Key Learning: Accessing the Measures

Once measures were chosen, the process to gain access to them commenced. The project team was mindful of ensuring we gained permission to use the measure where required.

Hua Oranga is supported and administered through Te Rau Matatini, (a New Zealand Maori mental health workforce development agency). Part of the support provided by Te Rau Matatini is the administration of a centralised database for a small fee. To register to use the tool organisations must undergo training and be deemed culturally competent. The training provided by Te Rau Matatini is determined a year in advance and is available to organisations within District Health Boards who sign up for its use. The two participating organisations within Toka Tū fell outside of DHBs who had purchased the training for this year. The timeframes of the Toka Tū project meant training could not be delivered so Hua Oranga is not being used in this project.

WHOQOL — Auckland University of Technology supports and promotes the use of WHOQol, specifically the measure designed for New Zealand. The measure is easy to access and free. A number of mental health NGOs are currently using it and forums have been established to promote learning and engagement. Databases have been developed including the incorporation of data into already existing information collection systems that some NGOs use.

Taku Reo, Taku Mauri Ora — Taku Reo is easily accessible as a printed version and is free to use. It is currently being developed into an online measure by Kites Trust. Kites' aim is to make the tool easily accessible to individuals as a means of reflection and learning in their recovery, and the electronic version enables participants to receive their data in graph form over different points in time. A database is currently being developed to enable individual data to be aggregated for the purpose of Toka Tū.

CODI — This measure is from the USA and requires a small fee for the licence and manual. It is designed for use by therapists and has been adapted specifically for peer support.

The Human Givens — This measure was already in use by Balance Wanganui.

Our Learning

The following is some of our key learning to date:

- There is no perfect tool – while there is a strong desire to find ways to evidence the value of peer support, no one measure can do it all. All measures have positive and negative qualities.
- Attribution –attributing outcomes to what happens within services is very challenging. It is not possible within this study to say that outcomes for individuals are due to the service provided. People are impacted by a number of factors, especially in recovery which may include other services, treatments, family, whānau and friends.
- The need to have evidence for the funders of the peer support services is emerging as a strong driver to use measures.

Within this study we are interested in what it takes for peer support services to undertake and build their evaluation capability. To date we have identified the following in relation to using outcome measures:

1. Access to a range of measures to consider plus assistance to identify what outcomes we want to measure. The collection of a number of peer support services working this out together has been invaluable.

2. A level of comfort with technology. This is required in terms of accessing the measures and entering data into databases.

3. Not all outcome measures have easily accessible and developed databases. For a number of organisations we have created an excel sheet or data collection system.

4. Recognition that these services have high ideals and working out what is possible to do within already constrained environments is required.

5. The bigger the organisation is; the extent to which outcome measures are already being used; and the leadership of evaluation makes the use of outcome measures easier.