

4. Survey Instrument Evaluation

This chapter provides an overview of the psychometric properties of the *National Consumer Experience of Care (Your Care)* survey. Data has not been analysed by site as the focus of this analysis is on testing the properties of the survey (to allow for improvements to the survey) rather than reporting results from the survey. Each participating site has received a report on the results for their service. As the participating sites represent a self-selected sample there is no expectation that the survey results are generalisable beyond the participating sites. Therefore, survey results have not been reported except where necessary as part of an analysis. All analysis was conducted using SPSS PASW Statistics 18.

Additional qualitative feedback collected as part of the broader evaluation activities relating to the project has been included where relevant.

In reading this chapter please note that:

- Reported sample sizes will vary depending on the number of respondents answering each question and the type of analysis being conducted.
- As the psychological distance between points on Likert scales are being tested to determine the properties of the scale, where possible comparison of scores between segments has used proportions rather than measures of central tendency.
- The survey was constructed in four sections. These are referred to in some of the analysis:
 - Questions 1 to 27 are referred to as experience questions (independent items).
 - Questions 28 to 31 are referred to as outcome questions (dependent items).
 - Questions 34 to 35 are open-ended questions (free text).
 - Questions 36 to 42 are demographic questions.

4.1 Response rates

The response rates demonstrate that consumers had a high level of participation in the survey, comparing favourably to other similar surveys of mental health consumers in Australia. The sample was found to be representative of the population of consumers from which it was drawn.

This section explores the response rates for the survey (Table 1). The survey was returned by 222 respondents (123 inpatient and 99 community). This exceeded the initial target of 200 responses for this analysis.

Table 1: Response rates by service setting

| Response Collection Type | Community Site 1 | Community Site 2 | Community Site 3 | Community Sub total | Inpatient Site 4 | Inpatient Site 5 | Inpatient Site 6 | Inpatient Sub total | Total |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Service population (A) | 208 | 250 | 459 | 917 | 83 | 87 | 91 | 261 | 1178 |
| Offered (B) | 54 | 185 | 96 | 335 | 34 | 41 | 98 | 173 | 508 |
| Refusals (C) | 15 | 100 | 34 | 149 | 1 | 5 | 17 | 23 | 172 |
| Distributed (D) | 39 | 85 | 62 | 186 | 33 | 36 | 81 | 150 | 336 |
| All responses received (E) | 19 | 22 | 58 | 99 | 27 | 29 | 67 | 123 | 222 |
| Responses more than 80% completed (F) | 16 | 21 | 54 | 91 | 25 | 29 | 52 | 106 | 197 |
| Offered survey response rate(E/B) | 35% | 12% | 60% | 30% | 79% | 71% | 68% | 71% | 44% |
| Population return rate (E/A) | 9% | 9% | 13% | 11% | 33% | 33% | 74% | 47% | 19% |
| Population offer rate (B/A) | 26% | 74% | 21% | 37% | 41% | 47% | 108% | 66% | 43% |
| Offered survey response >80% survey completion (F/B) | 30% | 11% | 56% | 27% | 74% | 71% | 53% | 61% | 39% |
| Refusal rate (C/B) | 28% | 54% | 35% | 44% | 3% | 12% | 17% | 13% | 34% |

4.1.1 Eligible population

The eligible population for this survey was the service population, less those mental health consumers who were unable to participate because of any of the following:

- Their service staff (usually a clinician or case worker) identified that they were too unwell. As interviewing was conducted over a period of weeks, these people may have been eligible and offered a survey at a later point in time.
- The person lacked sufficient written or verbal English language skills to understand the introductory information about the project and consent, or to complete the survey independently. This could have been identified by the service staff, or the consumer worker in implementing the survey process.
- The person lacked capacity to consent. This could have been identified by the service staff or the consumer worker in implementing the survey process.

As the factors that make a consumer ineligible may change over time and relate to individual characteristics that are not available from services, we have used the service population (A, Table 1) in our estimations of the eligible population (knowing this will be an over-estimation of the eligible population size).

The service population was 1,178 clients (917 community, 261 inpatient). In total, 19% of the population returned a survey (47% for inpatients and 11% for community clients) (E/A, Table 1).

4.1.2. Offer rate

The offer rate is the proportion of the population offered a survey. Overall, 43% of the service population was offered a survey (B/A, Table 1). This is consistent with other surveys of mental health consumers. The offer rate was significantly higher in inpatient than community setting (66% compared to 37%). In community settings, the consumer worker was only able to offer the survey to clients who physically attended the location. As consumer workers worked part time, they may never have had the opportunity to offer the survey to some clients. Services were asked to remove those clients who only received home visits and did not attend a centre from the eligibility list. However, this was not always possible.

4.1.3 Survey completion

Overall, 44% of people offered a survey (E/B, Table 1) agreed to participate and returned a survey (either through an iPad or paper completion). This is consistent with other surveys of mental health consumers. Inpatients had a higher return rate than did community clients (71% compared to 30%).

Clients could return a survey incomplete, through either the iPad or paper forms. Reviewing surveys that were at least 80% complete, provided a completion rate of 39% overall with inpatients still having a higher level of participation than community clients (61% compared to 27%) (F/B, Table 1).

4.1.4 Refusal rate

The refusal rate is the proportion of people offered a survey who refused to participate. This rate is an overestimation of the actual refusal by individuals for several reasons:

- If a person refused a survey at one point in time and completed it at a subsequent time they are still counted as a refusal, as the anonymous nature of the survey does not allow for identification of individual's participation.
- Post survey review of consumer worker diaries and administrative data revealed that ineligible consumers were on occasion counted as refusals (that is, refused a survey by the consumer worker).
- Similarly, people also refused a survey if they had already completed a survey.
- Finally, people may have been offered a survey several times and refused some or all of these approaches potentially allowing one client to be recorded as refusing several times.

Despite these over estimations of actual refusals by individuals, the overall refusal rate was 34% (C/B, Table 1). The refusal rate was higher in community than inpatient settings (44% compared to 13%). This is likely to reflect the larger population size of community settings and the increased possibility of multiple offers and refusals over the surveying period.

4.1.5 Representativeness of the sample

The sample was highly representative of the service population (Table 2). Only two characteristics differed significantly between the population and sample ($p > .05$). These characteristics were explored in the questions to identify first time service users and people who were not on an involuntary order at some point during the last three months. The first time service users question was not found to affect consumers' ratings of service experience. It is likely the difference in sample and population characteristics was a result of inaccurate self-reporting in the sample. As this question added no value to interpreting ratings of service experience, the value of its inclusion in the survey is questioned.

Legal status (voluntary, involuntary) has been found to be valuable in explaining service experience (see section 0). In comparing the sample with the population characteristics, it seems that when people have been involuntary during the last three months, they are able to accurately report this in the survey. Hence, for involuntary status there is no significant difference between the sample and the population. However, there was a significant difference between the sample and the population in the proportion of people who were voluntary over the last three months. This seems to result from voluntary clients selecting 'unsure' in the survey. This suggests that in analysis 'voluntary' should include 'unsure'. Removing 'unsure' is not recommended as it is likely to force some people to

inaccurately identify as involuntary. The current response pattern suggests that when people have been involuntary at some period over the last three months, they are very clear on their legal status.

Table 2: Comparison of sample demographics to the service population

| Gender | Community population n=917 | Community sample n=100 | Inpatient population n =260 | Inpatient sample n=109 | Total population n=1,177 | Total sample n=209 |
|--------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Male | 61% | 52% | 45% | 47% | 57% | 49% |
| Female | 39% | 48% | 55% | 52% | 43% | 50% |
| Other | - | - | - | 1% | - | 1% |

| Language | Community population n=917 | Community sample n=100 | Inpatient population n =260 | Inpatient sample n=109 | Total population n=1,177 | Total sample n=209 |
|----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| English | 96% | 96% | 98% | 99% | 96% | 98% |
| Other | 4% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 4% | 2% |

| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander | Community population n=917 | Community sample n=100 | Inpatient population n =260 | Inpatient sample n=109 | Total population n=1,177 | Total sample n=209 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| No | 94% | 97% | 91% | 90% | 94% | 93% |
| Aboriginal | 3% | 3% | 6% | 10% | 4% | 7% |
| Torres Strait | 0% | - | 1% | - | 0% | - |
| Both | 0% | 1% | 0% | - | 0% | 1% |
| Not stated | 3% | - | 2% | - | 3% | - |

| Age | Community population n=917 | Community sample n=100 | Inpatient population n =260 | Inpatient sample n=109 | Total population n=1,177 | Total sample n=209 |
|-------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 18-24 | 8% | 11% | 13% | 11% | 9% | 11% |
| 25-34 | 23% | 29% | 26% | 31% | 23% | 30% |
| 35-44 | 29% | 28% | 22% | 22% | 28% | 25% |
| 45-54 | 24% | 20% | 27% | 31% | 24% | 26% |
| 55-64 | 15% | 10% | 10% | 4% | 14% | 7% |
| 65+ | 2% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% |

| First time | Community population n=917 | Community sample n=100 | Inpatient population n =260 | Inpatient sample n=109 | Total population n=1,177 | Total sample n=209 |
|------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes | 6% | 29% | 48% | 58% | 15% | 45% |
| No | 94% | 71% | 52% | 42% | 85% | 55% |

| Involuntary at some point | Community population n=917 | Community sample n=100 | Inpatient population n =260 | Inpatient sample n=109 | Total population n=1,177 | Total sample n=209 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes | 35% | 30% | 51% | 38% | 39% | 34% |
| No | 64% | 56% | 49% | 42% | 61% | 48% |
| Not sure | - | 15% | - | 21% | - | 18% |