

**DataSpeak**  
**Developing Effective Performance Measures**  
**March 9, 1999**

**Facilitator's Guide**

The MCH Information Resource Center's (IRC) DataSpeak program is designed to provide the MCH community with current information on timely MCH data and related policy issues. In the interest of facilitating the application of information presented during DataSpeak audioconferences, the MCH IRC encourages state and local Departments of Health and other groups to organize DataSpeak participants to listen to and discuss the programs together. The following questions are suggested to facilitate discussion regarding the development of effective performance measures, the topic of the March 9 DataSpeak audioconference.<sup>1</sup>

*Suggested Discussion Questions*

- How effectively is our state/county able to measure performance indicators for our state? What steps could we take to improve the quality and consistency of our data?
- How is our agency using the performance measurement data to address problems?
- How will performance on key indicators affect the allocation of resources?
- How could our state/county use information available from the MCHB's new Title V Information System? Do we have the technology and expertise needed to use that system effectively or are there steps we need to take to make better use of that resource?
- To what degree do our agency's performance measures and goals coincide with those of other related agencies? What opportunities for collaboration exist to address mutual goals?
- How well aligned are our agency's daily activities and programs with the strategic goals highlighted by our performance measures?
- The General Accounting Office has indicated that the purposes of the Government Performance and Results Act would be best fulfilled by the development of outcome goals, as opposed to output or process goals. What portion of our state's negotiated measures are outcome goals currently, and how do we envision that will change in future years?
- What external factors are likely to hinder the achievement of our performance goals, and what can we do to ameliorate the effects of these factors?



<sup>1</sup> Many of the issues identified in these suggested questions were raised in a recent report by the General Accounting Office addressing the Department of Health and Human Services' Fiscal Year 1999 Annual Performance Plan (GAO/HEHS-98-180R).

