



24-HOUR COVER FOR VULNERABLE YOUTH

Youthline Otago,

Otago Youth Wellness Trust

A KEY SERVICE OF YOUTHLINE OTAGO (YLO), IN SUPPORT OF THE YOUTHLINE HELPLINE, IS PROVIDING HELPLINE SUPPORT WITH QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS 24/7...

BACKGROUND

The Otago Youth Wellness Trust (OYWT) supports the most vulnerable young people with intensive, wraparound support but it is not practical or safe to have their staff available to their clients 24/7. This exploration of a collaboration to close this gap was to see how they might link clients through the YLO Helpline Case Management function, that works alongside the Helpline team to support complex clients, enabling them to support OYWT's clients when required.

PROCESS

Complex mental health needs exist at all times, not just in work hours so organisations need to work together to provide this and avoid wasteful duplications. To do this requires respect for confidentiality while ensuring safety of helpers and clients when needed, often late at night. The two organisations considered a way to share YLO's Case Management system which would work with informed consent and identify OYWT clients needing out of office support, then link these clients back to OYWT.

Funding was requested to help them work towards a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlining responsibilities and accountability, identify the processes and systems required, and trial the information transfer systems.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The process identified a way to enable young people receiving help from OYWT to text the YLO Helpline service and be identified as OYWT clients. It addressed issues of informed consent and trialled an IT platform for secure information exchange, protecting both agencies and their clients. It was expected to ensure access to afterhours client support for both agencies.

The need for this service was not as high as initially anticipated. However, YLO took the systems and processes that had been put in place and expanded this to enable the case management team to be assigned a client from the Helpline space and with client consent, link into that person's key support workers and agencies supporting them, enabling the Helpline to work alongside mental health professionals, social workers and other agencies to safely support clients after hours.

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WHAT WAS LEARNT?

YLO Manager, Brian Lowe, says he found the level of trust and openness between the organisations led to good communication, and having passionate staff and management also helped. Focusing on development of an MoU helped decide responsibilities and forced them to think through the issues and anticipate them 'up front'.

Success encouraged them to seek further ways to collaborate and they found by 'working smarter and creatively can achieve results.' This service has greatly expanded since the project was completed and is now a core part of the Youthline Helpline, working alongside a number of clients and their agencies with a dedicated staff team focused on achieving collaborative outcomes.

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