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics

The Federal Interagency Forum is a group of 22 agencies that utilize research involving children and their families. The forum was founded in 1994 and formally established in 1997 through an executive order. The forum coordinates member agencies so that data collection and reporting are more consistent across the federal government. The forum also helps agencies communicate this information to each other and the public.

The forum creates an annual report to summarize child well-being through a variety of national indicators. The report is meant to ensure that federal data reach both policymakers and the public as well as facilitate discussions between data providers. The forum is governed by a planning committee that manages the administrative aspects of the body. The reporting committee focuses on producing the forum's annual report, while the research and innovation committee focuses on finding best practices for collecting and reporting child and family information data.

The forum's membership includes a variety of statistical and service agencies from the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, and Transportation as well as OMB and the Environmental Protection Agency.[62]

Data

Chief Information Officers Council

The Chief Information Officers Council is an interagency forum dedicated to improving practices related to agency information resources. The council is made up of chief information officers from each agency and is headed by the federal chief information officer. The Chief Information Officers Council focuses on consolidating and optimizing data centers throughout the government so it is easier for cross-agency collaborations to use data to create evidence and to communicate this evidence to the American public. The council also develops OMB recommendations for federal information technology management policies, establishes governmentwide priorities for information technology policy, shares best practices across agencies, and promotes collaborations among agency information officers. The council has a number of working groups and committees focused on information security and identity management, innovation, workforce, accessibility, privacy, and data center consolidation.[63]

White House Data Cabinet

The White House Data Cabinet was first formed in January 2016 on the initiative of the White House's chief data scientist. The cabinet is focused on issues such as data policy, data governance, and data talent. The cabinet has grown to include roughly 70 members from inside and outside of government and works to determine best practices and responses to common challenges among public officials who work with data.

Chief Financial Officers Council

The Chief Financial Officers council was established by the CFO Act of 1990 to ensure greater collaboration in order to improve the financial management of the U.S. government. The council includes chief financial officers from agencies across the government as well as senior officials from OMB and the Department of Treasury. The council's current priorities include improving financial management systems, developing a quality financial management workforce, implementing the Government Performance and Results Act, and modernizing various business, payments, and loan systems.[64]

Performance Improvement

Federal Performance Improvement Council (PIC)

PIC is a governmentwide body that supports cross-agency collaboration and the exchange of knowledge to advance and expand the practice of performance management and improvement. PIC creates opportunities wherein government employees working to achieve progress can learn from breakthroughs achieved elsewhere and collaborate to solve complex challenges.

PIC is chaired by the federal chief performance officer and is supported by a number of full-time staff at the General Services Administration. The membership of PIC includes performance improvement officers and associated staff from federal agencies. PIC meets regularly and convenes a number of governmentwide working groups to foster dialogue and best practice sharing among agencies.

PIC initiatives include the following:

- *Goal Setting, Measurement/Analysis, Reviews, and Delivery.* PIC provides support to agency performance improvement officers and other program officials to facilitate the development of agency and cross-agency goals, including priority goals. PIC also supports implementation planning and coordination on cross-cutting performance areas, including working with OMB, policy councils, and agencies on the Cross-agency Priority Goals.
- *Best Practice Sharing and Capacity Building.* PIC delivers services for federal agencies that deepen performance improvement capability and facilitate sharing of effective practices. This includes the Performance Enthusiasts/Ambassadors program and in-person training program offerings that meet demand from agency staff. PIC also leads cross-agency working groups on areas such as goal setting, agency performance reviews, and capability building to improve agency performance management capacity. These working groups allow agency leaders from across the federal government to collaborate and benchmark best practices and lessons learned that strengthen data-driven management and informed decision making. Finally, PIC runs its Collaboration Studio to bring teams together and facilitate engagements that can spark cross-cutting performance improvements.

President's Management Council

The President's Management Council is part of the General Services Administration's Office of Executive Councils and was established in 2001 by an executive order from the Bush Administration. The council is made up of chief operating officers from various federal departments as well as directors from the General Services Administration and Office of Personnel Management. The council is led by OMB's deputy director of management. The council provides performance and management leadership throughout the executive branch by overseeing the implementation of management policies. Two of its primary initiatives are the Cross-cutting Performance and Management Initiative, which seeks to adopt best practices governmentwide, and the President's Management Advisory Board, which adapts promising business practices for use in government agencies.

Evaluation

Interagency Council on Evaluation Policy (ICEP)

According to OMB's *Overview of Federal Evaluation-building Efforts*, "many government functions (e.g., performance management and statistical functions) have a formalized statutory structure that enables interagency exchange of information, best practices, and coordination and collaboration on areas of common interest. Federal evaluation offices currently have no such formalized statutory mechanism for coordination."[65]

ICEP was established by OMB as a pilot to help fill this gap. ICEP is cochaired by the OMB Evidence Team and a director from one of the agency evaluation offices. ICEP works as a learning community where evaluation offices from across the federal government come together to discuss common challenges and work together to find innovative solutions. ICEP helps ensure that best practices are quickly promulgated

across the federal government. ICEP also helps OMB to promote common principles and guidelines throughout the departments and ensures OMB hears from the evaluation offices themselves.[66]

The council is currently focused on developing principles and practices for evaluation, paralleling those published for statistical agencies; exploring a common evidence framework and research guidelines for federal agencies; and strengthening the capacity of evaluation staff across government.

Appendix III: Agency-level Offices and Actions

Cutting across Multiple Types of Evidence

Evidence Offices

While there isn't an official designation or even a term to refer to them, some agencies have centralized offices that deal with multiple types of evidence. As the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) notes in its *Overview of Federal Evidence-building Efforts*, "some centralized offices conduct more than one evidence-building function, including descriptive statistics, program evaluation, research, performance measurement, policy and program analysis, public health surveillance, and external support. For example, in addition to conducting evaluations and demonstrations and providing statistical data like the American Housing Survey, the Office of Policy Development and Research at HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development] also conducts research on priority housing and community development issues and provides reliable and objective data analysis to help inform policy decisions." The 2016-enacted budget for eight such offices identified by OMB was $376 million.

Statistics

Federal Agency Statistical Units

Federal agency statistical units are agencies whose principal mission is to produce official federal statistics that can inform policymakers throughout government. More than 100 agencies or units deal with statistics on a regular basis, of which 13 are primarily engaged in statistical work. The FY2016-enacted budget for these 13 agencies was $3.149 billion.

OMB issued a framework of fundamental responsibilities for principal statistical agencies in the design, collection, processing, editing, compilation, storage, analysis, release, and dissemination of statistical information. The key features of this framework include producing and disseminating relevant and timely data, ensuring credible and accurate statistical products, conducting objective statistical activities, and protecting the trust of information providers by ensuring the confidentiality and exclusive statistical use of their responses.[67]

Data

Chief Information Officers

At least 42 federal entities have chief information officers.[68] The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 assigns agency chief information officers statutory responsibility for promoting the effective and efficient design and operation of all major information resource management processes within their agencies, including data.

Performance Improvement

Performance Improvement Officers (PIOs)

The PIO position was first created by President George W. Bush in 2007 through an executive order. The position was made permanent through the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, which designates a chief operating officer for each agency that is responsible for improving management and performance within its own agency. The position of PIO within each agency was created,

and these officers were directed to assist the agency heads in selecting and overseeing agency performance goals. PIOs are senior executives in their agencies and are designated by the heads of their agencies in conjunction with the agencies' chief operating officers.

PIOs advise senior agency officials about how to achieve their agencies' missions through "strategic and performance planning, measurement, analysis, regular assessment of progress, and use of performance information to improve the results achieved."[69] PIOs help the agencies select goals, oversee strategic planning efforts, review performance, and communicate these efforts to agency staff. There are currently at least two dozen PIOs throughout the federal government. These PIOs hold a variety of positions within their agencies.[70]

Evaluation

Federal Evaluation Offices

According to OMB's *Overview of Federal Evaluation-building Efforts*, "evaluation functions have evolved more slowly [than federal agency statistical units] and have had a variety of structures within agencies. Some evaluation offices were created by statute, such as the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance in the Institute of Educational Sciences at the Department of Education. Others have emerged in response to demand for evidence to inform policy, such as the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) at the Administration for Children & Families (ACF) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)."[71]

One of the newest such offices to emerge is the Chief Evaluation Office, which was created in the Department of Labor in 2010 to coordinate and manage the department's evaluation agenda. The office is independent of the broader department but located within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy. The office conducts a variety of evaluations based on the priorities of the secretary of labor. The office also works to encourage the department to utilize more evidence-based policies throughout its work. The office releases dozens of studies each year on topics such as paid leave, veterans' reemployment, the gender pay gap, training programs, and retirement. The office also runs the Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research to serve as a one-stop shop for labor-issue research and is setting up a variety of analytical services for the public to make better use of department data. Finally, the office oversees the public use of labor data files and provides a number of resources for those reviewing labor studies.

Seven of the most prominent offices are included in Table VII.3 in Appendix VII. The FY2016-enacted budget for these seven offices was $329 million.

Appendix IV: Guidebooks Detailing Principles and Best Practices for Creating and Using Evidence

Statistics

Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency

Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency is a book published by the Committee on National Statistics, which is part of the National Academy of Sciences. The book was first published in 1992 and is currently on its fifth edition, which was published in 2013. The book provides guidance and lessons learned from policy experts and government officials in statistical agencies. The fifth edition focuses on producing objective and relevant data, developing credibility among data users, building trust among data providers, and maintaining independence from external forces. The book is a set of principles for officials to aim for and provides guidelines about how to define a unit's mission, communicate the sources and limitations of data, create strong evaluation programs, meet professional standards of practice, disseminate data, and coordinate with other statistical agencies.[72]

Data

Office of Management and Budget Memorandum: Open Data Policy—Managing Information as an Asset, M-13-13

In *Open Data Policy—Managing Information as an Asset*, the Office of Management and Budget outlines actions agencies shall take to improve the management of information resources throughout the information's life cycle and reinforce the government's presumption in favor of openness, including specific practices to collect or create information in a way that supports downstream information processing and dissemination activities, build information systems to support interoperability and information accessibility, strengthen data management and release practices, strengthen measures to ensure that privacy and confidentiality are fully protected and that data are properly secured, and incorporate new interoperability and openness requirements into core agency processes.

Performance Improvement

Performance Principles & Practices Playbook

In 2015, the Performance Improvement Council staff set out to define the foundational aspects of performance management in government. Using their experience working with diverse federal agencies, they clarified their point of view about what it takes not only to achieve mission results but to actively manage ambitious and sometimes cross-governmental goals. They also went back into their archives of interviews, summits, and working groups to reflect what they repeatedly heard from professionals who have given their careers to understanding, improving, and driving their agencies' performance.

The Performance Improvement Council developed the Performance Principles & Practices construct to go beyond the legal requirements and capture the capabilities and spirit of performance management and improvement. The council has turned Performance Principles & Practices into a playbook to be used by anyone who has a role in implementing programs, initiatives, and missions. Performance is a tool to help one achieve one's goals, deliver the right things, and build the capabilities needed to evolve.[73]

Evaluation

Department of Labor Evaluation Policy

Many departments now have independent evaluation offices that are meant to analyze their departments' programs and recommend policy changes that could be more efficient or effective at reaching department goals. The Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office is tasked with developing and implementing the department's evaluation policy. Other department program offices are to reference the policy when evaluations are part of discretionary grant opportunities or when that program office sponsors its own evaluation. The policy covers the planning, conduct, and use of program evaluations throughout the department. The policy is intended to ensure the department conducts evaluations that are of high quality and high use to policymakers. The policy also is intended to ensure that the evaluations inform the department's decision-making process.

The policy calls for the department to use the most rigorous methods available whenever feasible for all types of evaluations. The policy specifically notes the importance of internal and external validity for decision making. The policy also calls for an emphasis on evaluations' being relevant to the needs of specific agencies and programs within the department and transparent to the broader public. Finally, the policy stresses the importance of evaluations' being independent of undue influence and conducted in an ethical manner.[74]

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Evaluation Policy

ACF, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, utilizes an evaluation policy through its Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (OPRE).[75] The office carries out evaluations of existing programs as well as evaluations of newer, innovative practices and broader research studies. The office is also the chief performance management unit of ACF. The administration's evaluation policy is published through the *Federal Register* and was last updated in late 2014. ACF's evaluation policy stresses the need for evaluations as a tool to "learn systematically so that we can make our services as effective as possible." The policy also notes that evaluations are only one aspect of a broader continual improvement agenda.

The policy requires offices within ACF to coordinate their evaluation efforts with OPRE to ensure that their evaluations are rigorous and relevant. OPRE is particularly interested in ensuring that all impact, implementation, and process evaluations have strong internal and external validity as well as measurement reliability. The policy also stresses the need for transparency and sets guidelines for how evaluation results should be published and archived. The ultimate goal of the administration's evaluation policy is to ensure that each study is conducted in an independent and ethical manner. ACF uses evaluation studies to enhance its own practices and promote a culture of continuous improvement.[76]

Common Guidelines for Education Research and Development

The Institute of Education Sciences at the Department of Education, in partnership with the National Science Foundation, released the "Common Guidelines for Education Research and Development" in 2013. The guidelines establish standards for research funded by the Institute of Education Sciences or National Science Foundation. The document details the various types of research studies used in generating evidence as well as when and how these types of research studies should be used. The document is meant to serve as a guidepost for how research and evaluation officials within each organization should invest in education research. The document also is meant to clarify agency guidelines and practices for grantees, outside advocates, and the broader public.[77] ACF in the Department of Health and Human Services then followed suit with its similar "Common Framework for Research and Evaluation."[78]

An informal interagency working group comprising U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, and the U.S. Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office continues to build on this and other related work to establish a cross-agency platform for judging evidence. These emerging standards aim to address both reviewing and conducting evaluations and related research, cover all types of evaluation and research designs and all types of results, provide standards that are useful and relevant for all federal agencies and assess areas where agencies may need to augment or adapt, and establish an approach to efficiently share evaluations and research that have been reviewed. As the working group further develops the standards and framework, it is expected that additional departments and agencies will be involved.[79]

Appendix V: Policies Governing the Creation and Use of Evidence

Section I: Anchor Policies

Cutting across Multiple Types of Evidence

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum: Preparing, Submitting, and Executing the Budget, A-11

OMB circular number A-11 provides guidance to federal agencies on preparing their FY2018 budget requests and instructs them on how to execute this budget. The document briefly touches on evidence and evaluation practices. Agencies are asked to identify their current efforts to build and use efforts, barriers to progress, and program reauthorizations, which may include an evidence-building component. The circular also highlights the government's efforts to use performance improvement and management strategies in addition to other techniques to create a culture of evidence throughout the federal government.[80]

Analytical Perspectives: Budget of the U.S. Government Fiscal Year 2017

The document details the president's priorities for the FY2017 budget. It highlights specific budget data such as economic and accounting analyses as well as information about federal collections and spending. There is also information about federal borrowing and debt. The document includes two relevant chapters related to evidence: a chapter titled "Building the Capacity to Produce and Use Evidence" and a chapter titled "Delivering a High-performance Government." The document can be found online.[81]

Analytical Perspectives: Budget of the U.S. Government Fiscal Year 2016

The document details the president's priorities for the FY2016 budget. It highlights specific budget data such as economic and accounting analyses as well as information about federal collections and spending. There is also information about federal borrowing and debt. The document includes two relevant chapters related to evidence: a chapter titled "Building Evidence with Administrative Data" and a chapter titled "Delivering a High-performance Government." The document can be found online.[82]

OMB Memorandum: Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Guidance, M-15-11

The FY2017 budget memorandum invites agencies to submit "proposals that scale-up interventions or policies that have been tested and shown to work" and "proposals that will further develop agencies' capacity to use evidence, evaluation, and data as tools to improve program outcomes."[83] The memorandum also asks agencies to submit an "evidence template" that details their efforts to build evidence as well as the agency's priority evidence-based proposals.

OMB Memorandum: Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Guidance, M-14-07

The FY2016 budget guidance from OMB continued many of its previous policies relating to the use of data and evidence to inform decision making. To further these efforts, the guidance focused on "supporting agency efforts to use evidence, evaluation, and data as tools to improve program outcomes and support agencies in scaling up new approaches that have been tested and shown to work."[84] Agencies were directed to propose new evaluation and improvement strategies for their programs and establish priorities for the use of evidence in the upcoming year. The guidance also asked agencies to further increase access to their high-value data assets. Finally, the guidance focused on furthering the president's management agenda, which prioritized data-related activities like information technology delivery.[85]

OMB Memorandum: Next Steps in the Evidence and Innovation Agenda, M-13-17

The FY2015 budget memorandum asked federal agencies to prioritize programs that strengthen the use of evidence and innovation. This included funding programs with existing evidence to back their effectiveness

and programs that would build new evidence. The request also invited agencies to participate in workshops and collaborations to strengthen their proposals that utilize innovation and learning.[86]

OMB Memorandum: Use of Evidence in the 2014 Budget, M-12-14

The FY2014 budget memorandum advised federal agencies to demonstrate that their budget submissions relied on the use of evidence when making funding allocations. Agencies were invited to propose new evaluations such as low-cost evaluations using administrative data or evaluations linked to performance partnerships and local waivers. OMB also advised agencies to use evidence in both their grant-making and decision-making processes. Finally, the memorandum noted OMB's dedication to facilitating an interagency dialogue about evidence use and evaluation by reestablishing the interagency evaluation working group and convening other groups to meet on issues related to evidence-based practices, performance improvement, and the use of technology.[87]

Statistics

OMB Memorandum: Statistical Policy Directive No. 1: Fundamental Responsibilities of Federal Statistical Agencies and Recognized Statistical Units, 2014

OMB released a policy directive that "affirms the fundamental responsibilities of Federal statistical agencies and recognized statistical units in the design, collection, processing, editing, compilation, storage, analysis, release, and dissemination of statistical information."[88] The directive details federal statistical agency responsibilities, requires the adoption of certain policies and best practices, and examines how other agencies or departments must support federal statistical agencies. The directive is used by OMB to inform any guidance issued to federal statistical agencies or related units.[89]

Data

Open Data Policy—Guidance M-13-13

The guidance requires agencies to collect and create information in a way that supports its processing and dissemination. Agencies should use data standards for information creation and collection and ensure that these standards meet confidentiality requirements. The guidance also states that agencies should modernize their information systems to maximize information interoperability and accessibility.

Open Government Directive, M-10-06

OMB also works to make government data more easily accessible to researchers and the public through the Open Government Directive. In response to a presidential memorandum on transparency and open government, OMB established the directive and required agencies to release more of their high-value data sets publicly. More broadly, the directive requires agencies to publish information about their policies online to increase overall accessibility to the public.[90]

Guidance for Providing and Using Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes, M-14-06

OMB provided federal departments and agencies with this 2014 guidance to encourage the use of administrative data for statistical purposes. The memorandum called for senior officials to encourage collaborations between their program and statistical offices as well as develop strong policies and practices around statistical uses of data. The memorandum also encourages senior officials to promote the use of administrative data for statistical purposes and provides them with tools and other resources to deal with issues related to privacy concerns.

Evaluation

OMB Memorandum: Increased Emphasis on Program Evaluations M-10-01

This guidance notes that "rigorous, independent program evaluations can be a key resource in determining whether government programs are achieving their intended outcomes as well as possible and at the lowest possible cost. Evaluations can help policymakers and agency managers strengthen the design and operation of programs. Ultimately, evaluations can help the Administration determine how to spend taxpayer dollars effectively and efficiently—investing more in what works and less in what does not." Accordingly, it announces that as part of the FY2011 budget process,

- OMB will work with agencies to make information readily available online about all federal evaluations focused on program impacts that are planned or already under way;
- together with the Domestic Policy Council, National Economic Council, and Council of Economic Advisors, OMB will establish a new interagency working group to promote stronger evaluation across the federal government; and
- OMB will allocate a limited amount of funding for agencies that, on a voluntary basis, show how their FY2011 funding priorities are evidence based or otherwise subject to rigorous evaluation, assess their own capacity to support evaluation and suggest pathways for strengthening that capacity, propose new evaluations that could improve government programs in the future, and identify impediments to rigorous program evaluation in their statutes or regulations.

Evaluating Programs for Efficacy and Cost-efficiency M-10-32

This guidance notes that OMB will continue for FY2012 the governmentwide efforts started in the FY2011 budget process, with some modifications:

- OMB is working with agencies to make information readily available online about all federal evaluations focused on program impacts that are planned, already under way, or recently completed. A Budget Data Request is being issued concurrently to this memo to assist in the completion of this request.
- FY2012 evaluation initiative: as part of the FY2012 budget process, OMB will allocate a limited amount of funding for agencies that, on a voluntary basis, show how their FY2012 funding priorities are evidence based or otherwise subject to rigorous evaluation, provide OMB with an evaluation plan updating or expanding on the evaluation plan in their strategic plan if needed to address questions raised by this memorandum, describe all evaluation proposals costing $1 million or more (Resource Management Offices have the discretion to adopt lower thresholds) already incorporated into their FY2012 budget submissions, propose new evaluations that could be started in FY2012 that could improve government programs in the future to which additional funding would be applied, assess agency capacity to support evaluation and suggest pathways for strengthening that capacity, and identify impediments to rigorous program evaluation in agencies' statutes or regulations. To provide an incentive to agencies to evaluate their programs, the evaluation initiative funds will be added to agency top lines at the end of the budget process.
- Agencies are encouraged to share information beyond what is requested in the guidance and consult with OMB's Resource Management Offices to coordinate and improve the design, implementation, and utilization of evaluations.

Further OMB policy guidance has focused on program evaluations where OMB has pledged to allocate additional funds to agencies that demonstrate a strategic evaluation plan and propose new evaluations for

government programs lacking strong evidence.[91] OMB guidance also focused on providing capacity-building measures to support agencies that wished to evaluate their own programs.[92]

Behavioral Sciences

Executive Order 13707—Using Behavioral Science Insights to Better Serve the American People

In September 2015, the president signed an executive order on how officials can use behavioral science to improve government efficiency. The executive order encouraged departments to identify policies that could be improved by the use of behavioral science and directed the National Science and Technology Council to oversee this effort and provide technical assistance to federal agencies.[93] Departments will work to improve how information is presented to consumers, design policies to encourage Americans to take specific actions with larger benefits, and streamline government processes. This work is largely being informed by the White House's Social and Behavioral Sciences Team, which works to understand how people participate in government programs and respond to particular policy choices.

Implementation Guidance for Executive Order 13707: Using Behavioral Science Insights to Better Serve the American People

The guidance, issued in September 2016 as a response to executive order 13707, details how agencies can "identify promising opportunities to apply behavioral-science insights to Federal policies and programs."[94] The guidance instructs agencies to consider streamlining access and enrollment procedures to their programs using behavioral insights for guidance. The guidance also encourages agencies to consider revitalizing their presentation of information to promote greater understanding of agency actions among the public. The guidance further encourages agencies to examine how they present options or choices to program beneficiaries and enrollees. Finally, the guidance instructs agencies to reexamine how their programs incentivize certain actions.

Section II: Legislation

Cutting across Multiple Types of Evidence

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

The act increased the requirements agencies needed to meet to interact with and collect information from the public. The act required OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to oversee agency requests to gather public information for statistical purposes. These authorizations must be renewed every three years. Agencies also were required to establish senior officials or offices that would be responsible for managing the information policies and resources of each agency. In terms of the use of evidence, this requirement included program evaluation and performance management information. These officials are tasked with using this information to improve program efficiency as well as the quality and utility of the information gathered.

Evidence-based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016

The bipartisan legislation established the Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking. The 15-member commission, with members appointed by the president and congressional leaders, will conduct a comprehensive review of the government's data inventory, infrastructure, security, and statistical protocols to make recommendations about the best arrangement for administrative data on federal programs. The

commission will evaluate topics such as which data are relevant for program evaluation and policymaking, what legal or administrative barriers exist, and whether a clearinghouse for program and survey data is needed.

Information Quality Act (sometimes referred to as the Data Quality Act)
The Information Quality Act was passed in 2001 through the appropriations process. The act requires OMB to issue guidance to federal agencies for ensuring the information disseminated by these agencies meets quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity standards. Agencies are also required to publish their own guidelines related to information quality and allow individuals to seek corrections for information that does not meet OMB or agency standards.

Privacy Act of 1974
The law establishes standards for agencies to collect, maintain, use, and disseminate personally identifiable information about individuals in their various records systems. The law requires agencies, with some exceptions, to receive consent when disclosing information about a specific individual. Agencies have to state which law allows them to access certain information and whether their access to this information is voluntary. Some of the approved exceptions in the law include law enforcement purposes, routine uses within agencies, and statistical purposes at the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Data

Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014
The law requires the Treasury Department and OMB to establish data standards to improve the quality of federal spending data and publish spending information on USASpending.gov. The act also requires OMB to pilot publishing information related to grants and federal contracts.[95]

Performance Improvement

Government Performance and Results Modernization Act (GPRA) of 2010
GPRA of 2010 updated the previous GPRA of 1993. The 1993 act established a framework for agencies to communicate their progress on agency-wide goals to the legislative branch and the broader public. The framework included strategic planning, performance planning, and reporting processes. Agencies had to create multiyear strategic plans and report annually on their progress. The law also requires "the agency to include in its strategic plan … a description of program evaluations used in establishing or revising general goals and objectives, with a schedule for future program evaluations."[96] This requirement was in both versions of the law.

The 2010 law maintained a similar structure but updated the law in numerous ways. The law requires the director of OMB to work with agencies as they develop their performance plans and requires that agencies update the public on their annual progress toward their performance goals. The goal also requires internal progress checks between the director of OMB and appropriate lead officials in each department. The law designates a chief operating officer for each agency, who is responsible for improving management and performance within the agency. Finally, the law creates the position of performance improvement officer within each agency and directs these officers to assist the agency head in selecting and overseeing agency performance goals.[97]

e-Government Act of 2002

The act establishes new regulations on the government's use of electronic services and processes. For agencies that gather statistical information to build evidence, the act requires a number of changes to ensure overall privacy. Section 208 of the law requires federal agencies that collect and disseminate information to complete Privacy Impact Assessments. These assessments will analyze how this information is collected and managed throughout the process of gathering and disseminating information to ensure that adequate privacy protections are used. The act also includes the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act, which establishes higher confidentiality standards for U.S. statistical agencies. The act includes the Federal Information Security Management Act, which requires each federal agency to develop and implement an information security program for its information systems in response to threats to cybersecurity.

Appendix VI: Mechanisms Helping States and Localities
Section I: Using What Works Centers

Cutting across Multiple Types of Evidence

Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs)
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/

RELs work with partners in local school districts and state departments of education to provide data and research to improve academic outcomes for students. The program, managed by the Institute of Education Sciences, runs 10 RELs, which are based around the country. Each REL uses applied research, development, dissemination, and technical assistance tools to ensure that the best research and proven programs are used by districts and states for their school improvement efforts. RELs have established almost 70 research alliances designed to partner practitioners with researchers and policymakers who can work together to analyze data, conduct research, and design evidence-based policies that respond to local challenges and needs.

Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center
https://www.ojpdiagnosticcenter.org/

The U.S. Department of Justice runs the OJP Diagnostic Center to support local law enforcement organizations and communities develop data-driven justice solutions. The center works to provide specialized training and technical assistance by using local data to develop customized solutions to each community's challenges. The center uses research, program evaluations, local data, and collaborative partnerships to support local groups.[98]

Statistics

Federal Statistical Research Data Centers
http://www.census.gov/fsrdc

These centers serve as partnerships between federal statistical agencies and leading research institutions that wish to work with data that are generally restricted from public use. There are currently 24 centers that are managed by the Census Bureau. A variety of agencies provide data to these centers such as the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Social Security Administration, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.[99] These Research Data Centers allow qualified researchers to gain restricted access to data at secure centers across the country. This allows agencies to protect the confidentiality of the data they store here and allows researchers to publish findings from approved academic projects.[100]

Center for Statistical Research and Methodology
The Center for Statistical Research and Methodology promotes research on statistical design, modeling, and analysis for some of the Census Bureau's other programs that perform data collection, analysis, or dissemination activities. The center has expertise in record linkage, statistical modeling, missing data, and other common statistical or data issues. This research is used to inform other government employees and academics of best practices through professional development activities and reports.[101]

National Center for Health Statistics

The National Center for Health Statistics is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The center provides biomedical and other health data to researchers. This information comes from the center's surveys, indexes, and linkage programs. The center focuses on providing statistical information to researchers and the public to spur policies that will improve the health of the American people.[102]

Data

State Data Center Program

http://www.census.gov/about/partners/sdc.html

The program is administered by the Census Bureau and creates partnerships between all 50 states. The program, first started in 1978, works to make data more available to state and local decision makers in government, business, and community organizations. The program supports this effort by making Census Bureau data and products more accessible and by providing educational events to partners and stakeholders across the country.[103]

Census Information Center

http://www.census.gov/about/partners/cic.html

The center is administered by the Census Bureau's Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office and was established in 2000, after years of being an informal network, to make census data more available to underserved communities. The center now manages a network of more than 50 nonprofit organizations including colleges, universities, research organizations, civil rights organizations, chambers of commerce, and tribal governments. The center works to provide these groups with access to census data, particularly as they pertain to underserved or minority populations.[104]

Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications

The Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications is an office within the Census Bureau focused on utilizing administrative data from federal, state, and other sources in innovative ways. The office is particularly focused on using these data for research collaborations with experts within government agencies or from the academic sphere on topics such as demographic characteristics, income distribution, social and economic mobility, and federal program participation.[105] The office also works with computer scientists on issues such as record linkage, data analytics, administrative records infrastructure, and microsimulations. Finally, the office is dedicated to reducing the government's reliance on high-cost surveys for economic research or evaluations.[106]

Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

PTAC is an office within the U.S. Department of Education that focuses on providing information related to student privacy, confidentiality, and security—particularly as it relates to student-level education data. The center provides tools and resources to assist state and local governments in their efforts to safeguard any information they collect about their students. In particular, PTAC provides information related to data sharing and dissemination, disclosure avoidance, data security, data governance, and legal references (particularly in relation to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Virtual Research Data Center

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services works with a contractor to provide a virtual research data center. The data center provides access to Medicare and Medicaid program data. Researchers can access data files and conduct analyses in a secure environment. The center is run through a contractor who

employs numerous health specialists who can assist researchers from the academic, government, and nonprofit sectors with their research.[107]

Section II: Federal Web Sites about Evidence

Cutting across Multiple Types of Evidence

Office of Management and Budget Evidence and Evaluation
https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/evidence
This office provides highlights, policy guidance, past budget materials, and resources and other information related to (1) making better use of data already collected by government agencies; (2) promoting the use of high-quality, low-cost evaluations and rapid, iterative experimentation in addition to larger evaluations examining long-term outcomes; (3) adopting more evidence-based structures for grant programs; and (4) building agency evaluation evidence-building capacity and developing tools to better communicate what works.

Statistics

FedStats
https://fedstats.sites.usa.gov/
FedStats, which has been available to the public since 1997, provides access to the full range of official statistical information produced by the federal government without one's having to know in advance which federal agency produces which particular statistic. With convenient searching and linking capabilities to more than 100 agencies that provide data and trend information on such topics as economic and population trends, crime, education, healthcare, aviation safety, energy use, farm production, and more, FedStats provides visitors access to the full breadth of federal statistical information.

usa.gov (Section on Statistics)
https://www.usa.gov/statistics
usa.gov was designed to create and organize timely, needed government information and services and make them accessible to the public anytime, anywhere, via one's channel of choice. It includes a dedicated section with links to more than two dozen federal Web sites containing statistics on a wide range of topics. The site is an interagency product administered by USAGov, a division of the U.S. General Services Administration's Technology Transformation Service. It has received donations from foundations and was legislatively mandated through section 204 of the e-Government Act of 2002. Since 2002, usa.gov has received an annual appropriation from the U.S. Congress. It includes a section focused on data about the United States, such as maps and population as well as demographic and economic data, and includes a listing of federal data and statistics Web sites run by the principal statistical agencies.

America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-being
www.childstats.gov
Produced by the Forum on Child and Family Statistics, this Web site includes detailed data, including trend data, for indicators discussed in *America's Children in Brief* as well as other America's Children indicators; data source descriptions and agency contact information; America's Children reports from 1997 to the present and other forum reports; links to forum agencies, their online data tools, and various international data sources; and forum news and information about the forum's overall structure and organization.

Data

data.gov

https://www.data.gov/

data.gov is managed and hosted by the U.S. General Services Administration, Office of Citizen Services and Innovative Technologies. It includes a collection of data, tools, and resources to conduct research, develop Web and mobile applications, design data visualizations, and more.

healthdata.gov

https://www.healthdata.gov/

healthdata.gov is managed and hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is part of the department's Health Data Initiative, which is meant to "liberate" the department's health data by making it more available and accessible to the public as well as the research and business communities. The Web site includes data sets on Medicare, hospitals, health quality, and inpatient care as well as data from the community, state, and national levels.

Performance Improvement

performance.gov

https://www.performance.gov

performance.gov is a window to the administration's efforts to deliver a more effective, smarter, and leaner government. The site gives the public, agencies, members of Congress, and the media a view of progress under way in cutting waste, streamlining government, and improving performance.

performance.gov advances the president's commitment to communicate candidly and concisely what the federal government is working to accomplish, how it seeks to accomplish its objectives, and why these efforts are important.

All cabinet departments and nine other major agencies have agency pages on performance.gov. Each agency's page describes the agency's mission and lists the agency's strategic goals, objectives, and priority goals. Each agency's home page provides links to the agency's strategic plan, annual performance plan, and annual performance report; reports agency progress on governmentwide management initiatives; and shows agency contributions to Cross-agency Performance Goals.

performance.gov is funded by the Performance Management Line of Business, an investment by agencies to jointly contribute to the creation of a common Web site for public display and the development of a back-end database that contains performance data from across government. The Performance Improvement Council is the business owner of this Line of Business, while the General Services Administration's Technology Office leads the technical development work.

pic.gov

https://www.pic.gov/

pic.gov is the online home of the Performance Improvement Council and includes information about the council's mission, projects, staff, and community.

Evaluation

youth.gov ("A Guide to Evidence & Innovation" Section)
http://youth.gov/evidence-innovation

While there is no one, overarching federal Web site devoted to evaluations across the federal government, this role is partially played by the https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/evidence site referenced above and is complemented by youth.gov (the U.S. government Web site that helps visitors create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs). youth.gov includes a section about Investing in evidence (http://youth.gov/evidence-innovation/investing-evidence), which includes common standards for research and a listing of major evidence-based policy initiatives across the federal government. It also includes a listing of evidence-based program directories: http://youth.gov/evidence-innovation/evidence-based-program-directories.

clinicaltrials.gov
https://clinicaltrials.gov/

clinicaltrials.gov is a registry and results database of publicly and privately supported clinical studies of human participants conducted around the world. The Web site is managed by the U.S. National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine. The Web site is a database of clinical studies that healthcare professionals and researchers can use to find publicly and privately supported trials. The database provides information like the type of condition researched, interventions studied, and trial results. The information can be downloaded from the database for further study.[108]

Section III: Clearinghouses of Evidence-based Programs

Interagency

youth.gov Program Directory

http://youth.gov/evidence-innovation/evidence-based-program-directories

Multiple federal agencies have established program directories that are designed to encourage state and local partners to utilize evidence-based programs and practices. A prominent example is the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse, which was established in 2002. The clearinghouse reviews research on a variety of education topics. The department then provides a directory of evidence-based programs or practices based on their effectiveness, extent of evidence, and topic area. Each established directory sorts and disseminates programs or practices based on their own criteria or guidelines. Recently, directories have been paying more attention to how programs or practices work in specific contexts or with specific populations to better inform their state and local partners.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Evidence Review

http://tppevidencereview.aspe.hhs.gov/evidenceprograms.aspx

The review, which started in 2009, includes information about "programs with evidence of effectiveness in reducing teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and associated sexual risk behaviors."[109] The review rates the quality of each study and has identified 44 program models that have evaluation studies meeting review criteria for effectiveness. The review is regularly updated, with the most recent update in early 2016.[110]

National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices

http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/

The registry is managed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The registry has information about more than 350 substance abuse and mental health interventions. The profile of each intervention includes information about outcome levels, settings, population, descriptions of evaluation studies, and implementation. Each intervention is subject to a rigorous evaluation to ensure that programs meet ratings of effectiveness and are relevant to policymakers.[111]

Guide to Community Preventive Services

http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html

The guide is "a collection of evidence-based findings of the Community Prevention Services Task Force," which serves as "a resource to help you select interventions to improve health and prevent disease in your state, community, community organization, business, healthcare organization, or school."[112] The task force reviews topics such as adolescent health, birth defects, diabetes, health equity, mental health, nutrition, obesity, physical activity, vaccination, and violence.

Prevention Research Synthesis

http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/dhap/prb/prs/

The synthesis reviews evidence-based programs related to HIV/AIDS prevention. The synthesis is managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. The synthesis works with prevention providers and policymakers to ensure that HIV prevention programs are evidence based and supportive of the populations these programs serve.[113]

Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness

http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/

The review provides information about home-visiting research and is run by the Administration for Children and Families. The review assesses evidence of effectiveness for various home-visiting programs that support families with pregnant women and children. The review includes reports of each program as well as outcomes and implementation profiles for practitioners.[114]

Self-sufficiency Research Clearinghouse

https://www.opressrc.org/

The clearinghouse reviews research on low-income people and users of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and serves as a networking hub for researchers and policymakers who work with these groups. The clearinghouse includes topics such as employment, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families policy, income and poverty studies, family formation and family structure, education and training, health, community development, housing, child care, asset building, food assistance, child support, and transportation.[115]

Proven and Promising Responsible Fatherhood and Family Strengthening Initiatives

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/proven-and-promising-responsible-fatherhood-and-family-strengthening

The review, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., was a systematic attempt to identify and catalogue "studies of programs serving low-income fathers and those serving couples and rating the quality of the evidence."[116] The review was carried out from 2010 to 2013 and informs practitioners and policymakers of evidence-based family-strengthening programs.

U.S. Department of Justice

Crime Solutions

http://www.crimesolutions.gov/

The directory is managed by the National Institute of Justice and uses a variety of research to rate program and practice effectiveness. The goal is to inform practitioners about what works in justice policy and which programs might be promising in the future. Research is rated at three levels (effective, promising, and no effects). The directory includes topics such as corrections and reentry, courts, crime and crime prevention, drugs and substance abuse, juveniles, law enforcement, technology and forensics, and victims and victimization.[117]

National Reentry Resource Center

http://whatworks.csgjusticecenter.org/

The What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse publishes information about specific programs, interventions, and evaluations including brand name programs, case management and comprehensive programs, education, employment, family-based programs, housing, mental and physical health, substance abuse, supervision, and youth reentry and aftercare programs. The center is part of the Council of State Government's Justice Center and serves policymakers at the local and state levels primarily. The center is nonpartisan and evidence based.[118]

Model Programs Guide

http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg

The guide is published by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The guide "contains information about evidence-based juvenile justice and youth prevention, intervention, and reentry programs." The guide has information about child protection, health, and welfare; children exposed to violence and victimization; delinquency prevention; detention, confinement, and supervision; juvenile and family courts; law enforcement; offending by juveniles; and schools. The guide has 279 programs reviewed by ratings of effective, promising, and no effects.[119]

U.S. Department of Education

What Works Clearinghouse

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/

The Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse is managed by the Institute of Education Sciences and includes research on topics such as literacy, children with disabilities, early childhood, English learners, K-12 education, teacher excellence, student behavior, dropout prevention, teacher excellence, and postsecondary education. The clearinghouse features intervention reports, single-study reviews, and practice guides. The clearinghouse currently features more than 10,000 studies.[120]

U.S. Department of Labor

Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluations and Research

http://clear.dol.gov/

Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluations and Research is the Department of Labor's repository for labor-related research. The Web site features a number of profiles for research with high potential to help local

practitioners and a searchable database of identified research. Topics for the clearinghouse include apprenticeship and on-the-job training, behavioral insights, community college, employer compliance, entrepreneurship, job search assistance, low-income adults, opportunities for youth, reemployment, and women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.[121] The clearinghouse is managed by the department's Chief Evaluation Office and rates studies by three levels: high, moderate, and low causal evidence. Profiles on the clearinghouse's page typically include information about the research question, the intervention, the setting, methodologies, and findings.

Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)

Evidence Exchange
http://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange

CNCS's evidence exchange is "a digital repository of research, evaluation reports, and data focusing on national service, social innovation, civic engagement, and volunteering."[122] The repository provides studies on CNCS grantee programs, CNCS grants, and other issues related to the agency's mission. The repository includes impact studies, implementation evaluations, outcome reports, and case studies.

Appendix VII: Assorted Figures and Tables

Figure VII.1. Results for America What Works Index, detailing desired agency infrastructure.[123]

RESULTS FOR AMERICA — FEDERAL INVEST IN WHAT WORKS INDEX (2016)

CRITERIA	Administration for Children and Families (HHS)	Corporation for National and Community Service	Millennium Challenge Corporation	U.S. Agency for International Development	U.S. Department of Education	U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development	U.S. Department of Labor
TOTAL SCORE (out of a possible 100)*	**80**	**72**	**85**	**83**	**80**	**76**	**80**
1. Leadership: Did the agency have a senior staff member(s) with the authority, staff, and budget to evaluate its major programs and inform policy decisions affecting them in FY16?	8	8	8	8	8	8	9
2. Evaluation and Research: Did the agency have an evaluation policy, evaluation plan, and research/learning agenda(s) and did it publicly release the findings of all completed evaluations in FY16?	9	8	9	8	8	8	9
3. Resources: Did the agency invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations in FY16? (Note: Meeting this criteria requires both Agency and Congressional action.)	7	7	10	10	7	6	8
4. Performance Management/Continuous Improvement: Did the agency implement a performance management system with clear and prioritized outcome-focused goals and aligned program objectives and measures, and did it frequently collect, analyze, and use data and evidence to improve outcomes, return on investment, and other dimensions of performance in FY16?	8	7	8	8	8	9	9
5. Data: Did the agency collect, analyze, share, and use high-quality administrative and survey data - consistent with strong privacy protections - to improve (or help other entities improve) federal, state, and local programs in FY16?	9	8	9	9	9	9	9
6. Common Evidence Standards/What Works Designations: Did the agency use a common evidence framework, guidelines, or standards to inform its research and funding decisions and did it disseminate and promote the use of evidence-based interventions through a user-friendly tool in FY16?	9	8	8	8	9	7	9
7. Innovation: Did the agency have staff, policies, and processes in place that encouraged innovation to improve the impact of its programs in FY16?	8	7	9	9	8	8	7
8. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs: Did the agency use evidence of effectiveness when allocating funds from its 5 largest competitive grant programs in FY16?	7	9	8[1]	8[2]	8	7	7
9. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Non-Competitive Grant Programs: Did the agency use evidence of effectiveness when allocating funds from its 5 largest non-competitive grant programs in FY16?	7	7	N/A	N/A	8	7	7
10. Repurpose for Results: In FY16, did the agency shift funds away from any practice, policy, or program which consistently failed to achieve desired outcomes? (Note: Meeting this criteria requires both Agency and Congressional action.)	8	3	8	7	7	7	6

* These scores are based on information provided by the 7 federal departments and agencies included in this index. You can find this background information - as well as a description of how RFA developed these scores - at http://results4america.org/policy/invest-in-what-works-index/
[1] Since MCC only administers competitive grant programs, its total possible score was 20 for Question #8 and 0 for question #9.
[2] Since USAID only administers competitive grant programs, its total possible score was 20 for Question #8 and 0 for question #9.

Table VII.1. Select centralized federal offices or components that perform multiple evidence-building functions.[124]

Office or component	Department or independent agency	FY2016-enacted budget for statistical activities (in millions $)
Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	Health and Human Services	156.2
Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services	Health and Human Services	50.9
Defense Manpower Data Center	Defense	20.1
National Center for Statistics and Analysis, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration	Transportation	43.1
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation	Health and Human Services	18.9
Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development	Education	1.9
Office of Policy and Support, Food and Nutrition Service	Agriculture	39.9
Office of Policy Development and Research	Housing and Urban Development	44.8
Note: The evidence-building functions of the offices or components in this table include descriptive statistics, program evaluation, research, performance management, policy and program analysis, public health surveillance, and providing external support. The listed office or subcomponent is a primary evidence-building component within its parent department or agency. It may not be the sole evidence-building entity within its department.		

Table VII.2. Principal statistical agencies.[125]

Agency	Department or independent agency	FY2016-enacted budget (in millions $)
Bureau of Economic Analysis	Commerce	105.1
Bureau of Justice Statistics	Justice	50.2
Bureau of Labor Statistics	Labor	609.0
Bureau of Transportation Statistics	Transportation	26.0
Census Bureau	Commerce	1368.4[a]
Economic Research Service	Agriculture	85.4
Energy Information Administration	Energy	122.0
National Agricultural Statistics Service	Agriculture	168.4
National Center for Education Statistics	Education	322.6
National Center for Health Statistics	Health and Human Services	160.4
National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics	National Science Foundation	58.2
Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics	Social Security Administration	26.1
Statistics of Income Division	Treasury	36.9
Note: A principal statistical agency is an agency or organizational unit of the executive branch whose activities are predominantly the collection, compilation, processing, analysis, or dissemination of information for statistical purposes.		
a. FY2016-enacted budget includes preparatory funding for the 2020 decennial census.		

Table VII.3. Select federal offices or components with program evaluation as their predominant function, identified by the Office of Management and Budget.[126]

Office or component	Department or independent agency	FY2016-enacted budget for statistical activities (in millions $)
Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning	U.S. Agency for International Development	20.0
Chief Evaluation Office	Labor	30.7
National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance	Education	19.9
Office of Evaluation Sciences	General Services Administration	1.5
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families	Health and Human Services	103.3
Office of Research, Demonstration, and Employment Support	Social Security Administration	141.7
Office of Research and Evaluation	Corporation for National and Community Service	11.9
Note: The listed office or subcomponent is a primary evaluation office within its parent department or agency. It may not be the sole evidence-building entity within its parent department. The FY2016-enacted budget reflects those statistical activities that the office or component implements and thus may include funding that the office or component implements on behalf of other offices or components. It may not include other funds that the office or subcomponent receives for other evidence-building purposes, such as research, performance measurement, or providing external support. It also may not include funds for evaluations that the office or subcomponent indirectly oversees.		

Figure VII.4. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking Recommendations

Improving Secure, Private, and Confidential Data Access

REC. 2-1: The Congress and the President should enact legislation establishing the National Secure Data Service (NSDS) to facilitate data access for evidence building while ensuring transparency and privacy. The NSDS should model best practices for secure record linkage and drive the implementation of innovative privacy-enhancing technologies.

REC. 2-2: The NSDS should be a service, not a data clearinghouse or warehouse. The NSDS should facilitate temporary data linkages in support of distinct authorized projects.

REC. 2-3: In establishing the NSDS, the Congress and the President should amend the Privacy Act and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA) to require new stringent privacy qualifications as a precondition for the NSDS to acquire and combine survey and administrative data for solely statistical purposes. At the same time, the Congress should consider additional statutory changes to enable ongoing statistical production.

REC. 2-4: The Congress and the President should review and amend, as appropriate, statutes such as Title 13 of the U.S. Code to allow statistical uses of survey and administrative data for evidence building within the CIPSEA secure environment.

REC. 2-5: The Congress and the President should consider repealing current bans and limiting future bans on the collection and use of data for evidence building.

REC. 2-6: The Congress and the President should enact statutory or other changes to ensure that state-collected administrative data on quarterly earnings are available for solely statistical purposes. The data should be available through a single Federal source for solely statistical purposes.

REC. 2-7: The President should direct Federal departments that acquire state-collected administrative data to make them available for statistical purposes. Where there is substantial Federal investment in a program, Federal departments should, consistent with applicable law, direct states to provide the data necessary to support evidence building, such as complete administrative data when samples are already provided.

REC. 2-8: The Office of Management and Budget should promulgate a single, streamlined process for researchers external to the government to apply, become qualified, and gain approval to access government data that are not publicly available. Approval would remain subject to any restrictions appropriate to the data in question.

Modernizing Privacy Protections for Evidence Building

REC. 3-1: The Congress and the President should amend the Privacy Act and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA) to require Federal departments to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment on de-identified confidential data intended for public release. De-identified confidential data subject to the Privacy Act and CIPSEA should only be made available after a disclosure review board (1) approves the release and (2) publicly provides the risk assessment and a description of steps taken to mitigate risk.

REC. 3-2: The President should direct Federal departments, in coordination with the National Secure Data Service, to adopt state-of-the-art database, cryptography, privacy-preserving, and privacy-enhancing technologies for confidential data used for evidence building.

REC. 3-3: The President should direct Federal departments to assign a senior official the responsibility for coordinating access to and stewardship of the department's data resources for evidence building in collaboration with senior department information technology, privacy, and other leaders. A Principal Statistical Agency head, or other appropriately qualified senior official, should serve this function.

REC. 3-4: The Congress and the President should enact legislation to codify relevant portions of Office of Management and Budget Statistical Policy Directive #1 to protect public trust by ensuring that data acquired under a pledge of confidentiality are kept confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.

Implementing the National Secure Data Service

REC. 4-1: The National Secure Data Service (NSDS) should be established as a separate entity in the Department of Commerce that builds upon and enhances existing expertise and infrastructure in the Federal government, especially at the Census Bureau, to ensure sufficient capacity in secure record linkage and data access for evidence building.

REC. 4-2: The NSDS should establish a Steering Committee that includes representatives of the public, Federal departments, state agencies, and academia.

REC. 4-3: To ensure exemplary transparency and accountability for the Federal government's use of data for evidence building, the NSDS should maintain a searchable inventory of approved projects using confidential data and undergo regular auditing of compliance with rules governing privacy, confidentiality, and access.

REC. 4-4: The NSDS should have specific administrative and implementation flexibilities including the ability to leverage public-private partnerships and to collect and retain user fees.

REC. 4-5: The Office of Management and Budget should increase efforts to make information available on existing Federal datasets including data inventories, metadata, and data documentation in a searchable format.

Strengthening Federal Evidence-Building Capacity

REC. 5-1: The President should direct Federal departments to increase capacity for evidence building through the identification or establishment of a Chief Evaluation Officer, in addition to needed authorities to build a high performing evidence-building workforce.

REC. 5-2: The Congress and the President should direct Federal departments to develop multi-year learning agendas that support the generation and use of evidence.

REC. 5-3: The Congress and the President should direct the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to coordinate the Federal government's evidence-building activities across departments, including through any reorganization or consolidation within OMB that may be necessary and by bolstering the visibility and role of interagency councils.

REC. 5-4: The Congress and the President should align administrative processes to support evidence building, in particular by streamlining the approval processes for new data collections and using existing flexibilities in procurement policy.

REC. 5-5: The Congress and the President should ensure sufficient resources to support evidence-building activities about Federal government programs and policies.

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