

Review of: "Research & Evaluation Framework 2022/23"

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This article acts as a useful primer for anyone unfamiliar with service evaluations. As such it provides a narrative thread together with links to helpful resources, allowing those who are curious to obtain both an overview of evaluation and a way to pursue more detail. I have a few comments which the authors may wish to consider:

1. PPI - it is great to see PPI recognised as a key part of service evaluation. However, given its stated importance, it is perhaps strange to have PPI left to the end of the article. Furthermore, although the article makes it clear that PPI should run through each and every stage, PPI is not part of the 4 stage diagram. I understand that the diagram needs to be simple, but perhaps PPI could run as a theme underneath the existing 4 boxes that runs throughout? If PPI is not prioritised and central to the model, then it feels odd to say that PPI is important and central but to leave it out of the model and only say this at the end. Those of us who believe PPI to be important need to 'walk the talk'.
2. I found the model made a strange jump, from 'is it worth it?' to 'is it working?' without a stage for actually doing 'it'. I took 'it' to be the intervention or improvement work.
3. I liked the recognition of the work of realist evaluation model which moves us on from asking did it work to asking for whom did it work, and in what circumstances. But this does mean that there is a tension between the question you ask in phase 2 and those in phases 1 and 3. All of these questions should be about who it is working for, and how and in what circumstances - only phrasing the question this way in one of your stages seems to negate the progress in our understanding that there is no intervention anywhere that works for everyone all the time - the question 'did it work?' is not one that evaluators should be asking. I think you can build the intent of phases 1 and 3 into the more nuanced questions....
4. I am not sure of your intentions for this article, but it does not seem to cite or reference original work that it clearly draws from (such as realist evaluation, for example).
5. You could consider adding examples from your organisations experience to illustrate your article.

I wish you luck as you continue to develop your ideas about how to help other people to understand and implement intervention evaluations.