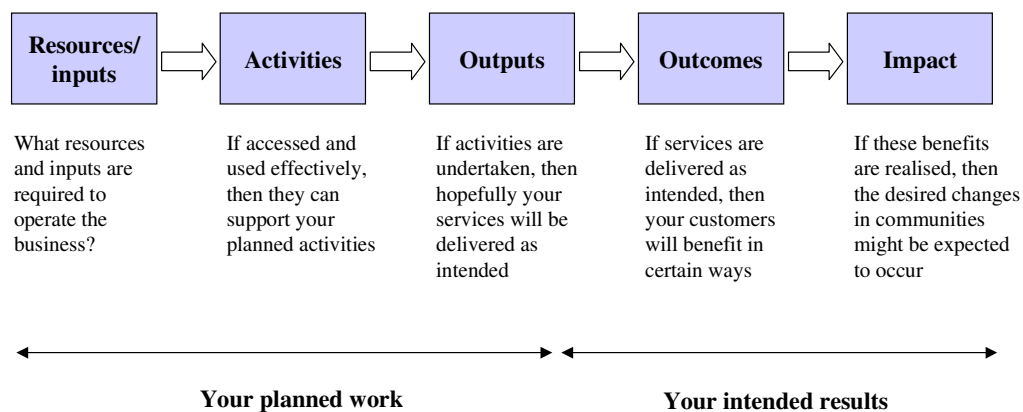


Developing outcome models to support the refinement of Local Authority/CPP Single Outcome agreements as part of the HIPM process.

Introduction

This short paper has been developed for NHS Health Scotland (NHSHS) from recent work completed by Brodies LLP and Avril Blamey & Associates on behalf of the West Dunbartonshire Health Improvement Strategy Group (HISG) - the “health” sub-group of the local Community Planning Partnership. The paper illustrates how the application of logic modelling may aid CPPs and Local Authorities in the further development of their Single Outcome Agreements (SOA’s)

Logic modelling is an approach which aims to provide a ‘roadmap’ or ‘journey’ that projects the sequence of related events that logically come together to deliver desired outcomes (www.wkkf.org).



Planning approaches in many public bodies traditionally work by moving from the left of the diagram to the right (i.e. what impact can we make by continuing to do what we do?). The logic modelling approach works from right to left, working back from the desired impact, through the outcomes (long, intermediate and short-term), to identify the outputs, activities and inputs needed from each partner.

This paper presents examples of how this process can be applied to physical activity. It illustrates how local partnership physical activity programmes can contribute to national government outcomes and local single outcome agreements.

It also provides examples of how logic models can help identify and be aligned with national and local indicators for performance management purposes.

The example models [Hyperlink to PA logic models](#)

The strategic model

Model A is a strategic model which illustrates how an integrated set of local physical activity programmes might be logically linked to local and or national intermediate and longer term outcomes.

The right hand side of the model shows the four high level (longer-term) outcomes that will most plausibly be influenced by local physical activity programmes from the fifteen high level outcomes in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

Moving to the left, the next column illustrates long-term outcomes that might be achieved via the influence of a local physical activity programme, most of which feature in the basket of proposed indicators which form part of the SOA guidance.

Moving again to the left, the next column indicates the programme's potential contribution to more intermediate outcomes.

Finally the left hand side of the model shows the range of interventions and services that may constitute a local programme and, if delivered appropriately, how they may contribute to these previously detailed outcomes. [The letters on these boxes and the colours correspond to operational models detailed later in this paper]

The short-term outcomes are not detailed in this strategic model but are illustrated in operational models that show the contribution of particular interventions in more depth. To reduce the size and complexity of the models, the partnership inputs are not detailed on any of the models presented in this illustrative paper.

The operational models

Models B to E demonstrate how logic modelling can be used at a more operational level to show the linkages between activities, outputs and shorter-term outcomes 'below the water line' and the associated intermediate outcomes 'above the water line' that might appear in SOAs. As such, these operational models are more useful for developing action plans over shorter timescales and for identifying shorter-term outcomes that might form the basis of local monitoring and management of programme performance to underpin SOAs.

Learning and reflections from the application of logic modelling

This section presents key learning that has been gathered to date from our (and others) application of logic modelling in West Dunbartonshire and elsewhere.

Models should be fit for purpose

Logic modelling can be used for a variety of purposes. However, models require different degrees of specificity depending on that purpose. For example, if the model is intended as a tool to communicate a project or partnership's intended long-term outcomes then it can remain relatively simple. If it is to guide implementation then it should ideally provide more detail on intended outputs and short and intermediate outcomes and identify who is responsible for different activities and contributions. If its purpose is to inform monitoring then it should contain targets and link these to indicators. If it is to be used for evaluation purposes then it needs, in addition, to contain anticipated thresholds of change and to ensure that linkages are shown between specific activities and specific outcomes. The utility of models that are intended to guide implementation and aid monitoring or evaluation will be enhanced if greater consideration is given to the targeting, reach and uptake of the intended activities. These elements are vital in terms of understanding potential impact and attributing any changes in outcomes achieved. Ideally partnerships should have a clear concept of why they want to engage in logic modelling and understand the type of model and necessary process that is required.

As illustrated above logic models can be used individually, linked or nested, they can show various partner contributions or identify different contributors sphere's of influence on any given outcome. Again, however, their development takes time and commitment. Partnerships should understand that it requires significant resources to construct the models

and that there is little point in doing this if managers and operational staff are not 'bought into' the process and committed to their use to aid programme improvement.

The value is in the process not the product

Our experience to date suggests that it is the process of developing and critiquing logic models that is of value rather than the finished models *per se*. Models that are developed should be considered as 'live' and need to be regularly reviewed and adapted if programme learning is to result from their use. Although models can be used in all of the ways detailed above they are primarily a tool to aid programme improvement. They should help to identify the key information that needs to be gathered and considered by stakeholders to aid them in decision making about the future balance and emphasis of different investments in the programme activities to enhance short, intermediate and longer-term outcomes.

Ultimately logic modelling aims to improve the service for the benefit of the service recipient. The quality and specificity of the model is important but so are the values that inform the model. In addition to testing the model against criteria such as plausibility, testability and do-ability, there needs to be explicit discussion about the underlying values upon which any project or service is based (e.g. inclusiveness, equity and intention to do no harm). It is possible to design an apparently evidence-based and logical model that addresses the wrong problem or that does harm (e.g. unintentional injury, raises anxiety or exacerbates inequalities). It is vital, therefore, that the underlying problem the model is to address has been articulated appropriately and that the key assumptions and values that underlie the model are made explicit. It is also important in outcome-focused planning and performance management to consider the contextual issues and external factors that may impinge upon the outcomes. Some of these may be outside the control of the partnership.

Logic models should be embedded in part of a wider performance management system and a learning culture

There are a number of barriers that exist in using logic modelling.

The greatest barrier is gaining the commitment and input from both managers and operational staff who may see their key role as delivering services rather than planning, prioritising, monitoring or evaluating them. Logic modelling can be seen as a threatening

process which can uncover programme limitations and duplication. It may be used to inform discussion about disinvesting as well as investing resources and can, therefore, threaten individuals and the programmes that they have spent substantial time and effort developing. The resulting decisions may have wider political implications if, for example, a service is changed or removed as it was ineffective but popular with participants.

Like any other tools logic modelling will be more successful if it is embedded in a wider performance management system that values self-reflection and that is committed to learning from success and failure. Such systems are likely to succeed only if they are non-threatening, reward learning, and encourage sharing of learning across projects and programmes.

Leadership is vital to embedding a learning or evaluative culture in an organisation or partnership. Senior and middle managers need to ask for, and act upon, evaluative information. Operational staff and junior managers are unlikely to invest the necessary time in planning, monitoring and evaluation if there is neither, a demand for the subsequent learning, nor, if programmes and investments remain unchanged as a result of such learning. If there is it be a cultural shift towards outcome-focussed planning and performance management then various stakeholders (funders, service recipients, elected members, managers and operational staff themselves) need to regularly ask pertinent questions about the outcomes of programmes and investments rather than only about the levels of activity and throughput.

Logic modelling is limited by, but may also may contribute to, the existing evidence base

In many ways the utility of logic models are limited by the accessibility and availability of existing data and monitoring systems. There are undoubtedly many areas in health improvement where evidence is scarce or difficult to interpret or where there are few data sources available at appropriate geographical levels or frequency. However it is not unusual to find that existing evidence has not been considered in a comprehensive way in relation to the current problem or context. Similarly existing data sources and surveys are often not analysed, shared or used or no agreement is made as to the most appropriate source for planning purposes across a partnership. The result may be that partners set different and potentially conflicting targets for the same outcome and have varying criteria or means to judge success. Logic modelling, if applied appropriately, can bring such issues into the open and provide opportunities to address them. Logic modelling has the potential to enhance

performance monitoring and evaluation and may, in time, contribute to the existing evidence-base as a result of the improved delivery and evaluation of current practice.

Conclusions

The above issues highlight that logic modelling is not a panacea. However, if used appropriately, it is a useful additional weapon in our armoury for improving programme learning and enhancing the impact on, and experience of, services for those most in need as well as the wider population we serve.

The box below summarises some pertinent issues in relation to logic modelling.

- Logic modelling is a tool not a panacea
- The value in logic modelling is through engaging in the process rather than being in receipt of the product (e.g. is a journey not a destination)
- Beware of developing beautifully detailed models that address the wrong problem
- Be clear about why you want to use logic modelling, the type of model that you need and the resources it will require to fully develop, test, and use it
- Models should be tested via a range of criteria [e.g. the Re-Aim framework, plausibility (including targeting, reach & uptake), do-ability and testability] but must also consider underpinning values such as equity and inclusiveness
- Uncovering the underlying assumptions upon which a programme is based and the context and external factors that might impinge upon its delivery is vital
- A successful logic modelling process requires time and resources and the participation of and 'buy in' from managers, operational staff and wider stakeholders
- Logic modelling should be embedded in wider performance management systems
- The potential of logic modelling will only be achieved if leaders and managers are regularly requesting information on programme outcomes, if learning from success and failure is encouraged, and if such learning is subsequently acted upon to improve programmes