

Saskatchewan's Building Partnerships - Hub and COR (Centre of Responsibility) Model

 Innovation image

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Organisation: Corrections and Policing, Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice

Country: Canada

Level of government: Regional/State government

Sector: Public order and safety, Social protection

Type: Data, Financial Resources, Human Resources, Methods, Organisational Design, Partnerships, Public Service

Launched in: 2011

Overall development time: 6 year(s) 6 month(s)

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

From onset, the models of community have had a dual focus: 1. crime reduction, and 2. enhancing the wellness of individuals, families, and neighbourhoods/communities. The Hub provides immediate, coordinated and integrated responses through the mobilization of resources to address situations facing individuals and/or families with acutely elevated risk factors as recognized across a range of service providers. It meets twice weekly and brings together an integrated multi-agency from participating agencies such as mental health, social services, health, education, police, corrections and First Nations. The COR (centre of responsibility) focus is on the broader notion of community safety and wellness with an eye towards longer-term community goals and initiatives, and identifying solutions to systemic issues formed through research and analysis of Hub data.

Most models in use derive their point of action from incident-based data, e.g. an incident occurs before response, and response is taken by a single sector or at best bilaterally with select partners (e.g. police and mental health). Whereas in Hub/COR models collective action is taken on the basis of 'acutely elevated risk' recognized across multiple sectors. The Hub required a new approach to information sharing, carefully navigating provisions of all relevant privacy laws. The adoption of a strict discipline (the 'Four Filter Discipline') enables practitioners to recognize thresholds at which progressive levels of information sharing must occur while respecting the privacy of individuals. By tracking Hub intervention risk data an entirely new data source has been developed to enable the follow-on analytics of the COR, leading to evidence-based planning for community safety and well-being at the local level, and systemic policy reform at higher levels of public administration.

Why the innovation was developed

- Saskatchewan recognized an urgent need to address composite risk factors and social determinants among marginalized population groups in general, and in particular, the province's indigenous population.
 - It was evident that current public sector practices were not meeting these needs, which extended well beyond policing issues, and which required a whole-of-government approach across all human services.
 - The primary goal of these initiatives was to break down the silos of public service, to achieve collaborative and upstream attention to evident factors leading to systemic reform, and to deploy a new rapid triage and intervention model to immediately reduce those risk factors that lead to a wide variety of harms and social conditions.
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Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement, Support economic growth

Main beneficiaries

Elderly people, Ethnic or racial minorities, Families, Government bodies, Government staff, High-risk populations, Young people

Existing similar practices

Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), Govanhill Hub, and Glasgow Community Safety Services(GCSS)

In other countries' public administrations

Scottish Government; Strathclyde Police; City of Glasgow

The violence reduction efforts and outcomes of the Scottish government and policing system served as an excellent model to learn from as the Saskatchewan initiatives were still forming. In 2010, a delegation traveled from Canada to study these emerging models and found many features and conditions that were transferable. In particular, by combining the multi-agency analysis occurring at GCSS, and the diversion and rapid intervention models of the VRU and Govanhill, the Saskatchewan team recognized the opportunity to build a comprehensive approach suitable to the province and to Canada in general.

<http://www.actiononviolence.org.uk>

Results

Efficiency

- One of the more consistent positive results cited by practitioners and their managers has been the increase in the efficient connection to services for those client individuals and families facing composite risk factors. Studies conducted in Ontario have echoed similar findings.
 - A recent, but yet to be published, thesis from the University of Regina will soon add quantitative value to these observations. Among other outcomes, economic studies of the impact on policing costs reveals dramatic efficiencies in policing, and cites the likelihood of similar efficiency gains in other sectors as well.
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Effectiveness

- The most often cited benefit of the model among practitioners, managers and executives, and the one that has driven the rapid proliferation across over 75 communities, has been the impact on the effectiveness of service delivery connections.
 - To quote one practitioner, "I just achieved in 20 minutes what it usually would take me 6 months to achieve".
 - The Saskatchewan Hub and COR model brings about service connections that have never been achieved before.
 - In a single intervention, clients have had multiple risk factors mitigated, protective factors immediately deployed, and have experienced immediate risk reductions that have averted crises of the highest order.
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Service quality

Accessibility:

- An often cited feature of the model is its ability to 'bend the curve' on access to services. Each individual sector has its own intake patterns, and these are often based on 'single lens' understanding of priorities. Thus, persons in acute need often wait for service, because the full acuteness of their needs may not be reflected in the isolated risk or intake analysis applied by that sector.
- When understood through multiple lenses, these individuals or families present with highly complex and acute risk, and as a result, the intake priorities shift immediately as a result of the collaborative triage and intervention model of the Hub. The result is accelerated access to care for those that need it most.

Responsiveness:

- Through the analytic work of the COR, responsiveness is gradually being improved across the system.
- By identifying recurrent patterns of risk factors and unmet service needs, the system is now able to better understand where the gaps in responsiveness are most critical, and through the collaborative model, all sectors are able to work together to define and implement system improvements through shared planning and action.

Reliability:

- To date across Canada, there have been over 4000 individuals or families that have been the subject of Hub interventions based on the Saskatchewan model. Statistics indicate that over 80% have accepted the multi-agency interventions they have been offered, and have thus achieved a reliable connection to services sufficient to reducing their risk factors to acceptable levels. Some have taken time to accept these services, but have been notified of their availability, with many taking up the offer within a few weeks. A small number have rejected the offer of multi-agency services.
 - The available data also reveals that on average, fewer than 20% of those served in this manner by a Hub have re-entered an acutely elevated state within 3 years of the intervention, attesting to new levels of reliability achieved through the multi-sector nature of the interventions.
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User satisfaction

- There have been virtually no complaints among the 4000+ recipients of Hub intervention services. Anecdotally, there have been a great many positive experiences reported.

Development

Design

Saskatchewan's Ministry of Justice: Corrections and Policing (CP) engaged in a Future of Policing Study from 2008-2010, in partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police (SACP) and the RCMP. In parallel, then Chief of Police for Prince Albert, SK, Dale McFee (now Deputy Minister CP), mobilized his human service partners in the City of Prince Albert, including Health, Mental Health, Addictions, Social Services, Education and City By-Law. As the model formed, the Deputy Ministers of nine human service ministries of the provincial government, along with the SACP and RCMP, executed a Charter document committing to moving forward together. That Charter document is currently being updated and re-executed among an even wider array of interests across the province. Design time: 2 year(s)

Testing

- CMPA served as a prototype for the province, and ultimately the rest of Canada.
 - Local CMPA partners invested about \$25K each to launch the model, and dedicated operations staff to bi-weekly Hub meetings on an ongoing basis. The province committed \$500K/year in ongoing funding to support the development and operations of the COR.
 - A doctoral research fellow from University of Saskatchewan was embedded in CMPA early in its development through to 2015. This researcher produced two comprehensive evaluations.
 - The Ministry of Justice commissioned a special body, the Information Sharing Issues Working Group (ISIWG) to work with CMPA and the province's Information & Privacy Commissioner to monitor, refine and document the procedures emerging from CMPA.
 - The Ministry developed a specialized support unit to guide the prototype through its early experience, to conduct training, and to provide technical guidance to CMPA and all adopting communities in the province (13 replications in Saskatchewan).
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Implementation

Tools used:

- In order to track the risk factors and collaborative interventions arising from the Hub, a risk-tracking database tool was custom built through cooperation between the Ministry and CMPA.
- In addition, the Prince Albert Police Service developed a risk matrix instrument to assist their analysts in recognizing and bringing forward situations of acutely elevated risk.
- A number of info-graphics, standardized referral documents, and multimedia tools were developed to assist with program fidelity, and to support consistent messaging for those interested in replicating the model.
- A unique governance structure was put in place to ensure effective oversight and guidance for all Charter members (crossing levels of government and community based entities).

Resources used:

- The Hub is driven entirely by existing front-line and/or supervisor level resources from among the many agencies. Approximately 20-25 members sit at each Hub meeting, bi-weekly, for 90 minutes, as part of their regular duties
- The COR has a full time Executive Director, one administrator, and two dedicated analytic professionals. In addition, most of the sectoral partners dedicated 1-2 specialists, each funded by their host organizations, to work full time at the COR.
- Annual operating costs of the COR are approximately \$500K.
- In addition, the Ministry (C&P) has dedicated a staff of 4, plus some outside advisors, over the past few years to support the rapid evolution of the model.

Implementation time: 2 year(s)

Diffusion

- From outset, CMPA and the Saskatchewan Government welcomed delegations from around the province, across Canada, and the US. Well over 40 visiting delegations attended the CMPA prototype.
- In addition, Saskatchewan's special advisors engaged with other provinces to support replication and continuing program fidelity.
- In Canada's largest province, a special Ontario Working Group was formed in 2014 and has drawn in dozens of policing and human service representatives from interested communities to move forward collectively on the adoption of the Saskatchewan models.
- Specialized e-learning modules form the most consistent and reliable means of supporting replications while preserving integrity of the model and its information sharing disciplines.
- To date, over 75 communities - ranging from large cities to urban regions to rural counties and First Nations reserves - have adopted this model to some degree. Prince Edward Island is moving forward with provincial application of the model.

Diffusion time: 2 year(s) 6 month(s)

Challenges and solutions

- The greatest challenge has been the deep career investment of middle managers in the practices and procedures of the status quo.
 - Executive champions for this new model have been abundant and front-line staff quickly and consistently embrace the opportunity to deliver more efficient service to those who need it most. However, middle managers remain accountable to sectorized systems where performance measurement and reporting schemes [that define their careers] favor siloed practices and incident based responses. The best strategy to address this has been proof of concept and training.
 - As new managers are trained and informed of the collaborative models, they see immediate results in improved service connections for vulnerable and high needs clients.
 - We continue to invest in education and support programming; senior executives in all sectors advocate to staff to find ways to reconcile traditional performance indicators with the need for more collective and outcome-based measurement regimes.
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Partnerships

Multiple partners

Academics and Research Bodies, Civil Society, Other Public Sector, Private sector

The initial partnerships behind the Saskatchewan and Prince Albert innovations included the Ministry of Justice: Corrections and Policing (provincial lead); the Prince Albert Police Service (local lead); 9 human service ministries of government (social services, education, health, etc); Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police; RCMP; regional health and education authorities; Prince Albert Grand Council (representing indigenous peoples). The Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina have also been involved in developing and evaluating the model. Public Safety Canada and the Government of Ontario have also actively observed the innovation.

Partnership has been an essential ingredient, taking two primary forms. The first involved a shared commitment among senior executives to ensure their entire organizations embraced the ideals of collaboration and information sharing. In particular, direction from senior executives to their respective staff organizations to depart from traditional resistance to sharing information and to operate within the framework of the Hub's Four Filters Discipline. The second involved a willingness among all actors to engage together in the necessary learning from risk-based data, and to commit to systemic reform in order to address apparent service gaps that are revealed. These partnerships have resulted in new forms of engagement and new patterns of intake and service delivery across every sector involved.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- **Worked Well 1:** Base innovation on available evidence and research. Early investments made by initiators of this model in research, community consultation, and a global scan of promising practices served them well during the adoption and mobilization phases. Available and consistent research on the impact of known risk factors (crime, social disorder, and the caseloads of every sector involved) provided a compelling basis for the resulting innovations.
 - **Worked Well 2:** Mobilizing influential champions was an essential part of the adoption strategy. In the prototype case and every major adoption since, direct and personal leadership of sector executives has been instrumental in mobilizing all decision makers.
 - **Less Well:** Ability to reach and adequately prepare middle managers who are, by the nature of their positions, guardians of the status quo on the one hand, and whose areas of responsibility are the most immediately affected by changing patterns of intake and service delivery, on the other hand.
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Conditions for success

- Most essential is the sustained support of the most senior government officials in any jurisdiction considering adoption. Without this, resistance to change among middle managers and practitioners, across every sector, has the potential to create both real and imaginary barriers to adoption and effective execution of these socially innovative models.
 - Executives must see and understand the compelling and evidence based reasons for the innovation, and they must serve as the reassuring voice to keep the innovators insulated from the resistance they will inevitably face.
 - It is imperative that all parties look at collective impact versus siloed impact. We cannot solve complex issues through one lens; in fact data shows a siloed response compounds the problem.
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Other information

There is no doubt that the Saskatchewan innovations in community safety and well-being, and specifically the Hub and COR model, currently represent a genuine phenomenon in public service reform in Canada. They are widely recognized as the only demand-side management strategy yet conceived across the policing system, where over 75% of calls for service now relate to social matters other than crime. And, among the other human services, all of whom are also struggling under fiscal constraints, the evident and dramatic impacts on their service delivery to the most high demand clients in every sector continue to draw more interest and adoption of these models across the country.

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