Marrying Feelings and Facts: Using Both Qualitative and Quantitative Data to Drive Programming

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Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of veteran engagement, objective data, and the client experience
2. Understand what qualitative data is and why it is valuable in serving veterans who are homeless
3. Learn why it is important to incorporate discharge data into program design
What data do we use?

- **Quantitative data** focuses on numbers and mathematical calculations and can be analyzed statistically.

- **Qualitative data** is concerned with descriptions and subjective feedback which can be observed but typically not manipulated mathematically.
Differences between quantitative and qualitative data

**Quantitative**
- Objective
- Statistical
- Level of Occurrence

**Qualitative**
- Subjective
- Non-Statistical
- Depth of Understanding
Big data is like teenage sex: everyone talks about it, nobody really knows how to do it, everyone thinks everyone else is doing it, so everyone claims they are doing it...

(Dan Ariely)
Statistics shows that teenage pregnancy drops dramatically after 20.
What does the data show?

The primary risk factors preceding homelessness among veterans are consistent with those for the general population:

- Substance abuse
- Mental health problems
- Income-related factors
Trauma and veterans

Data shows that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is one of the biggest contributing factors to homelessness.
So how do we engage veterans in treatment?

- Use a trauma informed approach
- First interactions are crucial
- Have the veteran choose his goals and develop his treatment plan
- Give choices in their day
Principles of a Trauma-Informed System

- Ensure cultural competence.
- Promote safety.
- Understand trauma and its impact.
- Integrate care.
- Share power and governance.
- Support client control, choice, and autonomy.
- Recovery is possible.
- Healing happens in relationships.
- Ensure cultural competence.

Healing happens in relationships.
Recovery is possible.
How are residents welcomed upon intake?

- Given a private, clean space to wait for intake
- Immediate needs are checked (i.e. food, drink, shower access, new clothing)
- Keep information at a minimum on the first day
SET GOALS

1.
2.
3.

S = Specific
M = Measureable
A = Actionable
R = Realistic
T = Time-bound
 Choices

The journey to recovery doesn’t look the same for everyone.

The Baltimore Station offers:

▶ Enrichment programs for every interest to help homeless veterans on the road to recovery and a better quality of life
▶ A program that encourages participation, but allows for choice
▶ Programming backed by DATA!
Innovative programming to achieve positive outcomes:

- Drama class
- Cooking class
- Diabetes education
- Tai chi
- Good grief
- Anger management
- Recovery coloring
- Moral injury
- Drumming Circles
- Legacy letters
- Weekly forum
- Relapse prevention
Drama Classes

Research shows that expressing themselves through drama can be vital for those who do not do well with traditional therapies.

Drama can help express emotions.
Recovery Coloring and Art Therapy

A focused mental state can help people achieve a sense of well-being.
Music Therapy - Drumming Circles

Data shows that drumming enhances recovery though inducing relaxation and enhancing brain wave synchronization.
Tai Chi

Data supports that Tai Chi is effective in reducing anxiety and depression, relieving stress, and increasing self confidence.
Giving Back

The value of helping others
Does the data support this?

Consider the findings of the 2010 *Do Good Live Well Survey* of 4,500 American adults.

- Forty-one percent of Americans volunteered an average of 100 hours a year.

- Of those who volunteered,
  - 68 percent reported that it made them feel physically healthier;
  - 89 percent said that it “has improved my sense of well-being” (e.g., happiness)
  - 73 percent of respondents said that volunteering “lowered my stress levels.”
Combating Anhedonia

- Data shows that people using drugs and alcohol frequently suffer from anhedonia, or "pleasure deafness"
- The brain is conditioned to the spike of dopamine that is associated with substance use disorder
- Exposing people to new experiences helps the brain to adjust to new sources of enjoyment and the person begins to experience pleasure again
Exploring/reconnecting with activities

Exposing the men to new activities helps them to regain joy and meaning in their lives.

The following slides demonstrate some of the ways residents of The Baltimore Station are exposed to new experiences.
Attending sporting events
Access to a variety of pro-social activities, including photography class
Recognition of Military Service
Camping
Softball league
Fishing excursions
Engaging with the outside community

In addition to going out into the community, TBS encourages the community to come into the program to share their talents and time with the men.
How do you evaluate how well your program is working?

Qualitative and quantitative data should be integrated to evaluate your program.
Examples of Qualitative data that can inform your program

- Suggestion box
- Weekly forums
- Comment sections of surveys
- “Water cooler” discussions
- Case Manager meetings
"If at first you don't get the survey results you want on your first survey, get mad and tear it up."
Examples of Quantitative data that can improve your program

- Random drug samples
- Surveys
- Incident reports
- Discharge data
This is where we started to draw taller bars to please you guys.
Client Surveys

- Asking your clients directly about the services you provide is an essential form of quantitative data to obtain on a regular basis.

- Surveys should also include a comment section, which is a form of qualitative data.
What should you do with all the data you collect?

- Review quarterly (at a minimum)
- Set benchmarks
- Make adjustments/changes based on the data
Examples of effecting change based on quantitative data

- Explore new ways to have the veterans take ownership of their treatment goals by increasing the frequency of their treatment plans.
- Consider new ways to include different cultural experiences based on the veterans’ backgrounds, i.e. food choices or holidays celebrated.
- Monitor all programming to determine if adjustment is needed based on the population.

The following are some examples of how qualitative data has been used to effect change.
Restoring dignity

Based on a suggestion from the men, TBS hosts a monthly formal dinner series where residents dress in collared shirts and ties and are served meals prepared by local restaurants. On alternating months, the meals are served by either TBS staff or members of the Board of Directors.
Suggestion: Continued connection after discharge

Intensive Outpatient/Outpatient Programming

► Expansion of services to program alumni, non-veteran and community-based individuals

► Medicaid and Tricare eligible
Continued alumni connection
Outcome data

While working with the men to heal in their recovery, it is imperative not to lose sight of the ultimate goals:

- Obtain permanent housing
- Have an income stream (benefits, jobs)

The following are some data informed program initiatives implemented by The Baltimore Station that have positively influenced ultimate outcomes:
Through mock interviews, work therapy, and connections with community partners for training, TBS helps the men obtain sustainable employment.
Partnering with community housing resources is crucial to meeting objectives
Local businesses and corporations are key partners to identifying employment leads.
In Conclusion:

Your performance management system needs to integrate both qualitative and quantitative data to enrich your program and achieve the most positive outcomes possible!
"AND FINALLY QUESTION FIFTY, DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE KILLING SOMEONE?"
We Turn Lives Around

We Know It Works

We Succeed
For more information about this presentation contact Arlene Hackbarth

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