



How Do We Make Outcomes Understandable ? (Outcomes Even a Mother Could Love)

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Introduction

The South Carolina Department of Mental Health generates a wealth of data on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis for a variety of uses and audiences including:

- Management
- Community Mental Health Center Management
- Community Mental Health Center Personnel
- Clinicians
- Board Members
- The Governor and Legislators
- Consumer and Advocacy Groups
- Mental Health Commission
- Interested Citizens
- Researchers

How the Data Is Used

Depending on the audience (some of whom may only spend a few seconds looking at the data) data may be used:

- As an Educational Tool to Describe the Activities of the Agency
- To Inform Key Stakeholders of Agency Performance
- To Assess Performance Over Time
- To Assess Trends
- For Agency Planning
- To Assess Financial Performance and Cost Effectiveness
- For Research and Program Evaluation

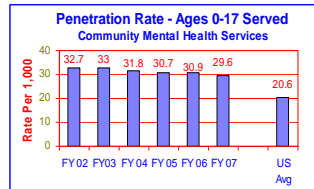
Steps in Making Complex Data Understandable

1. Identify the Key Areas of Performance from Mission, Goals and Public Expectations
2. Target your audience: If your Mom can't say, "Oh, I get why its important and what the graph means," in 30 seconds, go back to the drawing board.
3. Show data over time (3 year trend, minimal).
4. Graphs should contain comparable references (compared to whom).

Examples

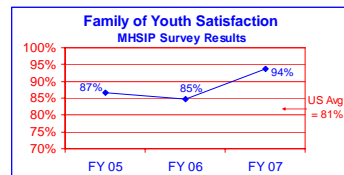
Key Area: Access to Services

- Penetration Rate for Children Exceeds National Average

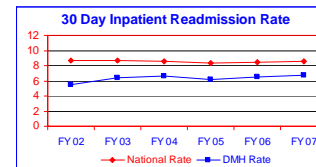


Key Area: Quality/ Appropriateness

- 94% of Parents Report Satisfaction with Services

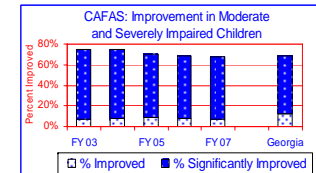


- 30 Day Readmission Rate to Hospitals Consistently Below National Average

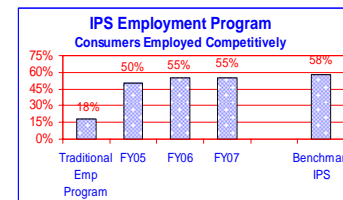


Key Area: Outcomes

- 61% of the Most Emotionally Disturbed Children Significantly Improved

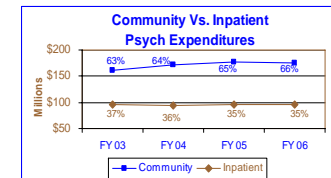


- 55% Employment Rate in Supported Employment Programs



Key Area: Structure

- Community expansion achieved through new dollars, Medicaid revenue, and re-direction of cost-savings



Conclusions

- Identify Key Outcome and Measurement Areas
- Identify Key Patient Populations
- Know the Audience
- Use Simple to Read Charts
- Show Trends Over Time
- Show Comparable References

Acknowledgments

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For further information

Please contact emts@scdmh.org. More information on this and related projects can be obtained at www.state.sc.us/dmh. A link to an online, PDF-version of the poster is nice, too.