

Supported Decision-Making Project, Phase Two Evaluation: Evaluation Plan



Department of Social Services

School of Social Sciences

Social Policy Research Centre

Prepared for: NSW Family and Community Services,

Marr

Jane Bullen, Kelley Johnson and Christiane Purcal



Research team

Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia

Kelley Johnson, Rosemary Kayess, Christiane Purcal, Jane Bullen

Intellectual Disability Behaviour Support (IDBS), UNSW Australia

Leanne Dowse

For further information

Kelley Johnson, kelley.johnson@unsw.edu.au (02) 9385 7802

Social Policy Research Centre

Level 2, John Goodsell Building
UNSW Arts & Social Sciences
UNSW Australia
Sydney 2052 Australia
T +61 (2) 9385 7800
F +61 (2) 9385 7838
E sprc@unsw.edu.au
W www.sprc.unsw.edu.au

© UNSW Australia 2016
ISBN: 978-1-925218-52-7

Suggested citation

Bullen, J., Johnson, K., & Purcal, C. (2016). *Supported Decision Making Project, Phase Two Evaluation: Evaluation Plan*. Sydney: Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
	1.1 Context.....	1
	1.2 Background	1
	1.3 The Supported Decision Making Phase 2 project	2
2	Evaluation framework.....	9
	2.1 Evaluation approach.....	9
	2.2 Program logic	9
	2.3 Evaluation questions	11
	2.4 Outcome indicators	11
3	Evaluation methodology	13
	3.1 Evaluation stages	13
	3.2 Data collection methods	13
	3.3 Data analysis.....	15
4	Project management and reporting	16
	4.1 Timeframe and deliverables	16
	4.2 Communication strategy.....	17
	4.3 Risk management	17
	4.4 Ethical considerations	18
	References	19

Tables and figures

Table 1.1 Selection process	5
Table 2.1 SDM2 project outcomes and indicators	12
Table 4.1 Timeframe: data collection and deliverables	17
Table 4.2 Risk management.....	18
Figure 2.1 FDMT program logic model for the SDM2 project	10

Glossary

ADHC	NSW Ageing Disability and Home Care
FACS	NSW Family and Community Services
FDMT	Financial Decision Making Team
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
PG	Public Guardian
TAG	NSW Trustee and Guardian
SDM	Supported Decision Making
SDM2	Supported Decision Making Phase 2
SPRC	Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia
UNCPRD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

1 Introduction

The NSW Trustee and Guardian (TAG) has commissioned the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at UNSW Australia to evaluate the Supported Decision Making Phase 2 (SDM2) project. The evaluation report is to add to the evidence base for the practice of supported decision making within the context of financial management. The evaluation will consider the efficacy of:

- a trial program of new supported decision making approaches

- the perceived impact of supported decision making training for service providers

- the perceived impact of financial literacy training for people with cognitive disability who have undertaken the training.

This evaluation plan outlines the background and methodology of the research.

1.1 Context

Since the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD),

considered eligible for an s71 authority) are managing, or moving towards managing, a larger portion of their estate by the end of the trial program.

People with cognitive disabilities, including those whose funds are subject to a financial management order, are able to undertake financial literacy training to enable them to take greater control of their finances.

It is conjectured that measurement of financial ability at the beginning and completion of the project will provide a quantifiable indication of improvement in financial ability across financial task areas and decision making ability. These measures alongside the collected qualitative information will inform work with PG to develop principles of practice and processes

Additional information about the program including consent considerations, confidentiality measures, entry and exit processes and complaints procedures will be included in a decision maker information package.

Decision makers may leave the program at any time without penalty. They will be provided with the opportunity to de-brief or be referred to services for follow-up support or to talk to the evaluators, if they wish. Supplementary intakes of decision makers and supporters will occur as required to maintain the number of participants in the project.

If a supporter chooses to exit the trial program and the decision maker wishes to remain involved, the FDMT will assist in identifying another supporter.

Table 1.1 Selection process

Stage	Action/Agent
--------------	---------------------

Supporters

The focus of the trial program will be the selection of people with disabilities who want support to make decisions. An identified supporter or willingness to be referred for assistance to identify a supporter is as criterion for inclusion. Decision makers with existing supporter arrangements, or who have a person or people who are readily able and willing to take on the role, are considered more likely to be suitable candidates for the trial program and thought to be less likely to withdraw before the program

Supporters will be given information about the trial program and asked to decide whether they would like to join. Participation of supporters is voluntary and they may exit the trial program at any time without penalty.

The FDMT recognises that decision makers may choose people from within their existing family and social networks. This may mean that family members or carers will be taking on a different role, or sharing their support role with new supporters. The FDMT will collaborate with family members and carers to explore the support relationships around each decision maker.

Trial program site

The trial program will select decision makers from across the state, but the selection criteria will look to include decision makers with a range of demographic characteristics.

Assumption of capacity

Under common law, every adult in NSW is assumed to have the capacity to make their own decisions. The UNCRPD states that people with disability should enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.

Although all decision makers in the trial program have been found by a court or tribunal to require a financial manager to manage their finances, the FDMT:

- assumes that each person with disability has the ability to be involved in making decisions, including financial decisions

- recognises the rights of people with disability to participate in research and trials on an equal basis with others

- will give decision makers with disability information about the trial program in a form appropriate to their individual needs.

The FDMT will confirm that each interested person has given informed consent to join the trial program. Some decision makers may have a formally appointed guardian. In those cases, the guardian will be informed of the trial program participate.

Management of the trial program

Given the number of proposed participants and the importance in minimising any time lag between decision maker and supporter recruitment and commencement, it is envisaged that decision makers and supporters will be taken into the trial program in small groups from the end of May 2016.

The FDMT will maintain regular contact with decision makers and supporters following commencement to provide SDM resources and to facilitate the SDM relationship.

Collaboration with the training team

The FDMT will work closely with the training team throughout the development, implementation and finalisation of the trial program. The training team will be particularly involved in developing resources and tools for the recruitment process of decision makers and supporters, resourcing the FDMT in facilitating the SDM relationship, and in identifying and resourcing agencies and others to continue the facilitation role following project completion.

Sustainability of program outcomes

The program is intended to cease being a trial and continue beyond the end of the project. The FDMT will establish a mechanism including principles of practice, policies and work processes with TAG to embed the program and the principles of SDM within its operating procedures. Decision makers and supporters will be offered the opportunity to continue with the program beyond project completion, and mechanisms for ongoing recruitment will be established. Responsibility within TAG and linkages with external financial literacy providers and facilitator agencies will be established before project closure.

Evaluation

An evaluation of the trial program will be undertaken by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at UNSW Australia, and a report will be produced in early 2017. The evaluation will use a multi-method approach to review outcomes of the trial program of the financial decision making project and the SDM training project. It will also comment on the implications for supporting people with cognitive impairments to make decisions about their lives and how to embed SDM in policy and practice.

Limitations

The use of purposive sampling for this trial program will create a number of limitations:

The selection of decision makers who may be considered to be more decision-ready, or who are more likely to assist in implementing the trial program creates the risk of bias.

The trial program sample, although diverse, will not necessarily represent the experiences of the broader community.

Because participation is voluntary, the trial program decision makers will generally be motivated and informed, which may not be representative of people with cognitive disabilities in the broader community.

The size of the trial program and timeframe mean that limited conclusions can be drawn about the influence of particular variables in decision making or whether there is a causal relationship between input and outcomes.

The size of the trial program sample means that the results will be of limited statistical significance. The combination of quantitative data and qualitative responses will be used to inform policy and practice.

2.3 Evaluation questions

Considering the aims of the SDM2 project and its program logic model, the evaluation aims to answer the following questions:

1. How effective is the SDM2 project in:

- supporting people with cognitive impairment to successfully manage parts of their estate, where possible
- enhancing the financial literacy of research participants with cognitive impairment
- increasing the capacity of service providers and the community to assist people with cognitive impairment to make their own decisions?

2. What are the implications for:

- supporting people with cognitive impairment to make decisions about their lives
- efforts to embed SDM within the policy and practice of support organisations?

2.4 Outcome indicators

Outcome indicators for the project are included in **Error! Reference source not found.** The indicators will form the basis of the evaluation tools, including interview and focus group guides and survey questions.

Table 4.1 Timeframe: data collection and deliverables

Stage	Tasks	Deliverables	Month/ Due date
-------	-------	--------------	-----------------

Table 4.2 Risk management

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Solution
Failure to engage participants and stakeholders	Low	High	The evaluation team will work actively with PG and key stakeholders. The research team is highly experienced in recruiting hard to engage participants.
Psychological distress or other harm to people with cognitive impairment or carers	Low	High	The evaluation team are experienced fieldworkers and will stringently design recruitment and data collection procedures to ensure minimal burden and distress. Delays in gaining ethics approval present a small risk to this project; however, SPRC has developed systems to expedite the process if necessary. We will seek ethics approval to conduct the study as soon as the methodology has been finalised.
Project exceeds specified timeline	Low	Moderate	Timelines can be extended in consultation with PG should there be delays in implementing the SDM2 project. The project manager will liaise regularly with PG to ensure timely resolution of any

References

ADHC (2012) *Decision Making and Consent: Policy and Procedures Final 1.1*. Sydney: Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Family and Community Services NSW. http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0006/228084/Decision_Making_and_Consent_Policy_and_Procedures_Apr_2012.pdf

Psychiatry, Psychology and Law

11(2):202-13

Byrnes, A., Conte, A., Gonnot, J-P., Larsson, L., Schindlmayr, T., Shepherd, N., Walker, S. and Zarraluqui, A. (2007) *Disabilities: A Handbook for Parliamentarians*. Switzerland: UN

Rehabilitation 19(1):75-85

Pawson, R. (2006) *Evidence-based policy: A realist perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Ltd

Walmsley, J. and Johnson, K. (2003) *Inclusive research with people with learning disabilities: Past, present and futures*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Westwood Spice (2015) *My Life, My Decision: an independent evaluation of the Supported Decision Making Pilot*. NSW Department of Family and Community Services