

## 2. An outcome assessment model for Flemish mental health services

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*Background & Aim.* Researchers, professionals and policy-makers show increased interest in outcome management. This contribution presents and evaluates an outcome assessment model that aims to improve the quality of the treatment. Application of this model is possible on both client and/or global service level.

*Method.* Measurement instruments were organised into so-called outcome compasses, aiming at routinely measuring three crucial outcome aspects, patients' symptoms, functioning and satisfaction. Since 2007, twenty-five Mental Health Services (MHS), including Centre's for Mental Health, Psychiatric Hospitals, Psychiatric Ward of General Hospitals and Sheltered Livings, participated in this project: two-thirds of them integrated the outcome assessment model in their treatments and/or global services (starters), one-third prepared the introduction of the model in their organisation (planners). The application of the outcome assessment model has been evaluated by Smith et al.'s (1997) outcome principles.

*Results.* All outcome principles were partially or entirely applied in Flemish MHS. Starters applied almost 60% of the principles, whereas planners almost 80%. Most starters (a) applied the model on both client and global service level, (b) included the clients' and professionals' perspective, (c) caused minimal burden on the client, (d) included clients' satisfaction and (e) provided feedback to the client. Few MHS (a) used Reliability of Change Indices to detect significant change, (b) assessed outcomes of drop-outs and (c) reassessed at clinically meaningful points in time.

*Discussion & Conclusion.* The current model helps professionals to improve the quality of their treatments and is applicable to various MHS. The introduction of outcome management takes time.