Ability and Substance Abuse Issues in Saskatchewan: From Needs Assessment to Building Capacity

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Community-Based Research Showcase
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Background

• The rates of alcohol and drug use in persons with ability issues (PAIs) higher than in the general population:
  – Traumatic Brain Injury & Spinal Cord Injuries (< 60%)
  – Sensory impairments (40-50%)
  – Intellectual Abilities (12-14%)

• Disproportionally low utilization of SU treatment services by PAIs

• Access to SU services - a basic human right
The provincial context...

  - Providing drug and alcohol treatment to special populations including PAIs identified as one of the priorities

- “People Before Systems: The Saskatchewan Disability Strategy” (June, 2015)

  Recommendation #1
  - SHIFTING ACCOUNTABILITY: Make disability programs and services, within and outside Government, accountable to the people they support
Purpose: Build partnerships with service providers, service planners and services users to inform future research based on the identified needs.

Objective 1:
To identify current EIPs in assessment and treatment of alcohol & drug problems in PAIs

Method: Literature review

Objective 2:
To identify needs in policy and service development

Method: Interviews, 2 community listening sessions

Objective 3:
To develop a research project informed by the literature & the needs assessment

Method: A Networking Meeting

We are here now
Literature Review

– A lack of validated screening and assessment tools
  • E.g. for persons with intellectual ability issues; TBIs, hearing and visual impairment; persons accessing rehabilitation services;

– SU Treatment service providers overestimate accessibility of their services

– Professional skills and attitudes toward PAIs
Preliminary Findings
Qualitative Data
Tree Map (service users)

Nodes compared by number of coding references
Preliminary Findings-Word Cloud (Service Provider Relations)
Service Provider Relations

“Service providers do not need to necessarily dumb things down but they need to remember who they are talking to---to the individuals they are working with...and learn a different discourse on how to explain things”
Discussion

