VOCAL (Voice of Carers Across Lothian)

Established by carers in 1994, we provide support to unpaid carers:

➤ Provision of information

➤ Carer support

➤ Carer training

➤ Advocacy

➤ Counselling

➤ Carer consultation

VOCAL's approach to capturing outcomes Key steps in the process…

- Defining VOCAL's outcomes by discussing and debating in the team what we could support carers to change

- Establishing how to capture those outcomes

- Implementation and ongoing learning

Establishing how to capture those outcomes

- VOCAL Working Group set up to try to answer this question – this group continues to meet and co-ordinate implementation

- Group consists of staff from services across VOCAL – training, one to one carer support, and IT

Establishing how to capture those outcomes

We looked at:

- VOCAL's outcomes

- Our existing practice

- Learning from pilot sites across Scotland

VOCAL's approach to capturing outcomes Flexibility with consistency

- The aim is to record the key outcomes the carer is seeking to achieve – these outcomes are identified in conversation with the carer (baseline)

- The recording tool allows staff and the carer to be flexible in the way they have those conversations eg. face to face, over telephone, in one meeting, over a number of meetings

- The recording tool brings a consistency to the way we record that conversation

- No later than 3 months after the initial baseline is established the impact of the support/services offered are reviewed with the carer (review)

VOCAL's approach to capturing outcomes A conversational approach

- **Baseline**

  - Very important issue

  - Important issue

  - Small issue

  - Not an issue

- **Review**

  - Big improvement

  - Small improvement

  - No improvement (no deterioration)

  - Worse

The impact of the approach on our work

- The approach and recording tool introduce a consistent and outcome-focused approach across VOCAL

- It helps us to shape the support offered to each carer in a co-ordinated way

- It helps VOCAL to develop future services based on the collective feedback from the approach

- It allows VOCAL to provide evidence based feedback to other services and agencies

Key lessons after four years of implementation….

- The outcomes approach has involved a major shift in practice – shifting the focus from tasks/resources to focus on what we are trying to change

- Supporting this change in practice is crucial – training, team meetings and supervision

- Revisiting and reinforcing communication skills is key to the shift as it is an approach based on capturing and reviewing outcomes through conversations with the carer

- It is a whole systems change – managers, front line practitioners , data recording and analysis – so the systems have to support the change

Key lessons after four years of implementation….

- It is crucial to separate out the conversation from the recording tool – the recording tool should be used to record the salient points but is **not** the framework for the conversation

- Engaging staff in ongoing debate and discussion is key as this creates a feedback loop for ongoing learning

- It takes time, perseverance and commitment – we are still learning and improving – current focus is on data analysis

- **It works - for the carer but also for the organisation**

Defining VOCAL's outcomes –
we aim to have the following impact on carers:

- Carers will report being better informed about issues linked to their caring role

- Carers will report improved confidence in their ability to shape services and support

- Carers will report improved confidence in managing their caring role

- Carers will report improved physical and mental wellbeing

- Carers will report improved confidence in their ability to deal with the changing relationships resulting from the caring role

- Carers will report improved social wellbeing

- Carers will report improved economic wellbeing

- Carers will report improved personal safety in relation to their caring role

Positive outcomes – what carers say…

- Improved knowledge and understanding of condition, support available and rights

- Accessed services and support e.g. respite, care package

- Making time for yourself – socialising, time for other important relationships and other activities

- Feeling understood, listened to and valued

- Having a chance to reflect on issues

- Being more confident and assertive in dealing with others such as professionals, family and cared for – more in control

- Clear boundaries in place/clarification of roles – better relationship with cared for person

- Feeling less guilty

- Meeting and talking to other carers

Personal outcomes and integration

One of the stated objectives of integration is that,

'Health and social care services are firmly integrated around the needs of individuals, their carer and other family members'

- How do you ensure that personal outcomes remain personal within a framework that is aggregating data to partnership level? National level?

- Should this be captured via process measures, for example:
    - How are you supporting people to identify their personal outcomes?
    - How are people being supported to achieve their personal outcomes?
    - How is the information being used in service planning and delivery locally?

- Should we be developing a performance and **improvement** framework?

- The evidence from VOCAL's experience is that engagement with the individual is fundamental to the successful implementation of the outcomes approach