Roundtable: Getting the Most Out of Switchboard

October 30, 2024, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Transcript

Introduction

Today's Speakers

Tigest Coleman: Hello and welcome, everyone. Thanks so much for joining us today. My name is Tigest Coleman. I'm the deputy director for Switchboard. I will be your facilitator for today's session. Very brief background about myself: I am a licensed clinical social worker in the state of Washington with over 20 years of experience working with refugees and newcomers in various roles. I've had the privilege of applying my direct service experience into our work and the project at Switchboard. Great.

I am joined today by my wonderful colleagues who will be today's roundtable speakers. We have Sarah Diner, who's our research officer. Maya Wahrman, who's our training officer focusing on client-centered services. Last but not least, we have Megan Rafferty, who is the training officer focusing on mental health. Next.

Learning Objectives

TC: These are our learning objectives that we have for you today. By the end of the roundtable, we hope that you'll be able to, one: explain how Switchboard's resources empower our intended audience, which is you, our newcomer service providers.

Identify the key features of three types of Switchboard learning opportunities that we'll go over. Communities of practice, research evidence summaries, and last but not least, we'll also tackle technical assistance—which you might refer or you might hear us refer as TA requests. We hope that we can select the Switchboard learning experience that best meets your needs.

Lastly, we will show you how to submit a TA request for Switchboard if you haven't already. We can use that as a sample-- We'll use a sample problem that you might have experienced or experienced, and we'll use that opportunity to walk you through on how to submit a TA request.

Poll Question

Which statement most closely describes your role?

TC: All right. To kick off this topic, we'd like to hear from you. To do this, we would love to use this interactive tool that we call Slido throughout today's webinar. You can join Slido session today in two ways. You could either take your cameras and scan it. I see people are already doing that. Or you can also go to slido.com and enter the code that you see on your screen. Once you get there, as you are already doing, you should be able to see our first question, which is, which statement most closely describes your role? Please select one of them. I see folks are answering.
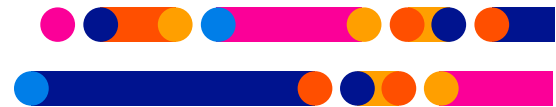
As you could see, it's a live poll. It changes depending on the participations. We'll give it maybe another five seconds or so. Pretty even. I love that. This is great. Some folks are saying they provide direct service, which is great. Then we have folks who provide support on programmatic or operational activities. Then there's also some of you who lead a program or organization and have the authority to make strategic decisions. As you can see, that is changing as folks share. This is good to know. You'll see why we asked this question as we have some reports that were also our data that we will share with you all.

1. About Switchboard

Switchboard is a One-Stop Resource Hub

TC: Next, we have a very short video that provides an overview of what Switchboard is.

[video playback begins]

Speaker 1: Do you support refugees and other newcomers in the U.S.? Is it hard to find learning resources to help navigate the resettlement experience? Whether you're a seasoned professional or brand new to your role, Switchboard can help. We are a one-stop resource hub for the resettlement community in the United States. We make it fast, easy, and flexible to get help tailored to your needs. We offer live and self-paced training.

Speaker 2: Our team needs training on community outreach.

Speaker 1: Customize learning resources.

Speaker 3: Can you send me multilingual health videos?

Speaker 1: Peer-to-peer communities of practice.

Speaker 4: What case management database do you use?

Speaker 1: Case consultation.

Speaker 5: Our agency is working with a family of six.

Speaker 1: Research.

Speaker 2: What mental health interventions are most effective?

Speaker 1: You can access these learning resources for free, anytime, via Switchboard's website and mobile app. Visit www.switchboardta.org and sign up for our newsletter to learn more. Together, we can help build capacity across the resettlement community and help refugees and other newcomers thrive.

[video playback ends]

TC: Wonderful, thank you. We will share a link to that video so that you could share it with your colleagues. In a nutshell, Switchboard is a one-stop resource hub for refugee service providers in the

U.S.. Our overall goal is to provide comprehensive support and guidance to organizations and communities serving newcomers. Through our inclusive and diverse approach, we aim to empower and equip service providers with the tools they need to facilitate successful and sustainable integration for newcomers to the US. We're going to be unpacking each of the essential components of our goal in the next few slides.

Comprehensive Support and Guidance

TC: The first one being comprehensive support and guidance. We are going to walk through what does it mean to actually provide comprehensive support and guidance. What does that look like at Switchboard? We have webinars, we have e-learnings, we have instructor-led courses, research, communities of practice, written resources. We also have other things like podcasts and some onboarding guides that you guys can access. If you have looked at our websites or our resources, we have over 1,000 resources that might be useful in any of the topics or areas that you might be looking for.

Poll Question

Which forms of Switchboard's support have you accessed in the past?

TC: What does comprehensive guidance—sorry. What we're going to do now is we're going to have you take this slide out again so that we could see what you have accessed before. If you've accessed Switchboard in the past, that is. Which forms of Switchboard support have you accessed in the past? We have folks joining. Thank you again for your participation and for your interaction. As you could see, a majority of you have used our webinars or have accessed our webinars, whether that is live or archived. Resources on the website, so you maybe just come in to find some resources that might be useful in the work or in the area that you're looking for.

Or you've attended some instructor-led courses. These are our certificate courses that we have offered before. Some, it looks like, have taken advantage of our e-learning courses. Then lastly, communities of practice seems to be another area that you have accessed. Great. Next, please. Thank you.

Who is Switchboard For?

TC: We wanted to share, as you have obviously demonstrated, this data from our annual evaluation report showing the average percentage of the different types of deliverables or resources that were accessed by you or by our learners. As you could see, most, about 78%, have used webinars and then followed by e-learning courses, instructor-led.

I think it aligns, maybe other than the resource on the website, aligns pretty similarly in the data that we just, or in the Slido that you just showed us. Great to show that there is some good representation of where people are finding useful information or accessing. Next.

Heading back to our goal, let's unpack what we mean by organizations and community-serving newcomers, because this is really the heart of our objective. That is the who: Who do we serve? If you look in the next slide, and also as represented in the very first Slido that you took, it is confirmed that our services are designed for services or service providers like you.

Almost half of our users reported that they provide direct service to clients and newcomers. About a third of users reported providing support on a programmatic or operational activities. Lastly, similar to, maybe with a few percentages difference, reported leading a program or organization and have the authority to make strategic decisions. This is just to show that even in our evaluation report, we see that service providers like you are accessing our resources.

What are Our Learners Saying?

TC: On the next slide, we wanted to spend some time to show that we are fully cognizant that almost a third of our users have experienced displacement or resettlement themselves, highlighting that this is also an area that impacts our resource development. Who is our audience? What's the best way for us to deliver or to package the resources that we share with you guys? We just wanted to show that we recognize and we see who our audience is, and want to create resources that could easily be used and understood.

On the next slide, one last data to show that there is a positive data from our users, and wanted to share that about 97% of our users say that the contents that we have is easy to understand, and 96% report that our materials are useful to the work that they do, which is huge. I know having that work or having been a service provider myself, it is really hard to find resources that specifically meet the target or the population that you serve.

This is a really good report for us to have.

2. What Does Comprehensive Support and Guidance Look Like?

TC: For our time today, what we're going to be doing is we're going to be spending some time covering the three areas of the support that we provide at switchboard, focusing on these three areas. To kick us off, I'm going to invite Megan to cover the communities of practice and how we utilize or how we've used that as a platform. Megan, over to you.

Megan Rafferty: Perfect. Thanks so much, Tigest. I really wanted to begin with a question for you all.

Poll Question

Have you ever felt isolated in your work, or wished you could connect with colleagues in similar positions across the U.S. to improve your work?

MR: Have you ever felt isolated in your work or just wish that you could connect with colleagues in similar positions across the United States to improve your work? I'm seeing some responses come through. We'll give it just another couple of seconds. What I'm seeing so far is overwhelmingly yes, 100% of people can relate to this. It's really great to be able to talk with other people who do the same type of work that you do, who can understand the difficulties and the challenges of this work that we do.

Thank you all for participating in that quick and easy question. If you said yes, then we may have just the thing for you, communities of practice.

Communities of Practice (CoPs)

MR: CoPs are groups of people who share a common concern or passion for something that they do, and they learn how to do this shared thing better by regularly engaging in social learning. To give you an even clearer picture of communities of practice, we've included four key elements here. Number one, of course, like I just said, is that folks who are really coming together with this shared purpose, people are united by a common concern, a passion, or a goal related to the work that they do.

Communities of practice are member-led. Members are expected to determine the topics of discussion and to really lead these groups themselves. That's because communities of practice are all about peer learning. In a CoP, learning happens through the interactions and through knowledge sharing among members rather than through formal instruction. We have lots of other formal instruction opportunities at Switchboard, like our webinars or our certificate courses, but CoPs are really a unique type of offering where members have more of an opportunity to learn from and support each other with an emphasis on peer-to-peer problem solving.

Finally, active participation is a requirement for communities of practice for them to be worthwhile. Once again, because these meetings, they're not like webinars where learners are often just sitting back and listening more passively, members should be ready to engage and talk throughout the meeting. At Switchboard, we currently have 10 different communities of practice that focus on different areas of interest within resettlement. These current CoPs that you have listed here have been offered throughout 2024, but we want to note that these aren't permanent.

These CoP topics shift and change from year to year depending on network needs. You will see that in this past year, we've had CoPs related to immigration and legal services, a group for leaders of ethnic community-based organizations, a group for service providers who work with unaccompanied refugee minors, education and youth services, mental health and psychosocial support, monitoring and evaluation, economic empowerment, housing, client-centered services, and Afghan women's health. Before we move on, just a few more notes about Switchboard's communities of practice.

You might be wondering, if these are really member-led, what is Switchboard's role? Yes, these are supposed to be member-led. Switchboard's role is just as your host for these meetings. What we really do is we create the space for these communities to exist. We manage the logistics like Zoom meeting links and an attendance roster. We send out reminders about the meetings. We're just your friendly host. We're not the main event. We're not the main speaker or leader for these meetings. Also, our meetings are typically held for about one hour once per month, making the time commitment very reasonable for our members to be able to engage. We host a virtual learning space for members to be able to connect with each other throughout the month in-between the meetings.

Case Scenario: Jasmine

MR: I want to provide a quick case scenario just to give a better example of someone who found support through one of Switchboard's communities of practice. Jasmine is a mental health provider working in a resettlement field office where her position is dedicated to offering psychosocial support groups, individual counseling, and crisis intervention services to newcomers experiencing mental health challenges. Although all caseworkers in her office support client well-being, Jasmine is the only person that's solely focused on mental health services.

Recently, Jasmine has encountered challenges in her work that neither her supervisor nor her

colleagues have been able to help her fully address. When she turns to mainstream mental health training resources, she finds that they lack a deep understanding of the refugee experience. To seek support and to share her experiences, Jasmine joins Switchboard's mental health and psychosocial support community of practice.

In this community, she connects with peers who have a shared purpose and face similar challenges. Through the CoP, Jasmine finds a supportive network where she can exchange ideas, discuss difficulties, and gain valuable insights to improve her work. That's all we have today on communities of practice. I am going to hand it over to Sarah, who's going to talk to us more about research.

Discussion Question

Share a moment when you needed easy access to research on how to effectively support the populations you serve.

Sarah Diner: Thanks, Megan. We are also going to start off with a little question. If you could share a moment when you needed easy access to research on how to effectively support the populations you serve. A little bit of time because you got to type it out this time.

Typing. Googling everything. Yes, Google can be a great way to find a lot of resources, but sometimes it's hard to figure out what is reliable and what isn't a really great, strong resource. Explaining how to use telehealth. That's a crazy concept for all of us to try to adopt. Resources to support newcomers who are internationally trained. Yes, trying to get people's documents transferred over.

This is a lot of great information about finding specific resources for things. That's great. We are going to go into talking about our evidence summaries, which are a great resource for people if you need to find information on a specific topic. You go to the next slide. Perfect.

How Can I Use Evidence Summaries?

SD: Evidence summaries. First of all, what is an evidence summary? An evidence summary is a rundown of different academic articles that talk about the outcomes of various programs that fall within a specific topic. When we are creating an evidence summary, we are looking for peer-reviewed academic journal articles that cover the outcomes of interventions.

What is an intervention? An intervention is a program that is designed to create a positive change in the life of a participant. Examples of interventions are things like peer support groups, education programs, and programs that provide something to the participants, like fresh food, for example. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses are our preferred types of journal articles. These are articles that compare outcomes of a lot of different interventions and articles all in one. The goal of an evidence summary is to summarize the outcomes of the different articles that meet the criteria to be included.

The articles are organized by themes, which are broken up into different headings to make it easier to find information that you're looking for. Towards the end, we include a list of implications for research and practice. These are usually things like a particular area may need more research done or a suggestion of what service providers should take away from the summary. At the very end of the summary, there's a list of supplemental studies, which are articles that didn't fit the inclusion criteria, but have information that we think might be helpful.

We currently have 29 different evidence summaries published on Switchboard's website. The topics include things such as mental health, English language learning, supporting LGBTQ+ newcomers, vicarious trauma and burnout, and youth mentoring. We add about four new evidence summaries per year, as well as update two previously published evidence summaries to make sure they stay up to date with current available evidence. The topics are chosen based on information from Switchboard's yearly needs assessment, as well as any gaps in current topics we notice, or new trends in the field that we become aware of.

Now that we've covered what an evidence summary is, we're going to talk about how you can use them. Helping to inform program design was the initial goal of evidence summaries. They allow you to see what programs have been implemented, and what their outcomes were. They can help narrow down options of what would be most promising for your organization or population. Evidence summaries are an easy way to make sure your planned programs are evidence-based and aligned with currently available evidence. Advocacy and funding are our next usage types.

Having clear evidence of what works can help when trying to secure community buy-in to a program or when applying for grants. They may offer helpful key terms or vocabulary on a topic to use in applications. They can also highlight gaps in the available evidence to assist in justifying why a program might be needed. Finally, sharing evidence summaries with staff who are working in similar areas can help ensure that they're up to date on the most concurrent evidence and are prepared to handle various situations as they arise. They can also help open the door for conversations among staff on what they feel could be done differently and potentially more effectively within an organization.

Recall Jasmine

SD: Now we're going to look at a case scenario that builds off of the one Megan shared. Thinking back to Jasmine. As Jasmine continues to familiarize herself with her role, she actively seeks additional resources to further her professional growth. While her CoP has provided helpful ideas and support, Jasmine continues to seek evidence-based practices that will directly benefit her clients. She explores Switchboard's website and reviews available evidence summaries for interventions tailored to refugee mental health.

One summary, what works to improve mental health of refugee children and adults, indicates Jasmine that culturally responsive interventions have been effective in similar settings. Jasmine incorporates these strategies into her work and advocates for additional program changes at her office to better support the mental health needs of her clients. Now we are going to pass it over to Maya, who's going to talk about some of the technical assistance requests.

Discussion Question

Which of these questions might you find helpful to ask a Switchboard staff member? Select all that apply.

Maya Wahrman: Hi, everyone. One more interactive way to get us thinking about what a technical assistance request is, what might be useful. This is just a select one of the options. Which of these questions might you find helpful to ask a Switchboard staff member? Oh, and you can select a multiple. If you think you want to ask the question, are there resources available about my service provision area or program? If you want to know if it's possible to receive a training. I see those two
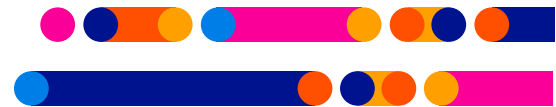
are now popular. I'm not sure what resources might help me improve my practice or I can't find a resource on your website.

We'll let folks fill these in. It's great to hear how you might want to be using technical assistance requests. These are all really valid questions that come with a technical assistance request and things that we would be happy to answer for you if you reach out.

What Can I Get by Submitting a TA Request?

MW: I know Tigest will be modeling live how to submit that technical assistance request. I'm going to talk a little bit about what are the kinds of things that you can get out of it. I see most respondents want to know about, are there resources about their program or service area? A lot of folks want to know if it's possible to receive a training.

About a third are exploring what resources might help me improve my practice. This is great. Really glad to see that these are relevant as this is a bulk of what we do here at Switchboard. On the next slide, we'll go through what can I get by submitting a technical assistance request? You can ask Switchboard to make a list of useful resources. I'm working on a certain program. The website's very big. As Tigest said, there is over 1,000 resources. What is going to be the most helpful for a specific issue or program that I'm running? That's something we are super happy to do.

You can ask Switchboard, could you create a new tool or resource? I don't think this exists. Is this something that you all could work on? You could ask to speak to us on the phone or in a virtual meeting as a consultation. We're struggling with a specific case or a problem with practice. Do you have ideas? Do you have someone who can consult with me on that? You can ask us to develop and deliver virtual or in-person training. Once we receive your request, that's going to fall into one of these buckets, we assess our capacity to respond. We prioritize requests where many providers will be reached, and learning is likely to be put into action.

That's a little bit about how we figure out our capacity to respond if someone's asked us to develop a new training or a new tool. Often we'll ask to speak to you virtually or on a phone call. We call this a planning call, or sometimes we just follow up over email to better understand what you're looking for, what might exist already that we can provide to really make sure that we're understanding what you're looking for and what the need is.

If it's a topic that someone on our team knows a lot about, then we'll allocate that internally, but we also consult with subject matter experts with other folks on the Switchboard team or outside of the Switchboard team who we work with, or if it's a puzzling topic to us we'll identify someone that we can work with. Then we'll work to develop a timeline on how we're going to get that. Whether it's a training or a resource, we'll keep you updated about how we're navigating your requests based on our capacity and what that means about how much we have to plan and who we're working with, et cetera.

We'll be in touch as we confirm the logistics. Finally, as we respond to the request, we will refer you to resources. Even if we're developing a new tool that's going to take time, it's something we're already working on or it's something that you and several other requesters have asked for, and so we realize there's a need and we want to work on it, we're going to make sure that we give you what resources do exist in the meantime to not leave you high and dry, but we'll work to develop those materials or deliver the training. There's lots of different things you can do.

MW: To give you a sense, these are some quotes on the next slide of some of the technical assistance requests I've answered in different ways. This first one, "I think this training was well thought out and planned and it was a really good refresher even for people who've been in this line of work for a while." This was from a TA requester on the state level who asked for a private webinar for the whole state. I met with this requester. I realized we had an existing training that fit her needs and her state's needs, and realized that the reach was going to be pretty big because of the states who were happy to rerun that training.

Then she said that it was well tailored to what they were looking for, whether it's for folks who have just joined the field or folks who have been in the field for a while. Next, "Thank you very much for all the time and effort you put towards finding the best contact and resources for this topic, as well as for sharing the resources already developed around the Ukrainian re-parole process." This was a specific TA request we received around Ukrainian re-parole, which is not anyone on our specific team's expertise, but we do have partners who are subject matter experts on this.

We rounded up what resources do exist on our website and in the federal government. Then we also made that connection to that subject matter expert for this organization to consult further. In this case, they weren't looking necessarily for a training, but just for resources and a consultation. We were able to facilitate that connection so that they could get the information they needed from the expert who had it. "Thank you so much, Maya, for giving me time to talk to you today. I received your technical assistance resources that could help us to learn more about refugee case management and employment service.

I will go through the resource list, inform you of the topics we are interested in to have sessions with you." This was a TA requester who said, I know my staff needs case management resources, I'm not exactly sure what that looks like. I don't know if I want a specific training. We have a lot of needs. What can you provide? What I did was I met with them on Zoom. We talked a lot about their needs. I shared a large resource list of things that could be used. Then as other trainings and learning opportunities became available, I stayed in touch with that TA requester to include his staff so that we could get the training that they needed in the timeline that worked well for everyone. Finally, "It was truly a pleasure participating in the training session. I cannot overstate the value I derived from it. Your dedication and the effort put into organizing such a comprehensive program were evident and greatly appreciated." Very kind words from this participant. This was not someone who directly submitted a TA request, but rather participated in a training that someone else had asked for from their state.

We want to show that the TA requests go beyond just the person who's asking for the support. That's really our hope, is if whether we're developing a customized training or your TA requests are affecting what tools and resources we're creating or what public webinars we're creating, or even just sending resource lists, that hopefully that information is really reaching lots of people and going to be able to help your colleagues in the field.

We really encourage you to submit a TA request or to have your colleagues submit it, and we hope that these resources will be helpful. I will pass it back to TIgest to show you how to do that.

3. Submitting a TA Request

TC: Great. Thanks so much, Maya. I think you covered actually most of what I'll cover, but I'll walk us through just for the sake of showing you how to enter a TA request on our website. How do you do that? We wanted to take some time to walk you through whatever need that you might have.

How Can I Submit a TA Request to Switchboard?

TC: As a former unaccompanied refugee minor provider, I chose one that was a little relevant to me. Here's a good example. A TA requestor came in and said, "I implement a program for unaccompanied refugee minors, URMs, that has recently seen an increase in clients with substance use issues." They're looking for resources to support their clients, and they came in and they're asking what support, guidance, or resources Switchboard can provide for them. Here-- Next slide, please. Thank you. First, what we're going to do is you're going to go to our website, switchboardta.org, and Patricia should also be putting that in there.

Then, you're going to select the Technical Assistance page and complete the eligibility request questionnaire that we have for you. Very, very simple three questions that are basic information about the service area and population that you serve. On the next page, as you could see, you're going to be selecting the topic area that you're looking for resources on. You would select the topic that best fits your request. We know that sometimes the topic or the area that you might have a need for might fall in multiple areas, which is completely okay.

You might select mental health, you might select health. If you feel unsure, just select one topic that meets your priority list. In this box, you will then tell us about the training or support that you're looking for. It would be helpful for you to write information that you're tackling, the challenge that you're tackling. What have you tried so far? In this case, our provider is saying, "I've tried to find mental health counselors who specialize in substance abuse, but the local providers I found don't have the language capacity or are not familiar with the work of the newcomers."

On the next box, we wanted to understand what you wanted out of the learning objectives. They wanted to better understand the reasons for recent high rates of substance use among the clients, and then they also wanted to access resources to get a local mental health substance abuse counselor who is working with newcomers. From there, you will select what kind of help you wanted, whether that is a phone call or a list of resources. Then, what we will do is the last section is really your contact information so that we can get in contact with you.

As Maya shared, we will likely send some curated resources that might be useful around the topic area that you've identified. We'll also most likely be in contact with you via email or schedule a planning call, which is just a phone call or a Zoom call to hear more about your needs. Then, you will just give us this information, which will give us some understanding of the population and the target area that you have. From there, you will select the city and the state and submit the TA request.

What happens from here is that we will likely identify a training officer who specializes in one of the topic that you have selected, and then they'll be in contact with you to work through delivering whatever training or technical assistance that you have a need for.

Q&A Panel

TC: Next slide, please. This sort of wraps up our session, and wanted to use this time to bring back our speakers, Sarah, Megan, and Maya, to answer questions that you might have.
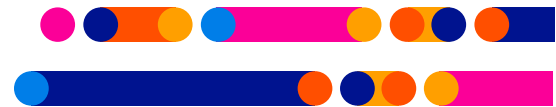
I know I've been keeping an eye on the Q&A box, and I have a few questions that I can direct and can start, but please use this time to ask any questions that you might have. The first one is for Megan. It says:

Hi, Megan, what advice would you provide for a CoP with members who are not responsive? How do you generate discussion?

MR: Yes, thank you so much for this question. I started typing an answer and it was just getting so long, but I'm really glad we have a little bit of time that we can just talk about it right now. I think that engagement with CoPs can be really tricky because service providers just have so much on their plates. It can be really hard for folks to carve out time and then to also be ready to engage actively when they do have finally an hour to themselves.

To begin with, my advice would be just checking in with your members with a feedback survey to get a little bit more information about what barriers might be getting in the way of them engaging more fully and what they think would help make the meeting more engaging for everyone. Some things that I might consider thinking about would be the timing of the meeting, the ways that you're engaging during the meeting. Are you using virtual polls to draw people in or people who are maybe less willing or less comfortable talking out loud?

How can you engage them maybe through virtual polls or through the chat? Are you using fun icebreakers? If it's a really big group, are you using breakout groups so that people can be in smaller groups where they feel more comfortable talking? Then, also, is there any type of structured agenda so that folks know what to expect in the meeting, folks know what they're showing up for, what the topic of the discussion is for that month? Those are all ideas that I think could help with a little bit more engagement in the group.

I'd also consider about how you have set expectations for the community of practice that let folks know that this is supposed to be a type of meeting where people are actively engaged and leading this meeting themselves, so thinking back to setting expectations in the very beginning. Again, going back to maybe a feedback survey, just gathering more data from your participants about finding out, is this CoP meeting their needs? Are the topics feeling really relevant to folks or maybe not? How might you shift or how might things change a little bit in order to meet people's needs and get them more interested and actively participating?

That's all my feedback on that topic, but I open it up to anyone else here on the panel who wants to share about how they've engaged their CoPs.

TC: I think those are great recommendations, Megan, and I know we've utilized almost everything that you have shared, so thank you for that. We have two questions that are similar, and I can take this one.

The first is: do you provide TA to organizations that do not receive ORR funding? Then, a very similar one is: would a request for a training for volunteers who provide direct service be an appropriate TA request, or are the TA requests only for staff who are employed at an agency?

TC: This is actually a really good question. Our services at Switchboard did expand. It used to be for ORR-eligible or funded programs before, but we have expanded that to now serve any service providers who are working with ORR-eligible clients, meaning if you serve clients who receive any
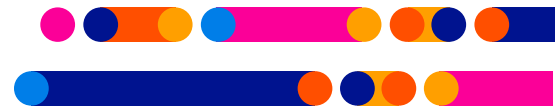
funding or are eligible for ORR services, then that opens up that opportunity for you to work with us.

The question for both is that we definitely do work with folks who are not employed at an agency, and if you're working with newcomers and or refugees, that certainly opens up that opportunity for you to work with us. Anything else, Maya, Megan, Sarah, that I might miss on this? No. All right. I have another one. I'm going to direct this one to Maya.

What is a typical timeline for Switchboard to provide a tailored training for an organization or a program?

MW: Coming off mute as I was answering another question in the chat. It really depends, which is a little bit of an annoying answer, but it is true. If you've asked for something that we already have that exists and we have some time and capacity to get that going, we definitely understand there are more urgent training and technical assistance needs, and so we want to try to meet a timeline that works for you. When we have to develop new content, especially for a training, it's going to take some time.

We really make sure here at Switchboard that we have a rigorous vetting process, that we're providing accurate information, that we're providing it in an instructionally-sound way that's going to be digestible to your learners, whether that's the graphic design, the copy editing, the way that we're telling stories about data or best practices, making sure that the information we're giving you is data-informed and best-practice-informed. That can take six to eight weeks to create more new content.

If we already have some of those things and there's a more pressing need, we might be able to accommodate that earlier. It's something that we would really try to work back and forth with you to make sure that we're meeting a need at a time that you have in the time that you need to have it met. I will say if you are anticipating a need ahead of time, the more lead time you can give us, the more quality information, resources, trainings we can provide for you.

We also understand there are urgent needs and emerging needs. In terms of when we're creating other webinars and resources for our website, we're definitely thinking about those emerging needs. We know that not all training needs and questions can be anticipated, but I would encourage you, if you know there's a specific date that you're trying to get a training for or a specific program or timing, the more information we have the earlier, the better we can try to accommodate your needs in terms of capacity.

TC: Thank you, Maya. I think it's also a really great question since, as you mentioned earlier, sometimes we might need to find subject matter experts that is outside our cohort who can tackle the topic that you might have, so that adds to the timeline of when we can provide trainings. There's a similar question that came up—

Is there a limit for accessing Switchboard's resources and or trainings?

TC: Who wants to take that on? If not, I'm happy to start and you all can have—

There's no limit. We certainly are here for you and hope to evolve with the emerging needs that you might have. Oftentimes, I think the kind of requests that we receive, for example, someone will come and request a training on a topic that we have already provided. We try to get creative where we have them watch the archived webinar and we come back and provide a facilitated and or guided

discussion around the topics that better tailor to the needs of the program or their organization. We try to use and access the resources that we've put in, like our archived resources, but still meet the need that you have. There's no limit, but we try to be cognizant of the time and try to diversify also the way that we are showing up for you guys. Sometimes, and Megan, I know we had a few folks who come back and request for trainings often, and we've worked and would work with them on providing them the skills that they need to facilitate training on their own.

That is also that train-the-trainer model, where we want you to use the resources that we have and want to empower you and provide the training that you need so that you can provide that. I just wanted to mention that. Megan, Maya, anything to add on that?

MW I would just reiterate that everything that we have available on our website, we would love for you to access over and over, whether it's something that you found useful in the past you want to refer folks to. We didn't really talk much in this webinar about e-learning courses, but those are self-paced courses that you can access and reaccess the information and you get a certificate for participating in at the end. That's all free and open to the public, and we would just love to see you engaging. I—

TC: Yes, and I also want to maybe plug one more on that. This year, we were actually very fortunate that we were able to offer CEUs, right, for-- We were accredited by NASW, the National Association of Social Work, so that was a huge plus for our learners, who we also understand need the credit that they need towards their licensure, so I wanted to plug that in. I'll pause here to get one more question. Sarah, this one is for you. One is, what are some types of—I know you gave an example—

What are some types of examples for a TA request for research? Then, as you answer that, maybe you can take this question on: how long does it take for you to develop an evidence summary, and what is the process that you use?

TC: Two good questions for you, Sarah.

SD: Yes, so types of research-related TA requests can be very dependent on what you're looking for. Are you developing a program or you see a problem in your community, the population that you serve, and you're wondering what else people have done to address this problem? What other programs have people done that have been successful, and how did they get those started?

That is a great way for us to look for the literature, figure out what interventions have already been done, what steps they took, see if one type of intervention might be a little bit better for your population based on certain characteristics, or if you can take a couple different interventions and maybe pull some different things from a couple different interventions to meet your need.

Then, how long does it take to develop an evidence summary? It's generally about six weeks from beginning to end, and part of that is because we have a pretty heavy review process for them. We'll start off with identifying key terms, and then use those in various databases to identify potentially relevant articles, and then I'll weed through all those to identify which ones meet our inclusion criteria, read through them, summarize them, and get them into our evidence summary.

Then, once I have a draft of that done, I send it out to the other members of our research team, as well as an SME on the topic to get their feedback, and then we incorporate all of that feedback and have a great discussion about what the evidence says, make sure everything I've written is clear and

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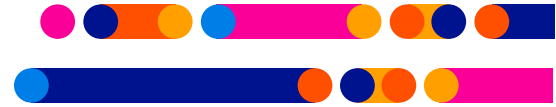
matches what we expected to say. It's a pretty lengthy, involved process, but we try to make sure they are as robust and clear as we can.

TC: Great. Thank you. Let's see. Give me one second to look at other questions here. I see a question here, and I'm not quite sure I understand, but maybe I'll take a stab at answering it. It says:

Will it be possible for Switchboard to schedule a meeting or webinar with ORR or PRM for open questions about resettlement services?

TC: If you are able to maybe provide more context on this, but if I understand, maybe I'll just say that if you have any questions about resettlement services and or it's—you could always start with Switchboard.

We do have the ability and connection with ORR to provide any guidance that you might need. Maybe my answer, my very general answer, is you could start with Switchboard and we can utilize our colleagues at ORR to answer some of the questions that you might have. That could also just be asking for a consultation call with us and we can gather your questions and take it back to our colleagues. Great. All right.

One last question is, what are some—maybe this is for all of you. Maybe you could share one from all of you.

What are some interesting types of TA requests that you have fielded that maybe were outside the box of, "provide a training for me," or something that was a big connection to your own interest?

MW: Yes. I can start.

TC: Thanks.

MW: I've had a couple. One was the topic of mandatory reporting that is a really important topic within refugee resettlement services and something we've been thinking about at Switchboard. I was really grateful when a state coordinator from Missouri asked for training for that state. This was one of these cases that we were already working on some of the materials to talk about mandatory reporting in general, but we also got to connect with a really wonderful subject matter expert in Missouri to help provide some state-specific information there.

We were able to run that private webinar, which also gave us a chance to try out some of our content that we later turned into a public webinar that was not state-specific. That was a really great experience. I got to learn a lot about Missouri resettlement, but also to think about mandatory reporting, which I know from my experience in the field is so important. Similarly, we had someone reach out asking about resources for LGBTQ plus newcomers, which coming into Switchboard was a huge passion of mine and from my time in the field.

We informed that person that we were working on some resources, but they actually had someone to connect us to who became a really important partner and subject matter expert in that. We were able to create even better resources just knowing both the appetite for those resources and to be connected with folks who could give us more information and connections to folks with lived experience and other expertise.

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MR: Similar to Maya, I would say that it's interesting when sometimes we'll get TA requests that inform public webinars, so if we get a lot of TA requests around a similar topic. There was one time where within a couple of weeks, I got three requests all related to de-escalation skills for caseworkers. Rather than providing three different private webinars, we decided to make it a bigger public webinar and invite a larger audience to come and join because we were seeing that must be a trend that was happening throughout the United States, that that was a resource that a lot of folks needed. That's just one that comes to mind.

TC: That's great. Sarah, do you have any?

SD: Yes, I guess a quick one was we had some people who work with a school board come and ask us if we could share some resources about how multiculturalism in schools can benefit students so that they could talk with their communities about the changing school dynamic and what it was going to look like and how it would be great for their students. That was a really fun one to work on.

TC: That was a really fun one. I remember that one. Thanks, Sarah. Yes.

Conclusion

Reviewing Learning Objectives

TC: Thank you all for your time. All right. I know we're almost at time. We hope that we have achieved these learning objectives that we set for you earlier on. Advancing to the next slide, before we share our recommended resources that I know I've been mentioning throughout, we hope that you can help us complete the survey. If you can scan the code that you see. It's also in the chat. If you would rather click on the link.

The survey is extremely important to improve our future trainings, and it's just six questions and takes less than 60 seconds. I'm going to pause here and allow you all to take the survey.

Recommended Resources

TC: All right. Patricia, if you can advance as people finish up their survey. Here are some of the recommended resources that might be useful for you in the topics that we have covered. We'll also share this in our follow-up email within 24 hours. We also encourage you to email us directly if you have any questions that were not addressed in today's session.

Stay Connected

TC: For more training and technical assistance, stay connected with Switchboard. You can email us at switchboardrescue.org, or visit us on switchboardta.org. You can also follow us on our social media at Switchboard TA. On behalf of the Switchboard team, thank you for learning with us today. We hope to see you again sometime soon. Thank you.

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