Charting our outcomes

Performance measurement framework
2010-2016

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INTRODUCTION

“What gets measured gets done… If you don’t measure results, you can’t tell success from failure. If you can’t see success, you can’t reward it; if you can’t recognize failure, you can’t correct it.”

Osborne & Gaebler, Reinventing government, 1992.

Leading by example is something that the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health (the Centre) takes seriously. To effectively assess the results and impact of our work, it is essential that we have strategies and tools in place to measure our performance. For the Centre to be seen as a credible agent of change, we have to determine if our initiatives and programs respond to existing needs, and if they are improving the quality and effectiveness of child and youth mental health services.

At the 2010 meeting of the Canadian Child and Youth Health Coalition, Dr. Lisa Simpson gave the keynote address on the levels of impact of health services research. The model she presented (reproduced below) implies that the Centre’s work can be assessed based on our impact on practice and processes, which in turn have an impact on outcomes. To this end, and recognizing the many partners working together to improve Ontario’s child and youth mental health system, the Centre’s performance measurement framework will adopt appropriate models for measuring our contributions rather than attributing outcomes solely due to our programs and services.

HSR = Health Services Research

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The Centre’s strategic plan adopts an organizational learning approach, recognizing the importance of context and systems when changing service provider practices. Our performance measurement framework seeks to capture outcomes at the individual practitioner, management, organizational and systems levels. We strive to be informed by current developments in the fields of evaluation, performance measurement and implementation science that speak to the unique challenges of measuring change at all levels.

As well, there is a continuous influx of evidence on what works best for children and youth. Using an organizational learning approach, the Centre hopes to build the capacity of service providers and organizations to deal with ongoing use of new evidence. The performance measurement framework addresses outcomes related to this capacity, rather than the implementation of specific evidence-informed practices.

The Centre’s performance measurement framework will provide a snapshot of how well we are meeting our strategic goals and priorities, and consequently our impact in the field. The key performance indicators identified are guideposts at the 30,000 feet level, focused primarily on outputs and outcomes. These indicators will be regularly tracked across fiscal years so that benchmarks, targets and trends are defined where applicable. Focusing on few core indicators will enable the Centre and its stakeholders to readily assess our progress in impacting the child and youth mental health service sector in Ontario.

Logic models, outcomes and indicators for key Centre programs and services will also be developed and gathered to inform on-the-ground program level improvements and outcomes. More specific indicators can be tracked to provide an in-depth look at the program level. Together the strategic performance measurement framework and program level evaluation framework will offer rich information on how well we are achieving our mandate. The annual operational plans will provide more specific descriptions of the Centre’s programs, timelines and budget estimates, and will include as well the program level evaluation frameworks.

This performance measurement framework accompanies the Centre’s strategic plan for FY 2010-2016. As with our strategic plan, this framework is not static, but rather is considered to be a “living” document. Recognizing that the Centre’s programs and services will continuously evolve to meet the
needs of stakeholders, we will regularly monitor the framework’s areas of focus and core outcomes to ensure they remain relevant and meaningful.

A working group with expertise in evaluation and health services research informed the development of the Centre’s performance measurement framework (see Appendix). We held an in-person meeting in early November, followed by a series of teleconferences to discuss our focus and approach, initial suggested outcomes and indicators, and final set of key performance indicators.
Logic Model 2010-2016

**Vision**

Optimal mental health and well-being for children and youth

**Strategic Goals**

- Foster a culture of organizational learning to support agencies in using evidence to improve client outcomes
- Build and develop collaborative partnerships to sustain capacity within mental health services
- Be a true learning organization and lead by example

**Areas of Focus**

- Engage directly with front-line providers and agency leaders to implement evidence into practice
- Provide tools, supports and resources to help agencies evaluate their programs and services
- Provide professional development and training tailored to meet evolving needs
- Promote youth and family engagement as key ingredients in effective service delivery
- Identify stages/levels of uptake of evidence-informed practices
- Facilitate knowledge exchange across service agencies
- Promote understanding of mental health issues among all service providers working with children and youth
- Strengthen existing linkages with MCYS and add expertise and capacity to provincial initiatives within and across ministries
- Enhance relationships with regional MCYS offices, both individually and collectively, to maximize the opportunity for effective communication to the field
- Work collaboratively with agencies and regional offices to create successful networks, partnerships and communities of practice
- Leverage opportunities for research by partnering with established granting agencies and funding bodies (provincially and nationally)
- Strategically foster relationships beyond the province where there are mutual advantages through knowledge exchange and direct benefits to the mental health of Ontario’s children and youth

**Primary Target Population**

Child and youth mental health service providers and agencies

CYMH service providers and agencies, cross-sectoral providers, government/decision and policy-makers, research funders

Centre staff, Centre governance committee, government funders

**Core Outcomes**

- Enhanced understanding of what is meant by “mental health” and “evidence” among service providers and agency leaders
- Increased awareness and readiness among agencies and engagement with the Centre to implement evidence-informed practices
- Improved use among service providers and agency leaders of a wide range of innovative knowledge exchange programs and services to help identify client needs and make ongoing improvements to service delivery
- Greater promotion of linkages and exchange among frontline service providers, agency leaders, champions in the field and government partners in efforts to share best practices
- Enhanced relationships and strategic partnerships among leaders, champions and government in the sector
- Enhanced Centre capacity for maximum effectiveness and sustainability of human, physical and financial resources in alignment with our mandate
- Improved Centre capacity to nurture a learning organization so that staff are well equipped to work successfully with our stakeholders

**Impact on Practice**

Strengthened quality and effectiveness of mental health services for children, youth and their caregivers

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THE FRAMEWORK

A logic model provides a succinct picture of how a program’s goals are linked to its activities and outcomes. The Centre’s logic model shows how our vision is linked to our strategic goals, areas of focus, core outcomes, and ultimate impact area (our mission). We outline below the proposed key performance indicators for each strategic goal.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Core outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of what is meant by “mental health” and “evidence” among child and youth serving agencies
- Increased awareness and readiness among agencies, and enhanced engagement with the Centre to implement evidence-informed practices
- Improved use among service providers and agency leaders of a wide range of innovative knowledge exchange programs and services to help identify client needs and make ongoing improvements to service delivery

Key performance indicators

- The first step for the Centre is to define its target population, i.e., the agencies that provide child and youth mental health programs, together with the MCYS. The Centre will also track the agencies that self-identify as providing child and youth mental health programs.
- The Centre will assess its reach, noting the number and percent of agencies that engage with the Centre and access its programs and services. We will include the sectors of these agencies (e.g., mental health, child welfare, youth justice).
- Another major focus of the Centre will be to engage the field in a shared understanding of what is meant by evidence and how to use evidence to improve practice. We will track service providers’ and agency leaders’ understanding of ‘evidence,’ and how they use it.
- The Centre is examining the many facets of organizational readiness to implement evidence-informed practices, and is identifying stages along such a continuum. The Centre will track the number and percent of agencies at various stages of the continuum, develop programs that match agency needs and strengths, engage stakeholders with Centre programs and services, and examine agencies’ movement along the continuum through their involvement with our programs.
- The Centre will assess stakeholder perceptions on the relevance, usefulness and effectiveness of our programs, tools and resources, including satisfaction with services. Where feasible and meaningful, perceptions from service providers and agency leaders will be obtained.
STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Core outcomes

- Greater promotion of linkages and exchange among frontline service providers, agency leaders, champions in the field and government partners in efforts to share best practices
- Enhanced relationships and strategic partnerships among leaders, champions and government

Key performance indicators

- The Centre will develop a matrix identifying our partners and the various ways we collaborate (e.g., formal partnership, coordination of projects, participation in a network). We will track if and how such partnerships evolve over time.
- The Centre will assess partners’ perceptions on the relevance, usefulness and effectiveness of our partnerships and collaborations. We will also document the key impacts of our partnerships, linkages and leveraged opportunities.
- While many outcomes of such partnerships are well-defined a priori, some outcomes are unanticipated due to the complex nature of systems change. The Centre will document these evolving and unforeseen impacts on practice changes and where applicable, policy changes.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Core outcomes

- Enhanced Centre capacity for maximum effectiveness and sustainability of human, physical and financial resources in alignment with our mandate
- Improved Centre capacity to nurture a learning organization so that staff are well-equipped to work successfully with our stakeholders

Key performance indicators

- The Centre recognizes the central role our staff plays in successfully implementing and achieving our mandate. Our staff and organizational capacities need to be aligned with our programs. To this end, the Centre will measure staff satisfaction, employee engagement/ buy-in, and participation in professional development opportunities. A survey utilizing a learning organization framework will be administered to staff on a regular basis. This survey will be used to assess our shared understanding of organizational learning and the rationale for Centre programs and processes. The survey will also be used to develop and refine staff programs (e.g., orientation program, mentorship, leadership development).
- The Centre will also track staff retention rate as well consistently document staff reasons for leaving and staff suggestions for improvement.
- To demonstrate our stewardship and accountability of our financial, physical and human resources, the Centre will identify and adopt relevant components of a balanced scorecard approach as we develop our annual operational plans.
OUR ACTION PLAN

The Centre has involved external stakeholders who are experts in evaluation of mental health services in preparing this performance measurement framework. After discussions with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, we will then consult with our primary stakeholders – service providers and agency leaders in child and youth mental health programs here in Ontario – to further develop our key performance indicators.

The Centre is developing its operational plan for the fiscal year 2011-2012 to bring our strategic plan and performance measurement framework to life. This plan will further identify the linkages of program level indicators to the key performance indicators. We will need to develop the measures and tools, and to integrate the measurement and collection of data on the indicators through our internal information and project management systems.

With the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) as the Centre’s organizational “home,” we will also be consulting with CHEO’s financial and human resource leaders to identify synergies and new opportunities for supporting our performance measurement framework.

GLOSSARY

**Balanced scorecard**: an approach that adds non-financial indicators in assessing organizational performance as a tool for strategic planning and performance measurement (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). The balanced scorecard identifies four areas or “perspectives” when assessing an organization’s effectiveness: learning and growth, internal business processes, customer perspectives, and financial perspectives.

**Communities of practice**: self-organized, informal groups of people who share a common interest, concern or passion for something they do. Members of these communities interact regularly to discuss and advance their knowledge of best practices, issues or certain skills.

**Effectiveness**: the measure of how well something does what it’s supposed to do for a certain group of people under normal conditions.
Evaluation: a systematic collection and analysis of information in order to see whether a program or a project is doing what it set out to do.

Evidence-informed practice: putting research into practice using empirically supported methods combined with other sources of information, including a clinician’s own knowledge and practices. In evidence-informed practice, clinical decisions might be enriched by prior research but not limited to it, and knowledge is constantly updated.

Front-line workers: those who are directly involved in mental health service provision, including (but not limited to): social workers; counsellors; child and youth workers; community support workers; psychologists; psychiatrists; Aboriginal community workers, elders and healers; and early childhood educators. The services provided include a range of treatments for children and youth with mental health problems or disorders, as well as prevention, early intervention, and supportive services to children, youth and families.

Key performance indicators: a statistic or parameter that provides information on trends in the condition of a specific output or outcome.

Knowledge exchange: an ongoing process of actively moving information and knowledge between individuals and groups.

Learning organization: an organization that continuously acquires knowledge fast enough to adapt, innovate and thrive in a rapidly changing environment. Learning organizations: (1) create a culture that encourages and supports professionalism, leadership development, teamwork and continuous employee learning to reach the organization’s desired goal; (2) link individual performance with organizational performance; (3) are willing to take risks; (4) foster inquiry and dialogue, while proving a safe environment for employees to share openly; (5) learn from experience and create new and innovative knowledge from it while embracing creative thinking; and (6) interact closely with their environment and shares new knowledge to foster continuous improvement.
Organizational learning is the ‘activity and the process’ by which organizations eventually reach the ideal of a learning organization (Finger and Brand 1999: 136)

Ministry-funded service providers: includes child and youth mental health services provided by:

- Agencies providing child and youth mental health services
- Hospital-based programs receiving mental health funding
- Residential settings
- Multi-service agencies that provide child and youth mental health services

(Note: “Ministry” refers to the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services.)

Partnership: an alliance between organizations. Partnerships may involve pooling of specialized resources, working collaboratively toward a similar goal, and sharing of information.

Performance measurement: a results-based management tool for defining, monitoring and using objective indicators to assess an organization’s operational efficiency and effectiveness, and to determine the gap between actual and targeted performance.

Program logic model: a visual diagram (e.g., flow chart) depicting the various components of a program and illustrates how these components are congruently linked together in order to achieve the intended outcomes.

Reach: the individuals and organizations targeted, directed and affected by a program.

Stakeholders: organizations or individuals with whom we collaborate, partner, or share information.
APPENDIX: PARTICIPANTS OF THE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT WORKING GROUP

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<tr>
<td><strong>External Stakeholders</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle Dermenjian</td>
<td>HandsTheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca (Algonquin Child and Family Services)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Farrell</td>
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<td>Laura McAuley</td>
<td>Manager, Impact Assessment, Canadian Institutes of Health Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Lyons</td>
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<td>Colleen Grady</td>
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<td>Ian Manion</td>
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