



Information for stakeholders

Mental health & addiction NGO outcomes data project

Project summary

Mental health and addiction (MH&A) NGOs are highlighted in *He Ara Oranga* (2018)¹ as playing a significant role in providing support for people, whānau, communities, and the wider mental health, addiction, and health sectors.

While many MH&A NGOs may use a range of outcome measures (such as Hua Oranga, ADOM and WHOQOL-BREF), there is no standardised or nationally mandated approach to outcome measurement across the MH&A NGO and community sector.

No data source currently provides a complete picture of mental health outcomes for people accessing MH&A NGO services (Atamira Platform Trust, 2025)². This means that there are opportunities to better understand the role that MH&A NGOs have in providing support to tangata whai ora and the impact that they have on people's health and wellbeing.

Following the release of *A Sound Investment* (2025) and ongoing discussions with Atamira Platform Trust members, there is strong sector interest in understanding what outcome tools are appropriate in different parts of the MH&A NGO sector and how outcome data could be collected and used in ways that contribute towards sector priorities, uphold Māori data sovereignty, and align with lived experience values.

In addition, Atamira Platform Trust seeks to understand more about outcome measurement by MH&A NGOs with a view to influencing the national discourse about the impact, value and worth of NGOs.

Organisations responsible for driving the project

Atamira Platform Trust is partnering with Te Pou to explore with MH&A NGOs the level of interest in routine, sustainable outcomes data collection by MH&A NGOs. The project is funded by Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora.

Atamira Platform Trust is a peak body for the MH&A NGO sector and is focused on the development of capable, strong and sustainable community MH&A organisations.

¹ Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction (2018). *He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction*.

² Platform Trust & Te Pou (2025). *A Sound Investment: A Spotlight on the Impact and Value of Mental Health and Addiction NGO Services in New Zealand*.



Te Pou is a national workforce centre for the addiction and mental health sector. Te Pou brings their own sector relationships, and project and data expertise to support the aims and objectives of Platform Trust. Te Pou will support Platform Trust to discuss with NGOs what self-determination in outcome measurement might look like and make available their resources and relationships to the project. Atamira Platform Trust will have equal input with Te Pou in peer reviewing the final report based on the respective knowledge and expertise of each organisation.

Project scope

In-scope

The aim of the project is to gather the views and insights from all types of MH&A NGO services about the use of practical, relevant and evidence-based outcome measures for routine data collection. The project will:

- identify at least five outcome tools that are acceptable and have utility for MH&A NGOs; as well as indicating their current level of use in the sector
- explore the barriers and enablers to outcome data collection, analysis and use at a national level
- identify areas needed to support implementation, including staff training, data storage analysis and meaningful reporting
- canvas MH&A NGO expectations about the ownership and governance arrangements for any NGO outcomes data
- explore the level of interest, readiness, and expectations in the routine and consistent collection of outcomes data in the Programme for the Integration of Mental Health Data (PRIMHD).

The findings and recommendations will be described in a report that will be made available to the NGO sector and to Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora in **June 2026**. The report will include guidance for MH&A NGOs that are interested in selecting outcome measures that are practical, relevant and evidence-based.

Out-of-scope

- This project is exploratory in nature and the findings will not be binding on MH&A NGOs.
- The project does not seek to promote the design of a new outcome tool.
- The project excludes outcome measurement by gambling harm services. A recent report by Dowling & Rodda (2025)³ indicates that gambling harm treatment services in New Zealand are moving toward a nationally consistent “minimum dataset” of outcome measures. These measures will focus on gambling behaviour, harms, comorbid mental health, wellbeing, and client experience over time.

³ Dowling, N. & Rodda, S.N. (2025). Measurement and treatment outcomes for gambling harm treatment services. Report prepared for Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora, Wellington.

Key objectives – what do we want to achieve?

- Increase awareness about the importance of outcome measurement by MH&A NGOs and the risks associated with government agencies making decisions about the performance of NGOs based on either no outcome data or poor-quality outcome data.
- Engage MH&A NGOs in a process to identify the outcome tools that are currently being used by different service types, as well as the barriers and enablers that impact on the collection, analysis and use of outcome data.
- Promote the concept of ‘data self-determination’ amongst MHA NGOs and stimulate a discussion about the ways in which this aim could be achieved.
- Create opportunities to improve what NGOs do using outcome measures.

How will we do this?

- Focusing on measuring a range of outcomes that matter to people.
- Aligning outcome measurement practices with people’s goals and service Kaupapa
- Utilising existing systems to strengthen NGO outcome measurement.

What is our approach?

Platform Trust and Te Pou have commissioned Phillipa Gaines to manage the project. She will get in touch with MH&A NGOs via Platform’s email list and Navigate networks. A short on-line survey will be sent to NGOs in March 2026 followed by more targeted interviews based on the number and type of NGOs that complete the questionnaire, and the issues that are raised.

The project will also establish a small Advisory Group group comprised of MH&A NGOs that have been selected because of their previous involvement and interest in MH&A NGO outcome measurement. This Advisory Group will provide input and guidance at key points in the project.

Who do I contact if I want to know more?

You can contact the following people if you want to know more about this project::

- Memo Musa, CEO, Platform Trust - memo@platform.org.nz
- Richard Woodcock, Manager, Data, Information and Research, Te Pou - Richard.Woodcock@tepou.co.nz
- Phillipa Gaines, Director, Lattice Consulting Ltd – pgaines@lattice.co.nz