

Evaluating Effectiveness of Participation projects
Evaluation design; learning from EEP project
EOI submissions

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A practical perspective on Cochrane support provided during Expression of Interest (EOI) submission development phase

- **Who requested support**
 - 5 metropolitan hospitals
 - 3 regional health services
- **What support was sought by EEP projects**
- **How Cochrane responded**

EEP projects address DHS' key policy levels of the health service system

- **Summary of EEP project aims (8 projects):**
 - **Improve the flow/quality of patient care;**
 - **Increase family involvement;**
 - **Give more appropriate care;**
 - **Implement quality improvement plan;**
 - **Improve whole community communication;**
 - **Embed consumer participation in hospital process/practice;**
 - **Improve patient safety.**

Interventions:

- **Patient information and staff education;**
- **Implementing new models of patient care;**
- **Comparing models of consumer participation in health service planning;**
- **Implementing consumer participation activities, or staff training around how to set up consumer committees;**
- **Consumer partnerships.**

Outcomes:

- **Patient/consumer/carer:**
 - **Informed/actual involvement in decision making; feeling of input being valued;**
 - **Anxiety, satisfaction, knowledge and awareness;**
 - **Change in attitude and behaviour.**
- **Staff/professional:**
 - **Doctor adherence to guidelines/standards;**
 - **Knowledge/skills, change in attitude/practice;**
 - **Admin time, adverse events, costs.**

What support was sought

- **Queries ranged from:**
 - **One page documents with brief project outlines;**
 - **Fully-fledged (EOI) submission.**
- **Queries consisted of:**
 - **Assistance developing relevant outcomes;**
 - **Advice on specific measurement tools;**
 - **Study design/implementation issues.**

How Cochrane responded

- Assistance - minimal to more extensive;
- Listening and conversations to clarify issues;
- Created a **response document** outlining the project - focus on aim, research question, intervention, outcomes, references.

We created a response document that aimed to assist EEP applicants to:

- **Narrow the research focus/project scope - developing a **research question**;**
- **Craft/hone the **intervention**;**
- **Expand the range of **outcomes**;**
- **Conceive of EEP project within a specific research framework e.g. CBA.**

Response document consisted of:

- **A summary of the project;**
- **With a parallel summary - teasing out the issues, commenting/expanding on;**
- **Headings: research question, aim, interventions, comparison/control, outcomes, study design, references;**
- **Most applicants found the response document useful.**

Framing a research question:

- **Ambitious notions of what could be achieved;**
- **Framing a research question helped to focus/narrow the study;**
- **Research question based on PICOT format: participants, intervention, comparisons, outcomes, target;**
- **Manageability of study scope;**
- **Contained study - meaningful findings.**

Developing the intervention:

- **Difficulty conceiving of project in terms of intervention;**
- **Developing an intervention that reflects the intention of the study.**

Expanding the range of outcomes:

- **Expanding the range of outcomes, focusing on causal effects;**
- **Reference to framework offering broad range of outcomes.**

Conceiving of the study within a research framework:

- **Fitting within a research framework;**
- **Considering Controlled Before-and-After (CBA) study design issues (comparison/control etc);**
- **Alternative study designs e.g. Interrupted Time Series (ITS), or Preference trial;**
- **Highlighting relevant references (CBA studies, a framework of indicative interventions/outcomes).**

EEP project applicants' comments/issues:

- **DHS had big expectations;**
- **Difficulty finding control site, ethical issue;**
- **Qualitative methodology more appropriate;**
- **Some health services needed encouragement to apply;**
- **Requesting detailed information - measurement tools, analysis.**

Concluding comments about Cochrane support:

- **Role providing CBA resources, developing interventions and outcomes;**
- **Proactive and reactive - sending Resource and Evidence bulletins, waiting for requests for support;**
- **Not able to assist with detailed statistical, analytical advice;**
- **Assisted focusing project on what was manageable within EEP timeline.**

Providing support from July 1 2007:

- **Information searches tailored to EEP sites;**
- **Two visits to each site;**
- **Tailored advice on measurement tools;**
- **Ongoing monthly bulletins on evidence and resources;**
- **Seminar in February 2008 to promote evaluation of participation within quality and safety setting.**

Reflection on Cochrane involvement:

- **Challenges around providing timely support;**
- **Could provide some information searches, measurement tools advice to all EOI applicants during submission phase;**
- **Projects require measurement tools for ethics submission;**
- **Period between notification of successful and project implementation needs to be longer.**

Future directions:

- **Intelligence and infrastructure for building the evidence base;**
- **Complex interventions;**
- **Learning through examining the parallels with research into improving provider practice.**