From snow ploughs to child obesity

Overcoming challenges in the deployment of OR projects in the public sector

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Overcoming challenges in the deployment of OR Projects in the public sector

- Learning points from my early career in government OR and British Coal
- Community OR – learning about user involvement and soft OR
- Addressing deployment issues with the Public Sector Scorecard
- What makes a good OR project?
Project 1: UK Department of Transport

- 18 month cost-benefit analysis of snow clearance and ice prevention on motorways
- Involved a simulation model of snow clearance for different snowfall scenarios, traffic flows, and snow clearance policies
- Produced 15 working papers discussed at monthly meetings with a steering group
- **Result:** staff agreed our assumptions as we went along, so felt committed to our recommendations

Learning point: Ensure regular contact not just with client but a range of relevant stakeholders / experts
Project 2: Department of Health

- Comparison of treatments for acute myeloid leukaemia (AML)
- Close client and staff involvement throughout
- Research papers jointly written with clinicians

Result: 'delighted collaborating clinicians since it made trials much easier to do and it wasn’t too long before a major breakthrough was made in the treatment of AML'.

Prof Steve Gallivan at the 25 anniversary of the Clinical OR Unit

Learning point: Involve front-line staff
Project 3: British Coal

- Presenting the financial case for industry to convert from oil to coal
- Encouraged more junior staff to use our software and to champion our work in their area
- Result: Software used in every marketing region
- Publicity for OR group on BBC TV.

Learning point: Close involvement with staff at all levels
Community OR Unit

Soon after I moved to Sheffield Business School, we were successful in our joint bid with Northern College to host the new national Community OR Unit

Gave me the opportunity to learn from several experts in problem structuring and in community OR

Learning points:

1. Involving, empowering and listening to service users was important in itself but also led to more successful deployment

2. Problem Structuring methods and soft OR were crucial in this process
Developing the Public Sector Scorecard

How can OR improve deployment in the public and third sectors

- Workshop-based approach involving staff, service users and other key stakeholders
- Get involved in strategy, service improvement and performance measurement
- Look at outcomes, processes and capability
- Work across organisational boundaries
- Culture of improvement, innovation and learning
The Public Sector Scorecard

THREE PHASES

1. Strategy mapping

2. Service improvement

3. Performance measurement

The PSS is a workshop-based framework for the public and third sectors

“The PSS has moved performance management from a top-down, blinkered, blame-game approach to a system founded on inclusiveness, cooperation and understanding”

Neil Robinson, Impact, OR Society
The Public Sector Scorecard
Using the Public Sector Scorecard for Sheffield NHS Stop Smoking Service

- **Aim** to improve the service and to develop performance measures which relate closely both to strategy and user views

- **Started** with three service user workshops – over 100 attended

- **Then** six workshops with a reference group including senior managers, staff, 8 service users, doctors, midwives, and other stakeholders
Stop Smoking Service Strategy Map - excerpt

OUTCOMES
- Equity of access
- More people stopping smoking
- User satisfaction

PROCESSES
- More sessions and in better locations
- Better phone support
- Availability of prescriptions
- Working with other agencies

CAPABILITY
- Benchmarking
- Use of other helplines
- Direct access to pharmacy
- Better communication with NHS staff
Results and Feedback

Numbers of people stopping smoking doubled during project and has stayed at that level ever since.

“The strategy map captures a useful strategic overview of the key interrelationships

Enabled a broad and balanced portfolio of measures that impact directly on the effectiveness and experience of service delivery”

Charles Price, Director of Public Health
(now Directorate General for Health and Consumers, European Commission)

Learning point: involving service users and stakeholders really works!
Three year £10 million programme aimed at reducing obesity in children and families

Systems approach tackling obesity in several ways at once

Strategy maps developed for each strand and the programme as a whole.

Based on workshops with the programme board, strand leads, voluntary sector, parents, and Sheffield Youth Council

Used a combination of the Public Sector Scorecard and the Theory of Planned behaviour
8 strands of work

Breastfeeding Friendly City

Parents as Positive Role Models

Community Health Champions

Living Neighbourhoods

Healthy Open Spaces

Cross Sector Innovation

Schools

Social Marketing
Reducing obesity in children & families

Satisfied stakeholders
Better diet & nutrition
Increased physical activity
Value for money & sustainability

Greater desire to adopt healthy lifestyle
Favourable attitudes of others
Confidence in ability to change
Overcoming barriers to change

Breastfeeding-friendly city
Community health champions
Schools at the heart of healthy communities
Healthy, safe, accessible, open spaces

Innovative new partnerships across all sectors
Effective social marketing
Parents as positive role models
Living neighbourhoods

Joint working SCC, NHS, third & private sectors
Community engagement
Shared vision
Effective project management

Leadership from programme board
Feedback

“The SLC4L Strategy Map visually told the story of SLC4L, what we were trying to achieve and how. It helped all those involved understand the outcome and process measures the programme was trying to achieve, and therefore being evaluated against.”

Carole Weir, SLC4L programme director

Learning point: address behavioural aspects
What makes a good OR project?

Is it ...

- identifying the best solution to a problem
- developing really good recommendations
- writing a good report
- an impressive presentation

or

- assisting the client in implementing successful change
Enabling OR to contribute to some of the major problems facing society

Systems Approach

Combination of soft and hard OR methods

Involve staff, service users & other key stakeholders

Address strategy, service improvement & performance measurement

Focus on outcomes, processes & capability

Work across organisational boundaries

Address behavioural factors

Integrate risk management

Culture of improvement, innovation & learning

Use the Public Sector Scorecard
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ONLINE WORKSHOP ON THE PSS

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Organised by the Operational Research Society

Further information at www.publicsectorscorecard.co.uk

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Main References


Earlier References


4. Moullin, M (1985) Talk to OR Society Conference, Durham,