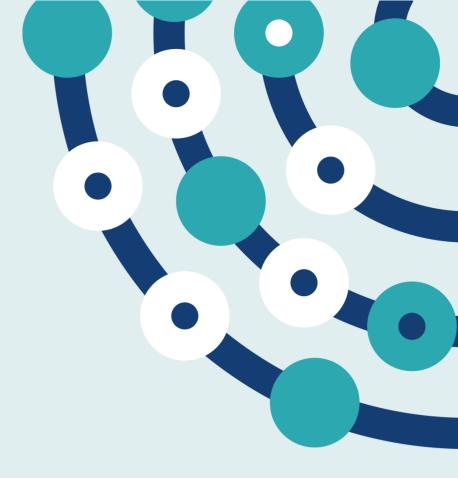


Exploring the delivery and impact of the Complex Lives Service: Emerging findings from a mixed-methods evaluation



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Background

- The Doncaster Council Complex Lives Service provides support to people who face complex needs including homelessness, offending background, mental health difficulties, substance and alcohol misuse.
- It consists of a multi-disciplinary team that closely works with other services e.g. housing and benefit services.
- Support is shaped to clients' needs including help with accessing housing, advocacy, supporting clients to attend appointments and providing social support.
- The service wanted the Health Determinants
 Research Collaboration to conduct an
 evaluation to inform service improvement.

Aim: Use mixed-methods to evaluate the delivery and impact of the Complex Lives' Service to inform service development.



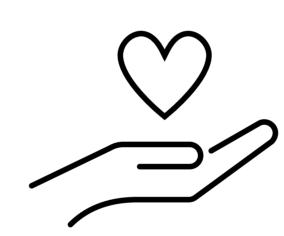
Methods

- Mixed-methods evaluation including:
- ❖ 16 interviews with practitioners 6 from Complex Lives Service and 11 who work with the service e.g. Commissioners or those who represent the partnership organisations.
- 9 interviews with clients.
- 13 hours of observations including team meetings and multi-organisation meetings.
- Analysis of client case notes.
- Statistical analysis of routinely collected client data e.g. demographics and outcome measures.
- We have undertaken some analysis to date and present the emerging findings in this poster.
- As the evaluation is formative, findings are being fed back to the service as they emerge to support service delivery.



Key components of the service

- The service provided flexible support tailored to individuals' needs including housing support, advocacy and 'little' things like washing clothes - these less formal tasks made clients feel that someone cared.
- The multi-disciplinary approach combining support across several services in one physical space (e.g. DWP and housing services) provided clients with consistency of support.
- The partnership model adopted within Complex Lives supported information sharing across different agencies which was valued by practitioners.



Impact

- Clients developed positive relationships with staff - facilitating consistent engagement and improving their trust in services.
- It was easier for clients to access relevant services as Complex Lives developed a 'one stop shop' e.g. people could access benefits support through the drop-in service.
- The service helped people to access housing & other support e.g income, and medication.
- This led to improved mental and physical health outcomes.
- Specific examples of impact included: entrenched rough sleepers sustaining their own home, accessing mental health support and the correct medication, and leading independent lives.
- Services working together helped provide 'wraparound' care for clients to reduce the risk that they would fall between the cracks of services.

Challenges of the service

- Having committed, experienced staff was essential but it was challenging retaining them.
- Clients felt there was a lack of transparency in why things happened e.g why they had to move accommodation, or their support worker changed.
- Insecure funding of the service was detrimental for staff retention and ongoing delivery.
- The service required buy in and resources from other organisations e.g. housing offers were dependent on what was available from local housing associations.
- It was difficult supporting people to move on from the service to enable capacity for new clients.
- There was difficulty providing mental health support especially alongside substance misuse/addiction needs. Strengthening mental health support in conjunction with NHS services is key.

Summary

- Emerging findings indicate that the Complex Lives' Service is having a positive impact on people's mental health and helping to address social determinants of health e.g. housing, income etc.
- Further analysis will enable us to develop greater insights to inform service development.

Thank you

- The evaluation was only possible because of the incredible engagement of the Complex Lives' staff and clients.
- Thank you to everyone for supporting the evaluation including Managers, Support Workers who encouraged their clients to participate and people who were interviewed.
- The evaluation has been a wonderful example of how in the HDRC practitioners, clients and researchers can collaborate to understand more about the impact of services and how to improve them.

Want to find out more?

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