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Outcome Measures from a NSW Mental Health Consumer's Perspective

Abstract

We need to acknowledge that there are many stakeholders involved in mental health services and most have unique outcome measurement requirements. Measures include those focusing on clinical, functional and welfare and safety outcomes, as well as outcomes related to life satisfaction or fulfillment and specific outcome measures for consumers and for carers. Capturing the views of consumers and carers on the quality of public mental health services is vital to making services more effective and responsive.

The presentation will review mental health outcomes measures and evaluation from the perspective of both a mental health consumer and experienced consumer advocate, with a focus on consumer outcomes.

While some aspects of outcomes measurement and analysis can be highly complex, consumer outcome measurement techniques take what people do naturally when they judge the quality and impact of a particular treatment and build on that assessment. The results of consumer outcome measures will enable funding bodies, services providers, workers, consumers and carers to have increased confidence in pursuing a particular course of action.

Consumer outcome measures are designed to contribute positively to decision making about policies and practices that affect consumers. The development of consumer satisfaction measures is required under the National Standard for Mental Health Services 9.30, viz:

... Mental Health Service [should] routinely monitor health outcomes for individual consumers using a combination of accepted qualitative and quantitative methods...[including]...consumer/carer satisfaction surveys, quality of life measures...

The presentation will also discuss a new project being developed in NSW called MH-CoPES (Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Evaluation of Services).

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