Transforming Human Services: A National View of the Puzzle

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The Problem

"All organizations are designed, intentionally or unwittingly, to achieve precisely the results they get."
R. Spencer Darling, 2004
Business Consultant

The Problem

"... the mental health delivery system is fragmented and in disarray ... lead[ing] to unnecessary and costly disability, homelessness, school failure and incarceration."
New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003

Transformation Goals

- Mental Health Care Is Consumer and Family Driven
- Disparities in Mental Health Services Are Eliminated
- Early Mental Health Screening, Assessment, and Referral to Services Are Common Practice
- Excellent Mental Health Care Is Delivered

Transformation

- Transformation means change
- Establish new ways of functioning in human services
- Beyond the rhetoric, how can human service systems be transformed?

Transformation Efforts

- MI: Reliable process/outcome measures of child progress
- OK: Methods to align government policies and better practices
- KS: Coordinated consumer advocacy
- CIMH: IPO for human services
- NY/NE SOC: Cross-system analyses and responses to family problems
### Transformation Agenda

- **Initiate & Manage Change**
- **Implement Innovations**
- **Sustainable Infrastructure**

### Initiate & manage change

- **Cannot change a whole system at one time**
- **Manage the old while creating the new**
- **Retain the best (of the old) while changing the rest**
- **Reduce impact of mistakes (minimize damage, increase flexibility, repair rapidly)**

### Policy - Practice - Feedback

- **Policy (Plan)**
  - Study - Act
  - Structure
  - Consumer Benefits
  - Procedure
  - Practice

- **Practice (Do)**

- **Feedback**

- **Form follows Function**

### Implement Innovations

- **Organizational Structures/Culture**
  - Practitioner
  - Purveyor
  - Evidence-based Practices
  - Fidelity & Outcome Measures

### Sustainable Infrastructure

- **Be an echo-holic**
  - Become addicted to feedback and assessments of results
  - **Form follows function**

- **Focus on function (measurable benefits to consumers)**

- **The feedback loop enables the learning process**
- **The feedback loop provides a trusted guidance system**
  - Approximations to the overall goals of the system at each level
  - Prompts action in the plan – do – study – act – cycle
Sustainable Infrastructure

- Measure benefits to consumers and society, don’t assume them
- Too many conflicting variables to assume that high fidelity implementation will automatically result in significant consumer benefits
- Level of Functioning system in Michigan’s Children’s MH

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Download the implementation monograph at:
http://nirn.fmhi.usf.edu/resources/publications/Monograph/index.cfm

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