

Mental Health Access and Pathways Project

One of every two Australians will experience some form of mental illness during their lifetime. Across the Eastern Metropolitan Region, the Inner East and Outer East PCPs partner with a broad cross-section of agencies delivering mental health services to local communities. In 2018, clients accessing these services experienced a period of significant change in the sector. The rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, coupled with other sector reforms contributed to a period of significant transition for the sector. These changes resulted in increased uncertainty, and affected care for community members living with mental ill health.

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services approached the Outer East PCP to work with local partner agencies across the region to better understand these changes. This catchment-wide approach was strongly supported by the Eastern Metropolitan Service Coordination and Mental Health Alliance, a significant partnership with leadership contributed by both the Inner East and Outer East PCPs.

Significantly, the Outer East PCP focused their work on the client journey rather than concentrating on what these changes meant for organisations. This approach embraced a best practice approach to person centred care and recognised that client needs don't necessarily change when a sector experiences change.

To support this strategy, the Outer East PCP developed a series of client personas to represent key service access points for people experiencing mental ill health. Co-designed with partner agencies and people with lived experience, the personas were designed to support agencies in understanding how clients might present to services.

The Outer East PCP subsequently delivered two full day workshops with a range of partner agencies from across the catchment including Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network, EACH, MIND, NEAMI, Latrobe Community Health (NDIS) amongst others. Utilising the developed personas, these workshops embraced a systems level perspective, with both managers and front-line staff invited to participate.

Outer East PCP then collated region-wide data and conducted a series of in-depth, one-to-one consultations with community members who had accessed local mental health services. These discussions were substantial, and sought to capture a full and holistic picture of their mental health journeys. These consultations then fed back into a series of detailed client journey maps. Of the themes emerging from the consultation, those interviewed identified trust, communication, choice and control as being the most crucial factors in their engagement with services.

The client personas developed by the Outer East PCP were significantly innovative, with organisations and networks outside of the EMR expressing interest in embracing similar methodologies for service improvement. Organisations from across Victoria continue to contact the PCP to learn more about this approach and the overall success of the project. ●

www.oepcp.org.au/portals/mentalhealthaccess/

REX
 44 I'VE JUST GOT TO KEEP IT TOGETHER. I WANT TO SEE MY KIDS AGAIN.
 17% SELF-IDENTIFIED
 17% UNEMPLOYED
 17% INHOSPITAL
 17% VULNERABLE

KEY FINDINGS FOR REX

SERVICE NEEDS

- "I need housing" support to access the system and get services.
- Consistency of staff and services.
- To be heard and understood - and to feel like he has some power.
- Support with employment flexibility and pay working.
- Support with any financial help to access services.

GOALS

- Involvement
- Recovery with the help
- Support with managing other services
- Support working
- Support a sense of purpose and independence

FEARS & FRUSTRATIONS

- Complex change processes, health system etc.
- Too many options provided and difficult to understand
- Lack of empowerment/proactivity

CLIENT JOURNEY MAPS

PH & NDIS PLANNING PROCESS

PH & NDIS PLANNING PROCESS: USING THE PLAN & SERVICES

Project highlights

An evidence-based storytelling tool for service providers, their staff and partners within the mental health sector across Inner and Outer Eastern Melbourne.

Key outcomes

- Identifying opportunities for strengthening local service supports and the client experience
- Recommendations provide support to organisations to strengthen the elements of trust, choice, control and communication
- A service provider checklist helps to assess current Client Experience operational capability.