

Reaching consensus on the most important measures of performance for NSW non government alcohol and other drugs treatment services

ROBERT STIRLING^{1,2}, SALLY NATHAN¹, ALISON RITTER³

¹School of Population Health, UNSW Sydney, Australia, ²Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies, Sydney, Australia, ³Drug Policy Modelling Program, Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Sydney, Australia

Presenter's email: robert@nada.org.au

Introduction and aim:

In NSW, non-government services are primarily funded by government using public funds, however there is no standardised approach to performance measurement. This study sought to establish a finite list of performance measures that represented consensus between funders, treatment providers, service users.

Method:

A three-round Delphi process was undertaken with (i) funders (n=10), (ii) treatment providers (n=10), and (iii) service users (n=10). Participants were asked to rate a range of measures on a 10-point Likert scale on how important they were to be included in contracts with funders. Measures with a median score >7 and agreement among participants above 70% were the criteria for inclusion in the final set of measures. Qualitative data in the form of text responses provided by participants for their ratings in round one and two were also analysed.

Results:

Participants rated 93 measures in round one, which reduced to 78 measures in round two, and 32 measures in round three. Fifteen service level measures and two system level measures met criteria for inclusion in the final set of performance measures. The final set of measures cover a range of measurement types: outcomes (n=5), access (n=3), structural (n=3), experience (n=2), input (n=2), process (n=1), output (n=1).

Discussion and conclusions:

The study results provide empirical data which can inform standardised assessment of performance of treatment services. Standardised measures can support efforts to demonstrate accountability for public funds, improve services, and communicate key measures of success to future services users and the broader community.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The study was undertaken as part of the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship. The Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies is supported by the NSW Ministry of Health and Australian Government Department of Health. Alison Ritter is supported by an NHMRC Senior Research Fellowship (APP1136944).