

NgOIT Landscape Survey Report Case Study

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WALSH Trust

The Walsh Trust has adopted a holistic approach to outcome measurement, generating change right across the organisation.

After investigating a range of possibilities for the application of outcome measurement tools within their organisation, Auckland's WALSH Trust has adopted a unique methodology that examines the success of every part of the organisation.

Trust director Rob Warriner says the WALSH Trust took the view that outcome measurement should not focus on client outcomes in isolation. For example how can you hope to provide excellent services to clients if staff are unhappy with their working conditions? The result for them was the development and application of an outcome measurement system that takes a holistic approach to gauging their success.

"Our outcomes are measured across four quadrants within the trust – 1) staff and clients, 2) community, 3) service delivery and 4) the organisation. Each quadrant is equally important and can affect the other three greatly, which is why we measure them all," says Mr Warriner.

The implementation of such wide-ranging tools has generated a change in culture for the staff of the WALSH Trust.

"It has required our staff to increase their expectations in terms of what is involved in reporting, as well as getting them to focus on developing their own definition of what achievement is. We are trying to support people to engage with service improvement and change across the whole organisation, not just in client services."

At the start of 2006 WALSH Trust implemented a skills based remuneration (SBR) framework. The framework assesses and supports staff development across 6 skill sets: 1) administration, 2) supporting recovery, 3) health and safety, 4) communication, 5) professional focus, and 6) organisational citizenship. The SBR framework is a key strategic initiative which:

- ✓ links the performance of skills on the job to the level of remuneration they receive.
- ✓ Links skills based remuneration to skills based training, thereby providing a structure for training that may advance staff member's careers – as well as providing WALSH Trust with the skills it needs.

In effect the development of a skilled workforce has become an organisational outcome measure.

Mr Warriner says that the decision to approach outcome measurements from a cross-organisational perspective means they are capturing and integrating how everything WALSH Trust does impacts on the quality of service their clients receive.

The client outcome measurement tools used by the WALSH Trust include the Life Skills Profile and two self reports, a Satisfaction With Life Scale and a Mastery Scale. The latter two were adapted from well-tested tools developed in the US.

“The Life Skills Profile can be justifiably criticised. Some of the language in this tool is a bit dated but the important thing for us was its validity. It has been in use since the late 1980s and is used in many different countries.”

Mr Warriner says the type or age of well-tested outcome measurement tools can often be less important than the way they are used and how the results are interpreted within organisations.

“The real benefits for us have been the shift of culture and focus generated by looking at outcomes more broadly. Service improvement is occurring throughout the organisation which is great for clients,” he says.

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