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Preliminary Work Towards The Development Of An Alcohol And Other Drug Treatment Outcomes Measurement System.

Abstract

Alcohol & Drug (A&D) Service contracts and specifications have recently referred to the measurement of outcomes in New Zealand. No formal mechanism has been put in place to consistently address these nationally, but anecdotal evidence suggests individual services have established some frameworks for this. Unlike the assessment and treatment concepts, many A&D workers do not seem to be familiar with the concept of 'measuring' the effects of their treatment intervention with an individual client. This project extends outcomes work being undertaken within the broader mental health field to include the A&D sector.

The study aims to consult with A&D professionals, consumers, Māori as Mana Whenua and other major cultural groups in New Zealand through survey, interviews, hui and focus groups. Through this process current practice, experiences and attitudes towards outcome measurement will be captured. Underlying principles will be identified to form the basis of core outcome 'instruments' that could be utilised across services. Preliminary evaluation will follow, with initial testing of the proposed instrument systems in a range of clinical settings to assess utility and feasibility of future implementation.

The research process includes a broader quantitative arm using a survey, and will expect to gain feedback from a wide range of interested individuals on their use of and beliefs around outcome measurement. A more focused approach incorporating Grounded Theory techniques will gather information for qualitative analysis. Interim findings of the survey and interviews will be presented.

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