

Tools and resources to support evaluation in mental health services



There are a range of tools and resources that can help support evaluation. The tools and resources here aim to support an adaptive approach to planning evaluations and managing common challenges.

The list contains guidance and tools from the literature, the NHS and other organisations, which aim to:

- support capacity building for evaluation
- planning for evaluation
- staff engagement, and
- service user engagement

NHS Service Evaluation Guidance

This resource provides guidance on what a service evaluation is, what it can tell you about your service and when an evaluation should be done. The resource also covers Caldicott approval, service permission and evaluation planning checklists.

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Evaluation capacity diagnostic tool

This resource provides an evaluation tool to assess evaluation readiness through capturing information on organizational context and the experience of staff. The tool can assist in pinpointing particularly strong areas of capacity as well as areas for improvement through the 4 level scoring criteria. The tool can also encourage staff to brainstorm about how their organization can enhance evaluation capacity by building on existing evaluation experience and skills and can serve as a precursor to evaluation activities. The tool is not health based but may be useful in the initial stages of evaluation planning or could be adapted to fit service needs.

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Designing effective employee surveys: What to ask and why

This resource offers guidance and advice on designing effective employee surveys. This includes useful guidance on what questions to ask that will assess across a range of factors relevant to staff, such as: staff wellbeing, productivity, work-life balance, engagement and improvement.

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NHS Evaluation Toolkit

This toolkit resource will assist in providing details around evaluation cycles. There are also links to case studies, checklists and guidance around conducting economic evaluations. The toolkit has been designed for health and care services, however the information contained is relevant to anyone who is planning to conduct an evaluation.

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Effective planning for evaluation in health services

This resource provides support and guidance that details the processes of evaluation within health care services, including tools that can be used, characteristics of well planned evaluations, common challenges and how to use the evaluation/improvement cycle as an ongoing process within services.

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NHS Employers: The dozen dos of staff engagement: guidance on good practice

This resource provides information and guidance on the actions needed to create and improve effective staff engagement. Recommendations contained within the resource are based on evidence from NHS staff surveys, learning from NHS organisations that have improved their staff engagement. Approaches recommended in the resource are based on engagement methods used in NHS Trusts that have the highest scores in staff engagement in the NHS Staff Survey.

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How to use evaluation to improve patient care quality

This resource is from Skills for Health (not-for-profit organisation for the development of an improved and sustainable healthcare workforce across the UK). The resource details the impact that evaluation can have for patients/service users. It highlights that evaluation can assist with identifying gaps in delivery of care, enhancing staff performance and training, improved patient safety, incorporating patient feedback for personalised care, driving continuous improvement. Also contains practical steps for delivery of effective evaluations.

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NHS Newcastle upon Tyne Hospital: Adult health psychology evaluation

This resource provides a visual breakdown of Adult Psychology Service Evaluation in NHS England. Resource highlights background, aims, step by step process of evaluation conduct and results.

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NHS England improvement leaders guide: evaluating improvement

This resource provides information, advice, guidance and tools on what evaluation is, the different types of evaluation, why and when to evaluate, designing evaluations, ethical approval, who should carry out evaluation and when should the evaluation be done. It also provides guidance on presentation of evaluation findings and FAQs. The model for improvement and measurement for improvement are also included as are illustrative case studies examples.

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A new framework for developing and evaluating complex mental health interventions: update of the medical research council guidance

Paper that details development of a framework for complex interventions. Framework was developed using a 4-stage process, 1) gap analysis 2) workshops 3) gathering stakeholder opinions 4) redrafting the framework. Paper gives examples of complex interventions within a Scottish context and identifies 4 perspectives to guide complex intervention research, 1) Efficacy, 2) Effectiveness, 3) Theory based, 4) Systems. Categories should be seen as overlapping and not mutually exclusive. 4 phases are included within the framework, 1) feasibility, 2) evaluation, 3) implementation, 4) develop/identify interventions. Research can begin at any phase and should be repeated. Core elements of research within the framework and detail concerning the 4 phases are discussed in greater detail.

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The handbook of quality and service improvement tools

This resource contains 75 tools for quality and service improvement as well as theories and techniques that can be used. There is also signposting to an additional document that details a step-by-step guide to common challenges faced within health service improvement. The guide is divided into project management, quality and service improvement tools sections. It has useful resources that can support service evaluation, such as creating data and measurement plans, information and advice on data for improvement, creating patient questionnaires and how to facilitate focus groups/interviews. Resource also contains information on how to engage and involve staff in quality and service improvement initiatives. Advice given on when and how to use specific tools/approaches. Examples are used throughout to illustrate use and impact.

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These resources are not an exhaustive list of the tools and guidance available to support evaluation in mental health services.

However, they do aim to provide advice and guidance of approaches that have worked in practice.

These resources, along with the resources contained in the library, aim to provide a supported approach to evaluation, using existing staff capacity.