EVALUATING ARTS AND HEALTH COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

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Dublin

What is Evaluation?

- A process through which you can assess whether what you planned and did produced the expected results.

- Establishes a link that shows that good outcomes were not accidental but were intended.

- Entitles you to claim success through evidence

- The art of asking good questions

- Gathering different perspectives – participants, artists, partners, funders

- Learning and improvement

- Reflection

Myths

Evaluation is all numbers.

Evaluation is only for funders. The most effective evaluation is designed to answer your own questions

Evaluation is not about PROVING the value of your work or advocating it. It can help you to advocate but it is more neutral

Evaluation is negative

Evaluation is retrospective. It is more effective if it runs alongside your work

Why Evaluate?

- Reporting and accounting for funding

- Learning and improvement

- Management Information

- Evidence gathering to prove value of project

- Effectiveness and Confidence in process

Who do you evaluate for …. ?

- Yourself
- Your participants
- Your commissioner/ funder/ employer
- The wider community of practice

Ethical Issues

- Ethics are moral principles or values generally governing the conduct of an individual or group.

- Not a one-way relationship as all parties are responsible for maintaining and fostering ethical standards and conduct.

- Protect all groups involved in research: participants, institutions, funders and researchers throughout the lifetime of the research and into the dissemination process

Trust, Truth and Integrity

- ## Participants Rights:
  - Choose whether to participate in the research
  - Be in a safe environment during the research
  - Be informed as to what the research is about
  - Be granted privacy of the research results if promised
  - People should not be coerced into participating in research. This is especially relevant where researchers rely on 'captive audiences' – schools, prisons, universities etc

- ## Approaches:
  - Integrity and Transparency
  - Free and Informed consent
  - Voluntary and without coercion
  - Anonymity and permission
  - Accuracy and Honesty

Stages in Evaluation

Before Starting the Project

Plan the Evaluation

→

During the Project

Record Activity

Monitor Quality

→

At the End of the Project

Evaluate Outcomes

Evaluate Impact

A Logic Model

Resources — Resources are needed to run a project

Activities — Applying resources to planned activities

Outputs — Accomplishing your planned activities leads to achieving the services you intended

Outcomes — If you achieve your planned activities, participants will benefit in certain ways

Impact — If these benefits are achieved then changes can be expected

Collecting Information

- Collect data well about 5 or 6 aspects of your project rather than collect inconsistent data about 15

- You need to do two things:
  - Think about what you need in advance including how you can get it and who will collect it
  - Collect information consistently and at the right time because inaccurate or incomplete data is worse than none at all

Understanding your Baseline

- What was the starting point?

- Who are the participants and what were their expectations and experiences?

- What was the starting point for the organisation?

- What was your own starting point?

Qualitative v Quantitative

A balance between the two methods creates a deeper and richer evidence base.

They are not discrete categories but different ends of a spectrum and are complementary data gathering methods.

- Qualitative evidence comprises narrative descriptions, images, stories, case studies of participants etc
- Supports interpretation

- Quantitative methods gather evidence that can be represented numerically
- Supports generalisation.

Good Questions

- Start with the issues you are concerned with
- Address a few issues rather than lots
- Translate the issues into questions that are:
  - Unambiguous
  - A mix of closed and open questions
  - Cleary worded, jargon free and precise
  - Simple
  - Neutral
  - Appropriate for the age group/ client group

Interviews

- Aims and purpose – what are you trying to find out?

- Who will you interview?

- Determine questions - decide how structured this will be and how much you will stray from the questions

- Contact potential interviewees and set dates

- Note taking/ recording

- Analysis and interpretation

Surveys

- Aims of survey – what information do you want to gather?
- Draft the survey
- Pilot it with three or four people
- Adjust and amend
- Covering letter/ email which explains the survey purpose and context
- Disseminate
- Number as they are returned
- Produce a database structure and enter data
- Analyse

Focus Groups

- Clarify the purpose and the questions to ask
- Decide on and invite participants – 8-10 per group
- Room should be accessible and private. Layout should encourage group discussion.
- Facilitator and note taker
- Establish ground rules – everyone has a say!
- Analyse the discussion quickly after the meeting

Analysing Data

- Enter the data in a spreadsheet with columns for questions and rows for respondents
- Clean the data by checking for errors or answers that are inconsistent
- Analyse the data for patterns, use tables, averages etc
- Reanalyse the data for new patterns, ideas or themes
- Present the data in tables, graphs, charts or images. Provide enough information for the reader to understand the data.

Presenting Data

- Tables
- Graphs
- Case studies
- Quotations from surveys/ interviews
- State the number in the sample
- Avoid percentages when the sample is less than 20
- Be precise and accurate
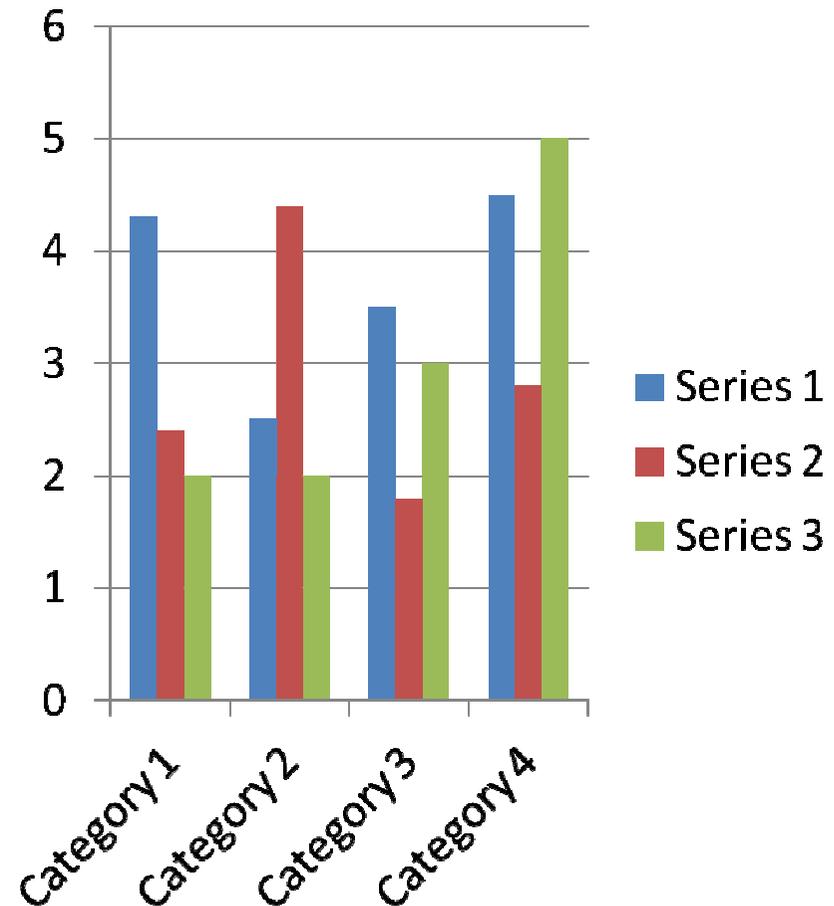
Report Writing

- Clear, coherent and concise
- Style:
  - Active voice – the artists led a session
  - Avoid vague terms like 'some'
  - Concentrate on facts
  - Celebrate strengths but also be honest about weaknesses
  - Use numbers
  - Respect confidentiality
  - Depersonalise criticism
- Four questions:
  - What did you do?
  - What did you achieve?
  - What is the evidence for the achievements?
  - What was the learning and how might this affect future work

A good evaluation is….

- Useful – informing future projects, other artists, your work

- Meaningful – it says something clear about the project's achievements

- Accurate – it doesn't mask the less effective parts of the project but reflects accurately what was achieved

- Fair – respecting the people involved and reflecting in a balanced and honest way on the project.

Resources

- Arts Council England Self Evaluation Framework: http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/selfevaluation/framework/
- Big Lottery Guidance on Self Evaluation: http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/evaluationandresearch-uk/understanding_self-evaluation.htm
- Evaluation Toolkit Arts Council Northern Ireland: http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/departs/all/report/VoluntaryCommunityArtsEvalToolkit.pdf

Handouts

- **What's in a word?**
- **Aims and Objectives**
- Your aim is what you want to achieve, your objectives are the things you need to do to achieve it. Neither needs to be long or complex or written in a particular language. It's your aim for your project and it has to make sense to you.
- *Example:*
- *Our aim is to get older people to enjoy keeping fit*
- *Objectives:*
- *To run a weekly dance class from January – March*
- *To help them make a performance based on their own ideas*
- *To train two health workers to continue the work*
- **Analysis**
- The process of interpreting the data gathered to tell a story. Data alone is of no use unless it is analysed systematically to work out what it is telling us. There are 5 stages to analysis:
- Enter the data in a spreadsheet with columns for questions and rows for respondents
- Clean the data by checking for errors or answers that are inconsistent
- Analyse the data for patterns, use tables, averages etc
- Reanalyse the data for new patterns, ideas or themes
- Present the data in tables, graphs, charts or images. Provide enough information for the reader to understand the data.

- **Baseline**
- The starting point before the project took place which will provide a benchmark against which you can measure and see what happened in practice.
- **Formative Evaluation**
- This takes place during the project and provides feedback on progress. It looks at process, measures, outputs and indicators.
- **Impact**
- Impacts are community wide benefits whether in social, cultural or economic terms.
- **Indicator**
- You should be able to say what success will look like if you achieve your aim
- *Example: Our aim is to get older people to enjoy keeping fit*
- *The Indicator might be: At least half the participants want to carry on dancing after the project*
- **Inputs**
- The inputs to any project are the resources that are needed to run it. This could be money, people, spaces, materials or ideas.
- **Logic Model**
- This is a picture of how your project works. It provides a way of approaching evaluation that is systematic and starts with the aspired for outcomes. It provides a clear picture of your assumptions, particularly how planned activities will lead to outcomes. It is a simple yet powerful tool that can help to clarify your thinking.
- **Outcomes**
- What happened as a result of the project. Changes in behaviour, skills and attitudes would be examples of this.
- **Outputs**
- What you did in the project. Generally, this is the number and type of participants, the number and type of activities and others engaged in the project.

- **Qualitative and Quantitative Methods**
- Qualitative evidence comprises narrative descriptions, images, stories, case studies of participants etc whilst quantitative methods gather evidence that can be represented numerically. The former supports interpretation whilst the latter supports generalisation.
- A balance between the two methods creates a deeper and richer evidence base. They are not discrete categories but different ends of a spectrum and are complementary data gathering methods.
- Observation – can provide a vivid picture of the project.
- Surveys and Questionnaires – could be written/ emailed or completed face to face. Surveys or questionnaires are useful in gathering simple factual information across a group of people. Surveys can also be carried out by telephone.
- Focus Group – collect data through group interaction on a topic determined by the evaluator. They work well in identifying what people think and what the issues are.
- Interviews - these can be structured with the same questions across a sample of people or semi structured with a few key questions leaving the opportunity for more interaction
- Case Studies – provide a detailed way of generating a holistic view of a project by looking at individuals. They are multi faceted and can show different perspectives. They can be time consuming and perceived as anecdotal.
- Art Work, video, film, photographs – can provide evidence of achievement and are vivid but hard to interpret
- Records – are existing sources of data compiled for management purposes such as registers, databases, attendance records etc.
- **Summative Evaluation**
- Typically, this takes place at the end of a project and makes a judgement about the overall success of your work against outcomes and impact.

STRUCTURE FOR AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

	PARTICIPANTS	STAFF/VOLUNTEERS	EVALUATORS OR PEERS
Resources		Time Sheets Management Accounts Evidence from Artists on the support they received	
Activities	Questions on Outcomes in Survey	Surveys/ Focus Group/ Interviews on strengths and weaknesses of the project and the key issues	Monitoring and observation
Outputs	Questions on background in Survey	Registration Forms Session Records	
Outcomes	Telephone survey	Group discussion	
Impact	Outcomes survey	Compile data on staffing	
	PARTICIPANTS	STAFF/VOLUNTEERS	EVALUATORS OR PEERS
Resources			
Activities			
Outputs			
Outcomes			
Impact			

A LOGIC MODEL

YOUR PLANNED WORK		YOUR INTENDED RESULTS		
RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT

FOCUS GROUP

PURPOSE	QUESTIONS	DISCUSSION
To understand and compare the perception of the staff towards the project at the onset and at the end		
To establish and understand the views of the staff within the health centre about the degree of change achieved		