

Building Evaluation Capacity in a Non-Profit Organization of Older Adult Centres

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Presentation Overview

- ▶ About the OACAO & the PGP project
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Survey Findings
- ▶ Interview Findings
- ▶ Next Steps - Evaluation Training

Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario (OACAO)

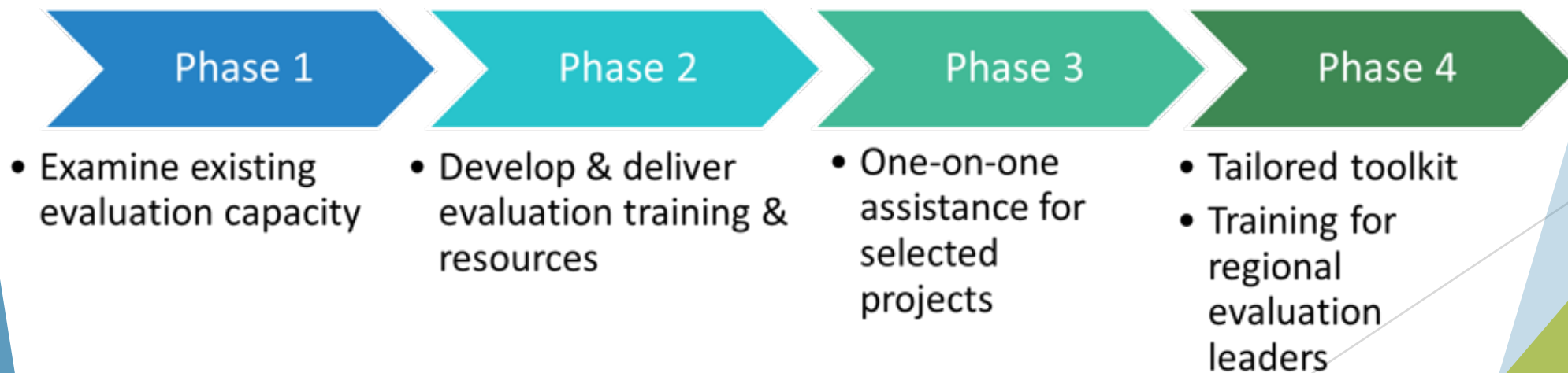
- ▶ Non-profit organization in Ontario
- ▶ Provides resources and support to 160+ **Older Adult Centres (OACs)**
 - ▶ Community-based organizations that offer health and recreation programming to seniors

OACAO

The Voice of Older Adult Centres
La voix des centres pour aînés

Partnership Grant Program (PGP)

- ▶ 25-month, 4 phase project
- ▶ Aim to enhance the ability and confidence of OACs to undertake credible and feasible evaluation activities



Survey Development & Distribution

- ▶ Created questions to assess evaluation capacity
 - ▶ Resources (e.g., staff/budget), data collection and tracking practices, use of standardized measures, strategic planning, and interest in evaluation training/resources
- ▶ Pilot tested survey with 8 OACs
- ▶ Final survey distributed via SurveyMonkey to 126 OACs

Follow-up Interviews

- ▶ Conducted with a **stratified sample** of 16 centres
 - ▶ Differing levels of evaluation confidence and capacity
- ▶ Aimed to gain a better understanding of:
 - ▶ Existing evaluation capacity
 - ▶ Perceived need and demand for evaluation training

Interview Sample (n=16)

- ▶ **Position:** Executive directors, managers, program/centre coordinators
- ▶ **Type:** 10 non-profit, 6 municipal
- ▶ **Size:** 200 - 4000 members
- ▶ Included centres with different levels of **confidence and capacity**

Survey Findings

The background features abstract geometric shapes, primarily overlapping triangles, in various shades of blue and green. The shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors range from light, airy blues to darker, more saturated blues and greens. The overall composition is clean and modern, typical of a professional report or presentation.

Survey Respondents (n=79)

- ▶ **Type:** non-profit (60%) and municipally run (34%)
- ▶ **Staffing/Personnel:** 0 to 69 FT *or* PT staff
 - ▶ Average: 6.8 staff overall
 - ▶ Four centres had no paid staff
 - ▶ Responding centres had at least 10 volunteers
- ▶ **Budgets:** \$13,000 to \$3.6 million
 - ▶ Average: \$361,497
- ▶ **Attendance:** 12 to 750 older adults per day
 - ▶ 60 to 7115 older adults overall

Routine Data Collection Practices

- ▶ **Limited participant info collected**
 - ▶ 86% collect age & sex
 - ▶ 47% collect health information
 - ▶ 10% collect no information
- ▶ 50% compared data over time
 - ▶ Small centres (<300 members) less likely to do so ($p = .012$)

Routine Tracking Practices

- ▶ 82% tracked daily centre attendance
- ▶ 67% tracked centre drop-outs
 - ▶ Non-profit centres more likely to do so ($p = .004$)
- ▶ 91% track program attendance for **some** (24%) or **all** (67%) programs
- ▶ 33% tracked program dropouts

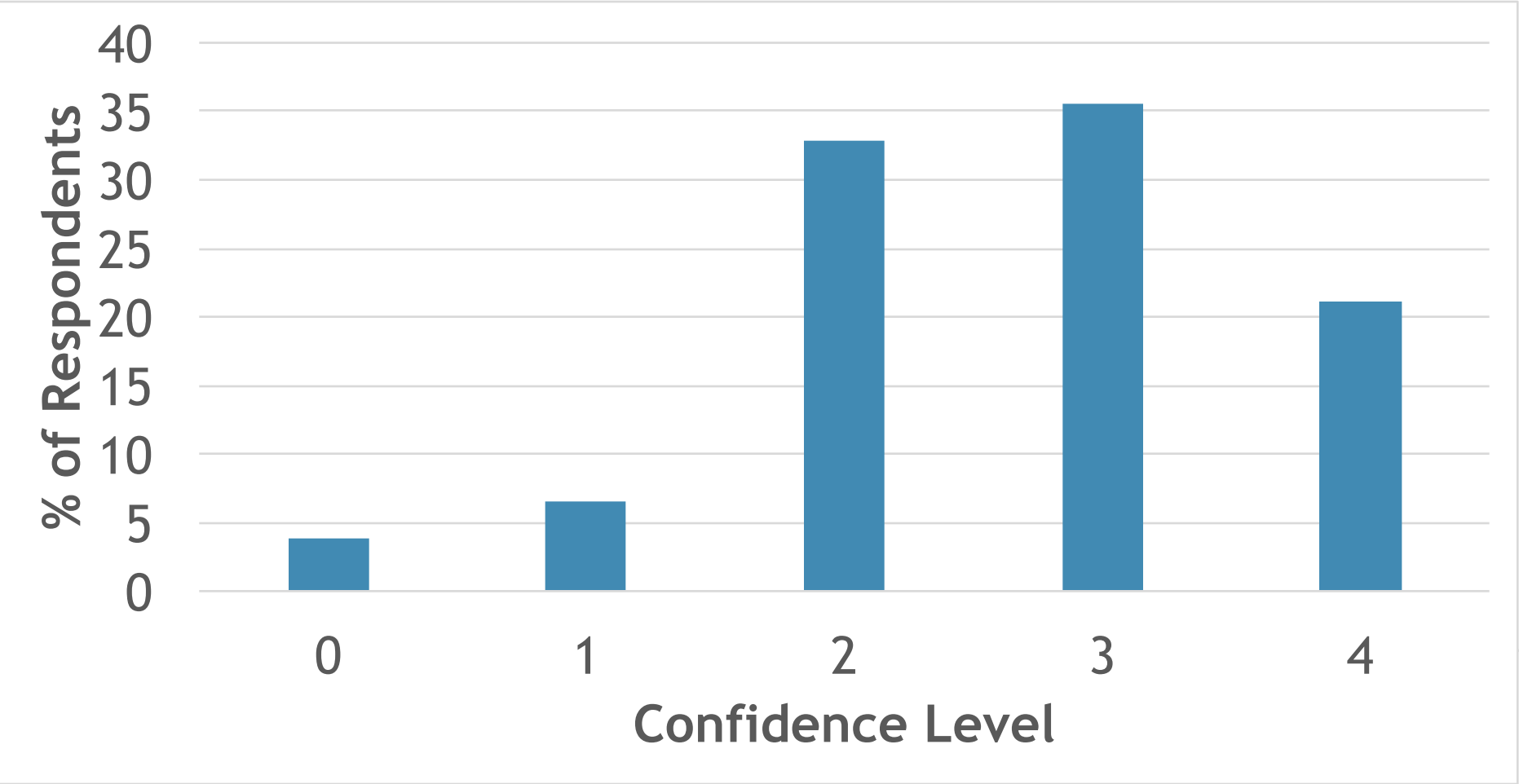
Participant Feedback & Use of Standardized Measures

- ▶ Used **suggestion boxes (70%)** or **in-person satisfaction surveys (67%)** to collect feedback from participants
- ▶ 70% had **never** used standardized measures to assess outcomes
 - ▶ Municipally run centres were less likely to use standardized measures ($p = .024$)
- ▶ 50% were interested in learning more about standardized measures

Planning and Decision Making

- ▶ 45% conducted **strategic planning**
 - ▶ Non-profit centres more likely to have their own strategic plan, while municipal centres relied on the strategic plan for their municipality ($p = .001$)
- ▶ 23% used **logic models**
 - ▶ Tended to be developed in-house

Confidence in Ability to Conduct Evaluation & Present Credible Results



Interest in Resources for Conducting Evaluation

Resources	n (%)
Templates (e.g., for collecting participant info.)	55 (71.4)
Strategies for engaging volunteers and participants in evaluation	48 (62.3)
Funding	46 (59.7)
Guidelines for data collection	43 (55.8)
Training on how to do evaluation/interpret results	40 (51.9)
Technical assistance	31 (40.3)
None thank you, we have everything we need	7 (9.1)

Interview Findings

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Understanding Evaluation Confidence - Low Confidence

- ▶ Evaluation is “*not necessary if program attendance was good*”
- ▶ Evaluation is “*quite overwhelming*” and many not sure how to begin
- ▶ Low confidence due to struggle in getting participants to complete surveys

Understanding Evaluation

Confidence - Moderate Confidence

- ▶ *“We don’t do a written evaluation [...] we know we are doing something well because a lot of people attend [and] people seem to be happy.”*
- ▶ No formalized evaluation structure; rely on talking to participants

Understanding Evaluation Confidence - High Confidence

- ▶ Able to give detailed examples of how they conduct evaluation (e.g., e-surveys, pre/post assessments)
- ▶ Have staff trained in evaluation and/or data collection techniques
- ▶ Use electronic data collection systems
- ▶ Extensive experience applying for grants

Challenges Doing Evaluation

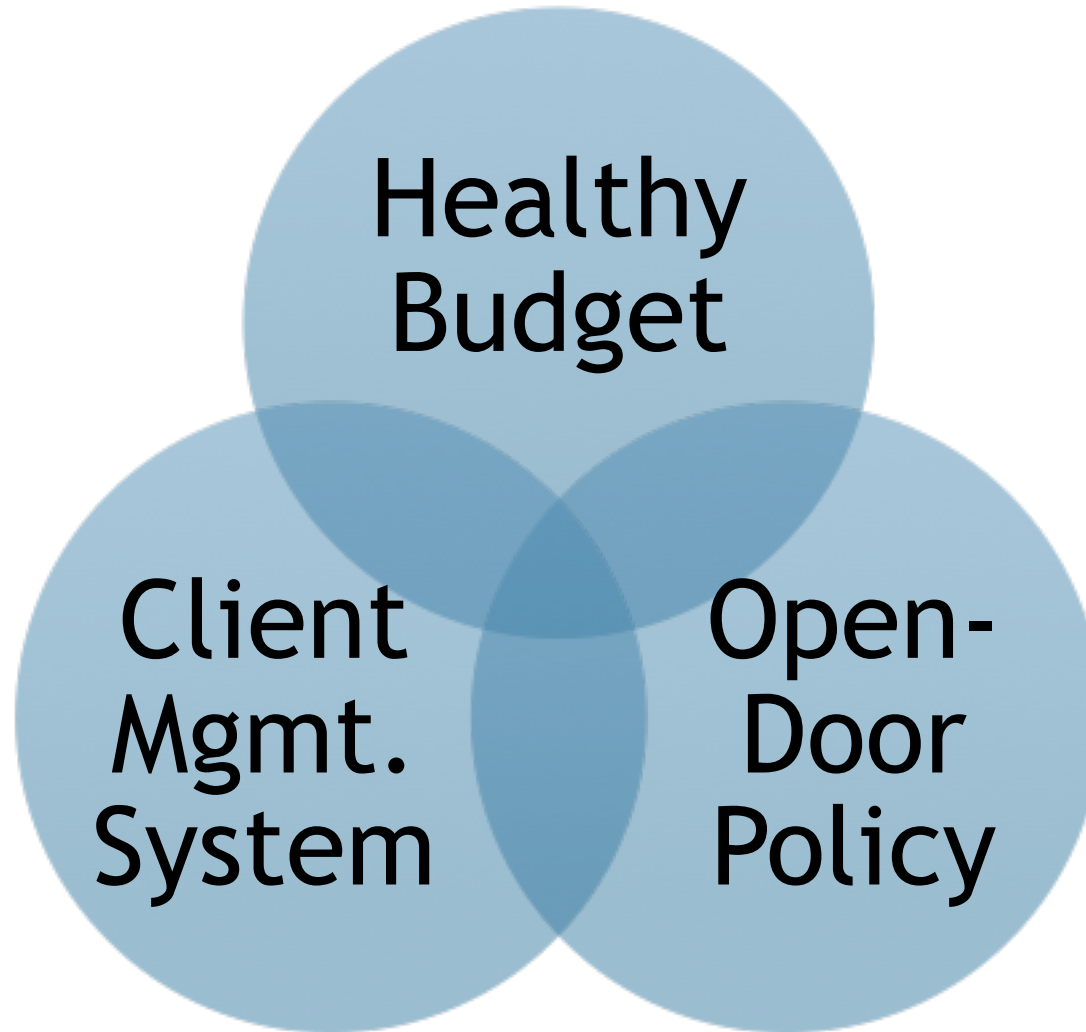
▶ Difficulty Collecting Data:

- ▶ Participants reluctant to provide personal information
- ▶ *“getting the importance across to volunteer conveners as to why it is important to evaluate so they can remind the [participants] and explain to them.”*

▶ Difficulty Interpreting Data:

- ▶ *“we have all this information but I’m not sure how to get the best usage out of it.”*

Factors that Promoted Evaluation Activities



Next Steps: Evaluation Training

- ▶ **Six one-day workshops** across Ontario
 - ▶ Emphasis on evaluation basics (routine data collection) and in-depth evaluation projects
 - ▶ 100 staff/volunteers representing 55 OACs
- ▶ **One-on-one assistance** with evaluation projects
- ▶ **Evaluation “leaders” training**
 - ▶ Two day workshop
 - ▶ Emphasis on data collection methods, analysis and interpretation

Thank You!

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