



Community Agents in Essex – the use of ASCOT to support impact measurement

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Outline

- Background to CA
- Proving the case
- Embedding the measure
- Training
- Progress and feedback
- Next steps

Background and purpose of Community Agents Essex

Community Agents, commissioned by Essex County council, support frail older people and their informal carers to gain and regain independent living skills. An agent will visit people in their own home, help them to identify what it is that needs to change and support them to help themselves and connect back to community networks.

The scheme is delivered by a partnership of four organisations:

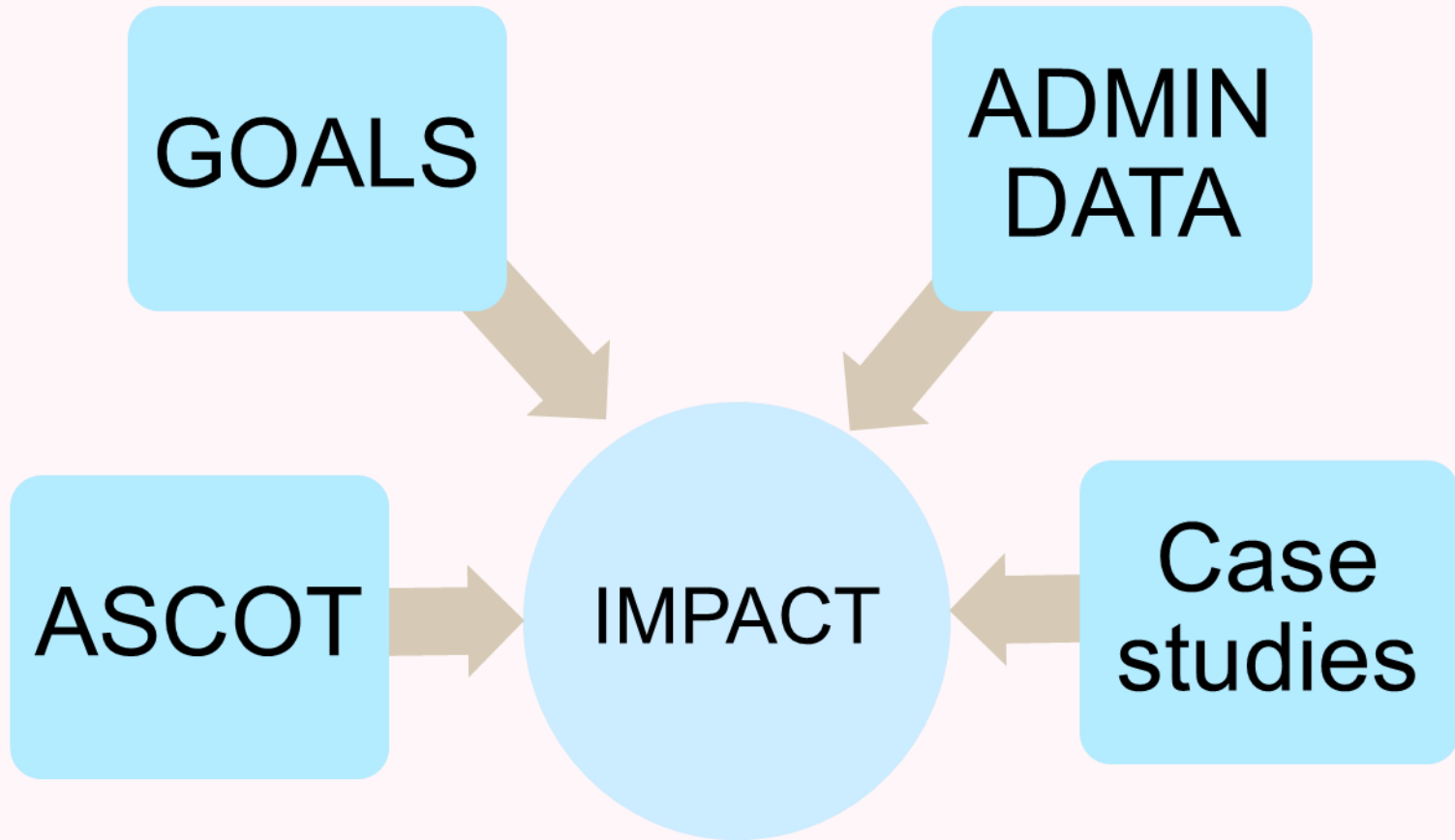
- Rural Community Council of Essex,
- British Red Cross,
- Age UK Essex
- Essex Neighbourhood Watch

Its aim is to provide an alternative solution to traditional social care support for frail older people and their informal carers and as a result manage demand into social care.

Proving the case

- As part of the business case it was agreed that there would need to be a measure of resilience and independence before and after intervention that could be used to demonstrate impact both before, and after at 3, 6 and 12 month follow up.
- It was also desirable to have a measure that could support a structured conversation (with clear aims and objectives).
- A review of measures was undertaken and ASCOT was identified.

Proving the case



Embedding the measure

- All involved were aware some training may be needed but there was no additional money to support the training.
- Set about developing some training in order to support our 3rd and voluntary sector partners.

The training

- 1) Starter exercise on measuring impact
- 2) Background to the measure
- 3) Exercise – Using the measure where they were asked to ask each other the measure cold
- 4) Having a structured conversation
- 5) Role modelling structured conversation (Practical example of how to use in a structured conversation using a pre planned script scenario
- 6) Exercise – Prompts
- 7) Ratings exercise:
 - This was based on some of the rating examples provided by ASCOT in their guidance
 - This both helped ensure inter-rater reliability and gave people the opportunity to understand the measure in detail

Following the training

- Agents were provided with guidance and an FAQ pack, which was informed by the questions asked during the training
- Agents were provided with a template which included the prompts they had come up with during the training
- Agents were asked to provide informal feedback and initial experiences of using ASCOT

Progress and initial feedback from agents

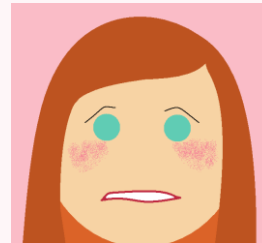
Over 650 first visit ASCOT completed



Definitely useful for having a structured conversation!



Agent perspective: Lack of confidence/some embarrassment to use for closing, with only 34 ASCOTs completed for closed cases



Client perspective: sometimes don't want to do it or think it is inappropriate



Next steps

- It is a learning process and we are still learning
- Not quite ready to report follow up data but initial difference between scores is promising
- Further review using focus groups, interviews or combination of both
- Additional training - possibly addressing the difference between ascot and goals in more detail
- Looking at alternative ways ? More time? Fewer cases? Or stop doing it on all cases?

Any questions or comments?