

Tier 4 - Part A: Establishing our Evaluation Strategy and Action Plan

As you move into Tier 4: Evaluation and Reflection, you will be able to draw upon the information you have gathered through the sharing of insights, knowledge and data as you moved through the previous three tiers. Now is the opportunity to take a breath, just as the momentum of the water falling down the tiers of the cascade of a waterfall slows when it reaches the pool at the bottom, you will be able to use this time to reflect upon the information you've gathered, the connections you have made, and collaboratively develop a plan to evaluate the implementation of the service model or any adaptations you have decided are needed to meet the needs of families in your community.

Developing an evaluation strategy goes hand in hand with deciding on the actions to be taken and who will take the lead in coordination aspects of implementation.

The following questions are based on the doctoral research which informed the CASCADES framework, having been identified as important to consider when evaluating outcomes of specialist CFH service models in different community settings.

- **What were our thoughts on evaluation when outcomes expected were explored together in Tier 2?** What were our early thoughts on strategies to measure the change we hoped to see in terms of the outcomes?
- **Given the collaborative group we have formed as we worked through the CASCADES Framework is there an opportunity to use a Community-based Action Research approach, building on our work to date as we implement and evaluate the actions we have decided upon?** Have any members of our group had experience in Action Research – if not, is there someone we can invite to join us to guide us and participate together in using this inclusive approach? Collaboratively community-based research can also provide a platform for continuing to share with and learn from one another.
- **Would there be benefit in taking a formative evaluation approach so we can review the outcomes data at regular time-points,** and utilise any findings to enable progressive real-time adjustments and changes to facilitate continuous improvement? A formative evaluation can be integrated into your action plan for the next steps you and/or the service will be taking to implement changes to improve outcomes for families in your community.
- **What have we decided to implement and what data can we use to specifically measure the impact of this?** This may refer to the implementation of a new service, a new service model, or adaptations to a current service model.
- **If you are implementing changes to a current service model, do you have data available that you can use as a baseline to measure change?** Is there data already being captured through established service delivery, e.g. data in electronic medical records systems?
- **Should we hold off on implementing changes until we have had an opportunity to collect baseline data?** This may include qualitative data from consumers and other stakeholders as well as quantitative data. You may be able to use some of the information you gathered in Tier 1 (Context) to form part of your baseline of the current state (i.e. access to services, services provided, consumer experiences, areas of need).

- **What other data might be available from other sources which may be useful in our evaluation strategy?** Sources could include Commonwealth and State or Territory Governments, health agency data, Primary Health Networks, local councils and ABS, as well as data held by other agencies.
- **Is there data that we are required to report on to a funding body?** If so, do the reporting requirements provide opportunity to recognise the adaptations we intend to make, e.g. if service activity is to be reported, will different modes of delivery be recognised such as telehealth and other less traditional modes of service activity? If not, who should we contact to explain our plan, rationale and advocate for flexibility in the reporting requirements.
- **Do we have sufficient funding for the next stage of our project** to enable the time we may need to continue to consult locally as we refine our adaptations/ actions for implementation and as we conduct our evaluation so this can be used to inform further improvements?
- **Is there an opportunity for us to seek an external grant to enable a robust approach to the evaluation,** enabling us to then report the findings more widely through possible publication or conference presentations to share the lessons learned? Your findings will then contribute to a greater understanding of the efficacy of different service models for various contexts.
- **Is there an opportunity to incorporate health economics data into our evaluation strategy, i.e. to measure return on investment or cost-benefit?** If so, who amongst us or do we know with the expertise to guide this work, i.e. is there a university or research agency who may be interested in participating in this evaluation?