



Stretch2Engage evaluation toolkit

Significant change story template

This document provides a template for collecting significant change stories. The template can be used and adapted by organisations implementing the Stretch2Engage Framework. The template forms part of the Stretch2Engage evaluation toolkit, which supports organisations to evaluate engagement initiatives.

The template was developed by Lirata Consulting, drawing on the Most Significant Change Technique (Dart & Davies, 2003), and is based on the change story template used during the Evaluation of the Stretch2Engage Framework Pilot in 2019. The evaluation was commissioned by Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC) and undertaken in partnership with Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies, Queensland Alliance for Mental Health and Enlightened Consultants.

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The Stretch2Engage Framework

Stretch2Engage is a contemporary set of best practice principles to guide the engagement of people using mental health (MH) services and alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services, and their friends, families and supporters, 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 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:

- **a brief guide to monitoring and evaluation of service engagement initiatives**
- **Stretch2Engage Theory of Change**
- **organisational survey template**
- **a brief staff survey template**
- **service engagement capacity wheel template and instructions**
- **significant change story template and instructions.**



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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.

About this template

Purpose

The significant change story template is designed to help organisations collect narratives from stakeholders about the changes that have occurred as a result of implementing the Stretch2Engage Framework, and associated engagement activities, within their organisations.

These stories can be important in identifying and analysing the types of changes that stakeholders have observed, which can inform reflection about the outcomes and impact of service engagement initiatives. Reflecting on these stories can also help to shape further development of service engagement initiatives.

The stories that are recorded using this tool may be important in:

- **Reflecting on progress**—to help others see the practical value of new service engagement activities and just how far organisations have progressed in these activities over time. Stories could be collated to demonstrate how much has been achieved.
- **Internal capacity building**—to provide simple stories or case studies that effectively illustrate how new engagement activities might improve satisfaction with services, build staff skills and motivation, embed more person-centred practices, or increase organisational efficiency.
- **Seeking funding**—to demonstrate that organisations have good engagement principles, practices and processes in place that allow them to effectively engage and consult with people using services in the design of any new programs or initiatives.

- **Sector-wide capacity building**—to inform and inspire others by sharing stories of success and service engagement improvements with other organisations or the broader community.

Stakeholders

Stories can potentially be collected from a wide range of stakeholders such as organisational staff, people using services, family members or friends of people using services, managers, board members, representatives of partner agencies, or others. You can choose how wide to 'cast the net' in gathering significant change stories.

Adapt the template

This significant change story template provides a starting point. We recommend creating your own version of it and adapting the introduction, questions and focus to fit your context. You may want to contain the scope to particular areas of change by asking more specific questions.

Key process considerations

Who will be responsible for collecting stories?

The people collecting the stories could be one or two project leads, or it could be many team members within an organisation. Peer-support workers could play an important role in collecting significant change stories from people using services.

People who will be collecting stories need clear information about the process, and a chance to practice. Highlight that the process is quick and easy—a story can be documented in just ten minutes. There are really three main questions to answer in any Stretch2Engage change story:

- What was the change that the person noticed?
- Why was it important?
- How did Stretch2Engage help it to occur?



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Many staff are already used to documenting case studies as part of their work or for funding reporting requirements. Significant change stories provide a structured way to do this that focuses on outcomes.

Who will be asked for stories?

Review the list of potential stakeholders and decide which groups will be the focus for your story collecting.

When will stories be collected?

Stories might be collected during a particular period in time (for example, a two-week window), or might be collected on an ongoing basis as stakeholders identify changes through conversations. Stories might also be collected at particular points during treatment or in relation to participants' journeys, for example during review and goal setting, or prior to a persons' exit from a period of support.

What help will people need to document their stories?

Some stakeholders may be happy simply to be given the template and to write their own story. Others may appreciate someone who can act as a sounding board and to encourage while they write.

Some people may not be confident or unable to write their story themselves. In these cases it is fine for someone else to help document it on their behalf, as long as the stakeholder is able to review a draft and ensure that it accurately reflects their experience and perspective. Some people may prefer to record their story in audio or video format and have it transcribed. To get the best stories, you may need to be flexible about how they are gathered.

How will people provide consent for use of their stories?

The template provides an example format for people to indicate their consent (or not) for various uses of their story. It is important that people exercise informed consent about how the

information will be used, and for them to know that their choices are respected.

How will stories be collated and stored?

You will need a person who is responsible for bringing together the stories that have been collected, and a secure location where they can be kept. The stories can stay on the templates used to collect them, or collated in a document or database to assist analysis.

How will stories be used for learning and evaluation?

Develop processes through which stories can be reviewed and discussed within the organisation. This could be in special workshops dedicated to this purpose, or in existing organisational processes such as team meetings, quality committee meetings or planning sessions. You may wish to use a formal process to select the most significant of these change stories and to reflect on the criteria used in assessing significance. You might also analyse the change stories to find themes across them, and to understand what they are saying about how change is occurring in the organisation.

It is strongly recommended to include people who use services, and their supporters, in processes of reflection on these stories. They will have important insights about the changes described and how they have occurred.

Most Significant Change

The template draws on, and can be used as a tool for the Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique (Dart & Davies, 2003), which provides a systematic and participatory way for stakeholders to assess program impact. To gain best value from change stories, we recommend learning and using the MSC process. For details see:

www.mande.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2005/MSCGuide.pdf



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References

Dart, Jess & Davies, Rick (2003). "A Dialogical Story-Based Evaluation Tool: The Most Significant Change Technique". *American Journal of Evaluation*. **24** (2): 137–155.

Further information

For further information about Stretch2Engage or the evaluation toolkit, contact **Queensland Mental Health Commission**:

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You are invited to share a story about how organisations are engaging people in designing and improving services.

Your story will help us understand how this is happening and what difference it is making.

What is service engagement?

Service engagement happens when organisations engage people who use their services, along with family members, friends, or other support people, in designing and improving services. This could include processes for gathering feedback, for including people in reflection and evaluation of programs, for jointly designing new services, and more. This can happen in many different ways.

The key is that organisations actively seek out and genuinely hear the views of people accessing services and their supporters, and then take action based on what they learn.

Service engagement does **not** refer to the ways that organisations engage people in treatment.

What is Stretch2Engage?

Stretch2Engage is a set of best practice principles to guide the engagement of people using services and their friends and families in service design and re-design. Stretch2Engage sees engagement as a human right and highlights the benefits to services that engage effectively.

The Stretch2Engage Framework was commissioned by Queensland Mental Health Commission and developed in partnership by Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies, Queensland Alliance for Mental Health and Enlightened Consultants.

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

Do you have a story to share?

If you have a story to share, turn to the next page and start writing!

You can ask a staff member for help if you are a service user and would like some assistance.

What will happen to your information?

You can choose whether to include your name or to remain anonymous. Your story may be shared within your organisation to continue improving engagement processes. With your permission, it may also be shared with other organisations to illustrate good engagement practices. All stories will be securely stored.

Confidentiality

If you choose to record your story on this form, it will be shared with people who are coordinating engagement activities within the organisation and with other staff and managers. You can also choose to allow the organisation to use your story for other purposes. This will only occur with your consent.

Do you (the storyteller):

- Want to have your name on the story? (tick one) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Consent to staff seeing your story for their learning? (tick one) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Consent to the organisation using your story in reports or submissions? (tick one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

About you

Name of storyteller (leave blank if you prefer to be anonymous) _____

Are you a...

- ☐ person who accesses services
- ☐ family member, friend or support person of someone who accesses services
- ☐ staff member of an organisation involved in engagement initiatives
- ☐ other professional
- ☐ someone else

About the story

Which organisation does the story relate to? _____

Name of person writing story (if different to storyteller) _____

Date story was written _____



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Significant change questions

1. What is your connection with issues of service engagement or with Stretch2Engage?

2. From your point of view, describe a story that shows a significant change you have seen in the way that organisations engage people accessing services, or their families and friends, in designing and improving services.

(What happened? When and where did it happen? Who was involved? How did it happen? What were the outcomes—positive and/or negative?)



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3. Why is this story significant for you?**4. How (if at all) has Stretch2Engage contributed to what happened in your story?****5. Give your story a 'headline'. How would you summarise it in a few words?**

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