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Surveying the Rocky Terrain of Multiple Services, Multiple Sites and Diverse Client Groups:

A pragmatic option for gathering outcomes data

Overview

- Mercy Community Services

- The rocky terrain

- The destination

- The journey

- Highways, dirt roads and roadblocks

- Learnings and recommendations

- Where to from here

Mercy Community Services

Family Services ~ Disability Services ~ Aged Care

- Family Services

- 20+ different types of programs

1. Residential Care & Transition Services
2. Foster and Kinship Care
3. Individual and Family Support
4. Multicultural Services

The Rocky Terrain

The Context for MCS

Various sites/locations

Number of programs

Types of clients

Requirements from funders

Client complexity

Stakeholder expectations

Organisational Readiness

Where to begin …?

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What is the Destination?
What do we want to achieve?

- Goals
  - Demonstrate the outcomes we are achieving
  - Accountability
  - Continuous improvement
- DMERTTS Strategy

(Documentation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Reporting, Training, Teamwork and Supervision)

The Journey
What did we do, how did we do it?

- Clarifying our paradigm/worldview–

  - Pragmatism as a research paradigm, not just a practical methodology

  - Focuses on solving practical problems in the 'real world'

  - No knowledge is ever absolute, research conclusions are "true" in so much as they are based on multiple sources of reasonable information; that they work meaningfully in the context; and that they are subject to ongoing inquiry processes to continue to evolve.

Identify Key Client Outcomes

The Journey...

What did we do?
How did we do it?

- Identify our key client outcomes
  1. Safety
  2. Healing
  3. Capability
  4. Connectedness
  5. Satisfaction

Client Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey (CSOS)

The Journey...

What did we do?
How did we do it?

- Cross organisational survey
- Client self-report
- Ongoing data collection
  - Overall satisfaction
  - Needs met
  - Benefit from the program
  - Recommendation of the program to others
  - Changes to knowledge, skills, confidence, behaviour, connectedness, safety
  - What's good; what needs to improve

CSOS – Satisfaction ~ Needs Met ~ Benefit

Overall, how satisfied are you with the counselling you had at FaRS?

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
○	○	○	○	○	○

How satisfied are you that counselling helped you with the things you really needed help with?

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
○	○	○	○	○	○

* As a result of having counselling, do you think things for you are ...

Much better	A little bit better	About the same	A little bit worse	Much worse
○	○	○	○	○

Mercy COMMUNITY SERVICES

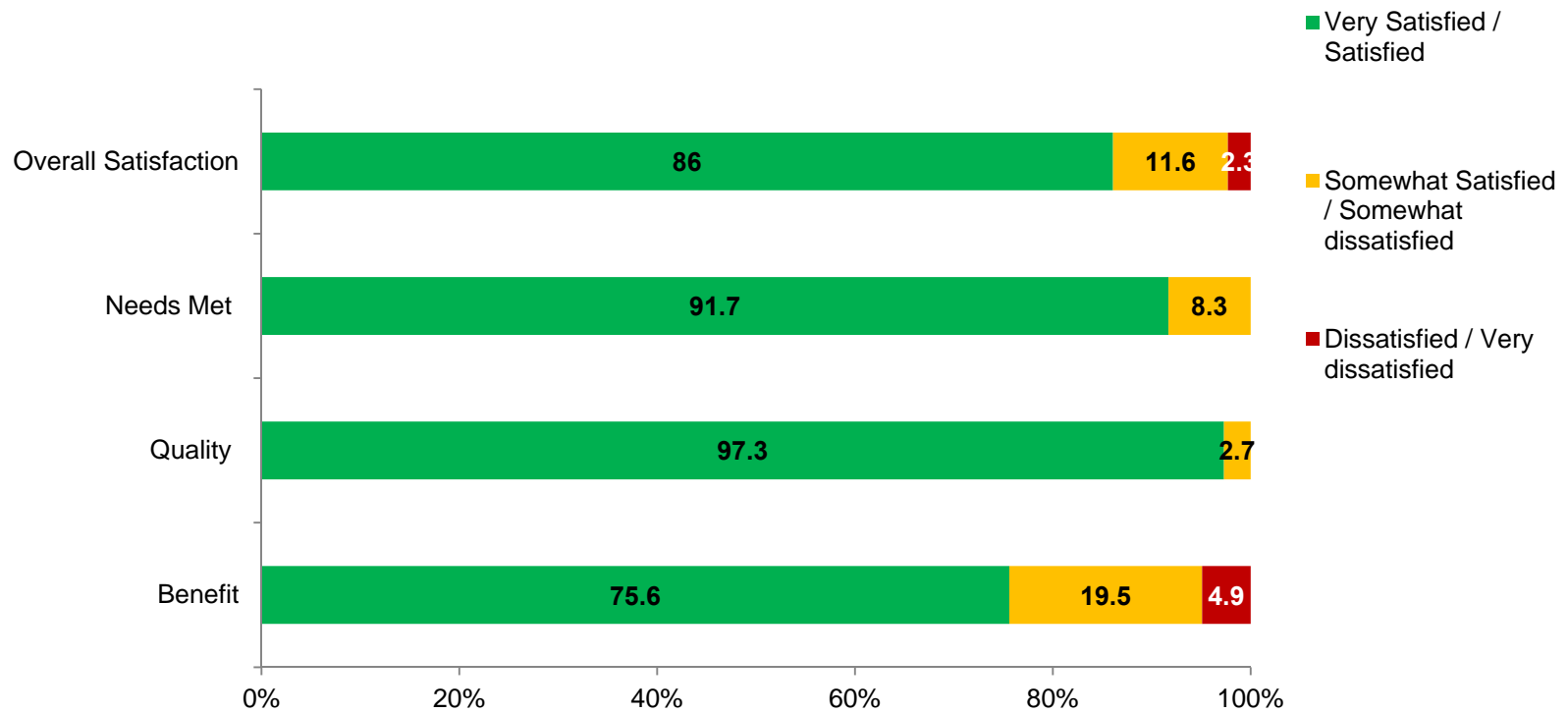Mercy   Acceptance   Excellence   Dignity   Empowerment   Integrity

CSOS - Changes to Client Condition
(Knowledge, Skills, Confidence, Behavioural Change, Connectedness, Safety)

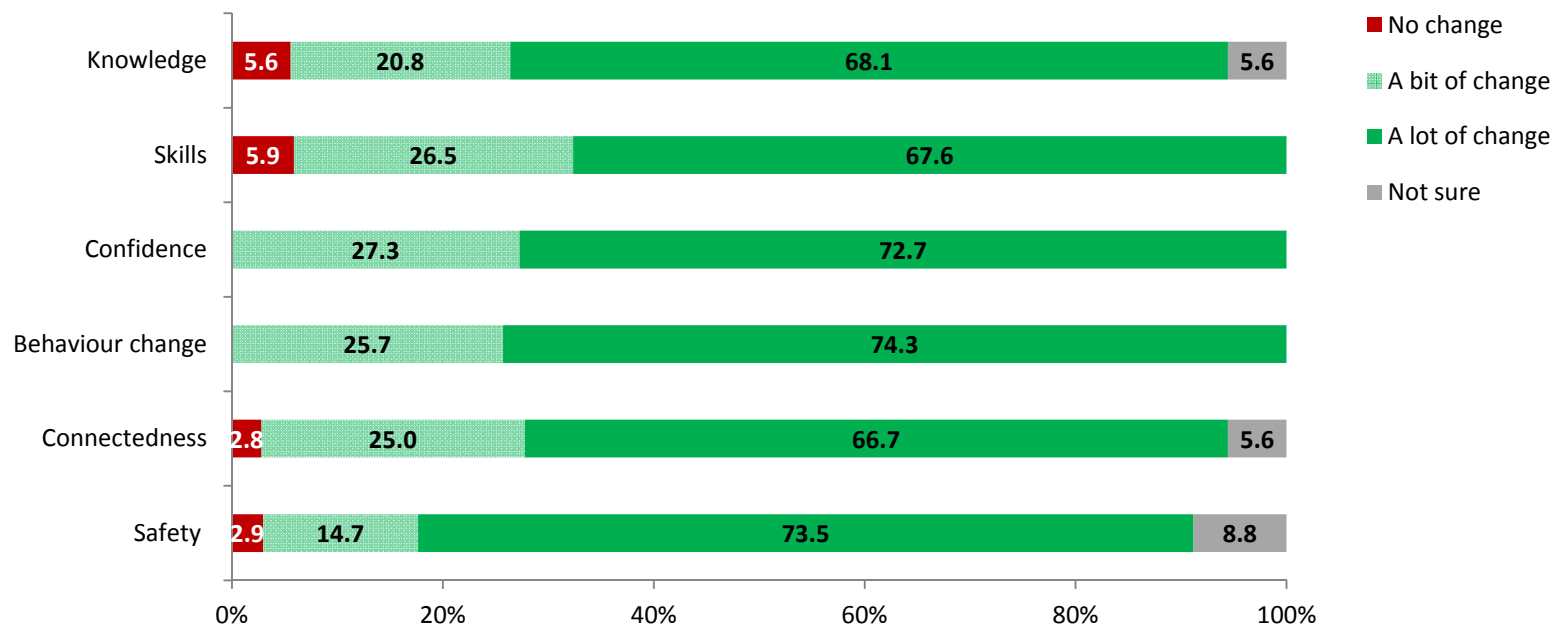**As a result of coming to counselling...**

	❌ Not at all	✔ A bit	✔✔ A lot	Not sure / Not applicable
I know more about the needs of my child/ren	◯	◯	◯	◯
I know more about how to have healthy relationships (partner/family)	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have learned useful parenting skills	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have learned useful skills for managing my own emotions and stress	◯	◯	◯	◯
I feel more confident in my ability to meet the needs of my child/ren	◯	◯	◯	◯
I feel more confident in my	◯	◯	◯	◯

CSOS
January to June 2016
Key Indicators

Legend:
- ■ Very Satisfied / Satisfied
- ■ Somewhat Satisfied / Somewhat dissatisfied
- ■ Dissatisfied / Very dissatisfied

Indicator	Very Satisfied / Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied / Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied / Very dissatisfied
Overall Satisfaction	86	11.6	2.3
Needs Met	91.7	8.3	
Quality	97.3	2.7	
Benefit	75.6	19.5	4.9

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CSOS
January to June 2016
'Change in Client Condition' - Indicators of level of change for clients as a result of engaging with the services

Category	No change	A bit of change	A lot of change	Not sure
Knowledge	5.6	20.8	68.1	5.6
Skills	5.9	26.5	67.6	
Confidence		27.3	72.7	
Behaviour change		25.7	74.3	
Connectedness	2.8	25.0	66.7	5.6
Safety	2.9	14.7	73.5	8.8

Legend:
- No change
- A bit of change
- A lot of change
- Not sure

Mercy COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mercy   *Acceptance*   *Excellence*   *Dignity*   *Empowerment*   *Integrity*
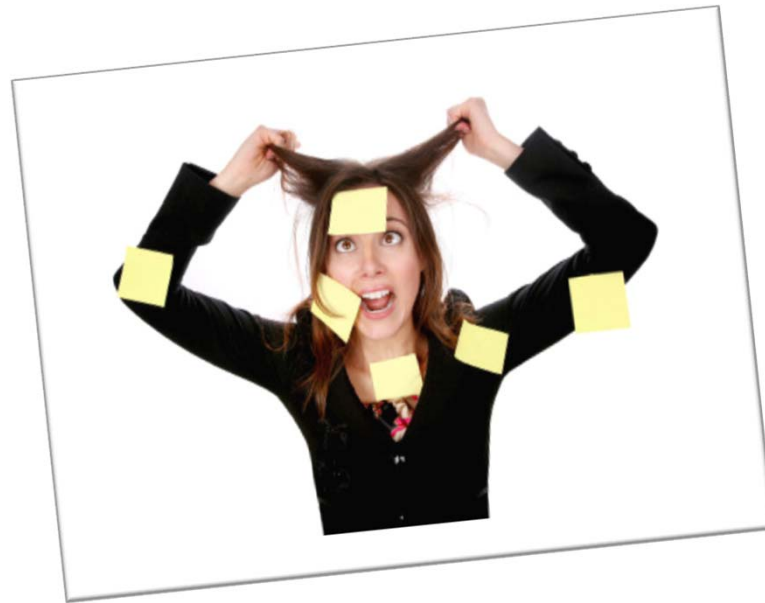
Highways across the rocky terrain
What were our successes?

- Designed and implemented a survey

- Collected data for our key client outcomes

- Gained some useful results

- Ongoing development of a culture of evaluative thinking and practice

- Organisational investment

Was it really that simple…?

The Rocky Terrain

The Context for MCS

Number of programs and
Various Sites/Locations

Types of clients

Requirements from
funders

Client complexity

Stakeholder expectations

Organisational
Readiness

Dirt Roads and Roadblocks
The Challenges

- Tailoring the CSOS to work across all of the different programs and client groups
- Versions:
  - Child
  - Adolescent
  - Adults
  - Caregivers
- Total number of surveys = 33
- Managing the data; software

Dirt Roads and Roadblocks
The Challenges

- Building an organisational culture around evaluation
- Buy in
- Response rates
- Paper versus electronic surveys

Learnings and Advice

- Takes time
- Be prepared for critical feedback and several revisions of processes, tools, strategies
- Ethical considerations
- Celebrate the small successes

Moving Forward
Where to from here…

- Cross cultural adaptation (language, constructs, implementation)
- Enhancing for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients
- Improving response rates
- Critically reviewing survey tools
- Continuing to meet funder requirements for outcomes reporting
- Keep building evaluation capacity and value

Thank you!

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