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Preliminary Work Towards The Development Of A Self-Assessed Measure Of Consumer Outcome For New Zealand.

Abstract

At the beginning of 2002 the New Zealand Mental Health Research and Development Strategy extended its brief of outcome research projects to include preliminary work towards the development of a self-assessed measure of consumer outcome for New Zealand.

A consumer organisation known as CASE (consumers as advisors, supervisors and educators) was contracted for this project. The lead researcher, Sarah Gordon, has the dual attributes of experience of mental illness and research expertise. She lead a research team of five people with a variety of skills and experience, which was assisted by a monitoring, advisory and communications consumer reference group, comprising eleven people with experience of mental illness. Rigorous processes were developed to ensure the project's responsiveness to Maori and Pacific Island persons.

The three primary objectives of this project were:

- (i) to conduct a comprehensive review of existing self-assessed measures of consumer outcome and other elements relevant to the development of a self-assessed measure of consumer outcome;
- (ii) to consult with consumers on self-assessed measures of consumer outcome and other elements of relevance; and
- (iii) to develop recommendations as to the most effective process for developing a self-assessed measure of consumer outcome for nation-wide use in New Zealand.

This presentation will provide a summary of the overall methodology and key outcomes of the research. Preliminary results indicate that the common concepts and traditional understandings within the field of mental health outcome measurement have severe deficiencies when a project is equally committed to being consumer focused, culturally responsive and research sound.

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