

Measuring Up: Evaluating an online resource for palliative care

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About CareSearch

- Existing website at www.caresearch.com.au
 - Quality information about palliative care
 - Literature database of “hard to find” content
- Development of a new online resource
 - Incorporate the existing content and functions
 - New resources and content

Purposes of evaluation

- Determine if work is progressing appropriately
- Identify how and where things could be improved
- Inform the development of applications or processes and the quality of product/service
- Assess the effects or impacts on users and or processes

Issues in ICT and web evaluations

- Ubiquitous nature of online
- Delivery vs. development vs. implementation
- Website and IT applications: similar but not the same
- Costly, often “no going back”

Evaluation issues specific to CareSearch

- Existing website and new web resource
- Multiple audiences
- Different components and functionalities
- Direct measures and indirect effects

Developing evaluation plan

- Clarifying purposes and uses
 - Ongoing and iterative improvements
 - Integrated part of activities
- Framework = Manage evaluation activities and have an immediate and a cumulative meaning
- Evaluation processes
 - Process evaluation
 - Formative
 - Summative (Impact and outcomes)
 - Evaluation partner (CHSD)
- Identifying components and activities

Evaluation Focus	Description
Access	Create <i>CSpckn</i> ; Ensure best possible site and functions
Use	<i>CSpckn</i> is used; Awareness, relevance, users
Usefulness	<i>CSpckn</i> makes a difference; Practice impacts; patient and carer knowledge
Process	<i>CSpckn</i> project is well managed Processes and checkpoints meet specified objectives

Evaluation Focus: Access

- End user needs and benefits
- User testing exercises
- Search term analysis
- ICT Attitudes and competence
- Design standards

Evaluation Focus: Use

- Web Metrics
- Logs and databases
- Registrations
- Component studies (eg GP pages)
- Feedback surveys

Evaluation Focus: Usefulness

- Existing data sources
- Feedback surveys
- Focus groups
- Impact research study
- Component Impact (eg RDMS)

Evaluation Focus: Process

- Accountability
- Internal processes
- Project standards
- Communication
- Participation
- Evaluation partner: CHSD

Evaluation Studies/Activities to Date

- Main focus: access and use. Use relates to the current website.
- Set up of logs, databases etc
- Various studies have been completed

User Testing: Formative, access focus

1. Consumer study:

- Menu terms confusing
- Replace with user friendly words

2. Clinician study:

- Relationship between menu and submenu not clear
- Graphic modifications

Feedback Surveys

1. Online survey:

- Very high visitor satisfaction
- Great diversity of needs

2. Specialist services

- Many clinicians haven't heard of CareSearch
- Barriers to access (state and service)

Web Metrics

1. Usage statistics

- 20,000 visits per month
- 200,000 - 400,000 hits per month

2. Page data

3. Referring sites

Web Logs and datasets

1. Requests

2. Registrations¹

- Site: 270
- RDMS
 - Active: 65
 - Total: 140
- Newsletter:
 - eNews: 710
 - Project Update: 876

¹ As at March 2008

So what do we do with the information?

- Immediate applications
- Reporting and accountability
- Culture of review, improvement and measurement
- Understand users, needs, processes and mechanisms

Key Messages about evaluation

1. Identify what you want to achieve with evaluation
2. Look at existing data. If you can, use data and measures that are part of what you do.
3. Use evaluation as part of management and development cycle
4. Build in evaluation from start . Don't leave it till the end
5. Ongoing evaluation reduces the stress of "hoping for the best".

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www.caresearch.com.au