

Better Data: Making the third sector business case for health improvement: August 2014

Prepared by Richard Hazledine, ConnectMore Solutions, this is a briefing on the available tools and resources to help organisations evidence need, impact and service quality.

Introduction

In the current financial climate the need for third sector organisations (TSOs) to be able to demonstrate their worth to commissioners and funders has never been greater.

This often represents a significant challenge for TSOs operating at the forefront of health and wellbeing. The ability of organisations to evidence need, impact and service quality has increasingly become a key factor affecting organisational sustainability.

For time-pressured staff members, responsibly for the development of services to promote health and wellbeing, it can be difficult to know where to access relevant data sets necessary to develop credible business cases to sustain projects.

The situation is further complicated by a mainstream healthcare system and third sector health care services which often struggle to relate to each other. These difficulties are often manifested through the different language, culture and approach of commissioners compared with providers as illustrated in the Regional Voices report 'Comparing apples with oranges' (www.regionalvoices.org/vcs-intelligence). The difficulties are particularly apparent when it comes to the use of data to develop service provision and present new approaches to preventative, holistic service provision designed to support health improvement.

In recognition of these challenges One East

Midlands, part of Regional Voices, a member of the Health and Care Voluntary Sector Partnership (<http://voluntarysectorhealthcare.org.uk>), and Public Health England have been working collaboratively on a project to support TSOs use 'open or free' data sources effectively to support business case development.

The project operates under the banner of 'Making the third sector business case for health improvement in the East Midlands' and has been designed to support the development of the wider integration and transformation agenda across health and social care.

Project overview – Making the third sector business case for health improvement

To commence the project two events were specifically designed to support VCS organisations to access, understand and apply data from existing free sources to build up the business case for their work.

The events were branded locally as 'Better data: Understanding open health data and intelligence to make the business case for your work'.

Contributors to the events represented a variety of organisations with experience of the use of open data sets to evidence need, impact or service quality. Each presentation provided links to specific internet based resources providing free data to support the development of health and wellbeing programmes.

The events were a great success with a clear appetite from delegates and contributors on the journey to develop new data usage practices to support the development of TSOs.

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The events not only revealed the diversity of tools available for use but also helped to develop further dialogue about how TSOs are often well placed to contribute to community level intelligence to develop needs assessments. Readers interested in the specific details of the events can find details of the individuals presentations held on the One East Midlands website (<http://oneeastmidlands.org.uk/betterdataposteventpage>).

The next section of this paper provides a review of the key tools presented at the events and an overview of their potential use by VCS.

An introduction to the tools

Public Health England (PHE) – data and knowledge gateway

Introduction to the tool: The PHE data and knowledge gateway provides direct access to a wide variety of data and analysis tools on a range of conditions of interest to VCS organisations.

The resources are specifically designed to help local government and health service professionals make decisions and plans to improve people's health and reduce their inequalities in their area.

<http://datagateway.phe.org.uk>

Relevance for TSOs: Many of the links on the homepage are designed to direct traffic to specific service areas which would be of interest to TSOs e.g. learning disability, mental health, substance misuse. The underlying profile data with each service area has the potential to be used within an 'evidence base of need' to support fundraising or service development activities.

Health Profiles

Introduction to the tool: The 'Health Profiles' programme was established to improve availability and accessibility for health information in England. The profiles are designed to be easy to understand and provide a snapshot overview of health in each local authority in England.

www.apho.org.uk/default.aspx?qn+p_health_profiles

Relevance for TSOs: Health profile information will be of potential interest to TSOs working within a specific local authority area. The information presented within each profile provides comparative statistics with the England average. The data has the potential to support organisations to engage in conversations with local authority commissioners or support the development of evidence bases for the purposes of fundraising submissions.



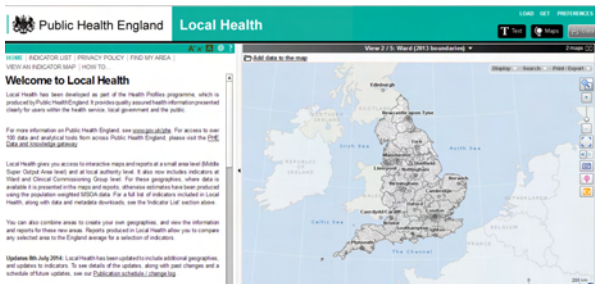
Local Health

Introduction to the tool: Developed as part of the health profiles programme Local Health detailed local health data through use of interactive mapping. Information can be accessed as small area, medium super outlook area and ward level data. Data can also be mapped as lower and upper tier local authority level and collated by clinical commissioning group.

www.localhealth.org.uk

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Relevance for TSOs: The local health tools will be of interest to organisations wishing to build a detailed profile of ward level and trends to complement existing local knowledge.



National General Practice Profiles

Introduction to the tool: The National GP Profiles are designed to support GPs and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to ensure that they are providing and commissioning effective and appropriate healthcare services for their local population.

Using a variety of graphical displays, such as spine charts and population pyramids, the tool presents a range of practice-level indicators drawn from the latest available data, including:

- Local demography;
- Quality and Outcomes Framework domains;
- Disease prevalence estimates;
- Admission rates; and
- Patient satisfaction.

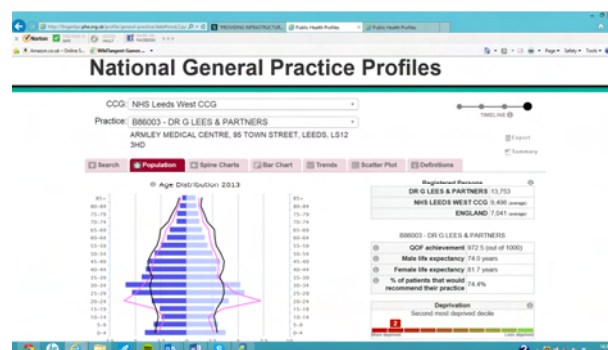
In addition to viewing individual practice profiles, summary profiles are also available for each CCG area.

The profiles do not provide an exhaustive list of primary care indicators, but they do allow a consistent approach to comparing and benchmarking across England.

<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/general-practice>

Relevance for TSOs: A potentially useful tool to help VCS organisations assess the

health and wellbeing needs of the local community from the perspective of the local GP or CCG. Data has a potential application within fundraising and tendering activities.



Public Health Outcomes Framework

Introduction to the tool: The Public Health Outcomes Framework for England 'Healthy lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency' sets out a vision for public health, desired outcomes and the indicators that will help us understand how well public health is being improved and protected.

The framework concentrates on two high-level outcomes to be achieved across the public health system, and groups further indicators into four 'domains' that cover the full spectrum of public health. The outcomes reflect a focus not only on how long people live, but on how well they live at all stages of life.

The tool currently presents data for available indicators of England and upper tier local authority levels, collated by Public Health England.

www.phoutcomes.info

Relevance for TSOs: The tool will be of potential use for organisations interested in the wider determinants of health or health improvement issues. The tool has obvious uses to help organisations understand the most pressing public health issues from the

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perspective of their nearest local authority.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Quality Standards

Introduction to the tool: NICE quality standards are a concise set of prioritised statements designed to drive measurable quality improvements within a particular area of health or care. NICE quality standards are central to supporting the Government's vision for a health and social care system focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for people who use services, as detailed in the Health and Social Care Act (2012).

www.nice.org.uk

Relevance for TSOs: NICE quality standards are specifically designed to enable practitioners to make decisions about care based on latest evidence and practice. The standards could enable providers to quickly and easily examine the performance of their organisation and assess improvement in standards of care they provide – this is potentially a helpful exercise in preparation for a competitive tendering exercise. The standards cover a diverse range of service provision and provide a useful opportunity for organisations to enhance and endorse the credibility of their service provision in the eyes of funders or commissioners.

The guidance is also useful for people receiving health and social care services, their families and carers and the public to find information about the quality of services and care they should expect from their health and social care provider. As health and social care services become more personalised in future the appropriate use of NICE guidance could be a key determinant in the selection of preferred providers.

NHS Evidence

Introduction to the tool: NHS Evidence provides online access to a library of high quality authoritative evidence and best practice. The resources cover health, social care and public health evidence. Resources include latest research and costing tools. Evidence Services aim to help professionals make better and quicker evidence based decisions.

www.evidence.nhs.uk

Relevance for TSOs: The NHS evidence tool is a potentially useful resource to assist organisations to research specific areas of healthcare practice to contribute to evidence based practice. The tool could potentially be used to endorse specific service delivery approaches or undertake benchmarking of service delivery costs.

EQ-5D

Introduction to the tool: EQ-5D is a tool used by health professionals to measure quality of health related outcomes of patients. The tool is centred around five domains including mobility, self care, usual activities, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression. The tool is designed for self-completion by respondents and is ideally suited for use in postal services and face-to-face interviews.

www.euroqol.org

Relevance for TSOs: EQ-5D is a potentially useful tool to demonstrate outcomes to healthcare commissioning organisations and funders. The tool can be used to help measure distance travelled of beneficiaries accessing programmes – in a way which would be recognised by public sector health care professionals. The tool is only available under license and so there is a cost implication for organisations to consider. Free demonstrations and examples of the tool are available.

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Wider tools

In addition to the tools featured at the events Regional Voices has collated information on a wide range of internet based tools that are available to support TSOs develop the business case for their work.

www.regionalvoices.org/evidence

Using data to build a business case

Whilst no two business cases are the same there are some underlying principles organisations should embrace on the journey to develop an effective business case to deliver a service.

Strategic relevance – To prepare an effective business case it is imperative that organisations understand how their offer overlaps with the strategic priorities of the funder or commissioning organisation. Organisations who are unaware of the priorities of their target audience risk developing a business case which is of little interest. In addition to this it is important to understand how their business case helps to solve a problem which is relevant to the audience they are presenting it to.

The case for change – Once the strategic relevance of a service is understood it is important to consider how the service is presented to make a compelling case for change that decision makers can understand. A good business case should present how the service is different to what already exists and should clearly illustrate the financial and non-financial benefits of an intended service.

Presentation of costs, savings and risks – A compelling business case should also outline the potential costs and savings to develop a new service. Tools such as the unit cost database

(http://neweconomymanchester.com/stories/832-unit_cost_database) exist on the internet to help organisations benchmark the costs of existing interventions and model potential cost savings. To help build the credibility of each business case it is also helpful to outline the risks of service provision and contingences to mitigate against those risks.

Development of service options – A helpful approach to the development of a business case can also involve the preparation of a range of alternative options to deliver the service. This can be a useful tool to help promote positive discussion with key decision makers and present alternatives in response to possible objectives.

Evidencing impact – Finally, a credible business case should provide evidence of the impact achieved in similar areas of service provision. In today's climate most funder will want to see evidence of a track record in service delivery alongside an effective plan to monitor the impact of service provision in the proposed area. Further information and practical examples of measuring impact can be found at <http://southwestforum.org.uk/proving-our-value-2>.

Case study: Building the business case – Welfare advice for people who use mental health services

A practical example of a developed business case to illustrate the savings and benefits of welfare advice for people who use mental health services has been developed by the Centre for Mental Health (www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/pdfs/Welfare_advice_MH_services.pdf).

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Next steps

The next phase of the project will focus on how organisations should use available data to present a coherent business case.

This will include the development of a training programme to assist TSOs to navigate and apply the wealth of available data to present a business case for a particular health improvement service.

This is intended to culminate in the development of specific TSO business case studies in health improvement expected early 2015. Each business case is expected to outline the strategic relevance of a service and illustrate the financial and non-financial benefits of service provision.

Further work is also underway to link best practice from the project with the development programmes of health and wellbeing boards across the East Midlands region.

Contact details

This briefing is prepared on behalf of Regional Voices and One East Midlands by Richard Hazledine at ConnectMore Solutions (www.connectmore.org.uk).

For more information about this report or our work on 'Better Data' please email One East Midlands at office@one-em.org.uk or visit www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk or www.regionalvoices.org.