

Using economic techniques in evaluation to understand the efficiency of service provision and mechanisms for improvement:

Key points derived from the evaluation of Swansea City Centre Help Point Scheme

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Help Point+ Scheme

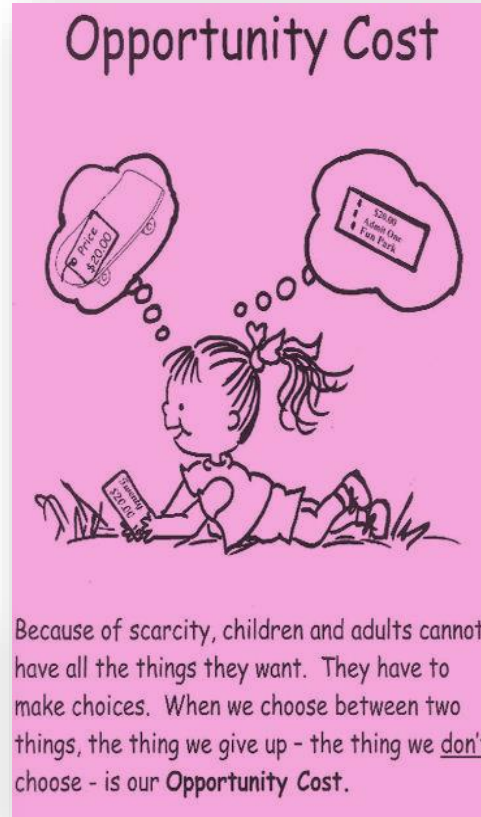
- Recognised a need to develop strategies to better manage local night-time economy that go beyond alcohol and licensing-related issues
- A partnership developed between South Wales Police and ABMU Health Board
- Focus on the demand placed on
 - Police
 - Healthcare services, e.g., A&E and Ambulatory services

Aims to

- Reduce strain on policing functions enabling them to concentrate on other critical and urgent areas
- Divert intoxicated patients away from A&E and hospitals to reduce impact on clinical environment



Commissioning of Evaluation / Health Economics / Public Health Evaluation



Help Point+ Evaluation Logic and Framework

Certain **resources** are needed to operate a program / service:

If you have access to them, **then** you can use them to accomplish your planned activities (Input => Implementation Process)

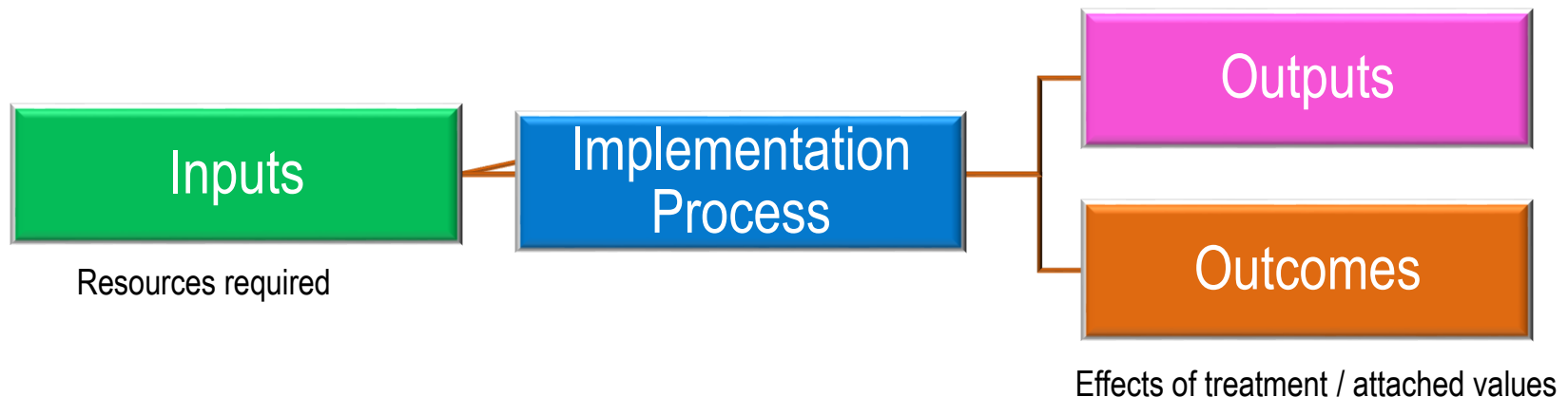
If you accomplish your planned activities, **then** you will, it is hoped, deliver the amount of product and / or service that you intended (Implementation Process => Output)

If you accomplish your planned activities to the extent intended, **then** your participants will benefit in specific ways (Output => Outcome)

If these benefits to participants are achieved, **then** certain changes in organisations, communities or systems might occur under specified conditions (Outcome => Impact)

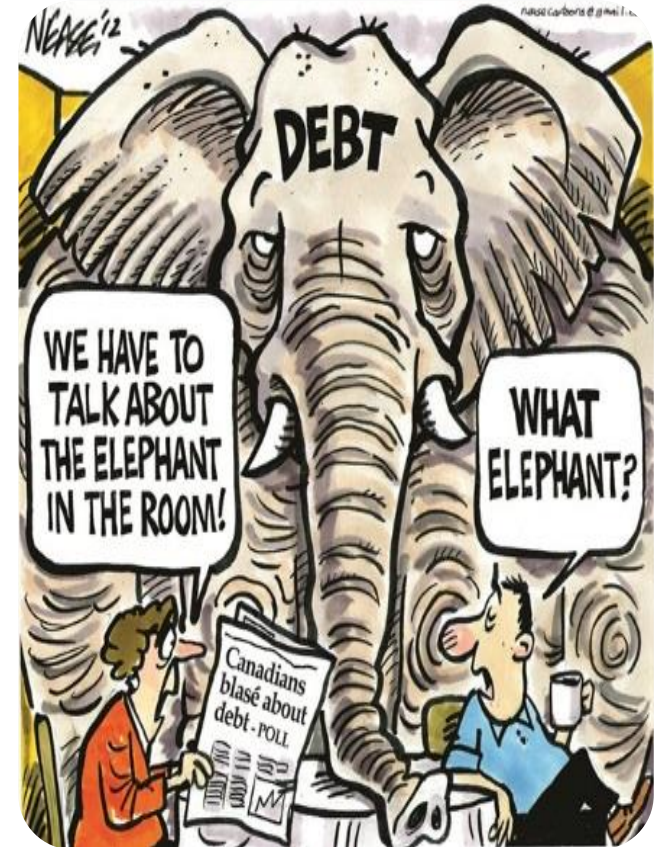
WK Kellogg Foundation, 2004

Economic Evaluation Framework



Elephant in the room...pause for a reality check

- We had time, data and resource constraints - the opportunity cost of the evaluation itself!
 - The pathway on the 'world without a Help-Point Service' would have to be created to act as our comparator
 - Data to quantify the 'true' impact on A&E attendance and other down-stream costs and consequences were proving difficult to obtain
 - Our scoping found that we could inform about the resource use (and potential shift in resources) – however, this would not tell us about the impact on service capacity etc..
- The evaluation had to be 'Real World'
 - i.e., while operating under real-world budget, time, data and / or political constraints an integrated approach was adopted to ensure acceptable standards of methodological rigor

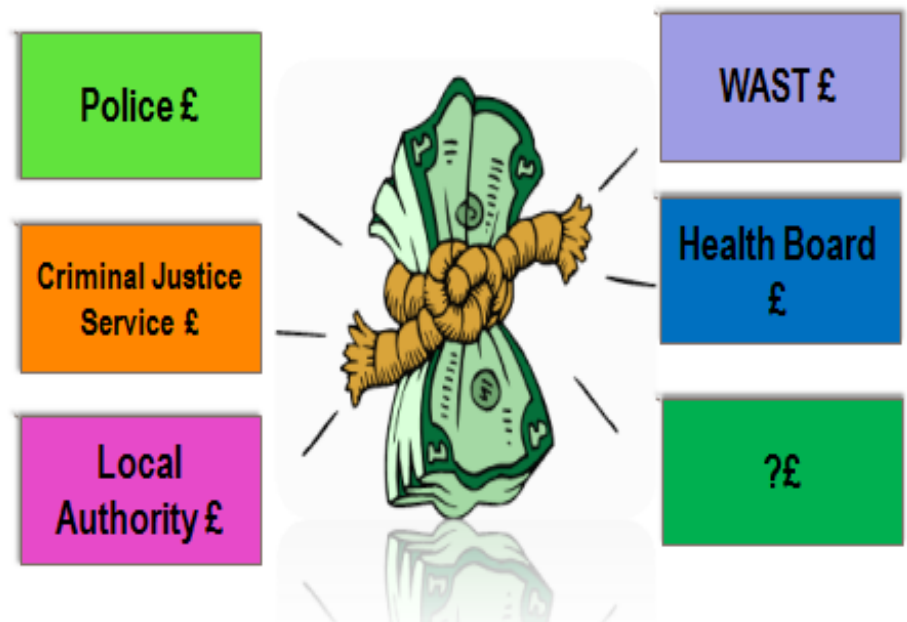


Real World Evaluation Aims & Methods

- Quantification of resources used and associated costs in the delivery of the scheme
- Estimation of key costs associated with the scheme's implementation and the resulting cost consequences associated with scheme on police resources
- Gather and evaluate key stakeholder perspectives on the process of delivery of the help-point service along with barriers and drivers to the service

In a nutshell...

Provide the best available information for SWP in order to support their decision if the Swansea City Centre Help Point Service provides value for money?



Value: a multi-aspect term...

- Process as well as outcomes are as important as value of health care from citizens perspective (given limited resources).

Gavin Mooney



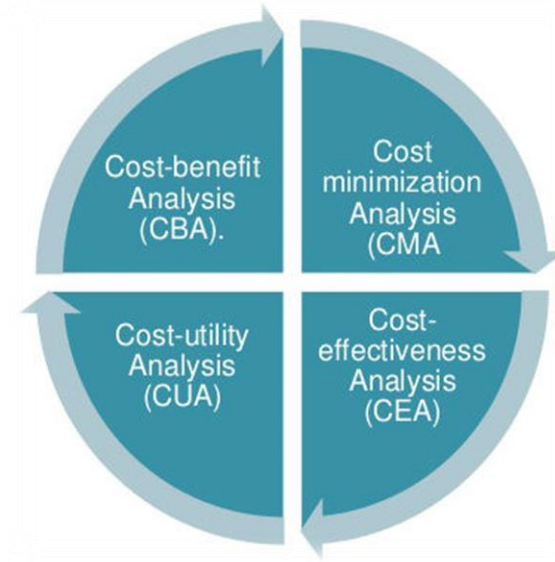
Valuing the Stakeholder Perspective

Participatory approaches should be used as much as possible in [Real World] Evaluations (though with appropriate rigor) for a combination of Qualitative and Quantitative Methodology.

- We wanted to include views of key informants as well as undertake observations to:
 - Broaden the conceptual framework combining theories from different disciplines
 - Combine generalisability with depth and context
 - Allow for triangulation and consistency checks
 - Enable the Process Analysis
 - Observation, informal conversations, interviews and focus groups can be more effective for understanding group processes or interactions between people and public agencies, and studying the organisation / program / service
 - Broaden the interpretation of findings
 - Statistical analysis frequently includes unexpected or interesting findings which cannot be explained through the statistics

Tackling Data Constraints through considered choice of Economic Evaluation Methodology

- We went round the 'usual circle' of Economic Evaluation Methods at our disposal - *none of them fitted...*
- We agreed on a Cost Consequence Analysis (CCA)
 - This approach combines several methods (CBA, CEA and/or CUA) in one evaluation of efficiency without integrating the results into one comparable unit



CCA

*...a tabular representation of costs versus changes in primary and secondary outcomes. The cost-consequences approach **presents all relevant outcome measures** alongside the costs (**without combining them into an ICER**) to leave decision makers the option to **form their own view of relative importance***

Costing Methods

- A model of the care pathways was produced and validated with the wider project team to:
 - Identify key events (and sequence) of patient referral, management and subsequent outcomes (e.g. discharged, admitted to A&E)
 - Develop a measurement framework
 - Develop a resource matrix which formed the basis of constructing a resource utilisation log to be used in the clinic
- Police:
 - South Wales Police costing estimates were used for all police associated costs
- Healthcare (e.g. Ambulance and A&E):
 - NHS reference costs for 2013/2014 were used
- Volunteer services, including St. John:
 - Office of National Statistics estimations of Volunteers

Test and Challenge of Economic Analysis

- Simple, reproducible and user friendly (Excel based)
- Validating our assumptions and produce a transparent account of what we did and why
- Dealing with extensive uncertainty
 - Sensitivity analysis
 - Scenario analysis
 - Threshold analysis
- Consultation on our draft findings and report from key stakeholders
 - Sensitivity analysis
 - Scenario analysis
 - Threshold analysis

Summary of Descriptive and Costing Results

- Over the 12 month evaluation period 1560 people attended the Help Point+ service for assessment, with the highest number of referrals (25%) from the police.
- 61% of Help Point+ attendees were classed as 'vulnerable'; with accidents, violence and acute alcohol intoxication cited as the main reasons for referral / attendance
- Triage outcomes:
 - 74% of individuals were discharged following assessment and treatment at the Help point service;
 - 12% were transferred to the local A&E
 - 1% referred to the police
- Compared to a 'world without' service, Help Point+ is delivering savings to both the SWP and the ABMU HB and further demonstrates time and resources being freed up for the SWP, WAST and A&E.
- **Sensitivity analysis** was undertaken to test the robustness of the cost estimates used.
 - All the scenarios tested showed these results to appear relatively robust.
- The **threshold analysis** tested alternative scenarios that suggested it would seem unlikely for any plausible situations to arise where the costs associated with the delivery of the Help Point+ would increase to a point that no cost savings would be made compared to no service,
 - i.e., the current published estimate of A&E attendance without Help Point+ would have to reduce from 80% to 20% to no longer be cost saving.

Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

- Facilitators and main drivers were the partnerships formed between Help Point+ service providers and 'door staff' along with the volunteers.
 - I.e., networking and cooperative collaboration created outcomes that all stakeholders found mutually beneficial and satisfactory.
- Barriers to its delivery were reported as obtaining a sustained source of funding and concerns around maintaining the level of volunteers supporting the Help Point+ service.

Important factors for project sustainability and replicability:

- The investment of key agencies in supporting the delivery of Help Point+ should be fully acknowledged; particularly 'unseen' costs such as the student volunteers who are critical to its success
- Continued investment in the training should be undertaken, e.g. student volunteers and 'door staff' to continue awareness in, and support appropriate referral to the Help Point + service;

Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions

- The impact of the scheme, in terms of consequences , e.g., reduction in police hours, ambulance call out and A&E services, costs and stakeholder reviews are evident.
- It is anticipated that there could be vast long-term effects and cost savings
 - including huge reductions on police hours due to the night-time economy.

Recommendations

- Further research is needed to assess the longer-term consequences/costs of the scheme
- Changes/adjustments are required on the data collection instruments to enable realistic data collection
 - so as to reduce the need for assumptions and to ensure extensive analyses beyond just police-time and/or ambulance/A&E utilisation.

Main Message

- Evaluators must be prepared for Real World Evaluation challenges.
- Time and budget restraints are not an excuse for 'sloppy' evaluation methodology.
- There is considerable experience to learn from.



**Thank you for your time and interest
– please come and talk to us about
any queries at our stand today!**

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