






Building Bridges between research, policy and practice: implementing an “independence” approach in community services

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ECH Inc.

-  Not-for-profit provider of residential care, community services and independent living in Adelaide.
-  Longstanding commitment to promoting the independence of older people

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ECH Vision:

“ECH listens, considers and responds to the changing and diverse needs of older people, providing innovative and supportive services to enrich life, promote independence and enhance lifestyle choices.”

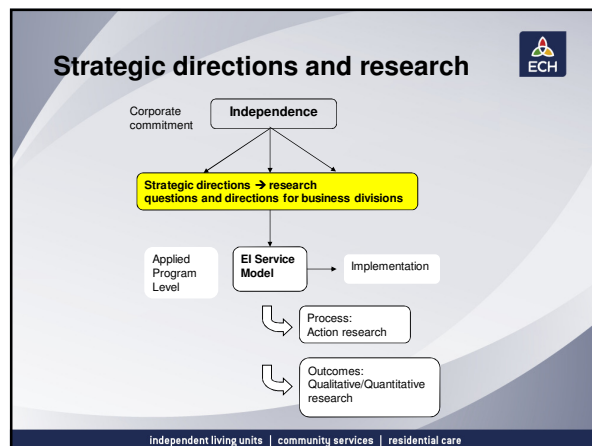
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Corporate commitment

-  Leadership required to shift our focus back to independence.
-  Development of a discussion paper based on research evidence.
-  Significant first for ECH – linking intended direction with research

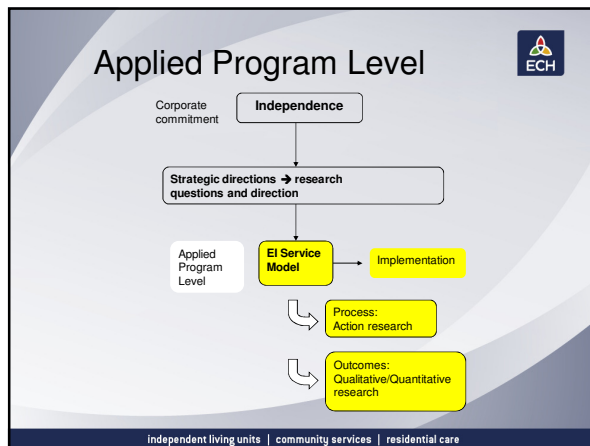
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Strategic directions and research (cont'd)

- Had to reflect all aspects of our business.
- Translation of research to into ECH context.
- Two-tiered approach: over-arching philosophy and service model.
- Philosophy suggests topics for investigation and research across all business units.

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Applied program level (cont'd)

- Practical service model.
- Outlined how we could use existing resources differently to achieve the outcome we were seeking.
- Explicitly described the new relationships expected.

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Applied program level (cont'd)

- Insight gained from research guided our decisions regarding assessment tools and processes to enable future comparisons.
- Need to measure and report on implementation process as much as final outcomes.

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Applied program level (cont'd)

- How do we successfully measure client outcomes when there are many confounding influences?
- Allure of research versus program evaluation
- Many possible research questions.

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Challenges

- Access to recent research.
- Confidence to translate research across into practice.
- Understanding the language of research.
- Understanding the requirements of robust data collection

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Key messages

- ▶ Measuring process may be easier than measuring outcomes in a new service model.
- ▶ Supportive leadership.
- ▶ Relevance of research to practitioners.
- ▶ Many possibilities for partnerships.

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Thank you

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