



Outcomes Capability Planning and Assessment Tool – Guidance Material

Scene setting

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Why focus on outcomes capability? What is it?

All organisations exist for a purpose – to realize their purpose, vision, and mission.

You want the organisation to be the best it can, to be highly effective at what it does, to be capable of supporting and achieving the desired changes (results, outcomes) for the people it works with. To do this, you need to make sound decisions based on robust information and data.

Key questions you'll grapple with include:

- how do we know that our services, our programmes are producing the desired changes – the intended results, the intended outcomes?
- how do we know that it is *our* services, *our* programmes that are producing these changes (results / outcomes)?

To be able to answer these questions about outcomes and effectiveness, your organisation needs to develop the capability to produce and use outcomes information.

Your organisation needs to be able to demonstrate – to provide evidence – that your services, your programmes are what make the difference for the people you work with.

To be able to do this means developing 'outcomes capability'. Outcomes capability is the ability of an organisation to identify, measure, record, make meaning and report on the client changes (the results / outcomes) they specifically contribute to – that is, the specific difference they make for the people they work with.

Outcomes capable organisations are able to provide evidence of:

1. the client outcomes that are achieved through the use of their services, and
2. their overall organisational effectiveness.

Outcomes capable organisations will have:

1. clarified their purpose for being – their business (why)
2. identified and be measuring outcomes (what)
3. developed a system for capturing the outcomes data (how)
4. provided leadership, trained their staff and assigned people to operate the system (who).

Overview of the Tool

| | Area | Description of area |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Clarity of organisational purpose | Clarity about purpose for being, and organisational goals. |
| 2 | Leadership | Leadership required to guide and support the organisation to identify and measure outcomes, and demonstrate effectiveness. |
| 3A | Identification of outcomes / results (organisational) | Identification of key client outcomes for own service / organisation (local or regional / national). May be individual or collective outcomes. |
| 3B | Identification of outcomes / results (programmatic) | Identification of key results for contracting with MSD (programmatic). |
| 4A | Outcomes measurement system (organisation) | System or processes identified for measuring client outcomes organisation-wide. |
| 4B | Outcomes measurement system (programme) | System or processes identified for measuring programme outcomes funded by MSD (ideally integrated with system above). |
| 5 | Attribution of client changes | Description of how organisation supports client change to occur. |
| 6 | System capability re outcomes data capture (the tools, templates etc) | ICT infrastructure, client information system and other tools or templates that support outcomes data capture. |

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|---|------------------------|--|
| 7 | Staff capability | Staff engagement with, and capability in undertaking, outcomes analysis and reporting. |
| 8 | Analysis and reporting | Organisational use of data to meaningfully analyse and report on outcomes at the organisational and/or programmatic level. |

Simplifying the Tool

For practical purposes the eight areas of the tool can be grouped into four main ideas: identifying outcomes, measuring outcomes, using outcomes information, and considering attribution. The way the different ideas link to the tool is illustrated below.

| | Area | Four main ideas |
|----|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | Clarity of organisational purpose | IDENTIFYING OUTCOMES |
| 2 | Leadership | |
| 3A | Identification of outcomes / results (organisational) | |
| 3B | Identification of outcomes / results (programmatic) | |
| 4A | Outcomes measurement system (organisation) | MEASURING OUTCOMES |
| 4B | Outcomes measurement system (programme) | |
| 6 | System capability re outcomes data capture (tools, templates etc) | |
| 7 | Staff capability | USING OUTCOMES INFORMATION |
| 8 | Analysis and reporting | |
| 5 | Attribution of client changes | ATTRIBUTION |

Outcomes capability - Assessment summary template

The following table has been designed to provide a snapshot of your organisation's outcome capability ratings. By considering the ratings 'at a glance' you can immediately identify the areas in which your organisation requires outcomes capability development.

| | Area | 1. Aspirational | 2. Emerging | 3. Good | 4. Transformative |
|----|---|--------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Clarity of organisational purpose | | | | |
| 2 | Leadership | | | | |
| 3A | Identification of outcomes / results (organisational) | | | | |
| 3B | Identification of outcomes / results (programmatic) | | | | |
| 4A | Outcomes measurement system (organisation) | | | | |
| 4B | Outcomes measurement system (programme) | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 5 | Attribution of client changes | | | | |
| 6 | System capability re outcomes data capture (tools, templates etc) | | | | |
| 7 | Staff capability | | | | |
| 8 | Analysis and reporting | | | | |

Outcomes capability development priorities

The following table has been designed to assist you to identify your outcomes capability priorities. This involves considering the rating for each outcomes capability area (from the previous table), the level of priority for this issue, and any other organisational considerations (eg if a review is occurring later in the year and this would be a better time to progress this matter) and then ranking each outcomes capability area according to their order of priority.

By considering the ratings together you can more accurately select the capability priority level for your organisation.

There is no correct 'answer' when selecting priority levels and order of priority. Every organisation is different, works with different people and will have different priorities.

However, in considering the priority of each capability area for your organisation, you may ask yourself the following questions:

- how important is this capability to the people using our services?
- how important is this capability to the future of our organisation?
- how well developed is this capability within our organisation?
- what development is required and what priority is this development?

You may also choose to include brief notes about why you have selected the priority level for each capability and the order of priority.

| | Capability rating (1-4) | Priority level (H/M/L) | Other consideration(s)? | Order of priority (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd) |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Clarity of organisational purpose | | | | |
| Leadership | | | | |
| Identification of outcomes / results (organisational) | | | | |
| Identification of outcomes / results (programmatic) | | | | |
| Outcomes measurement system (organisation) | | | | |
| Outcomes measurement system (programme) | | | | |
| Attribution of client changes | | | | |
| System capability re outcomes data capture | | | | |
| Staff capability | | | | |
| Analysis and reporting | | | | |

Outcomes capability - Checklist

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Clarity of organisational purpose | What does your organisation exist to do in your community? What business is your organisation in? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your mission / goals?• What and who is your community?• Who are your clients?• What are the reasons why people might use your services?• What sort of changes might people expect to make coming here? |
| 2 Leadership | How does your leadership support the organisation to deliver its outcomes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the Board support a results / outcomes-driven organisation?• How does management provide the climate for, and support, staff to grow and develop outcomes capability?• Does the vision and/or mission reflect the organisational purpose in results / outcomes-focused language?• Who are the individual champions driving results / outcomes-based services?• Who understands and envisions opportunities for outcomes to further add value to the organisation / programme?• Does the organisation foster a learning culture focused on continuous improvement? |
| 3A Identification of outcomes (organisational) | What sort of change for clients are your services aiming to achieve? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the desired outcomes for clients?• What outcomes are meaningful in terms of the organisation's strategic direction?• Do the desired client outcomes |

enable demonstration of the measurable difference of the extent to which a client is better off?

- Which outcomes do your services directly influence?
- Which outcomes does your organisation contribute to more distantly / indirectly?

3B Identification of results (programmatic)

What results need to be measured as part of our organisational goals for the programme, MSD and other funders' contracts?

- What outcomes / results does the organisation need to report on, including as part of MSD's and other funders' contracts?

4A Outcomes measurement (organisation)

How do we know we're making a difference?

- What are the critical outcomes that you should be measuring?
- What information / evidence will tell you that you are making a difference?
- What outcomes model / framework are you using for measuring and reporting on outcomes?

4B Results measurement (programme)

How can we capture programme data to report on our organisational outcomes, MSD contracts, and those from other funders?

- How do we capture programme data to feed into our organisational outcome measures?
- How can we capture data to feed back to MSD, and other funders?

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 5 | Attribution of client changes | What is your organisational approach / theory of change? How is change expected to occur? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How do you understand the way you work will assist the client to change? · How does this approach support the achievement of identified organisational or programme outcomes? · How are the underpinning organisational approach and staff interventions intended to lead to change (enabling provider claims of contribution to any client changes)? · Does your theory of change link to evidenced-based theories or is it particular to your organisation? |
| 6 | System capability re outcomes data capture | Are there standardised reports, tools and templates that can be set up to assist staff to collect information, extract data and report on outcomes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Are appropriate fields for data gathering established in the ICT/CMS system? · Are processes in place for capturing evidence in a consistent and ongoing way? · Are processes for capturing data a core part of business-as-usual? · Does the ICT/CMS system allow for the easy extraction of data? · How do staff members access the information they need? · Are there standardised reports that can be set up? |
| 7 | Staff capability | Are staff committed to engaging in the outcomes reporting environment, and equipped to measure outcomes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Do staff understand the reasons for the shift to an outcomes reporting system, and how it can be used to support their practice at the individual and organisational level? · Are staff engaged and committed to reporting on |

outcomes?

- Does supervision / management of staff use outcomes information to drive continuous improvement?
- Does the organisational culture support outcomes reporting?
- Are there any obstacles? If so, how might they be overcome?
- Have staff been trained to input data, and to do so as an embedded part of their work? (Important in ensuring reliability.)
- Are there staff with the necessary capability to analyse, interrogate and contextualise the data, to make meaning of it?

8 Analysis and reporting

Can the data be used to demonstrate the difference the organisation is making for people using their services?

- Who are the audiences for reporting, and what are the reporting requirements on the organisation?
- What systems and processes are in place to ensure robust analysis and interpretation of the information that is provided?
- How will you know that any client changes are about your service and not about other factors?
- Is there a feedback loop in place to reflect on the currency of the theory of change, in the light of outcomes information?
- Does analysis and reporting on outcomes information include interpretation that enables decisions to be made about continuous improvement?