

Development of a needs-based planning model for mental health services in Australia: the National Mental Health Service Planning Framework

Symposium Description (250 words max.)

Symposium Lead (name and affiliation): Sandra Diminic, Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research (QCMHR)

Rationale for Symposium: Australia's National Mental Health Service Planning Framework (NMHSPF) is a needs-based planning model consolidating available evidence to generate national resource estimates for mental health services. This symposium provides an overview of the NMHSPF development and new research on specific sub-groups.

Topic description

The aim of the NMHSPF is to provide a population-level, evidence-based model producing resource estimates for the full spectrum of mental health care needs in Australia. It draws on evidence from published literature, clinical guidelines, survey and administrative data, expert panels, and user feedback to: define a national taxonomy of standard mental health service components; describe appropriate staffing models, operational parameters, and salaries for mental health services; identify the number of people with mental health needs in the community by age and intensity of service needs; outline care profiles of the average types and quantities of services required by each need group in a 12-month period; and combine these elements into a Planning Support Tool that produces benchmarks for the resources (beds, staff, costs) and activity (sessions, hours) required to deliver adequate mental health care. The QCMHR research team is currently undertaking further work to enhance the model's application for specific populations such as people living in rural areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, and youth. NMHSPF outputs can be combined with information on current service provision to guide strategic reform directions, by identifying areas of relative underinvestment, service gaps, and duplication. The model is being used across Australia as a tool to support joint regional mental health planning.

Presentation one

Development of the NMHSPF: estimating mental health needs and service requirements for Australia

Sandra Diminic^{1,2}, Kate Gossip^{1,2}, Elizabeth Leitch^{1,2}, Kevin Fjeldsoe¹, Charlotte Woody^{1,2}, Imogen Page^{1,2}, Eryn Wright^{1,2}, Claudia Sparti^{1,2}, Harvey Whiteford^{1,2,3}

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Overview:

This presentation provides an overview of the NMHSPF model structure and the methods used to develop its estimation of mental health service needs, care requirements and service models. These inputs are modelled from published literature, mental health service models, health surveys, administrative data, and expert consensus. They are combined to produce resource estimates for planning across the full spectrum of mental health care, including mental health promotion and prevention, primary and specialised community treatment, bed-based care and psychosocial support services.

Presentation two

Adapting the NMHSPF for rural populations

Charlotte Woody^{1,2}, Elizabeth Leitch^{1,2}, Kevin Fjeldsoe¹, Kate Gossip^{1,2}, Sandra Diminic^{1,2}

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Overview:

Due to the principle of national averaging, a weakness of the NMHSPF has been that it does not provide tailored estimates for rural areas. In response, work was undertaken to model new care needs and staffing models to better account for different service requirements in rural areas. A rapid literature review was undertaken to identify key models of service delivery and related issues. Modelling principles were developed in consultation with an expert panel. The modelling principles defining key areas of service difference will be presented, along with how they have been used to guide modifications to the NMHSPF.

Presentation three

Adapting the NMHSPF for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Imogen Page^{1,2}, Elizabeth Leitch^{1,2}, Fiona Charlson^{1,2,3}, Kevin Fjeldsoe¹, Kate Gossip^{1,2}, Sandra Diminic^{1,2}

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Overview:

This presentation details the process to adapt the NMHSPF to provide more specific benchmarks for the unique mental health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. Expert panel consultation and a scoping literature review of effective models of care were used to inform the focus areas for modelling changes and these were further refined with reference to national strategies and available evidence. A literature review to determine the prevalence of mental illness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations was also undertaken. Key principles of the new modelling will be presented.

Presentation four

Estimating the need and describing the type and quantity of youth-focused services required in Australia for 18-24 year olds

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Overview:

Young adults (18-24 years) are significantly impacted by mental illness and are in a critical developmental period that contributes to their unique service requirements that need to be considered when planning services. A program of work is being undertaken to identify the prevalence of mental illness and the evidence-based services that are required to care for this age group, within a continuum of adolescent, youth and adult services. The modelling principles defining key areas of service difference will be presented, along with how they are being used to guide modifications to the NMHSPF.

Presentation five

Challenges in mapping resourcing and utilisation of mental health services across Australia to support needs-based planning with the NMHSPF

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Overview:

Mental health service planners need to undertake mental health service mapping exercises detailing current service provision to inform their planning. Services maps that align with the taxonomy and resource types produced by the NMHSPF can be compared to NMHSPF modelled resource benchmarks, thereby providing insights into: gaps or duplication in the current provision of mental health services; and the presence of population subgroups that may be at risk of receiving insufficient levels of care. This presentation provides an overview of the processes and problems involved in generating NMHSPF comparable service maps across Australia using a standardised methodology.