

PROMENPOL

Ethical Issues of Mental Health Promotion

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Promoting and Protecting Mental Health

Supporting **P**olicy through Integration of Research, Current
Approaches and Practices

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Initial Comments (1)

- The PMP project is inviting you to carry out a field test
- PMP has obtained ethical approval through the procedures of the Austrian Red Cross.
- PMP has elaborated the ethical principles underpinning an ethical approach to mental health promotion.
- Nevertheless, it is the local situation that determines whether further ethical approval needs to be obtained or not
- There are three types of field tests.
 - Type 1 is a usability test of the website and no ethical issues arise
 - Type 3 is relating to existing initiatives and thus ethical issues will already have been addressed
 - Type 2 is about initiating MHP actions and thus is where local ethical issues may arise

Initial Comments (2)

- All Type 2 field tests must complete an ethical risk assessment and a project template and return these to PMP.
 - The documentation will be reviewed by the PMP Ethical Committee before approval to implement the Type 2 field test.
 - The aim is to ensure that all those Type 2 field tests that need to undergo a full national ethical approval procedure do so e.g. intrusive procedures, participants who have difficulty giving consent or the use of tools which have not been fully evaluated
- All Type 3 field tests will be asked to complete an ethical review form to indicate any ethical issues that were addressed during these projects
- Assistance is available from the PMP partners
- The PMP project will carry out an ethical review in which you will be asked to identify any issues that have arisen

PROMENPOL Ethical Framework

- Informed consent
- Confidentiality
- Beneficence and non-maleficence
- Competence

Informed Consent

- Respect and integrate as much as possible the opinions and wishes of others regarding decisions which affect them.
- Provide as much information as is reasonable in clear understandable language to the person or his or her representative

Informed Consent

- Obtain informed consent for all research that involves:
 - Obtrusive measures
 - Invasion into the private lives
 - Risks to the participant
 - Any attempt to change the behaviour of participants
- Seek willing and adequately informed participation from any person of diminished capacity to give informed consent and proceed without this only if the research is considered to be of direct benefit to that person.

Confidentiality and anonymity

- Produce a guideline for dealing with personalised information in reports
- Have procedures for the storage and release of personalised information.
- Quality control potential inadvertent references to identifiable individuals.
- Ensure that the nature of the data reported is both anonymised and aggregated

Confidentiality and anonymity

- Pilot sites must:
 - Have a Data Protection policy and set of procedures
 - Have a privacy and confidentiality statement which is signed by a representative of the pilot site
 - Have one person who is responsible for managing personalised information should be given to
 - Produce a guideline for dealing with requests for personalised information

Beneficence and non-maleficance

- Tools for which most evidence is available will be included in the toolkit.
- The toolkit will include a highlighted statement about doing good and avoiding harm and encouraging those using the toolkit to operate on these principles
- Pilot sites who wish guidance about how to abide by their ethical responsibilities can seek this from the PMP partners

Beneficence and non-maleficance

- Pilot sites should carry out a risk assessment to identify any potential risks and formulate appropriate risk management measures.
- Put in place mechanisms to monitor the wellbeing of participants
- It doesn't make sense to eliminate all tools for which benefits have not been proved. So monitor the impact and effectiveness of the actual tools included in the Toolkit

Competence

- Do not implement any technique or methodology that is beyond your competence or qualifications
- Review implementation plans to ensure that there is no concern about competence prior to embarking on a project
- Each tool in the toolkit for which specific skills or qualifications are required is flagged on the website.
- Seek additional training or bring in expertise where this is required.

Final Comments

- While there is no need for ethical approval for PMP, it has obtained ethical approval through the Austrian Red Cross
- There may be cases where individual Type 2 field tests are required to seek ethical approval.
- Where this is the case the PMP partners will provide materials and support in completing the application form
- The PMP Ethical Committee will assist in determining if this is required
- The extent to which ethical approval is required depends on the nature of the tools being used and the competence of the beneficiary group to consent and the degree of innovation involved.

Final Comments

- There is no need for ethical approval as long as:
 - Participation is voluntary
 - The tools being used are well established and evaluated
 - The actions are targeted at the mainstream population (i.e. total workforce, class etc.) or the organisation
 - There are no risks to participants
 - The pilot site complies with the PMP ethical guidelines