MyOutcomes® | On Track

On Track Implementation Booklet

PHASE ONE EXPLORATION

Contents

MyOutcomes® Improve Outcomes. Reduce Cost

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

What is implementation?

Implementation is the process of integrating a “new” evidence-based practice or tool into a real-time and real-life program. This process involves more than providing a therapist with a new tool. It is more than simply teaching the therapist how to use the tool. Instead, it is a multi-level process that involves creating positive change for everyone who has a stake in the agency or organization: leadership, therapists, funding agencies, regulatory agencies, and, of course, clients/patients. Implementation, in short, is a necessary change in the agency’s or organization’s culture as it moves towards becoming a feedback-informed system of care.

Because implementation involves such a seismic shift in “business as usual,” agencies and organizations need to entertain the possibility that it may take up to 5-7 years before MyOutcomes can be considered to be completely implemented. The implementation literature discusses five non-linear, non-discrete stages: **Exploration, Installation, Initial Implementation, Full Implementation, and Sustainability**. Each of these stages is comprised of numerous tasks that are required for successful outcomes. The stages are considered to be non-linear because movement forward can often require a return to a prior step before continuing. The stages of implementation are non-discrete because actions taken during one particular stage require building off of prior stages, while at the same time anticipating the requirements of future stages. Stated differently, “stage” refers to a cognitive framework that acts as a general roadmap for the implementation process. The actual details are determined by the nature and goals of the agency or organization and the characteristics and investment of the stakeholders.

Isn’t implementation just a natural part of the program that we’re trying to adopt?

No. The program is an evidence-based tool or practice that has been shown to have clinical value. The program could be a brand new finding still sitting in research journals. Alternatively, it may have already been implemented by other agencies or organizations. Either way, it is new to your agency or organization. Your agency or organization has decided to adopt the practice or tool because it is felt that it will be very beneficial to a particular part of the agency or organization. The full benefit of the tool or practice, however, won’t be realized until it has been completely and successfully implemented.

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Implementation is a set of independent actions that will guide the successful and complete integration of the tool or practice into the agency or organization. Whereas the adoption of the practice or tool is driven by a desire to improve some portion of the agency or organization, implementation, when done correctly, drives the successful adoption.

Why is implementation important?

Research has consistently demonstrated that a well-planned program of implementation is key to the successful integration and use of any new program. Think of it this way, many people can pick up a guitar and teach themselves to play it, if they have a good ear and a good music book. However, they will eventually hit a wall. Progress will cease long before they master the instrument. This is because there is more to playing a guitar then strumming the strings…things like how the instrument is held, how the fingers are positioned and so on. Without feedback, the person learns bad habits that will eventually impede their performance. The person will put the guitar away out of the frustration resulting from their inability to achieve their musical objectives. There's a chance that the person may even give up the possibility of playing any instrument in the future.

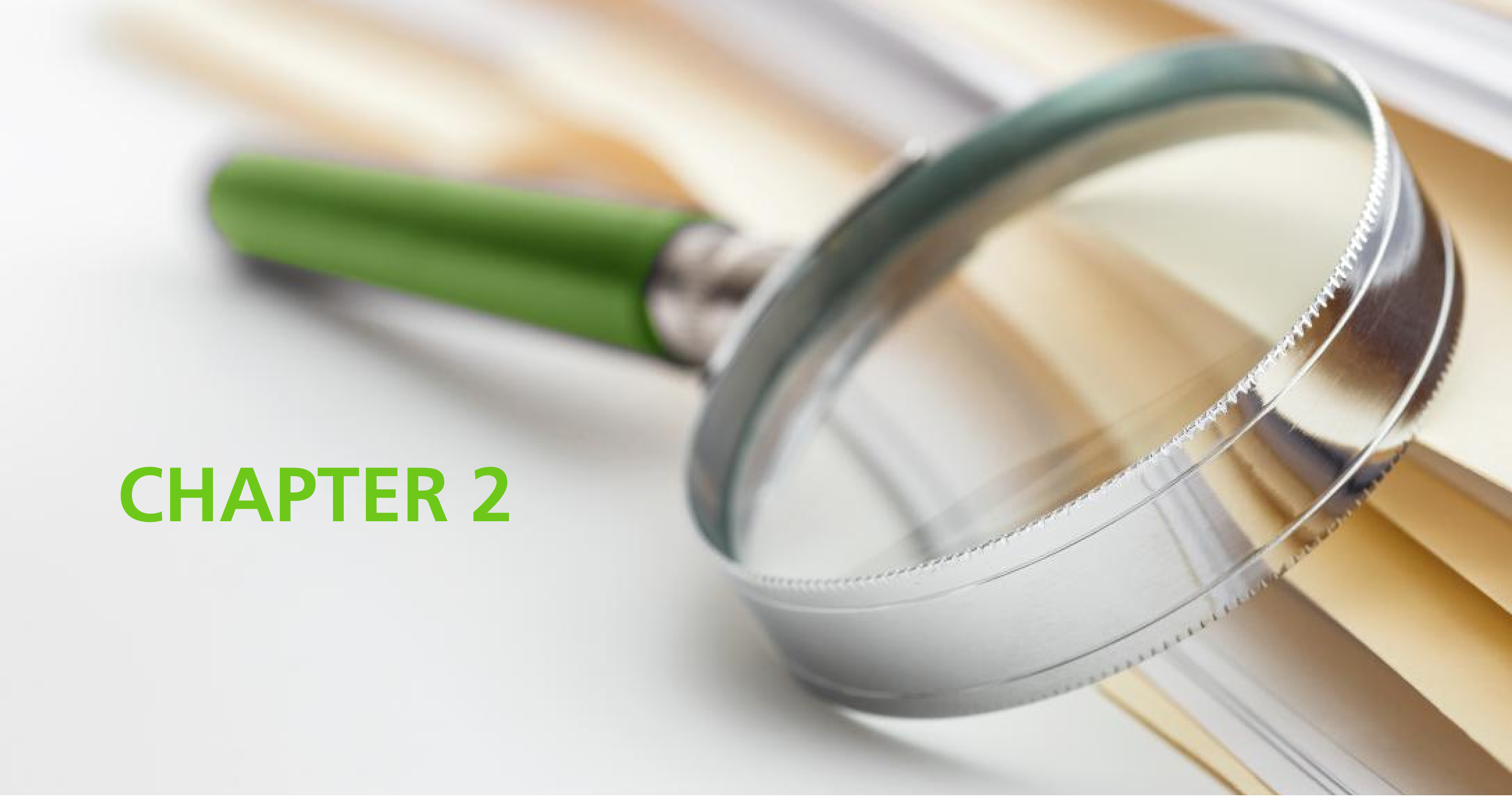
In the same manner, adopting a program, without a well-thought-out implementation strategy, will lead to a dead end. Investment in the program will be seen as a waste of money. And, the agency or organization may be hesitant about trying any new program in the future, thereby insuring that it will remain chained to the past.

A good implementation program is an evidence-based implementation program. It provides feedback not only on how well the program is doing, but, more importantly, how well the program is being integrated into the agency or organization. An implementation program not only points you in the direction you need to go, but it also shows you how to get there. It provides you a measure of your progress, informing you about the obstacles impeding your progress, the strengths facilitating your progress, and what actions you still need to take. Without that, it's much like trying to learn a musical instrument without any clear goals, without a lesson plan, and without a teacher providing feedback. It's chaotic, random, and doomed to fail.

What is On Track?

On Track is MyOutcomes' implementation program, designed to help our customers be successful in bringing the Outcome Rating Scale (ORS) and Session Rating Scale (SRS) into their practice. MyOutcomes is an evidence-based, feedback-informed company. This is, of course, an understatement given its offerings of the ORS and SRS, both evidence-based therapeutic tools that are the first choice of any agency or organization wishing to become a feedback-informed system of care. It logically follows that MyOutcomes' On Track program is, itself, an evidence-based, feedback-informed approach to implementation.

At MyOutcomes, we are keenly aware that your time is limited and valuable. Taking on the challenge of learning a new program can consume time and resources. The process of implementing a new program is also something that will consume time and resources.



CHAPTER 2

The Exploration Stage

The Exploration Stage is, as Scott D. Miller indicates, when you do what the name says…explore. It is the time when you are not only gathering information to help you answer some key questions necessary to your decision process, but it is also the time when you are gathering information that will be critical to successfully moving into the subsequent stages of implementation. It is a highly important stage that, if a sufficient time investment is made, can have huge payoffs in the likelihood of your implementation plan being successful.

Although this all sounds reasonable and intuitive, research shows that this stage is often sped through with little regard to developing a strategy for exploration, if not entirely skipped. Research also shows that if there isn't sufficient investment in this stage, implementation will fail.

To help you develop a good strategy, we offer the following information to build your plan around.

Will "we" benefit from MyOutcomes (SRS & ORS)?

This is really, after all, the reason you are here. It is also the essential question to answer during this phase. You have heard that MyOutcomes' web-based version of PCOMS (Partners for Change Outcome Management System) is the most powerful, evidence-based tool that can facilitate the practice of those who want to become or already are feedback-informed systems of care. You want to see if you should adopt it into your agency or organization. To answer this question, you need to first answer three other questions that can help you find the answer.

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Is there a need?

The answer to this question is found by comparing your current outcome data and time management to that which a Feedback-Informed Treatment model (FIT) and MyOutcomes can provide. The information to gather here are your current dropout and no-show rates, the consistency, or lack thereof, of outcomes, and, if you already measure outcomes, how well those measures integrate into the clinical setting, i.e. do they take too much time, or are they difficult to bring into your work with clients.

If you are not yet a feedback-informed system of care, can becoming one improve your outcomes? If you are already a feedback-informed system of care, can MyOutcomes save valuable time and improve record-keeping?

Is there a fit?

To answer this, you need to consider your mission statement, mandate, professional development, accreditation requirements, licensing and the direction the healthcare field is moving. You need to take into account the values and ethics of your agency or organization and the individuals who comprise your group. If you receive external funding, you need to consider whether they are demanding, not only better outcomes for less dollars, but whether they want evidence of those outcomes. The more that MyOutcomes and FIT are compatible with all of this, the greater the fit.

Is this the right time?

The adoption of any new program is a complicated affair that uses resources, e.g. money, time, etc. It can be an exciting time, particularly if one can see huge benefits in the end. But it is challenging, nonetheless.

Although we like to consider "politics" to be something that others indulge in, the fact remains that when it comes to change, especially change that involves the culture of the agency and organization, politics plays a key role in the success of that change. There are those who are eager for change, while there are those who resist change.

If you are in the position to take on the complications of adopting a new program, e.g. FIT and/or MyOutcomes, if you have the resources to dedicate to the transition, and if you will be able to overcome any resistance to change, then this may be the right time.

Form an Implementation Team

The Implementation Team will be tasked with finding the answers to the questions. They will also be responsible for gathering information…surveying the lay of the land, so to speak…that will be important in laying the foundation for the entire implementation plan, should you decide to move forward and adopt MyOutcomes.

The Implementation Team should be comprised of a wide range of stakeholders: funders, administrators, providers, champions and skeptics. To be successful in their mission, the Implementation Team needs the complete support of the agency or organization. It will be necessary for the Implementation Team to develop a communication plan for communicating its findings to all stakeholders.

One of the first things the members of the team should do is to fill out the FRIFM (see Chapter Three) with input from all stakeholders. The FRIFM can be used to begin doing the following:

Explore and assess the buy-in of those who will be impacted

Buy-in, or lack thereof, can be what ultimately determines the success or failure of implementation. If you adopt MyOutcomes, you will need to address this issue in your implementation strategy.

Determine available resources

Resources, whether they deal with finances, time management, the presence or absence of experts, are vital to any enterprise. Look are anything you might consider to be a resource…even excitement and interest in bringing positive change to the agency or organization can be considered a resource as they will play a role in engagement. Determining your resources can determine your strengths.

Identify your strengths and weaknesses

Strengths can lead to successful implementation. Weaknesses are not necessarily fatal. Knowing your weaknesses can inform you as to what you need to strengthen.

Decide whether you are in need of additional consultation or training

If everyone in your agency is a master practitioner of feedback-informed service, then adopting MyOutcomes will be easier than most. However, in all likelihood, your agency or organization will require varying degrees of training.

Consultation can play a role during the Exploration Stage, as well as throughout the implementation process. If you need guidance or other information regarding the implementation process adopting the FIT model or MyOutcomes, other agencies or organizations can be powerful resources for gaining a better understanding. We can connect you with agencies or organizations who have themselves undergone this process. Also, our experienced team at MyOutcomes is always available to share their expertise and knowledge.

Identify specific objectives/goals for successful implementation

No clinician would conduct a therapeutic session without some clear objectives or goals. Likewise, successful implementation depends upon developing measurable objectives and goals. Some of these will be short-term, others will be long-term. Remember, the more concrete something can be presented, the easier for everyone to engage.

Begin developing strategies for measuring progress of implementation (in contrast to effectiveness of program)

MyOutcomes, and FIT by extension, is a program designed to elicit feedback from the client that can be used to measure progress in the therapeutic context. Although the purpose of implementation is the successful adoption of MyOutcomes so that your agency or organization can fully realize the benefits of this feedback, implementation is an independent process. If you wish to be an evidence-based system of care, you need to measure progress. This not only tells you where you are in the implementation process, but it also will provide you information as to where the plan needs to be adjusted.

Identify possible barriers to successful implementation and strategies for overcoming them

In part, this is about measuring the amount of buy-in. In part, this is about resources. In part, this deals with your weaknesses. But this is more encompassing than any of these alone. This addresses all structural elements of your agency or organization, as well as the functional elements. This deals with everything that can possibility impede changing the agency's or organization's culture and shifting your business-as-usual model to a different business-as-usual model.

CHAPTER 3

The FRIFM

The Feedback Readiness Inventory and Fidelity Measure, or, as it's affectionately referred to, The FRIFM, is a free checklist that can be used to measure the readiness of your agency or organization to implement MyOutcomes and become a feedback-informed system of care. There are four major ways that the FRIFM can assist you during the implementation process:

- It is a valuable tool for gathering information during the Exploration Stage
- It can be used as a measure of your progress throughout the implementation process, informing you as to what is and what is not working
- It can be used as a measurement of fidelity to the use of MyOutcomes and the FIT model
- When you achieve the highest score possible, you will know that the implementation has been completed

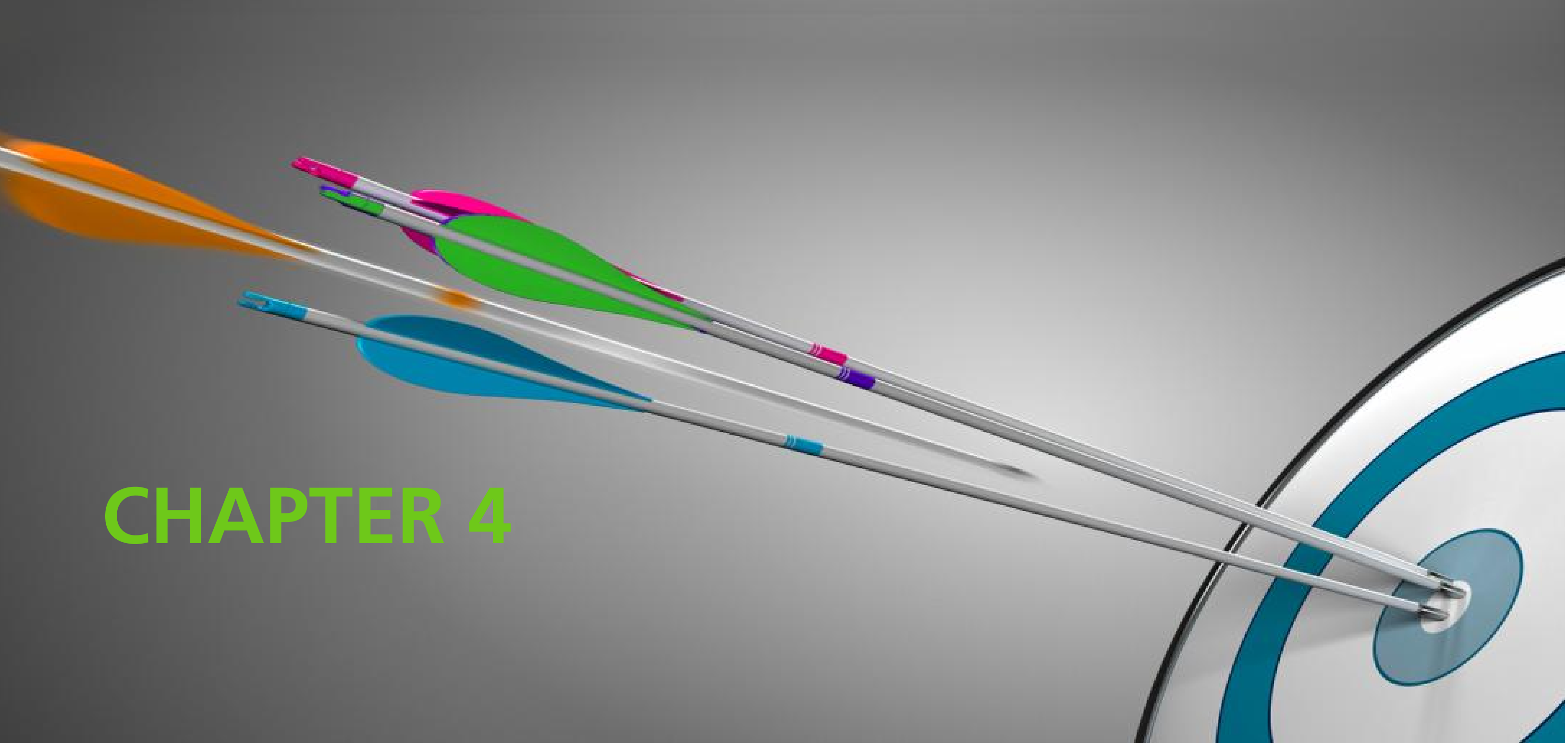
During this phase, the FRIFM should be completed at the beginning of the Exploration Stage. Each member of the Implementation Team should complete the FRIFM. If possible, each team member should work with staff from different areas of the agency or organization while filling out the FRIFM. The FRIFM will measure six areas:

- Clinical Implications
- Administrative
- Information Systems/Paperwork/Documentation/IT
- Regulatory and Accreditation
- Consumers
- Funders.

When you complete the FRIFM, you will be able to:

- Identify strengths and weaknesses in integrating MyOutcomes and the feedback-informed approach into your agency or organization
- Prioritize areas needing additional consultation and training
- Develop goals/objectives for successful implementation
- Measure progress and identify barriers to full implementation, i.e. as already noted, if can be used throughout the entire implementation process

Once the FRIFM is completed by each team member, a composite picture of your agency can be created. This picture can guide the pursuit of additional information, as well as direct the decision regarding adopting MyOutcomes and becoming a feedback-informed system of care. If the decision is to move forward, the data from the FRIFM can be used to guide developing an implementation plan, as well as establishing a baseline to measure your progress.



CHAPTER 4

Reaching The Goal Line

Throughout the Exploration Stage, you will be gathering information to answer the questions posed at the beginning of this guide: is there a need, is there a fit, and is this the right time? Over the course of several months, your Implementation Team will have gathered sufficient information for you to make a decision. If you discover that the answers to the questions indicate that you are not ready, that's okay. You can always revisit those questions and the opportunity of integrating MyOutcomes' clinical feedback system into your agency or organization at a later time. The truth is, trying to move forward with so many negatives on top of the usual obstacles would lead to a less than adequate implementation process. We want our clients to be able to experience the power that MyOutcomes has to offer. Certainly, anyone planning to adopt MyOutcomes will have many obstacles that need to be addressed during implementation. This is expected and normal. However, it is important to be in the position to address and overcome those obstacles. Given that our approach at MyOutcomes focuses on quality, rather than quantity, we are fully committed to helping those not ready to adopt MyOutcomes move forward at their own pace, as much as we are committed to helping our customers successfully implement MyOutcomes so that they can enjoy the benefits of adopting a feedback-informed system of care.

If, on the other hand, your Implementation Team has discovered that your agency or organization is ready to adopt MyOutcomes, then it is time to move forward. Before addressing what that entails, let's re-emphasize that a decision to move forward does not mean that adopting MyOutcomes into your agency or organization will not have its challenges and obstacles. It will, but that is why it is important to have a well-thought-out implementation plan addressing those challenges and obstacles from the very beginning.

When you are ready to move forward, there are three steps you will initially need to take: request a quote, commit, and setup the account.

Request A Quote

In the excitement of adopting a new program, this is a step that can often be overlooked. Of course, without this information, moving forward is hindered. In the end, the report that the Implementation Team worked diligently putting together just gathers dust. So, contact the staff at MyOutcomes and get your quote.

To receive and sign a formal quote for the cost of your annual subscription, click the following link: http://www.myoutcomes.com/request-a-quotation-myoutcomes-pro.

Commit

Conceptually this seems so simple and obvious that the immediate response is: “Yes, and…?” Yet, as with any major decision, it is the most obvious things that can get lost or forgotten. There are three things that we have found that can be easily overlooked by people who are at this point in the decision process:

Setup Funding

This means that your funders are on board and are willing to commit the financial resources needed. At this moment, those resources need only cover the cost of your annual subscription. However, as you have been made aware, successful implementation can be a five to seven-year enterprise. During this time, there will be training at all levels, activities to maintain engagement, compensating the team responsible for overseeing the implementation process, and more. It is important to have financial resources dedicated to this process.

Set Start Date

As you know, in order to optimize the success of any major change, it is necessary to set a start date. This means that as a group, your agency or organization is prepared to commit to a date that will begin the active process of implementation. Neither spontaneously starting nor having just a vague idea of starting sometime in the future, will lead to successful outcomes. Spontaneity can result in little to no active engagement, while a vague future can result in no movement forward. So, set a date to start and let your team know what that date is.

Sign a Contract

Silly as this may seem, given normal business activities, this can easily be overlooked. Your team may be anticipating the start date and, when it arrives, nothing happens because the contract wasn’t signed. Signing the contract is necessary for setting up your account.

Account Setup

This is the moment when you open the door and walk through. On the other side of the door is the road to becoming a feedback-informed agency or organization that uses the most powerful feedback tool on the market, MyOutcomes. This is the moment of truth when your hard work during the last several months becomes realized.

Provisioning

During provisioning, our team will work with your team to get MyOutcomes set up for your use. We will use information that you have provided to customize MyOutcomes to fit your agency or organization.

Set Up First Meetings

There are three things that our staff will address with you after provisioning:

- Starting the setup of MyOutcomes so that your team can begin accessing it
- An initial consultation with our staff regarding the next phase of implementing MyOutcomes
- The first webinar providing details about the next stages in implementing MyOutcomes

We recognize that the staff at your agency or organization are busy. However, we frequently see the implementation of MyOutcomes take a low priority, so that sometimes six months or even a year goes by before the process of implementation begins. This seems a waste of the energy spent during the Exploration Stage. The enthusiasm and excitement can diminish if implementation is put on the back burners. It's this positive energy that will carry you over the inevitable rough spots that can occur at the beginning. Furthermore, delays in implementation only delay the day when you will be able to experience the full benefits that MyOutcomes offers. Therefore, we highly recommend you scheduling meetings with our staff within days after provisioning, if not before.

CHAPTER 5

What's Next?

We hope that you have been patient and taken your time, using the information in this booklet as well as our other offered resources, to guide you through the Exploration Stage. If you decided to move forward by adopting MyOutcomes and becoming a feedback-informed system of care, you are well on your way to developing a successful process of implementation. Make sure that you have set dates for provisioning, consultation, and On Track's Phase Two and Phase Three webinars. Also, make certain that you have set a start date that every stakeholder in your agency or organization is aware of.

As you wait for these different dates to arrive, however, you needn't wait idly by. You can begin working on policies that will guide the transformation of your agency or organization. You can establish lines of communication that work in both directions between everyone who will be impacted by this transformation.

The Exploration Stage was a time to build consensus. After all, any major change in the agency's or organization's culture requires the participation of everyone, not just the Implementation Team. Continue to strengthen this consensus.

The Exploration Stage was also a period to identify the benefits of change. Keep these benefits in the awareness of the agency or organization staff. Remember, your staff chose their profession because they want to help others. It is hard to imagine that the benefits from integrating MyOutcomes into a feedback-informed practice can do anything but generate excitement. This will insure a willingness for continued engagement.

The Exploration Stage was also the period when you identified strengths, weaknesses, and barriers. Begin working on ideas for exploiting your strengths so that they provide maximum benefit without losing their value. Develop strategies for turning weaknesses into strengths. As for barriers, these are only the first you will face. You might as well begin determining how to overcome them…with practice, you will become better at removing barriers.

The staff at MyOutcomes hopes that you find the information provided in this booklet to be a valuable source during your exploration into making what could be positive change in your agency or organization. If you have questions, need guidance or assistance, or have useful feedback, please don't hesitate in contacting us.