

Stretch2Engage evaluation toolkit

Theory of Change—Detailed

This detailed Theory of Change (ToC) for the Stretch2Engage Framework identifies links between engagement activities and intended outcomes and impact for different stakeholder groups. The ToC forms part of the Stretch2Engage Evaluation Toolkit, which supports organisations to evaluate engagement initiatives. A summary version of the ToC is also available.

The ToC was developed by Lirata Consulting as part of the Evaluation of the Stretch2Engage Framework Pilot in 2019. The Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC), the Stretch2Engage Partnership (Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies, Queensland Alliance for Mental Health and Enlightened Consultants), and pilot organisations participated in developing and iterating the ToC with support from Lirata.

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The Stretch2Engage Framework

Stretch2Engage is a contemporary set of best practice principles to guide the engagement of people using services, and their friends and families, in designing and re-designing services. Stretch2Engage acknowledges engagement as a human right fundamental to citizenship, as well as highlighting the benefits to services that engage effectively.

The Stretch2Engage Framework outlines principles and processes that organisations can adopt to offer more contemporary, inclusive, and comprehensive engagement practice in direct service settings. Stretch2Engage's focus is not on therapeutic engagement, but on engagement in service design, improvement and evaluation.

Evaluation toolkit

Meaningful engagement asks organisations to think and act differently, which requires a significant investment of resources. It is important that organisations monitor and

evaluate the progress of their service engagement initiatives in order to:

- understand their engagement capacity and how it changes over time
- identify whether new engagement approaches are having positive outcomes
- learn from the engagement processes that are tested, and identify how to further strengthen them in future.

The Stretch2Engage evaluation toolkit is a collection of resources that helps organisations to monitor and evaluate service engagement initiatives. The toolkit includes:

1. A brief guide to monitoring and evaluation of service engagement initiatives
2. Stretch2Engage Theory of Change
3. Organisational survey template
4. Brief staff survey template
5. Service engagement capacity wheel template and instructions
6. Significant change story template and instructions.

More information about the Stretch2Engage Framework and the evaluation toolkit is available at: www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/engage-enable/lived-experience-led-reform/stretch2engage.



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About this Theory of Change

Purpose of the Theory of Change

The Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC) is committed to better including people who use mental health (MH) and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services in the design of these services. To progress this goal, QMHC funded the development of the Stretch2Engage Framework, and in 2018–19 oversaw the Stretch2Engage Pilot Project. The pilot explored how organisations could build their capacity to better engage people who use their services in designing and evaluating these services.

A ToC diagram has been developed to describe how QMHC, the Stretch2Engage Partnership and other stakeholders believe the Stretch2Engage Framework and associated activities lead to increased engagement capacity, better engagement and broader positive impacts.

The ToC helps to articulate the purpose of the Stretch2Engage Framework, and the pathways through which outcomes are expected to occur. This is useful for communicating the intent of the framework. It also provides a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the framework overall, and of engagement capacity building initiatives undertaken by specific organisations.

What is the problem that Stretch2Engage aims to fix?

QMHC believes that people who use AOD and MH services in Queensland need more input into the way these services are designed. QMHC would like to increase the engagement of people who use services by making changes within organisations. These changes include changing attitudes, culture, systems and practices to enhance engagement with people using services, and enhancing engagement with the friends and families of people using services.

The Stretch2Engage Framework does not expect or require service users to do anything different. The onus is on organisations to make changes that improve engagement of people using their services.

What is a Theory of Change?

A ToC is a description of ‘program theory’—how an intervention achieves a set of effects. A ToC links the intervention (in this case, the Stretch2Engage Framework and associated capacity building and engagement activities) with its intended impact, through a causal pathway of intermediary outcomes.

A ToC is designed to demonstrate the causal relationship between factors that are hypothesised to contribute to intended outcomes. A key intended outcome of the Stretch2Engage Framework is improved capacity by AOD and MH organisations to engage people who use their services in designing service activities. The TOC summarises stakeholders’ views on the component parts of this outcome, the activities that enable it to occur, and the other outcomes and impacts it contributes to.

How to read the Theory of Change diagram

The ToC diagram should be read from the bottom up. The ToC begins with an outline of the activities believed to be influencing the changes we want to see. These are desired changes or the ‘ACTIVITIES—S2E Partnership’.

The ToC diagram should be read from left to right. Initial changes are shown on the left side of each horizontal line with later changes shown towards the right side.

The headings on the left side provide context to the boxes along each horizontal line relating to it. The colours show which box relates to which heading. As you work up the document, the Stretch2Engage ToC assumes that each horizontal line below influences the ones above it.



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Factors influencing success

The bottom row of the ToC diagram shows factors which are expected to affect the extent to which intended outcomes are achieved.

In addition to the Stretch2Engage Framework and its associated capacity building activities, a range of contextual factors may influence the extent organisations can improve their service engagement capacity and practices. These factors include:

- type (e.g. public, private, government)
- size
- governance and leaderships
- agility
- competing priorities
- motivations to participate
- funding and funding requirements
- level of external support
- permission to trial new ideas
- stakeholder engagement
- internal champions.

Activities and outcomes

Moving up the diagram, the ToC outlines activities and intended outcomes for multiple stakeholder groups. These are arranged in horizontal bands.

1. **S2E partnership activities:** These are the activities, resources and development opportunities provided during the Stretch2Engage Pilot Project and are believed to improve AOD and MH organisations' capacity to better include people using their services in service design activities.
2. **Changes in understanding and attitudes:** Changes in the way people think, which are expected to flow from participating in Stretch2Engage capacity-building activities.
3. **Org activities (Organisational activities):** Activities that organisations undertake to

improve engagement processes and practices within their own operations.

4. **Changes in engagement processes, practices and culture:** Changes in the ways organisations undertake engagement, which are expected to result from the organisational activities and to lead to better engagement of people who use services in their organisations service design activities.
5. **Changes in services and systems:** Improvements within individual services and across sectors and systems that are expected to result from improved engagement processes, practices and culture, over time.
6. **Benefits for people using services:** Positive outcomes that are expected to occur for people using services as organisations strengthen their engagement practices and action resulting service improvements.
7. **Benefits for staff and organisations:** Positive outcomes for staff and organisations that are expected to result from better engagement capacity and practices.

Definitions of additional terms used

- **Impact:** Broad, long-term results that are anticipated to emerge from widespread use of the Stretch2Engage Framework in the AOD and MH sectors, over time.
- **Stakeholders:** Different groups of people who are participating in, or impacted by, Stretch2Engage Framework initiatives and associated engagement activities. They include people using services, their families and supporters, operational staff, managers, organisational project leaders, the Stretch2Engage Partnership and QMHC.
- **Champions:** People who advocate for and lead improvements in engagement capacity and practice within their organisation or sector.
- **Organisational culture:** The underlying beliefs, assumptions, values, behaviours, and ways of interacting that contribute to the



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unique social and psychological environment in an organisation.

Difference between the detailed and summary versions of the ToC

This document provides the detailed version of the Stretch2Engage ToC, which is intended to be used for in-depth evaluation of engagement initiatives.

A simplified summary version of the ToC is also available, which is more suited to general communication of engagement capacity building activities and intended outcomes.

Further information

For further information about Stretch2Engage or the complete Stretch2Engage Evaluation Toolkit, contact **Queensland Mental Health Commission**:

Phone: 1300 855 945

Email: info@qmhc.qld.gov.au

Web: www.qmhc.qld.gov.au



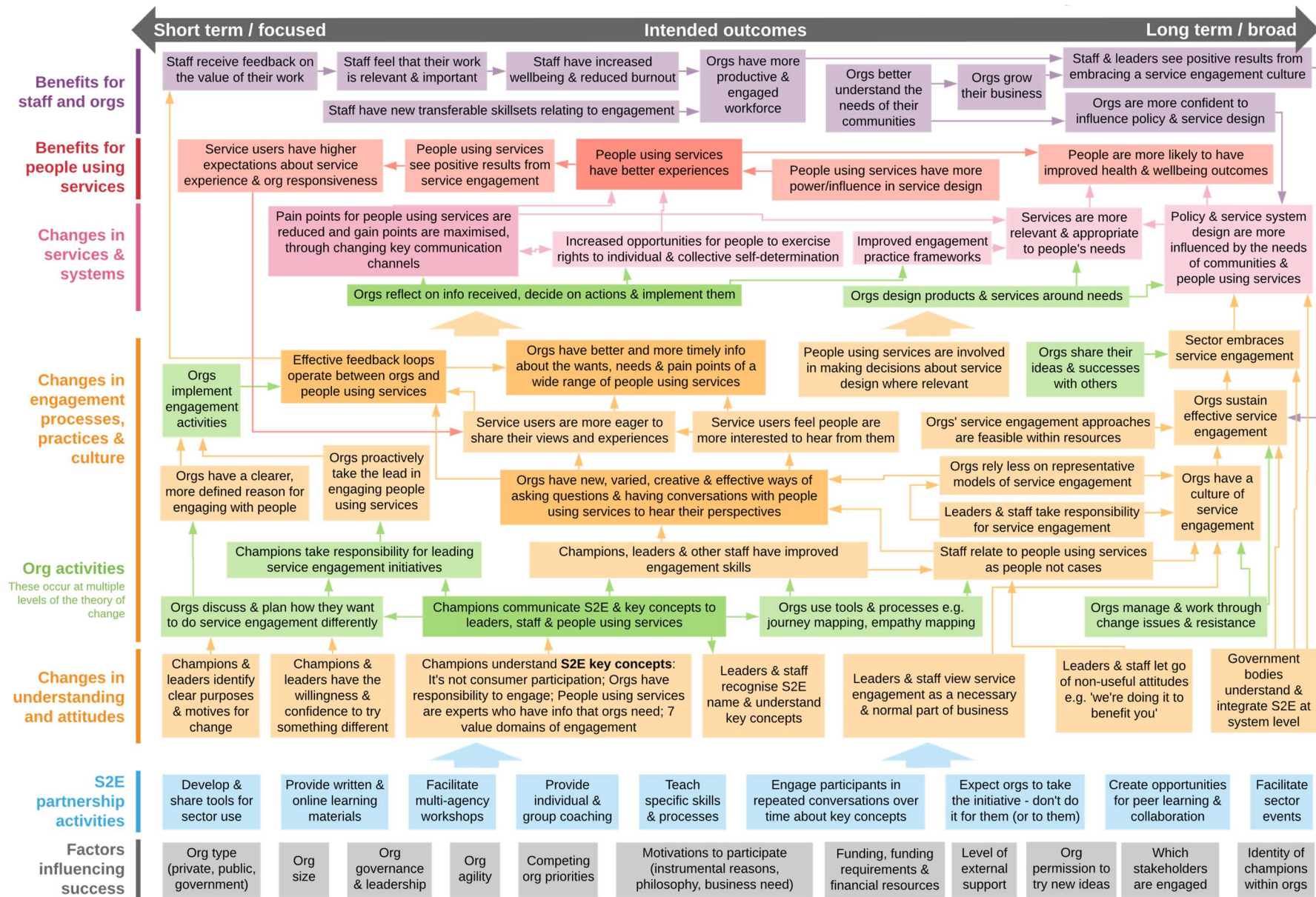
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