

BEST PRACTICE MODELS

BEST PRACTICE MODELS for Mental Health Promotion

[9] Mental Health Promotion

- a) Community awareness programs
- b) Mental Health consultation to agencies
- c) Training

[9 b] Mental Health consultation to agencies

The Best Practice model is for a specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to give equal importance to providing consultative services to other community agencies dealing with children and their families as they do to providing direct clinical services. This is in recognition of the fact that only about one tenth of cases of mental disorders are seen at clinical services and the other nine tenths are in the community, perhaps being dealt with by the agency requesting support. It is far more cost-effective for the community to support a range of agencies than to expect all cases to be taken by the specialist services.

Best Practice involves specialist staff specifically tasked with providing primary, secondary and tertiary consultative services and arranging professional development support for agency staff as needed.

Regular service projects should specify:

- The *aims and objectives* of the proposed consultancy, including a statement of *desired outcomes*,
- The composition of the consultee group,
- The time, place, and duration of meetings,
- The identity of the consultant and the agreed format of the consultations,
- Any procedural matters, such as prior supply of information, and means of communication.

A Contract, outlining the commitments arising from the negotiations, should be drawn up for signing by both agencies. The usefulness of the consultancy service should be periodically reviewed in the light of the *desired outcomes*. This not only ensures rigorous quality control but also facilitates service research.

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