Evaluating Wellbeing

Are you running a project where you are promoting better wellbeing for the participants and you would like to know if your project has had a positive impact and made a difference to people's wellbeing?

Or do you need to provide evaluation evidence to help support a project bid or business case or just to add into a final report?

If the answer is yes to any of the above, Kent County Council's Public Health Mental Wellbeing team could be able to help you to use the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) to measure the wellbeing of the participants at your project. This guide has been written for organisers of projects working with Mental Wellbeing Team in Public Health to help evaluate the wellbeing of Kent based projects. If you want to evaluate your project using a paper based method only please find out how to here.

Contents

1.0 Why Measure Wellbeing?

- There is evidence that mental wellbeing is a good indicator of how people and populations are able to function and thrive
- Past research and practice surrounding mental health and wellbeing have focused on mental health problems and on prevention of developing a mental disorder (mental health problem), rather than on mental wellbeing
- Collecting before and after project data can tell us a lot about what strategies work best and what helps people improve and sustain mental wellbeing

Kent County Council's Public Health Mental Wellbeing Team are promoting the use of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) to measure the impact of a project on the wellbeing of its participants and this guide is built around using this scale to evaluate your project.

2.0 Why are we using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)?

The Mental Wellbeing Team supports the use of the WEMWBS evaluation tool.

- WEMWBS is a fully validated and researched measurement of wellbeing among people aged from 13 – 74 in the UK.
- There are good examples of WEMWBS being used nationally in various types of projects.
- The WEMWBS measurement comprises of 14 positively worded statements with five responses to choose from for each statement which are from 'none of the time' to 'all of the time'. The period of assessment that you would be asking participants to think about when they are answering the statements is the two weeks prior to the completion of the scale. The WEMWBS is designed to be filled in by participants themselves.
- For more in-depth information about WEMWBS go to section 7.0 of this document

3.0 Planning for Your Evaluation

If you are going to evaluate your project and measure the wellbeing of its participants there are a few things to consider before you start:

1. Is it clear to all project team members what mental wellbeing is, and why it's important for overall health? For more information go to www.liveitwell.org.uk. We are running a series of free Six Ways to Wellbeing Seminars in Kent that could help you understand what mental wellbeing is and why it is important; to find out more information go to: www.liveitwell.org.uk/seminars.

2. In Kent, the Mental Wellbeing team in Public Health can help you keep track of the wellbeing measurements scores of your project participants by providing an automated spreadsheet of the results of your project at designated times. If you want us to support you in this evaluation it is important that you contact us as far in advance as you are able and provide us with the following information:

    a. project lead contact details – name, address, email, phone number – this person will be the main link for us with all correspondence and queries about the project
    b. type of project
    c. number of anticipated participants
    d. start of project date
    e. projected mid-way date (if known or approx.)
    f. project end date (if known or approx.)

We have created an online form for you to complete with your project details which will automatically be sent through to mentalwellbeing@kent.gov.uk you can access this form here**.**

3. The Mental Wellbeing Team in Public Health will give you the results of your WEMWBS on an excel spreadsheet which we will share with the named lead on the project. These WEMWBS spreadsheets will be available at dates agreed with the project lead. We can also provide advice and support in collecting and collating WEMWBS and we can help you understand the results of your WEMWBS scores; please email us at mentalwellbeing@kent.gov.uk for information.

4. If you are not using the Mental Wellbeing Team at Kent County Council Public Health Department to help you collate your results and you are doing this yourself, you need to be sure you have an agreed structure for collecting, recording and managing the evaluation data that you have all agreed on. We suggest using the paper based method only as detailed in the document: 'Using WEMWBS to measure the impact of your work on mental wellbeing: A practice-based user guide' found at the link below:
   www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/researchers/userguide/wemwbs_practice_based_user_guide.pdf

   Whatever method of evaluating wellbeing that you agree on you will need to be sure that the aims, objectives and measurements you use is clear and the chosen method of collecting, recording and managing data is agreed upon.

5. Are all team members clear on how to track and maintain data on individuals over time? There is a simple flow chart available to support your project and contains basic information at 8.0.

4.0 Before Completing WEMWBS

When asking people to take part in WEMWBS there are a few things to remember:

- The WEMWBS scale is designed for participants to think about how they have felt over the ***past two weeks*** therefore your project needs to be running for more than two weeks for the WEMWBS to be an effective measurement.
- The participant is over the age of 13 (there is a wellbeing measure 'Stirling' for under 13's which you can find details of in section 7.0).
- Undertaking WEMWBS is voluntary.

If people are unsure about undertaking the WEMWBS survey assure them that all responses are anonymous and when the project is evaluated all data will be kept secure and confidential. The WEMWBS measurement for a project it is not about an individual's wellbeing but that of the whole project.

NB If a person wants to find out their own wellbeing result they can do this by using our online tool found here: liveitwell.org.uk/WEMWBS

Ideally WEMWBS forms should be completed as early as possible in a project, for instance at our seminars we ask all participants to complete a form before we start the seminar. Be realistic with your project or intervention and the people involved but the first WEMWBS should be completed early.

4.1 Timescales for WEMWBS

In order to identify the impact of a project, WEMWBS data should be collected at the start and end of a project as a minimum. If you have a long project, you might choose to also collect data mid-way through, to identify progress. Please see some examples below:

a) If you have a twelve week project, you could ask participants to complete the WEMWBS survey in week one, upon registration. You could then ask participants to complete at project end in week twelve at the end session.
b) If you know that a lot of people drop-out of a project from about the week eight, you may wish to ask people to complete their follow-up WEMWBS at seven weeks to maximise your sample size.
c) If your project is open ended you could choose to do an initial WEMWBS and then follow up with participants at eight / ten week intervals.
d) It is also possible to collect WEMWBS after a project has finished to see if mental wellbeing levels have been sustained. We would suggest though not relying on this as a measure because it is often difficult to collect information and contact people when a project has finished.

If you are unsure about when to measure email mentalwellbeing@kent.gov.uk and we will do our best to help guide you.

5.0 Completing WEMWBS Forms

You can download blank WEMWBS forms here: liveitwell.org.uk/WEMWBS

WEMWBS can be described to participants as '***statements about their thoughts and feelings in the past two weeks'***. Explain that you would like participants to fill in a quick questionnaire about these statements before they start the project, middle of the project (if applicable) and then again at the end to follow the effectiveness of this project.

WEMWBS is designed for the person to complete themselves.

Each person completing the WEMWBS questionnaire should have an identifier that remains with them throughout the project. It could be that you assign a project code number to an individual and keep these in a separate document, an excel sheet for instance. We have found it easier to ask people to write their mother's maiden name and their year of birth into the form as this is equally as sufficient and makes the task simpler.

If you are going to keep project identifiers it is a good idea to assign this to a participant at registration, next to their name, and to store this electronically on a password protected file. This way you can check which code you have given to which participant when it comes to the follow-up survey/s.

NOTE: It is important that the same identifiers are used throughout the evaluation, so if you choose to use a project code that this code is maintained consistently for the participant.

This is why we use mother's maiden name and the year of birth – as this is easily recalled by everyone and doesn't change.

STATEMENTS	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	(4)	5
2. I've been feeling useful	1	2	(3)	4	5
3. I've been feeling relaxed	1	(2)	3	4	5
4. I've been feeling interested in other people	1	2	(3)	4	5
5. I've had energy to spare	1	2	(3)	4	5
6. I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	(4)	5
7. I've been thinking clearly	1	2	(3)	4	5
8. I've been feeling good about myself	1	(2)	3	4	5
9. I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	(3)	4	5
10. I've been feeling confident	1	(2)	3	4	5
11. I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	(2)	3	4	5
12. I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	(5)
13. I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	(5)
14. I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	(3)	4	5

Example of completed WEMWBS form 1

When you have collected your WEMBS forms send all of the paperwork along with the form found in 9.0 or online at: liveitwell.org.uk/WEMWBS to: **WEMWBS, Mental Wellbeing Team, Kent County Council, Public Health, Room 3.45 Sessions House, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ.** When we receive the forms we will enter them onto our automated system which calculates the scores. We will then provide a copy of the results in the form of an excel spreadsheet. If you are scoring your WEMWBS forms manually go to the link here for more information.

6.0 Support for people completing WEMWBS

Occasionally reflection on the WEMWBS statements may generate distress. For participants to recognise that their mental wellbeing is not good is not necessarily a bad thing. It can be the first step towards taking action to feel better. It is important nevertheless to be able to offer support in such circumstances. Please advise people who are distressed to talk to their GP or they can contact local helplines in Kent and Medway, there is 24 hour help offered by Mental Health Matters on: 0800 1070160 or for mobiles: 0300 330 5486 or free NHS counselling services detailed at liveitwell.org.uk/therapy.

7.0 Additional Information

All paperwork mentioned in this guide is available to download here: liveitwell.org.uk/WEMWBS

For projects involving under 13 year olds there is the Children and Young People there is the Stirling Scale which can be found at the link and the initial report on this scale can be read here. (Unfortunately, at this time we are unable to support the gathering of this information).

WEMWBS Guides and further information can be found at the below links:

- http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/researchers/userguide/wemwbs_practice_based_user_guide.pdf
- http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/7551-WEMWBS%20User%20Guide%20Version%201%20June%202008.pdf
- http://www.healthscotland.com/scotlands-health/population/Measuring-positive-mental-health.aspx

"The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale was funded by the Scottish Government National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Well-being, commissioned by NHS Health Scotland, developed by the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh, and is jointly owned by NHS Health Scotland, the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh."

8.0 Evaluating Wellbeing using WEMWBS—Flowchart

Your Project Name:

Date :

Named Lead :

Contact mentalwellbeing@kent.gov.uk with details of your project or fill in the online form here (this will automatically be sent through).

1

Complete 1st WEMWBS forms

At the start of the first session / meeting: assign the participant with the project number and a participant ID number or ask them to complete WEMWBS using mother's maiden name and their year of birth. Send completed set of WEMWBS to the address below.

Collection Date : ……/……/……

Stage 2: Mid-point WEMWBS (if applicable)

Ask project participants to complete a WEMWBS form and either use their project ID (if assigned) or mother's maiden name and year of birth. Send completed set of WEMWBS to the address below.

Collection Date : ……/……/…… (if applicable)

2

3

Stage 3: Final WEMWBS

Get participants to complete a final WEMWBS questionnaire. Using either use their project ID (if assigned) or mother's maiden name and year of birth. Send 3rd completed set of WEMWBS to the address below.

Collection Date : ……/……/……

WEMWBS Forms and Addresses:

all supporting paperwork and forms can be found at:
liveitwell.org.uk/WEMWBS

Completed forms to: WEMWBS Kent County Council, Public Health, Room 3.45 Sessions House, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ using paperwork provided at the link above or for more information or help email: mentalwellbeing@kent.gov.uk

9.0 Form to send with completed WEMWBS

Completed WEMWBS forms and this form to be sent to:

WEMWBS, Kent County Council, Public Health, Room 3.45 Sessions House, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ

Project Name	
Project Lead i.e. named lead person	
Organisation	
Address of Organisation	
Date WEMWBS forms were completed	……/……/……
Number of WEMWBS completed	
Contact email:	