

# 2019 Interim Framework (IF) Home Assistance Program (HAP) EM&V Key Findings and Recommendations

No.	PROGRAM	KEY FINDINGS	2019 EM&V RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPACT	IESO RESPONSE
1.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<b>Discrepancies in reported peak demand savings were the primary source for the low realization rate for peak demand savings.</b> The primary driver for the low peak demand savings realization rate was the use of connected demand savings values instead of the Evaluation, Measurement and Verification (EM&V) peak demand savings values for reported peak demand savings for some measures.	Apply EM&V peak demand savings values for all measures beginning in PY2020. Verify that peak demand values are consistent for each measure type included in the tracking data. Ensure that values are not rounded into tracking databases to avoid mischaracterization of peak demand savings values. Verify that only measures with no peak demand savings report zero demand savings.	High	This demand savings reporting error was identified and rectified in 2019. Peak Summer peak demand savings values are now being reported for HAP activities.
2.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<b>Savings attributed to lighting measures are decaying over time.</b> Gross verified savings for lighting measures were lower on a per-unit basis than previous evaluation years due to increased baseline wattage values and lowered hours of use (HOU).	As savings from lighting measures decay, the program will need to reallocate resources to push alternative measures and focus on deep-energy savings. Weatherization upgrades can provide important savings opportunities and health upgrades for participants. It will be important for the program to emphasize and implement weatherization upgrades to participants as savings from lighting measures continue to diminish over time.	High	Identifying viable Weatherization projects continues to be a priority for the IESO.  Weatherization projects are underrepresented in the PY2019 data set due to the limited window of activities that were in scope for this evaluation.

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3.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<b>Clearly communicating measure eligibility is critical.</b> Participants who provided suggestions for program improvement most commonly suggested relaxing the eligibility requirements for specific upgrades and setting more accurate expectations regarding upgrades. Numerous respondents felt they were led to believe they would receive certain upgrades but were later told they were ineligible.		Accurately set participants' expectations regarding upgrades. Clearly communicate eligibility requirements for upgrades prior to the audit and ensure that auditors are trained to explain eligibility requirements for upgrades. Encourage auditors to not overpromise on measures for which customers may not be eligible.	Medium	The IESO understands that expectation-setting with HAP participants is important and will continue to work with its Service Providers to ensure participant expectations are being managed appropriately while also communicating the benefits of participating in the program.
4.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<b>Additional cross-promotion opportunities exist.</b> The IESO and program delivery vendor staff mentioned additional opportunities to cross-promote the program exist, including the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP).		Consider additional ways to cross-promote the program, such as through OESP.	Medium	The IESO will continue to review opportunities to effectively coordinate with external agencies that also manage other energy support programs such as OESP and the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP).
5.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<b>Power bar measures had extremely high realization rates.</b> The evaluator found multiple discrepancies with smart power bars and power bars with integrated timers. Discrepancies included incorrect savings value references in the program tracking data and substantiation sheet, and inconsistencies in measure types between the project files (which listed smart power bars) and the tracking data (which listed power bars with integrated times).		Ensure that the tracking data and the data collection forms align for each measure distributed to the participant. Ensure that auditors are installing the tier-2 smart power bars with audiovisual (AV) equipment (or include installation location in the data collection form). Verify that the correct energy savings values are applied to the correct measure. Note that the evaluator confirmed with the program delivery vendor that power bars with integrated timers will not be offered by the program once the remaining stock has been depleted.	Medium	The IESO will work with the Service Provider to ensure that Tier-2 Powerstrips are installed with AV equipment.

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6.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<p><b>Project costs were generally well below the program cap.</b> Seventy-one percent of the projects had an incentive less than \$500 and 92% of the projects had an incentive less than \$1,000, while the program's total measure cost cap per home was \$13,000. This suggests that lower cost measures were much more commonly implemented than higher cost measures and there may be additional savings opportunities not implemented that involve higher cost measures.</p>	<p>Ensure that the maximum amount of savings opportunities is identified and implemented at each home, within program cost limits. Higher cost measures should be considered when feasible as they may provide deeper savings per home.</p>	Medium	<p>Projects with limited scope/fewer measures are more likely to be represented in the PY2019 data, thus skewing the average per-project expenditures lower.</p>
7.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<p><b>Program marketing is working well but there is room for improvement.</b> Participants heard about the program from a variety of channels (bill inserts, friends/family, online, community groups, etc.) and auditors reported nearly always informing customers about the program. However, auditors and contractors reported that the greatest barriers to program participation were lack of awareness that the program exists (mentioned by eight respondents) and skepticism that the program is indeed free (mentioned by five respondents).</p>	<p>Continue to market the program through a variety of channels including online, through community groups, and by coordinating with LDCs to promote the program. Consider adding additional or more varied participant testimonials to marketing literature and messaging that emphasizes that the program is free. Ensure that auditors and contractors have enough literature to provide several copies to each customer so they can give them to friends and family.</p>	Medium	<p>The IESO will continue to explore the most effective methods to promote the program and its key messages, and to reach those customers most in need of support.</p>
8.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<p><b>Energy-efficiency education activities are likely resulting in savings.</b> Over three-fifths of all responding participants said their auditor discussed additional ways to save energy at the time of the audit or left educational materials behind (65% and 63%, respectively), and of these participants, three-fourths (76%) said they had tried at least one of the additional ways to save energy since having the audit performed.</p>	<p>Consider ways to analyze and quantify the energy savings resulting from the program's energy education activities such as through performing a billing analysis in coordination with LDCs.</p>	Medium	<p>The IESO will consider how it can analyze and quantify the savings/benefits associated with the educational components of HAP.</p>

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9.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<p><b>Participants, auditors, and contractors suggest offering additional equipment through the program.</b> Participants most suggested stoves/ranges, clothes washers/dryers, windows, heating equipment, and doors. Auditors and contractors suggested clothes washers/dryers, additional types of LEDs, exterior crawlspace insulation, painting for exterior wall insulation, increasing attic insulation requirements, and heat pump upgrades. The IESO and program delivery vendor staff indicated that the availability of the Affordability Fund Trust (AFT) has also created some dissatisfaction among customers who learn they are not eligible to receive some of the upgrades offered through the AFT, such as heat pumps.</p>	<p>Consider offering additional types of equipment, such as clothes washers and dryers, windows, doors, additional types of LEDs, "right-sized" appliances, heating equipment, and increasing attic insulation requirements.</p>	Medium	<p>The IESO has reviewed opportunities to expand the HAP measure composition, and has considered the inclusion of the equipment listed in this finding. The IESO did add a new Smart Thermostat measure for electrically heated homes in late 2019 as a result of this review but otherwise determined that the HAP measure composition is appropriately balanced in providing participants with attractive measures and impactful energy savings while meeting program and policy objectives.</p>	
10.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<p><b>Participants suggest offering higher-quality products for certain equipment types.</b> Offering higher quality free upgrades was mentioned by one-fifth (20%) of participants with improvement suggestions. Seven percent of all respondents who received drying racks said their product broke, and 5% of all respondents who received LEDs said one or more light broke.</p>	<p>Provide higher quality drying racks and LEDs.</p>	Medium	<p>LED bulbs and drying racks provided through the program are high quality and are warranted.</p> <p>Currently, the overall proportion of LEDs and drying racks reported as being faulty is less than 0.01%.</p> <p>The findings suggest there is an opportunity for the IESO to ensure customers are further educated on the proper use of equipment provided through HAP, and are made aware of the process for seeking replacement for faulty measures.</p>	

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11.	Home Assistance Program (HAP)	<p><b>HAP had direct, positive impacts to employment in Ontario from PY2019 activities.</b> The analysis estimated that HAP will create 110 total jobs in Canada, of which 99 will be in Ontario. Forty-nine of these jobs would be direct, with indirect and induced job impacts propagating throughout the economy under normal economic circumstances (i.e. prior to the disruptions from COVID-19).</p>	<p>Continue using the Statistics Canada (StatCan) Input-Output (IO) model in concert with in-depth surveying to understand the impacts from COVID-19 on job creation from PY2020 activities.</p>	Low	<p>The IESO will work with the evaluator to continue exploring methods such as in-depth surveying to understand the job impacts of COVID-19 in PY2020. It is assumed that the Statistics Canada IO model only estimates job impacts in a "normal" year and does not consider COVID 19 impacts.</p>