

MH-CoPES

Measuring and Responding to Consumer
Perceptions and Experiences of
Adult Mental Health Services



Stage 2

Discussion Paper:
Introducing MH-CoPES Stage 2:
Developing the Framework for Consumer
Evaluation in Service Improvement

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Introduction to the paper

The Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services (MH-CoPES) project aims to develop a framework for consumer evaluation of mental health services. Stage 1 has been successfully completed with the development of a draft MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services, including the MH-CoPES Questionnaire. This discussion paper will be introducing Stage 2 of the MH-CoPES project with a primary focus on *Stage 2: Developing the Framework*.

Stage 2 of the MH-CoPES project comprises two streams: *Developing the Framework* and *Laying the Statewide Foundations*. *Laying the Statewide Foundations* is focusing on implementing a functioning process for the distribution, collection and reporting on the MH-CoPES Questionnaire throughout NSW. *Developing the Framework* aims to complete the development of the Framework and Questionnaires which were produced in Stage 1. *Developing the Framework* will generate an agreed and fully articulated MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services, suitable for implementation within public mental health services for adults throughout NSW.

Critical to the success of a consumer evaluation of mental health services initiative, such as MH-CoPES, is the support and commitment of consumers, service providers and management, as well as the Department of Health. These groups, however, possess different viewpoints about the role and place of consumer evaluation in the mental health services. The Framework and any tools associated with it need to be seen as useful to all involved. As Stage 2 of MH-CoPES commences, the time is ripe to seek greater definition and agreement between the different groups involved in mental health services about what the role and place of consumer evaluation in Area Mental Health Services (AMHS) through MH-CoPES should be. The different perspectives and requirements of these groups need to be understood and ideally consensus reached, so that the needs of these groups can be adequately met.

This paper is for people who use public, adult mental health services in NSW, and for people providing and managing these services, particularly for those in the two pilot sites, as well as for the Department of Health. It seeks to assist in the process of defining the role and place of consumer evaluation in AMHS through MH-CoPES, by:

- Describing MH-CoPES
- Seeking feedback about the role and place of consumer evaluation within the mental health service. Guiding questions are available in Appendix C, however comments on any of the issues raised in this paper are welcome.

Responses received to this discussion paper will provide information to a statewide reference group and the project Steering Committee, and will inform the directions and work undertaken in Stage 2 of the MH-CoPES project.

Comments sought by: Friday 1 December 2006

**Comments on the issues raised in this paper
are sought by Friday 1 December 2006.**

An introduction to MH-CoPES

In January 2004, the NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc (NSW CAG) and the NSW Department of Health, Centre for Mental Health (CMH), commenced the Mental Health Consumer Perceptions and Experiences of Services (MH-CoPES) project.

It has an overall aim of developing a mechanism for consumer input into the evaluation of mental health services, by providing regular opportunities for consumers' perceptions and experiences of the quality and delivery of the services they use to be given. Part of the vision of MH-CoPES is to build better opportunities for dialogue and partnership between consumers and mental health services around issues that are important to consumers. Interest in MH-CoPES has been expressed at the national level, as a possible Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for the National Performance Framework.

While consumer input into the evaluation of mental health services is relevant across the entire sector, MH-CoPES is specifically focused towards use by:

- current or very recent adult consumers of mental health services
- in public sector Area Mental Health Services (AMHS)

The first stage of MH-CoPES took 18-months to complete. It comprised a series of robust consultations and literature review that supported the development of the draft:

- MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services, and
- MH-CoPES Questionnaire.

The draft MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services was developed to act as a guide to the process of consumer evaluation of mental health services, for consumers and the mental health service. It consists of four phases,

- data collection
- data analysis
- reporting and feedback
- action and change

and outlines the steps and actions to be taken during each of these phases of the evaluation cycle.

There are two versions of the draft MH-CoPES Questionnaire, one for use by people in current/recent contact with inpatient adult mental health services and the other for people in current contact with adult community mental health services.

The Framework and Questionnaire were developed based on the foundation of nine interconnecting principles, identified as underpinning the evaluation of mental health services by consumers. These principles are presented in the table below.

Principles underpinning MH-CoPES Consumer Evaluation

Recovery Orientation	A recovery orientation to service provision means that at a systems level mental health services are to be guided by consumers' experiences and views of what works and what does not. Consumer evaluation of services is a central feature of a recovery orientation.
Consumer participation	Consumer evaluation of mental health services is an enactment of genuine consumer participation, most particularly at service and systems levels.
Empowerment	Consumer evaluation of mental health services is fundamentally informed by, and directed towards creating opportunities for consumer empowerment.
Accountability	Services are accountable to consumers, families and carers, staff, funding bodies, and the NSW community.
Continuous improvement	Services should be striving to develop and advance their service delivery as a core part of their work. Continuous improvement is one of the quality indicators of NSW Health.
Privacy and safety	Evaluation of mental health services should be an activity that consumers and staff engage in, knowing their individual privacy will be maintained without fear of adverse repercussions.
Accessible and equitable	Evaluation processes should be freely available to everyone wishing to become involved.
Efficient and effective	The process of consumer evaluation should be easy to engage in, without creating unnecessary extra burden for consumers, staff or services. The process should also be effective, in that it guides service change on the ground.
Service and systems focus	The primary focus of consumer evaluation of services is to identify problems within the system, and at service levels. It is not aimed at identifying problems at individual levels.

A number of recommendations were made for the continued development of a strong framework for consumer evaluation of public mental health services through MH-CoPES at the completion of Stage 1. Stage 2 aims to develop MH-CoPES consumer evaluation ready for use in mainstream practice in NSW Mental Health Services by building on the developments in consumer evaluation of mental health services achieved in MH-CoPES Stage 1.

Stage 2: Developing the Framework will produce an agreed, fully articulated, MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services suitable for implementation across public mental health services for adults in NSW. This second stage will complete the development phase of the Framework and Questionnaires, ready for implementation across NSW using the functioning process established by *Stage 2: Laying the Statewide Foundations*.

The proposed MH-CoPES Evaluation Framework:

In Stage 1 of the MH-CoPES project a draft *MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services* was developed. This Framework broadly proposed a process involving four phases:

1. **Data Collection:** during this phase, consumers' feedback is sought and provided through the MH-CoPES Questionnaire and other tools.
2. **Data Analysis:** information provided during a defined time-period is collated and analysed, to be suitable for presentation and understanding by Area Mental Health Services, Centre for Mental Health, consumers and others interested.
3. **Reporting & Feedback:** reports, produced as an outcome of Phase 2 are provided to Area Mental Health Services, Centre for Mental Health, consumers and stakeholders at the state, area and local service levels. These reports require clear, concrete information, providing suggestions for action.
4. **Action & Change:** Area Mental Health Services in partnership with consumers and their communities engage in addressing the issues raised in reports; that is a process of Action & Change. It is envisaged that action plans would be produced where necessary, and then implemented.

These four phases make up one complete evaluation cycle. Cycles of evaluation would be expected to occur repeatedly. A range of views were offered by stakeholders in Stage 1 regarding the regularity of the cycles of evaluation, and is one of the questions that *Stage 2: Developing the Framework* aims to address.

What is consumer evaluation of Mental Health Services and why is it important?

What do we mean by consumer evaluation of Mental Health Services?

In this project, “Consumer evaluation” of Mental Health Services means the opportunity for consumers to:

- Participate in the process of identifying strengths and weaknesses of their MHS, and help to assess what might need to change about the quality and delivery of the services they receive;
- Give their feedback on the things that matter about the quality and delivery of mental health services, from their experience using the services;
- Participate in improving services, by generating solutions to problems identified through the process of evaluation, and assisting to implement these solutions for change.

Consumer evaluation of mental health services refers to the opportunity for consumers to have their say about how the service is working: what is working well from their perspective and how the service could improve. Importantly, “consumer evaluation” in this context means having the opportunity to do this from a “consumer perspective” rather than from the perspective of service providers, or others involved in service provision.

It is important to note, however, that there is not “one” consumer voice but rather, consumers hold a range of views and perspectives. So, in this project, the term “consumer perspective” is used to indicate that a process is sought that creates opportunities for consumers to provide feedback that can be effectively used in service improvement, and not limit consumers to commenting on issues identified by service providers as important. While there is not necessarily “one” consumer perspective, there are clear descriptions of common issues that are of high importance generally to people who use services.

Why is consumer evaluation of mental health services important?

1. It is consumers right to have the opportunity to participate in improving services

Perkins (2001, p. 9) poses the question, where should the criteria for an evaluation of mental health services come from: “Whose views of effectiveness are paramount and who has the right to define what service users need?” This question is just as relevant to the issues of quality and service delivery.

2. Consumers views about services are different to service providers or carers views

There is also clear evidence that consumers' perspectives differ from those of clinicians and service managers, and from those of carers and family members. While each of these group's perspectives is important to understand, and contributes to effective mental health service planning and development, the MH-CoPES project is focused specifically on developing opportunities for consumers' input to the evaluation of services. Ultimately, evaluation that is most effective in shaping better mental health services will bring all these groups' perspectives together in creating solutions and improvements.

3. Consumer evaluation of services will benefit services – creating better services for everyone

By getting consumers' feedback staff will know what they are doing well, and be able to build confidently on their strengths. This process will also help staff and services identify what areas they should focus their energy on changing to make the service they provide better. Using the MH-CoPES Framework and Questionnaire will also assist services to meet the requirements for ACHS Accreditation, and their obligations under the National Standards for Mental Health. There are a number of other organisational benefits for services in the application of MH-CoPES. In particular some items or groups of items on the Questionnaire may be relevant to particular programs. For example, the section that asks about opportunities for family or carers to be involved in treatment is directly relevant to the Family and Carer Mental Health Program being rolled out.

MH-CoPES Stage 2

The MH-CoPES project now has been two streams:

- *Developing the Framework*, to be led by NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health Inc.; and
- *Laying the Statewide Foundations*, to be led by InforMH, NSW Department of Health.

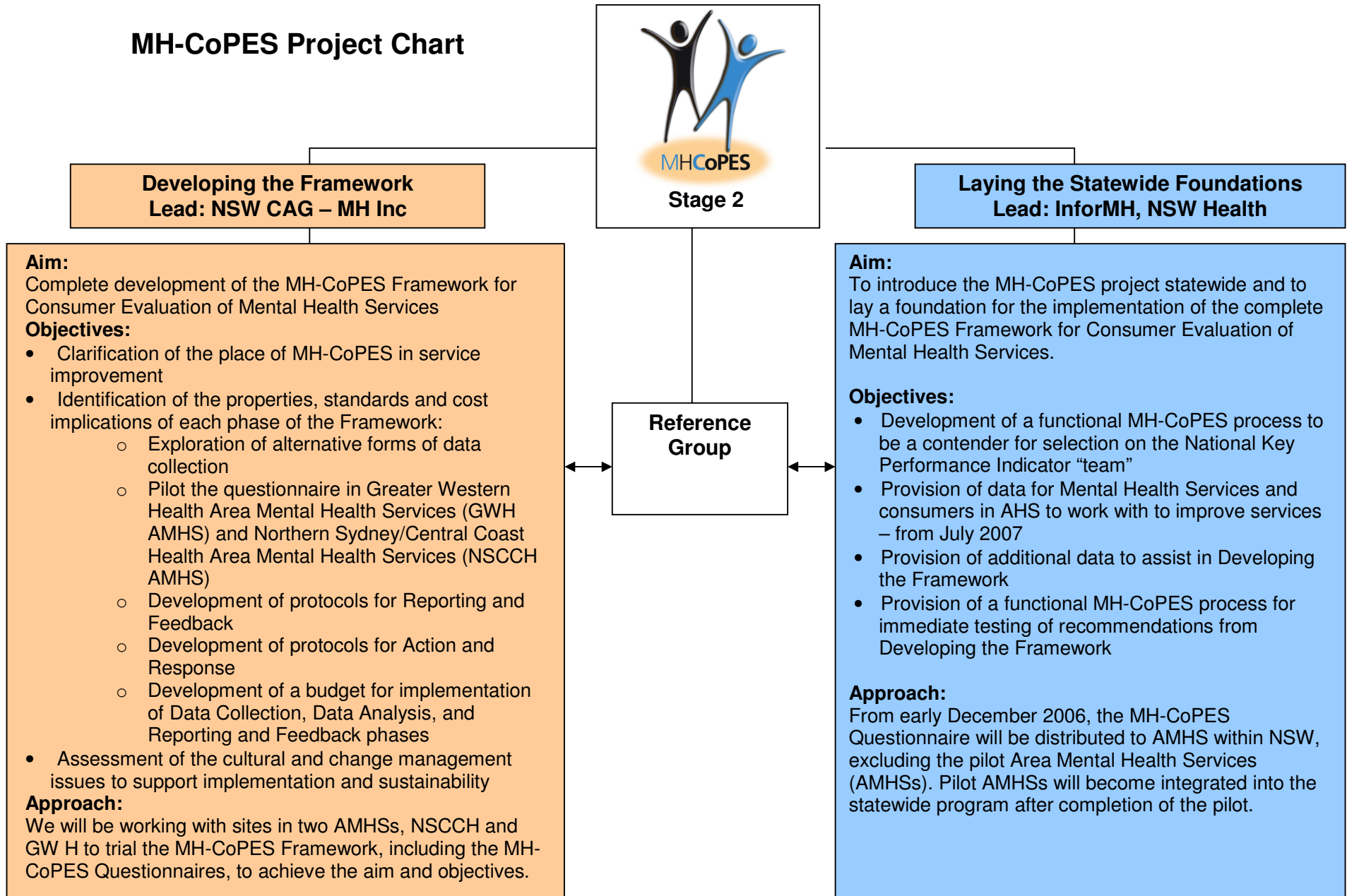
The MH-CoPES Steering Committee will oversee the two MH-CoPES streams. A statewide reference group will be established to provide a link between the two streams and the consumers and mental health services within NSW.

Developing the Framework will focus on piloting the Framework and Questionnaire in both a metropolitan and rural site. This will facilitate an exploration of the best methods of distributing and collecting Questionnaires from consumers. *Developing the Framework* will further explore alternative methods for consumers to evaluate services and to express their perceptions and experiences of mental health services. It will also allow the development of protocols for the Reporting and Feedback and the Action and Response phases of the Framework.

Laying the Statewide Foundations will see a statewide trial of the MH-CoPES Questionnaire throughout NSW, with the exception of the two Area Mental Health Services involved in the pilot. These Area Mental Health Services will be integrated into the statewide trial at the conclusion of the pilot in 2007. This statewide trial will provide a basis to immediately test recommendations from the Foundations stream. It will also enable the basis to be set for the statewide implementation of the complete MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services at the conclusion of Stage 2.

The work and findings of *Laying the Statewide Foundations* will inform the development of the framework, while the development of the framework will inform and guide the statewide foundations and later implementation. The diagram below outlines the project and the objectives to be achieved by each stream.

MH-CoPES Project Chart



Aim:
Complete development of the MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services

Objectives:

- Clarification of the place of MH-CoPES in service improvement
- Identification of the properties, standards and cost implications of each phase of the Framework:
 - Exploration of alternative forms of data collection
 - Pilot the questionnaire in Greater Western Health Area Mental Health Services (GWH AMHS) and Northern Sydney/Central Coast Health Area Mental Health Services (NSCCH AMHS)
 - Development of protocols for Reporting and Feedback
 - Development of protocols for Action and Response
 - Development of a budget for implementation of Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Reporting and Feedback phases
- Assessment of the cultural and change management issues to support implementation and sustainability

Approach:
We will be working with sites in two AMHSs, NSCCH and GW H to trial the MH-CoPES Framework, including the MH-CoPES Questionnaires, to achieve the aim and objectives.

Aim:
To introduce the MH-CoPES project statewide and to lay a foundation for the implementation of the complete MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services.

Objectives:

- Development of a functional MH-CoPES process to be a contender for selection on the National Key Performance Indicator “team”
- Provision of data for Mental Health Services and consumers in AHS to work with to improve services – from July 2007
- Provision of additional data to assist in Developing the Framework
- Provision of a functional MH-CoPES process for immediate testing of recommendations from Developing the Framework

Approach:
From early December 2006, the MH-CoPES Questionnaire will be distributed to AMHS within NSW, excluding the pilot Area Mental Health Services (AMHSs). Pilot AMHSs will become integrated into the statewide program after completion of the pilot.

MH-CoPES Stage 2: Developing the Framework

To develop the MH-CoPES Framework ready for implementation, a pilot of the MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services, including the Questionnaire will occur in two adult, public sector, Area Mental Health Services (AMHSs) within NSW. This trial will assist in answering some key questions that exist in relation to the Framework and its future implementation (see Appendix A). It will inform the finalised MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services.

Stage 2: Developing the Framework also seeks to clarify the role and place of MH-CoPES in service improvement. A further goal is to assess the cultural and change management issues within the mental health system that will need to be addressed in order for MH-CoPES to be successfully implemented. These aims will be achieved through feedback and experience gained throughout the pilot as well as through literature reviews and consultations with consumers, service providers, AMHSs, and other stakeholders from across NSW.

At the conclusion of *Stage 2: Developing the Framework*, an agreed, fully articulated MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services that is suitable and ready for implementation across adult public mental health services in NSW will be produced.

Piloting the MH-CoPES Framework and Questionnaire

Northern Sydney - Central Coast Health AMHS (NSCCH AMHS) and Greater Western Health AMHS (GWH AMHS) will work with NSW CAG as pilot partners, providing a metropolitan and rural service perspective. The services from these two AMHSs that will be included in the pilot for MH-CoPES include both inpatient and community adult mental health units. These AMHSs will not be participating in the *Laying the Statewide Foundations* stream, however will be integrated into *Laying the Statewide Foundations* at the conclusion of the pilot.

Throughout the trial, consumers from participating services within the NSCCH AMHS and GWH AMHS will be asked to take part in completing Questionnaires, attending forums and discussion groups, and being engaged in the action and change process. The pilot will test a range of methods of data collection and explore alternative mechanisms for consumers to evaluate mental health services. An additional component of the pilot will be the evaluation of the MH-CoPES Framework and Questionnaire by consumers. This is detailed in Step 1 below. The pilot process will provide insight and understanding of how each of the four steps of the Framework works in practice.

The pilot will include investigation of the following:

Step 1: Data Collection:

- Questionnaire Distribution – different options will be explored for who hands out the Questionnaire, how and when this occurs
- Questionnaire Collection – different options will be explored for how consumers can return their Questionnaire
- Different methods for reminding consumers to return their Questionnaire will be trialled
- Alternative ways that consumers can express their perceptions and experiences, such as focus groups and interviews will be investigated
- Focus groups and surveys will be used to gain feedback from consumers about their experiences of the Questionnaire and the methods used during the pilot

Step 2: Data Analysis

- Investigate requirements for establishing an independent organisation to conduct data analysis
- Protocols for data analysis will be devised

Step 3: Reporting and Feedback

- Consider the needs of different groups in providing reports and feedback
- Investigate the best methods of reporting and providing feedback to different groups
- Develop protocols for the reporting and feedback process

Step 4: Action and Change

- Consult with stakeholders at pilot sites regarding feedback from step 3
- Engage pilot sites in process of action and change to address issues raised and detailed in the feedback from step 3
- Develop protocols for the action and change process

This process will complete the development phase of the MH-CoPES Framework and Questionnaires.

References

Perkins, R. (2001). What constitutes success?: The relative priority of service users' and clinicians' views of mental health services. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 179, 9-10.

Appendix A

Key questions to be addressed in Stage 2: Developing the Framework

A trial of implementing the *MH-CoPES Framework for Consumer Evaluation of Mental Health Services* in Stage 2 will address the following questions/issues:

The Framework

- How often should cycles of evaluation occur, or repeat?
- How long is needed for the action and change phase?
- How do we know that the questionnaire really measures consumers' perceptions of service quality and delivery?
- How acceptable is the framework to consumers?
- How acceptable is the framework to mental health services?

Data collection:

- How can existing consumer groups assist in this phase?
- What alternatives to a questionnaire are necessary: what are the positives and negatives of these?
- What types of supports are needed by consumers to complete the questionnaire?
- What type of impact on the information collected do these supports have?
- How can these supports be managed and funded?
- How are questionnaires distributed to consumers - who will do this, and when? What impact will/could this have on the information received?
- What options for return of questionnaires could be used? (for example, in Stage 1 a recommendation was to have locked collection boxes in pharmacies where consumers could drop their completed questionnaire).

Data Analysis:

- How will data analysis be managed?
- Should data analysis be conducted by a centralised body?
- Who should conduct data analysis?
- Should data analysis be conducted by an independent organisation or by a body within NSW Health? What are the pros and cons of each option?

Reporting & Feedback

- What reports do different stakeholders need?
- What structures a). exist; and b). need to be established, to ensure the reporting phase is conducted well?
- Who are the stakeholders (not already identified in Stage1) who should have access to reports?
- What content and format is most appropriate for each stakeholder group?

Action & Change:

- What participation frameworks exist to support the action and change stage across the AMHS?
- What expectations for AMHS to engage in the Action & Change phase should be built into the framework? How can this be managed?

Area Implementation of the Framework

- How will the implementation of the MH-CoPES Framework be managed at a local, Area level?
- Who will be responsible at the Area level?
- How does the relationship between local and state management work?
- What existing processes within Area Mental Health Services can and should MH-CoPES link to? (for example, in Stage 1 suggestions were made that this process should be linked closely to the work of Area Quality Committees, and Consumer Consultants).
- What are the costs involved in implementing the process of consumer evaluation in Area Mental Health Services?

Statewide Implementation of the MH-CoPES Framework

- Who will manage the process of MH-CoPES consumer evaluation at a statewide level?
- Should an independent, consumer-directed organisation be established to work in partnership with the Department of Health, but take primary responsibility for statewide management of the process? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?
- How can the information collected be best integrated with statewide information management?
- What are the costs involved in implementing the process of consumer evaluation to the state?
- How can services be supported at a statewide level to actively engage in the process of consumer evaluation?

Appendix B

Discussion Paper: Introducing MH-CoPES Stage 2: Developing the Framework for Consumer Evaluation in Service Improvement

Guidelines for Discussion

1. Did this paper provide you with insight into MH-CoPES and its aims?
Yes No

If not, what would you like to know about MH-CoPES?

2. Is the MH-CoPES understanding of consumer evaluation as outlined in this paper (pg 7) consistent with your understanding?
Yes No

If not, what else should be considered, or what elements are missing?

3. How important to you are each of the following objectives of MH-CoPES?

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Improve dialogue and partnership between consumers and the mental health service			
Provide regular opportunities for consumers to express their perception and experiences of mental health services			
Provide opportunities for participation in service evaluation processes			

- Are there any other objectives you think MH-CoPES should include?

4. The proposed MH-CoPES Evaluation Framework consists of four phases:

- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Reporting and Feedback
- Action and Change

Considering this Framework, how important are the following to you?
(Please tick in the appropriate box)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Data Collection			
- Questionnaire handed out by someone not involved in consumer's clinical care			
- Questionnaire handed out by a consumer or consumer consultant			
- Having other options to the Questionnaire for providing feedback (such as interviews)			
Data Analysis			
- Analysis done by one central body			
- Analysis conducted by independent body			
Reporting and Feedback			
- A range of methods of reporting, eg formal reports, posters, updates in newsletters, forums			
- Recommendations of concrete actions			
- Individual reports to each service unit			
Action and Change			
- Discussion groups to clarify issues			
- Discussion groups to prioritise issues			
- Locally determined action			
- A collaboration between the service, consumers, the AMHS and NSW Health			

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
- Area Directors report back to a central body on the action and change implemented			

5. What role do you see consumer evaluation of mental health services through MH-CoPES playing in service improvement of mental health services?

6. Any other comments or feedback you would like to make on MH-CoPES Stage 2: Developing the Framework?

Name: _____ (Optional)

Organisation: _____ (Optional)

(Optional) Please tick the box below which best describes you:

- Consumer
- Carer
- Staff member/Service provider
- Other: _____

Please feel free to attach additional sheets if the room provided on this form is not enough. It would be appreciated if the relevant question number could be identified on any additional sheets.

Thank you for your feedback.

Please return this form by **Friday 1 December** to:

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