



INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR MENTAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP

MAKING SERVICES WORK FOR CONSUMERS



**Results of the Survey of Participants in the
2007 IIMHL Exchange and Working Conference**

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Executive Summary

Following each Exchange and Working Conference IIMHL undertakes a brief evaluation. The current 2007 survey assessed attendees of the conference in Ottawa and those who had been a host or visitor of an exchange. One hundred and fifty two participants out of 450 completed the survey.

This report aims to assess the impacts and benefits of an exchange and the conference for the year 2007 whilst highlighting the areas for improvement identified by the participants.

Results showed that people found the information sent by either IIMHL or hosts was rated as either medium to high quality. When asked to identify three key benefits from being either a host or a visitor in an exchange three common themes emerged. These were the opportunity to network and to develop personal and professional relationships, the opportunity for information exchange and the opportunity to learn and implement quality processes and systems in other countries.

Overall people were very positive about their exchange experiences, had taken significant action to improve services as a result of their exchange, had changed their practice (or their service's practice) based on what they had learned. The Working Conference venue was seen as excellent and many of the presentations and opportunity to network at the Conference were seen as good. The Conference reception and opening ceremonies were also seen as good as were the majority of presentations and workshops. Warren Evans and the "Young Experts" presentation were given higher ratings than the others.

Areas suggested for improvement mainly focused on the Working Conference and included having smaller numbers of people attending; and, changing the two-day conference format to include more networking opportunities and having stronger more inspiring (i.e. motivational and stimulating) leadership presentations. This feedback has been taken on board. It will be re-named the "*Network Meeting*" to reflect the need for ongoing networking following on from the exchanges and the aim will be to include more inspirational presentations rather than the usual conference format.



Background

IIMHL is funded by the governments of eight countries to enable mental health leaders to obtain opportunities to learn and share knowledge thereby strengthening leadership practices across the sector.

The overall aim is to improve services for people who use them.

The IIMHL exchange and working conference has been in operation for five years from 2003 to 2007. The first exchange in 2003 was in the UK with the conference being held in Birmingham, England; the second exchange in 2004 was in the US with the conference in Washington; the following year 2005 the exchange was in Australia and New Zealand with the conference in Wellington, New Zealand; in 2006 the exchange was in the UK with the conference in Edinburgh, Scotland; this was followed in 2007 by an exchange in Canada and the US with the conference being held in Ottawa, Canada.

It is important to assess the impact of the exchanges on mental health leaders, services and, ultimately, on service users.

Procedure

A two-page survey was designed using Survey Monkey as the method of data collection and analysis. The participants of 2007 exchange and conference were given the questionnaire at the Working Conference and the questionnaire was posted on the IIMHL website so that people could complete it online.

Results

The information sought was analyzed into both numerical data and comment.

Some comments are quoted and others paraphrased. The quotes are in italics and quotation marks.

Section 1

The Exchange

1. The majority of attendees were present at the conference for the first time (59%) in 2007. However, there has been a marked increase in attendance from 2003 till the present 2007. Only 9% of the attendees this year had been present in 2003, the greatest increase was seen in 2006 (35.4%) and 2007 (59%).
2. In 2007, 61.4% of those that participated in a match and served as host were Canadian and 38.6% were from the United States.
3. The majority of conference attendees (40.9%) rated the information that they had received from the IIMHL in preparation for the exchange as a four on a Likert scale of 0 – 5, with 0 being low and 5 being high. Twenty four per cent of the attendees rated the information provided as a 3 and 25.1 % rated it as a 5. One point five per cent of the attendees rated the information provided as 0 or 1 and the remaining attendees rated the information as a 3 (6.6%). This suggests that the majority of the attendees found the information provided by the IIMHL as being of a medium to high quality.

When asked to rate the quality of their hosts/visitors preparation prior to the Exchange on a Likert scale from 0-5 (low –high), 40.1% rated the quality as being a 4 and 35.8% rated it as 5 (high). Only 11.7% of those who went on an exchange rate the quality of their hosts/visitors preparation has being low (0, 1, and 2).

4. The majority of those that participated in a match in 2007 and were a visitor were from New Zealand (25.0%), England (19.0%) and the United States (17.0%).
5. When asked to identify three key benefits from being either a host or a visitor in an exchange three common themes emerged. These were the opportunity to network and to develop personal and professional relationships, the opportunity for information exchange and the opportunity to learn about different systems in other countries. Of those that were either a host or a visitor in an exchange 32% identified networking as the main benefit from such an event. Twenty-three percent identified the opportunity to learn new ways of thinking, information exchange and problem solving as one of the three main benefits from their exchange. Twenty-one percent identified the opportunity to learn about different systems in other countries and other leadership styles as one of the three main benefits from the exchange. Other notable benefits that were identified were the opportunity for discussion (6%), finding similar areas of concern (5.6%), and learning about a different skill (3.6%). The opportunity to reflect, regain enthusiasm and to bolster pride in one's own service (5.6%) was also another notable benefit that was raised from being part of an exchange.



6. As a result of the exchange the attendees identified two things that they would do to improve their practice or service. Many attendees identified specific areas in which they could use the information gained in their exchange to bolster their practice or service. These were specific to the individual needs of the attendee's service. Most of the areas that were identified for improvement were centred on productivity, employment, improving specific services, networking and leadership.

These included the following:

"I will endeavour to increase better communication among employees"

"To increase networking"

"To continue with contacts and peer support"

"To improve productivity"

"To decrease the use of inpatient beds of children"

"To look at costing of care systems"

"Use the lessons learnt re cultural activities"

"To look at diversity/cultural assessment"


"To use what I learnt to promote employment in Europe"

Only three attendees identified that their exchange was not a good service match.

Section 2

The Working Conference

1. When asked to rate the opening ceremony and the indigenous performances on a scale of 0 - 5 (low to high) 37.3% rated them as a high standard, 23.8% rated them as a 4, 17.5% rated them as a 3, 13.5% rated them as a 2, 4.0% rated them as a 1 as did those who rated it as a 0. One hundred and twenty seven people out of a possible 150 answered this question. The average rating was 4.65 which suggests that on the whole people were satisfied with the opening ceremonies. Attendees were also asked to rate the reception on the same scale. The results showed that the average rating was 4.39 with 32.5% rating the reception as a 4.
2. The attendees were also asked to rate the workshops and meetings that they attended. Again, the scale was 0 – 5, low to high. Response rate can be equated to attendance rate. Results must be read with caution due to the small number of responses to questions in some cases. The scale number with the highest percentage rating score is reported as is the average response rating. Appendix 1 shows a table demonstrating the majority percentage ranking in bold and the rating average for each of the workshops or meetings described above (a-k). The numbers in brackets are the number of people who scored the meeting at that particular rating score (0-5).

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- a. The keynote on ethnic, indigenous and cultural diversity: 139 people responded to this question. Thirty point nine per cent (43 people) rated this address as a 3 with the overall average rating being 3.25.
 - b. Meeting: Children: 49 people responded to this question. The majority (16 people) rated the meeting as a 4 (32.7%). The average rating was 3.22.
 - c. Meeting: Disabilities: 43 people responded to this question. The majority (12 people) scored it as a 4 (27.9%). The average rating was 3.12.
 - d. Meeting: Consumer: 53 people responded to this question. The largest percentage of the ratings (17 people) was attributed to a rating of 4 (32.7%), however the average rating for this meeting was 3.06.
 - e. Meeting: Indigenous, ethnic and cultural diversity: 49 people rated this meeting. The largest percentage of people (24.5%) rated it as a 3 (12 people). The average rating was 2.53.
 - f. Workshop: Leadership training and competencies: 63 people responded to this question. The largest percentage attributed to a rating was 33.3% which was a rating for a 3 (21 people). The average rating was 3.02.
 - g. Workshop: How a NHS Trust has moved toward a recovery based philosophy: 32 people responded to this question. The average rating was 3.19. Fifty per cent percent of the responders rated the workshop as a 4 (16 people).
 - h. Workshop: Update on the Toronto, Nashville, South Auckland and Birmingham partnership: 20 people rated this workshop. Forty per cent of the responders rated this workshop as a 4 (8 people) whilst the average rating for this workshop was 2.75.
 - i. Workshop: Mental Wellness Advisory Committee's Strategic Action Plan: 35 people rated this workshop. The largest percentage attributed to a rating was 34.3% which was for a 4 (12 people). The average rating was 3.20.
 - j. Workshop: Associated Consumer Experts (ACE): 26 people rated this workshop. Thirty eight point five per cent of the response ratings were for a 4 (10 people). The average rating was 2.88.
 - k. Workshop: Networks of Care – the internet assisting communities: 32 people responded to this question. Fifty nine point four per cent of the responders rated this workshop as a 4 (19 people). The average response was 3.69.

Overall 143 people answered this part of the questionnaire, 7 people skipped this section.

When looking at the results in a broad sense the rating average for all meetings and workshops ranged between 2.75 and 3.69. However, due to low response numbers in some questions these results could have been skewed by a few outlier/extreme ratings at either end of the scale. When looking at where the largest percentage of the ratings was placed for each workshop and meeting, 8 had their events rated as a 4 and 3 as a 3. This means that the majority of attendees found the workshops to be on the upper scale towards excellence. However, again because of the small number of responses in some cases the majority percentage was only about 20% of all rankings so again these results must be taken with caution.

3. The attendees also rated the presentations that were given on August 31st. 143 people responded to this section of the questionnaire. Seven people skipped this question. Again response was equated to attendance. The questions were rated by a 0-5 Likert scale that went from low (0) to high (5).
 - a. Senator Michael Kirby: 134 people responded to this question. Thirty six point six per cent (49 people) rated this presentation as a 4. The average rating was 3.64.
 - b. Warren Evans: 127 people responded to this question. Forty two point five per cent (54 people) rated this presentation as a 5 (excellent). The average rating was 4.01.
 - c. Young Experts: 115 people responded to this question. Forty three point five per cent (50 people) rated this presentation as a 5. The average rating was 4.09.
4. The conference venue, the opportunity that those who attended had to network, and how relevant the conference was to their work were also assessed. One hundred and forty three people responded to this question overall whereas 7 people skipped it. The responders were again asked to rate the question on a Likert scale from 0-5 (low to high).
 - a. Conference venue: 143 people answered this question. Forty six point nine per cent (67 people) rated the conference venue as a 5. The average rating was 4.22.
 - b. Opportunity to network: 142 people answered this question. Forty six point five per cent (66 people) rated the opportunity to network at this conference as a 5. The average rating was 4.20.
 - c. Relevance to your work: 143 people answered this question. Thirty six point four per cent (52 people) rated relevance to their work as a 5. The average rating was 3.70.

Section 3:

This related to ongoing activities with other people in other countries. Those that completed the survey were asked to answer a series of questions that asked how they plan to continue with IIMHL connections. All answers were either yes or no.

One hundred and forty four people answered at least part of this section with 6 people skipping this section.

1. When asked the question “Am I involved in one or more IIMHL projects?” 42.7% (50 people) said yes and 57.3% (67 people) said no. One hundred and sixteen people in total answered this question.
2. They were asked whether they were able to tap into international expertise for their work. 89.7% (122 people) said yes whereas 10.3% (14 people) said no. One hundred and thirty six people answered this question in total.
3. Whether they were going to have ongoing contact with people they had met over email 94.3% (132 people) said yes whereas 5.7% (8 people) said no. One hundred and forty nine people responded to this question.
4. They were also asked about whether they planned to continue with their connections if they not yet thought how to. Thirty-two point nine per cent (28 people) said yes, 67.1% (57 people) said no. Eighty five people responded to this question.
5. The final question they were asked was if they were likely to continue with any contacts. Seventy five people answered this question. Nine point three per cent (7 people) said yes and 90.7% (68 people) said no.

Additional comments

The responders were also invited to make any further comments. Responses are grouped into positive and negative feedback.

Positive Feedback:

“Face-to-face contact beats emails; this exchange/conference has really helped to solidify my/our priorities”

“Great opportunity to network with like-minded colleagues”

People commented that the exchange was challenging, stimulating and fun, and well worth the time invested to participate.

Negative Feedback:

Many people applauded the exchange and found it to be very stimulating and a rewarding experience. However, these same people also found that the conference was very anti-climatic and disappointing. Some also commented that they had had this type of feedback in previous years.

“The exchanges are the core of IIMHL and it’s hard to plan a conference that can match that level of learning. The conference at times felt somewhat unfocussed due to multiple agendas”

In addition some people would have preferred less religious content, and some would have liked more content for indigenous peoples; and others also commented on the need to develop a clearer purpose for the Conference.



Suggestions:

Many suggested that the next conference could showcase

- 1) Service changes that have been transformational highlighting how the change was delivered and what outcomes and benefits resulted,
- 2) Innovative policy formulation and implementation.

“Clarification has to why we are here and what we are seeking to accomplish would be helpful to keep the conference focussed”.

Discussion:

When looking at the exchange there were many benefits and possible service changes that were taken out of this experience. The positive feedback that evolved from those that were involved in the exchange highlights what a valuable experience on the whole these exchanges are. In addition there was strong support from the survey for the usefulness of ongoing relationships and contact with fellow IIMHL participants. IIMHL is seen as an effective way to access knowledge and information through contact with the organisation and its members.

Moderate ratings were received for the conference overall. This is in line with past evaluations. However from the ratings of the meetings and workshops it would appear as though participants were generally pleased with the standard of the presentations.

When looking at the averages it appears that most meetings and workshops were well received with most acquiring an average rating. The majority of the negative feedback that was given involved the conference. Key areas for improvement were the quality of the material that was presented and the apparent multiple agendas permeating the event.

It is clear that the Working Conference cannot be all things to all people. The conference cannot solve individual nation’s problems, but it can highlight best practice from which elements can be taken up by countries as best fits their specific context. From the feedback given it seems many would like the conference to return to the primary focus of IIMHL – that is, leadership as well as having a clear agenda and purpose.

This feedback has been instrumental when reviewing the Working Conference process. The Sponsoring Countries Leaders Group has agreed that the name and focus of future meetings will change. The name will now be the Network Meeting to ensure that this function is better preserved. The Network Meeting process will include leadership as the focus and inspirational presentations. We are grateful to those people that took the time to complete this questionnaire. Your comments have helped change our process for the future.

Acknowledgement

We are appreciative of the work of Frank Collins (Mental Health Corporations of America) who assisted in the design and analysis of the survey. Also thank you to Dr Trecia Wouldes who peer-reviewed this document.

Appendix:

Table 1: Ratings of Meetings and Workshops

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Rating Average	Response Count
A	2.2% (3)	6.5% (9)	15.8% (22)	30.9% (43)	28.8% (40)	15.8% (22)	3.25	139
B	4.1% (2)	6.1% (3)	18.4% (9)	22.4% (11)	32.7% (16)	16.3% (8)	3.22	49
C	7.0% (3)	9.3% (4)	14.0% (6)	23.3% (10)	27.9% (12)	18.6% (8)	3.12	43
D	3.8% (2)	13.2% (7)	11.3% (6)	28.3% (15)	32.1% (17)	11.3% (6)	3.06	53
E	4.1% (2)	22.4% (11)	22.4% (11)	24.5% (12)	20.4% (10)	6.1% (3)	2.53	49
F	4.8% (3)	7.9% (5)	15.9% (10)	33.3% (21)	28.6% (18)	9.5% (6)	3.02	63
G	9.4% (3)	6.3% (2)	9.4% (3)	15.6% (5)	50.0% (16)	9.4% (3)	3.19	32
H	15.0% (3)	5.0% (1)	10.0% (2)	30.0% (6)	40.0% (8)	0.0% (0)	2.75	20
I	5.7% (2)	2.9% (1)	20.0% (7)	22.9% (8)	34.3% (12)	14.3% (5)	3.2	35
J	3.8% (1)	11.5% (3)	23.1% (6)	19.2% (5)	38.5% (10)	3.8% (1)	2.88	26
K	9.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	12.5% (4)	59.4% (19)	18.8% (6)	3.69	32
	answered question							143
	skipped question							7

Key:

A	Keynote on ethnic, indigenous & cultural diversity	G	Workshop: NHS Trust
B	Meeting: Children	H	Workshop: Toronto, Nashville, Sth Auck. & Birmingham
C	Meeting: Disabilities	I	Mental Wellness Action Plan
D	Meeting: Consumer	J	Associated Consumer Experts
E	Meeting Indigenous, ethnic & cultural diversity	K	Networks of Care
F	Workshop: Leadership training		