

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Use of the Project Integrate Framework for situational analysis and benchmarking of progress towards care integration in the Central Coast NSW

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Background: The Project Integrate[i] conceptual framework began with a literature review on conceptual frameworks and relevant aspects of integrated care, from which a new conceptual framework, was built iteratively. This framework provides a standard set of dimensions and sub-elements which can be used to describe any integrated care initiative.

As part of the formative evaluation of the Central Coast Integrated Care Program (CCICP), we have employed the Project Integrate Framework to map the integration efforts of the program, provide a consistent and common language, to enable supported self-assessment of progress towards integrated care and to allow for international benchmarking.

Methods: An online survey of key stakeholders was undertaken mapping the degree of agreement on progress towards the Project Integrate dimensions. The survey results were used as a support tool in a workshop to assist CCICP team reflection and assessment and build a situational analysis of care integration progress within the program. This exercise was used as the basis to support agreement of future priorities and strategies within the program.

Results: The survey results indicated where progress towards care integration had been achieved in the Central Coast. It was then used as a support tool in a workshop setting to assist the CCICP team to reflect and self-assess progress towards integrated care.

Reflections regarding international comparators were made, stimulating further discussion, this led to the recognition of progress made to date and a realistic review of where progress should be given the maturity of the intervention.

Achievements and opportunities were identified, with priority areas mapped out. A key priority was communication, in particular, building a common and consistent language for integrated care. Workforce and upskilling regarding data warehousing and analysis was also identified as an opportunity for future work.

Discussion: The survey tool alone was inadequate since many answers reflected uncertainty regarding progress (Neither Disagree nor Agree), thus the data required review and further consideration by the team to contextualise the uncertainty, particularly given the formative stage of assessment.

The power of the survey results was in the group analysis and the contextualized discussion which ensued and added greatly to the understanding of progress in care integration on the Central Coast.

The Project Integrate Framework and its nomenclature was identified by the CCICP team as a key communication tool, to build a consistent terminology for integrated care and its use in reporting, communication and stakeholder engagement.

As with international case studies, progress towards system integration was regarded as poor, with substantial structural barriers beyond the control of the CCICP team. However, the intervention appears to be tracking more favourably in the dimension of patient-centred care.

Conclusion: Use of the Project Integrate framework has enabled the CCICP team to reflect on progress and spread of integrated care within the Central Coast Local Health District and where their next steps should be for spreading and building sustainability.

References:

1- Cash-Gibson, L. & Rosenmoller, M. Project INTEGRATE - a common methodological approach to understand integrated health care in Europe. *Int J Integr Care*, 2014;14:e035

Keywords: implementation; evaluation; communication
