Communication is important for any program or innovation. Intentionally developing and using linking communication protocols for new or existing programs and innovations establishes a transparent feedback process and furthers the development of a hospitable policy, funding, and operational environment.

The specific purposes of linking communication protocols are to:

- Communicate progress and celebrate success throughout the system
- Report systemic barriers that are preventing or hindering implementation and
    - Should be resolved by one of the groups
    - Need to be moved 'up the line' to the group that can best address the barrier
- Report on actions taken related to resolve or address past issues
- Revisit past decisions and agreements periodically to ensure that solutions are still functional

In promoting system alignment, you may be developing a 'chain' of protocols from the practice level to the state level or you may be developing protocols between and among partners in a collaborative group. Depending on a number of factors (e.g. how new the relationships are, how cohesive the groups are, how much a common purpose is shared), it may take one or several meetings to work out the first draft of the protocols. After the protocols have been tried out a couple of times, the process should be evaluated for satisfaction and functionality and then adjusted.

Communication Protocol Worksheet

From: _____

To: _____

Rationale	
Information to communicate (e.g., updates, successes, challenges)	
Responsible Individual(s)	
Schedule, Time Allotted	
Format	
Response Timeline	
Response Format	