Mobilizing knowledge for program development in an AIDS service organization

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Outline

- Background and objectives of "Research with a purpose"
- Project design and methods
- Results
- Next steps

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ACT's health promotion priorities

- ACT's health promotion priorities (HPPs)
  - mental health
  - stigma
  - HIV across the lifespan

- Process to identify the HPPs
  - consultation and research with ACT's stakeholders
  - staff retreat – discussions among ACT staff

- Purpose of Priorities
  - guide/inform program development and research over the current strategic plan and beyond

Research with a Purpose (RWP)
Purpose and objectives

Purpose

Develop the agency's knowledge base about the priorities in support of program development and research

Objectives

1. Interpret the HPP in relation to HIV

2. Identify the programs and service options for implementing the HPP

3. Identify research directions or options in support of program and service innovations

4. Develop and implement a KTE strategy to enhance the knowledge base to program development in the three priorities areas.

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Methods (1)

Environmental scan

a) Focus on HIV/AIDS organizations in Canada, USA , UK and Australia

b) Scanned websites of HIV organizations for programs and services in the three HPPs

c) Contacted organizations and sought referrals for other organizations

Environmental Scan

- Profile of relevant programs and services
    - Canada (9); USA (7); UK (2); Australia (1)

- Content

    - what is the program/service, its purpose, target group, and how is it offered?

    - relevant staffing and partnership information

    - other pertinent information

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Methods (2)

Knowledge synthesis papers

a) Iteratively searched research databases for reviews (2001-2010) in three HPP published 2001- 2010

b) Developed synthesis papers in small teams

c) Each synthesis paper reviewed externally and independently by two reviewers (1 researcher and 1 community member or service provider)

d) Synthesis papers revised accordingly

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Synthesis Papers

- Main concepts/definitions and short comings in the concepts and the research in general

- Which groups are being studied and what interventions were evaluated in the research

- Recommendations for ACT to consider

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Methods (3)

Consultations – bulletin board focus groups (BBFGs)

a) Two BBFGs with service providers and community members (N=12) and researchers and policy makers (N=8)

b) Developed a report based on the focus group discussion

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Consultations

- Gather stakeholders' ideas and perspectives related to research and program development

- Stakeholder report
  - What ASO's should do
  - Specific issues of concern in each HPP
  - Problems / Blind spots regarding each HPP
  - Unique strengths of ASO's in regards to the HPP

Limitations

- Environmental scan
  - only a partial listing of programs
  - not a "best practices" document

- Synthesis papers
  - no guarantee all relevant research is present
  - no consultation with "experts" (except for the review process)
  - Each HPP has own specific noted limitations

- BBFG process
  - Participation requires access to up-to-date tools
  - Time commitment may be a challenge for some people
  - Participants all Toronto-based

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Staff engagement (1)

- All publications available to staff
    - Environmental Scan
    - Synthesis Paper Collection
    - Stakeholder Report

- Delivered presentations to ACT staff
    - Re-engaged staff with HPP
    - Incorporated interactive exercises
    - Described content of outputs documents and how to use them
    - Answered questions

Staff Engagement (2)

- Each program area to further discuss the findings and recommendations
  - Staff will focus on interpretations, recommendations
  - Staff will discuss how to move HPP and research findings into program planning and development with support of manager and research staff

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Lessons

- Researchers and research users are able to interactively mobilize, circulate and develop knowledge

- Service providers increased their capacity to engage research literature for program development

- Greater and more equitable collaboration among stakeholders to better address the intersectionality of mental health, stigma and HIV across the life span

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Sharing our findings

- On the ACT Website you'll find:
    - Interpretations of each HPP
    - The BBFG Stakeholder Report
    - Each synthesis paper

- Go to: http://www.actoronto.org/research.nsf/pages/act.research.0387

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