Highlighting success; a Home Based Treatment Team’s approach to working with people with co-existing mental health and substance use problem

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This presentation highlights the approaches of a home based treatment team, using two brief case studies of service users needing treatment and care at home for co-existing mental illness and significant substance use problems. In outlining the important aspects of these case studies the presenter poses a number of questions about what was helpful. How well resilience was promoted, how much hope was able to be built and to what degree each person felt they had recovered is discussed.

There is a natural tension between the criteria of engagement set up within a specialist team and those factors associated with good outcome. Te Ariari o te Oranga: The Assessment and Management of People with Co-existing Mental Health and Substance Use problems 2010 (Todd, 2010) identifies engagement, retention and the quality of relationship with staff as some of the factors predicting treatment outcome. Criteria that dictates short term engagement is likely to adversely affect the quality of engagement, retention and the quality of relationships if the service user is prematurely passed over to another team. This presentation discusses the fundamental importance of these and other factors and how each contributes towards a positive outcome for the service user and family members involved.

The ability and willingness to work from an integrated framework in addressing co-existing mental health and substance use problems, in a service that allows flexibility of clinical engagement leads to less disruption, staying close to home and a better outcome. A better outcome is shown when the person we discharge moves on with greater resilience and more hope for the future.