

Embrace Caregivers

A series of guides to improve the experience of family caregivers in the addiction & mental health system.

Caregivers as Partners in Project Planning

We committed to bringing caregivers and providers together to co-design and implement project initiatives. We recognized that we couldn't do this without first developing a shared understanding of our methodology. Bringing caregivers and providers together for training on our selected organizational change model before we got started made the most sense.

Motivation	Approach	Decisions	Progress
<p>Healthcare projects are often planned and implemented by a team of providers with little or no input from the families affected by the change.</p> <p>To ensure that the voice of caregivers was integral to our work, we wanted caregivers and providers to be equal members of the team.</p> <p>We envisioned caregivers and providers making strategic project decisions together.</p>	<p>We brought the caregivers and providers on our project team together to participate in two days of training on our selected organizational change model: Influencer™, by Vital Smarts¹.</p>	<p>Is there a true commitment to using the organizational change model consistently?</p> <p>Is there is a training cost and funding source?</p> <p>Is the training locally available or is travel required? Travel can be a challenge for caregivers.</p> <p>Who are the caregivers and providers that will be working directly on the project?</p> <p>Will each caregiver and provider team member be trained?</p> <p>Is paid compensation required for the training time spent by caregivers and providers?</p> <p>Can the training be delivered to participants with a wide range of education levels and project management experience?</p> <p>Does the training schedule and pace need to be adjusted?</p>	<p>Project implementation moved along faster than usual by getting everyone on the same page early on.</p> <p>The project plans were inclusive, comprehensive, and clear.</p>

Method

1. Caregivers and providers on the project team received a detailed invitation to the training.
2. An offer of financial compensation for the training period was communicated to caregivers and providers in advance.
3. Training was delivered to the caregivers and providers together on-site by a local trainer.
4. Training was enhanced with added exercises and examples of caregiver inclusion to make the organizational change model immediately relevant to the project.
5. The training was evaluated to determine learning outcomes and participant satisfaction.

Lessons Learned

1. Choose the participants for training carefully based on need. It is better to have a small group of trained champions for change than a large group of trained individuals that includes people who will not have the opportunity to apply the training to the project.
2. Having our own in-house trainer allowed for the material to be presented in a relevant way, allowed for multiple training opportunities and helped to sustain the application of the organizational change model and its use with other projects
3. Choose an organizational change model that provides a clear and understandable project planning framework.
4. Including caregivers in the training with providers sent an important message that caregivers will be equal partners in project planning and the co-design team will use shared knowledge.

Acknowledgements

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Changing CARE: Embrace is an initiative of The Change Foundation with Cornwall Hospital's Community Addiction and Mental Health Centre and Cornwall & District Family Support Group.

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Resources

1. Vital Smarts – see Influencer Course: <https://www.vitalsmarts.com/>
2. Change Management vs. Behavioural Change Management: https://thechalfontproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Change_Management_vs_Behaviours.pdf
3. Helen Bevan – https://twitter.com/helenbevan?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor



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