

Evidence-Based Practice in Seating: a personal exploration

The basis of service provision is to understand the needs of the users of our service. To obtain the funding that we wish to develop our services, it is helpful to have facts and figures to support our case. This data can reflect any aspect of our service, but no data probably shows a service unworthy of further investment.

The simplest form of data to support a service is some form of 'user satisfaction'. This can be tailored to show users views about the value of their chair to them as individuals, or their experience of the service provided for them e.g. appointment times, telephone manners, experience of approved repairer etc ¹.

The easiest form of acquiring data is to use basic management data and then to initiate change whilst continuing to collect the same data – the so-called plan, do, study, act tools ². Process mapping is the simplest demonstration of this.

Audit is a more cumbersome tool, when pre-change data is collected either through small bits of data with large numbers of users (quantitative data) ³, or large amounts of data from a small number of users (qualitative data) ⁴. A change is then introduced and the same process is repeated.

Research looks at a question that can be answered through a measurable entity such as pressure measurement, pain, depression, quality of life etc ^{5, 6}. The results often lead on to further questions.

The workshop will explore the techniques available to answer the kinds of questions that may be in our minds, those of our users, the commissioners of our services, or even those of the Department of Health!

Reference List

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4. Davies, A., De Souza, LH., and Frank, AO. Stanmore Regional EPIOC Service: audit data report. 1999.
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