

DEVELOPING PRACTICAL EVALUATION INDICATORS FOR PROGRAMS LED BY PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV AND PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

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Background/Purpose:

The Australian National HIV Strategy affirms the importance of community- and peer-led approaches. Despite this, evaluations often focus only on individual-level factors that fail to measure system-level impacts and synergies of investment in peer-led approaches. This makes it hard for peer-led responses to show the full extent of their impact and value.

The W3 Framework (w3project.org.au) provides a conceptual model to enable peer-led responses to:

- demonstrate their full impact and value;
- enhance the implementation, quality, and impact of their programs; and
- respond quickly and confidently to rapid changes in the broader HIV and response.

This paper outlines efforts to utilise the W3 Framework to create a standard list of practical evaluation indicators, tailored to the unique needs and functions of peer-led responses.

Approach:

Drawing on past work with peer organisations, we developed a long list of program- and organisation-level indicators. We then implemented a multi-stage Delphi Method to enable peer staff from eight peer-led organisations of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and people who use drugs (PWUD), as well as government policy representatives working in blood-borne viruses (BBV) and alcohol and other drugs (AOD), to assess, rate, and revise draft indicators until consensus was achieved.

Outcomes/Impact:

We developed a list of indicators that were specifically designed to evaluate peer programs and organisations and that were deemed useful from the perspective of PLHIV and PWUD peer staff and program funders.

Innovation and Significance:

This is the first time (to our knowledge) that such a process has been utilised at a national level to gain consensus among peer workers and government policy representatives in the development of a set of standard indicators for use in evaluating HIV-related peer-led work. This will significantly improve efforts to understand and demonstrate the critically important role that peers play within the HIV response in Australia.

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