- **Small Scale Research Project:** Let them, ask them, tell them: A qualitative study of peer mentors' experiences using meaningful outcomes framework in a homelessness service

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# Agenda

- Rationale for the project
- Overview of Meaningful Outcomes Framework (MOF)
- Training for peers
- Data collection and data analysis
- Results
- Conclusions

# Rationale

- The evaluation is an important part of evidence-based practice.

- However, measuring change in homelessness services is challenging.

- One issue is the conceptualisation of what an "effective change" looks like (often defined by services )






# However...

Getting into employment or symptom reduction may not be as important for a person experiencing homelessness as functioning, quality of life or sense of control

Person centred care is at the heart of homelessness practice; however, person centred evaluation is not (Maguire, n.d.).

# Why this is a problem

- Where organisations do not insulate frontline workers from expected outcomes, support staff may encourage behavioural change that lacks meaning to individuals.

- This threatens self-determination theory

- This may compromise therapeutic engagement

# Meaningful Outcomes



# Meaningful Outcomes Framework (Dr Nick Maguire)

- Use of personalised outcomes in the measurement of homelessness service effectiveness

- This approach values the individual's view about the change important to them and is therefore a fundamentally person-centred, meaningful approach to outcomes.

# MOF in practice

In practical terms, this would mean helping clients to identify their aspirations and barriers by asking carefully designed questions, such as:

- What would you like to achieve?
- What is getting in the way?
- What would you like to do more of/less of?



We would then monitor behavioural changes. These behavioural changes are the outcomes that have been identified as meaningful by the clients

| CLIENT'S INITIALS: XXX | | CHANGE IN BEHAVIOURS OVER TIME: | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | W1 | W2 | W3 | W4 | W5 | W6 | W7 |
| BEHAVIOURS WHICH GET IN THE WAY OF ACHIEVING OUTCOME | Arguing and fighting with boyfriend | 2 arguments | 1 argument | 0 arguments | | | | |
| MEANINGFUL OUTCOME AS IDENTIFIED BY CLIENT<br><br>(SMART) | To not be so lonely. To have company<br><br>SMART- To attend women's group once a week on Thursdays at 3PM | 0<br>Unable to attend the group | 0<br>Unable to attend the group | 1<br>Attended the group | | | | |

# The project

- Training for peers
- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Results
- Conclusions



# Results ✓

| LOCUS OF CONTROL | CHALLENGES | PEERS' SUGGESTIONS |
|---|---|---|
| Ask them | Outcomes as a potential failure | Managing expectations/preparedness |
| Let them | Slow progress and subsequent emotions | Monitoring |
| Tell them | | |

# Theme: Locus of control

**Ask them**

*"It's finding what they're comfortable with. It's not what I'm comfortable, it's what they're comfortable with"* (P3)

**Let them**

*"You set the outcomes of what they want… and then the next time you let them go to the desk."* (P1)

**Tell them**

*"Get him to stop drinking so much and spend more money on food. Want to run before they can walk."* (P2)



# Theme: Challenges

**Outcomes as a potential failure**

*"But if you put in a signed agreement, then they think if they don't hit it, they failed, which is detrimental to them… Making someone feel they failed is totally against anything that I can prescribe to." (P1)*

**Slow progress and subsequent emotions**

*"And if things aren't going the way you want, it can be very frustrating"*

# Theme: Peers' suggestions

## Managing expectations/preparedness

*"…and there's ups and downs and all you hope is that the gap between the downs is getting longer and longer"* (P1)

*"And be prepared. You're gonna have highs and lows." (P2)*

## Monitoring

*You have to be a little bit more forceful in putting that across. I would like to see it more regulated." (P1).*

# Implications



- Overall, good understanding and willingness to implement MOF in homelessness service.
- However, practical implementation was not without challenges
- Autonomy
- Outcome collection being perceived as a potential proof of failure.
- When it came to the monitoring of behavioural changes, no outcomes were collected.

- More clarity is needed in relation to the barriers of collecting data (monitoring behavioural changes).
- While it maybe tempting to suggest mandatory outcome collection, would we be walking into the trap of “telling them” and while doing so threatening self-determination theory and engagement?

**Ask them, let them or tell them?**



# Final points

- Peer interventions are becoming more prevalent, but there is little research into the nature of such interventions (Barker et al., 2020)
- Top down imposed outcomes threaten self-determination theory and engagement.
- Training to use Meaningful Outcomes Framework for peers resulted in generally positive views of the framework and willingness to implement it.
- We gained some understanding of the specific challenges relevant to the successful implementation of MOF.

