



Pursuing self-interest:
Consumer promotion of routine
use of outcome measurement in
mental health services

Glossary

- Mental illness: a disabling experience of distress, confusion and/or disjunction with what is commonly believed to be reality
- Consumer: a person who experiences the above

Outcome implementation in New Zealand:

Standard Measures of Assessment and Recovery
– The MH SMART Initiative

Background

- Single measure
- National implementation
- Initial focus on clinical services
- Active involvement of Maori
- Active involvement of consumers
- Focus on assessment skills, including responsiveness to the needs of Maori
- Explicit recognition of recovery as the desired outcome

The evolution of the Initiative

- Early intentions – *are we really making a difference?*
- Investigation of self-rated measures – *and we didn't like any of them*
- Casemix and outcomes survey – *and the functioning measure goes belly-up amid the CAOS*
- Responsiveness to Maori – *different culture, different world view and an obligation to work in partnership*
- Consumer participation – *hang on a minute, mate, isn't this about recovery?*

The first national team

- National Manager – Jennifer Chipps
- Consumer Consultant – Jim Burdett
- Maori Consultant – Materoa Mar
- Admin and support - Gillian Moore

Selling the Initiative - the three musketeers hit the road

- Regional road shows
- Awareness raising in District Health Board
- Giving NGOs a heads-up
- Convincing the Mental Health Commission
- Communicating with consumers
- Meeting with Maori
- Family forums

Why involve consumers in outcomes implementation?

- Because it is about recovery – the desired outcome
- Which is, quite simply:
 - The ability to get on with your life

Consumer participation, consultation and communication

- Initial stakeholder meetings
- The reference group
- Maori monitoring and review group
- District Health Board consumer advisors
- National Association of MHS Consumer Advisors
- Regional consumer networks
- “Show me my HoNOS!”

Our (not so) secret weapon – the moral authority of madness

- Convincing clinicians
- Silencing saboteurs
- Forcing the hand of funders
- Manipulating managers
- Bullying bureaucrats

Levels of involvement

- At the coal face
 - The individual consumer
- Within services
 - Consumer advisors and representatives
 - CAGs, LAGs and SAGs
- Planning and funding
 - Regional
 - National
- Research and service development

The current state of play

- Winding down the contracted consumer consultant role
- Two .5 FTE consumer coordinator / trainer employees
- A consumer council – representation rather than consultation
- ...and the possible risks?

What lies beyond outcomes?

Impact - which can be described as :

- *...significant and lasting changes in the well-being of large numbers of intended beneficiaries.”* (Earl, Carden and Smutylo. *Outcome Mapping*. International Development and Research Centre, Ottawa. 2001)

...and we get there by...what?

- More of the same (only better)?
- Radical change
- Rebuilding the foundations on a new philosophical construct

A moment of reflection...

- What is “mental illness”?
- Medical condition - or the human dilemma that challenges us to ask:
 - Who am I?
 - What is real?
 - How am I to live my life?
- ...by creating or reconnecting the interface between my inner self and the world at large.

So, why involve consumers...?

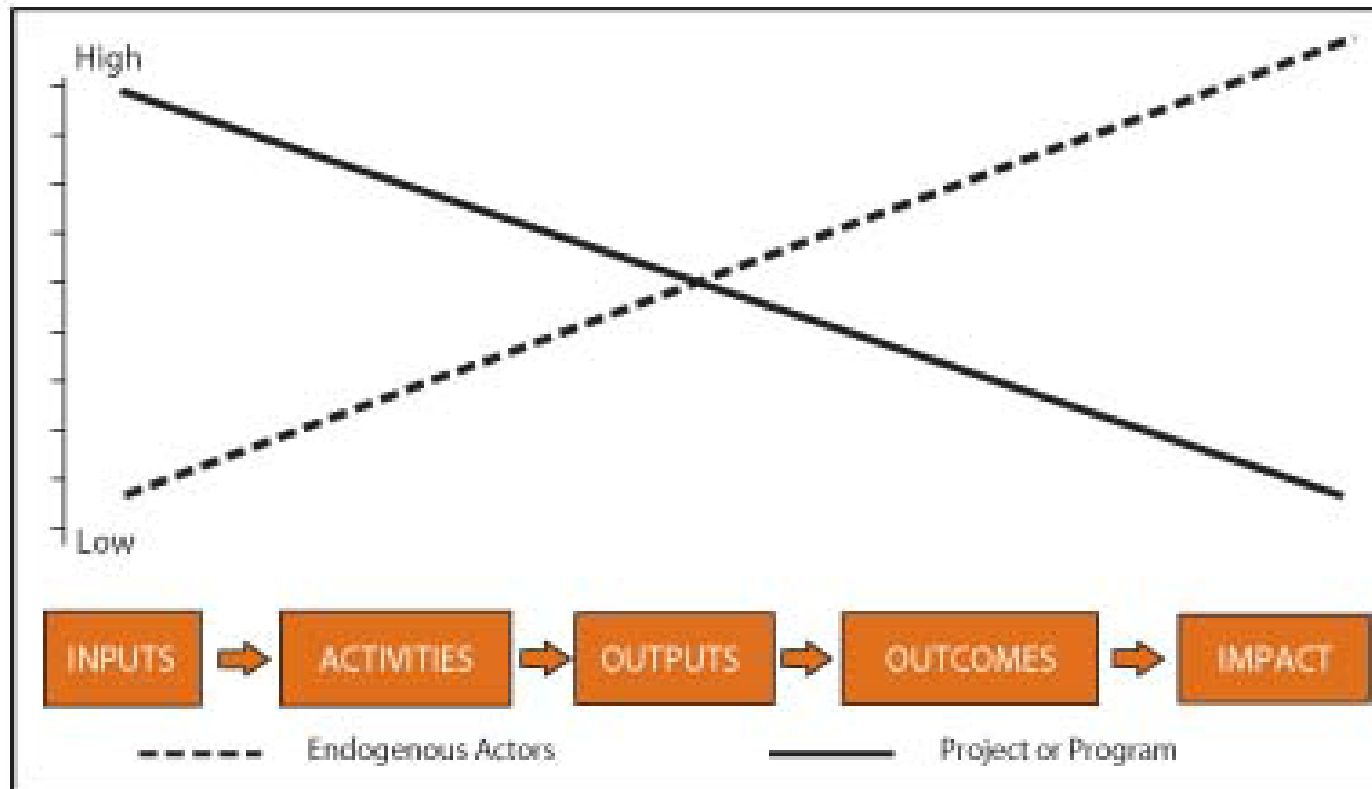


Figure 2. Relative Influence Along the Results Chain
(source: Smutylo 2001)

Which means...

- The third, and final, stage of deinstitutionalisation
- From big bins...
- ...to community care...
- ...to an unqualified focus on recovery.
- Which means...

...for clinicians ...

- Devolve power
- Be willing to work with, not for, consumers
- Accepting consumers' right to live in the world, to have a life that is worth living
- Recognise the limits of professional training

...and for consumers...

- Take power
- Be willing to use the expertise of clinicians
- Accept responsibility to own one's life and be involved in, and contribute to, the social, political, cultural and economic fabric of society
- Use the wisdom gained from reflection on the experience of mental illness to help others