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Issue 4 – April 2013



National

MHSPF

Mental Health Service Planning Framework

Project Overview

Using evidence based practice and epidemiological data, the National Mental Health Service Planning Framework (NMHSPF) Project aims to estimate the range and quantity of mental health care required by our population and the resources required to provide it. Established in July 2011 (using funds provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing), the NMHSPF Project initially concentrated on establishing the project governance and engaging various stakeholders around Australia to inform the modelling process. More recently, a Promotion and Prevention Working Group and additional subgroups specialising in age related care package development or threshold groups between bed based and community support services have been formed to contribute to the modelling process.

Key activities performed since the last Communiqué of September 2012 are outlined below.

Taxonomy for Mental Health Care

Project members have continued to develop the draft taxonomy of mental health care for the NMHSPF Project. The Promotion and Prevention Working Group developed an initial taxonomy for promotion and prevention items in December 2012 and in February 2013 revised the draft taxonomy for prevention activities based on research evidence conducted out of session. Similar work for promotion activities is currently being conducted out of session.

The remaining service elements in the taxonomy continue to evolve as the model is developed. Care package development highlights elements that need amendment. Changes include separation from a group of services, inclusion into a group, or changes in the scope/boundary of the element where a function might be considered in more than one space.

Service Element Templates

Significant work has been conducted on the service element templates over recent months. Descriptions for each of the services are largely drafted, with quantitative detail being explored in conjunction with the care package process. The Service Element document will serve to explain the context and scope of the service elements specifically in relation to the NMHSPF Project, and so should not be considered a 'Data Dictionary' or 'Definitional' document.

Care Packages

The development of care packages has been the primary source of activity over the last 6 months. Care packages refer to a package of care (in a 'should be' world) for a particular population over a 12 month period. The care described is relevant to a particular target population and spans all appropriate services required by that population from across the entirety of the taxonomy. Note that the packages do not represent a 'path of care' but rather a representation of the 'averaged' care for people within that population cohort, over a twelve month period.

The care packages have been developed according to age group and include a separate set of care packages for: 0-2yrs, 3-5 yrs, 6-11yrs, 12-17yrs, 18 – 64yrs and 65+ years. Work is currently being done to further disaggregate an 18-24yr cohort. Within each age group care packages are designed for individuals with mild, moderate and severe illness.

As the care packages are getting more developed and reviewed by the project membership, the next step is to apply the population data to each care package. The quantity of services contained in a care package is multiplied by the population attributed to it, providing an immediate feedback loop to the Project Groups enabling them to check the validity of the model and balance of services across the taxonomy as the Project progresses.

Staffing Profiles

Other key work has included the development of Staffing Profiles for services that are provided by a team or mixed staff arrangement. The staffing profile apportions the various staff categories within the hours of service modelled in the care package. The staff profile accommodates any kind of team, regardless of role, level or sector and will allow for greater accuracy in determining the multidisciplinary resources required to perform the mental health care modelled.

Project Documentation

Behind the scenes of the active modelling work, the project team has started to develop the templates and content of the various project documents that will be required at the completion of the Project. The following compendium of documentation is currently proposed:

- [NMHSPF Framework Document](#) – Outlines the context of the mental health system and how the tool relates to its various parts.
- [NMHSPF Technical Manual](#) – Outlines the development of the modelling tool, including project governance, key decisions and data information.
- [NMHSPF User Guide for the Estimator Tool](#) – The instruction manual for the user.
- [NMHSPF Service Element Descriptors](#) – Reference document of service element descriptions with staffing profiles.
- [NMHSPF Care Packages](#) – Reference document of care packages.
- [NMHSPF Glossary](#) – Glossary of terms (may be included within one of the other documents depending on size)
- [NMHSPF Final Project Report \(to the NMHSPF Executive Group\)](#) – Outcomes of project, gap analysis of projections vs actual and key recommendations for future work.

What can we expect in the next 6 months?

The development of care packages continues with the validation process progressing over the next 3 months. The draft Service Element Descriptions document and taxonomy is also scheduled for final review and endorsement by the project membership in mid year. Finally, the estimator tool will be reviewed by stakeholders and following incorporation of feedback, will be delivered to the Executive Group with all associated documentation at the completion of the Project.

Due to the volume and complexity of work generated in the Project, the Project Team have applied to the Department of Health and Ageing for a 3 month extension, suggesting a revised completion date of 30 September 2013.

How can I keep up to date?

Due to the complexity of the Project structure, the NMHSPF Project Team is the primary communication point for the Project. All enquiries regarding the Project can be directed in writing to:

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Alternatively, biannual Project Communiqués and other project material will be made available on the Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing website at www.health.gov.au/ for general public access.