Wraparound Fidelity Assessment System
Description and Frequently Asked Questions

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Description

Overview

The Wraparound Fidelity Assessment System (WFAS) is a multi-method approach to assessing the quality of individualized care planning and coordination for children and youth with complex needs and their families. WFAS instruments include interviews with multiple stakeholders, a team observation measure, a brief self-administered survey instrument, and a key informant survey to assess the level of community and system development for wraparound. The instruments that comprise the WFAS can be used individually or in combination with one another.

Uses

Fidelity measurement is a core implementation support to evidence based practices (EBPs). The WFAS assesses fidelity to the wraparound process as specified by the National Wraparound Initiative (NWI; see www.nwi.pdx.edu). Through the work of the NWI and its partners, wraparound care coordination has been increasingly well-defined in recent years, and wraparound's evidence base has grown to the point that it is listed as "research based" on prominent inventories of EBPs.

As a fidelity measurement system, WFAS instruments were designed to support both program improvement as well as research. With respect to ***program improvement***, depending on which tool is used, providers and wraparound initiatives can generate profiles organized by the prescribed activities of the wraparound process, such as the 10 principles, 4 phases, or the 5 essential process components. Such summaries can be used to illuminate areas of relative strengths and weaknesses. This information can be used to guide program planning, training, and quality assurance. These scores and total scores can be compared to national norms and benchmarks to further enhance accountability.

With respect to ***research***, data from WFAS instruments can help evaluate whether the wraparound process has been adequately implemented, and thus aid interpretation of outcomes. In addition, researchers on youth and family services may wish to use WFAS instruments to measure the relationship between adherence to the wraparound model and outcomes, as a way to explore which aspects of service delivery are most important to child and family well-being.

WFAS Instruments

Wraparound Fidelity Index, version 4.0

The Wraparound Fidelity Index 4.0 (WFI-4) is a set of four interviews that measures the nature of the wraparound process that an individual family receives. The WFI-4 is completed through brief, confidential telephone or face-to-face interviews with four types of respondents: caregivers, youth (11 years of age or older), wraparound facilitators, and team members. It is important to gain the unique perspectives of all these informants to fully understand how wraparound is being implemented. A demographic form is also part of the WFI-4 battery. The WFI-4 interviews are organized by the four phases of the wraparound process (engagement, planning, implementation, and transition). In addition, the 40 items of the WFI-4 interview are keyed to the 10 principles of the wraparound process (family voice and choice, team based, natural supports, collaboration, community-based, culturally competent, individualized, strengths based, persistence, and outcomes based), with four items dedicated to each principle. In this way, the WFI-4 interviews are intended to assess both conformance to the wraparound practice model as well as adherence to the principles of wraparound in service delivery.

WFI Short Form, Version EZ (WFI-EZ)

The WFAS tools were specifically designed to assess adherence to the 10 Principles of Wraparound and the Phases and Activities of the Wraparound Process as defined by the National Wraparound Initiative (www.nwi.pdx.edu)

The WFI-EZ is a brief version of the WFI-4. In addition to evaluating wraparound implementation, outcomes and satisfaction data are also collected. This version is primarily self-administered, but can also be completed as part of an interview. The forms are typically completed online, but paper versions are available as well. As with the WFI-4, there are versions for caregivers, facilitators, youth and team members. The purpose of this tool is to decrease the burden of collecting the data on youth, families, providers, and evaluators, while increasing the comprehensiveness of data collected.

Team Observation Measure (TOM)

The TOM assesses adherence to the wraparound model and the principles of wraparound in service delivery as observed during wraparound team meetings. The TOM consists of 20 items and 71 indicators, with 3-4 indicators dedicated to each item. The TOM is organized by the 10 principles of wraparound, with two items dedicated to each principle and is rated during the course of each team meeting. Working alone or in pairs, trained raters indicate whether or not each indicator was in evidence during the wraparound team meeting session. These ratings are translated into a score for each item as well as a total fidelity score for the session overall.

Community Supports for Wraparound Inventory

The Community Supports for Wraparound Inventory (CSWI) is a research and quality improvement tool intended to measure how well a local system supports the implementation of the wraparound process. The CSWI is based on the framework of Necessary Conditions described by Walker, Koroloff, and Schutte (2003), and presents 42 community or system variables that ideally are in place in communities that aim to implement the wraparound process. The CSWI is somewhat unique from the other WFAS instruments in that it assesses the system context for wraparound as opposed to the fidelity of the practice model for an individual child and family.

The CSWI can be used in several ways. It results in a quantified assessment of community supports for wraparound across multiple domains, so that researchers can determine the impact of these conditions

on fidelity and outcomes. The CSWI also presents levels of support for multiple domains (e.g. funding, collaboration, and accountability) so that evaluators and stakeholders can understand the full context for wraparound implementation. Results are structured so that local groups can assess system supports for wraparound, respond to areas of

Psychometrics

The WFI-4 has demonstrated good test-retest reliability, internal consistency, and inter-rater reliability. Validity studies have found that fidelity as assessed by the WFI correlates with the ratings of an external wraparound expert, while other studies have found significant associations with child and family outcomes as well as the level of community supports for wraparound. The WFI-4 has been found to discriminate between wraparound and non-wraparound conditions as well as sites with different levels of implementation support for wraparound. The TOM has demonstrated inter-rater reliability with substantial agreement found between paired raters in recent studies. In its initial findings, the WFI-EZ showed good agreement with the full WFI-4, was able to discriminate between wraparound and non-wraparound conditions, and showed robust internal consistency for total and subscale scores.

Supporting Technologies

The WFI-4, TOM and WFI-EZ include a training toolkit for lead evaluators to use to train interviewers and observers to criteria along with user's manuals containing detailed instructions and scoring rules.

In partnership with Social TecKnowledgy (www.socialtecknowledgy.com), WERT continues to evaluate and inform TMS-WrapLogic, a web-based, electronic behavioral health information system (EBHIS) specific to the Wraparound process. It has been designed to promote care coordination practice that is more efficient, transparent, and better aligned with research practice.

WERT also has a cloud-based, HIPAA- and FERPA-compliant data entry and reporting system called WrapTrack. WrapTrack allows users to enter data via a web portal that compiles data from the WFAS instruments into one database. This system allows sites to create a range of reports or export the data for analysis. WrapTrack is available for use by all collaborating communities. For more information go to www.wrapinfo.org or contact WERT at wrapeval@uw.edu.

If you would like to sign up to become a licensed user of the WFI-4, TOM, or WFI-EZ, please use our express licensing website: http://c4c.uwc4c.com/express-license. To become a CSWI collaborating site, please contact us at wrapeval@uw.edu.

Frequently Asked Questions

We do not call what we do wraparound, but it seems like the tools in the WFAS get at a lot of the values our program is based on. Can we use the WFAS instruments?

Communities that use the measures that comprise the WFAS should employ a practice model that resembles that described in the NWI Phases and Activities (www.nwi.pdx.edu). Communities that deviate substantially from this model (e.g. there is no requirement of a formal engagement process, the formation of a child and family team, the use of a facilitator, etc.) will find administration of the tools and interpretation of data difficult.

What do we need to do to be a collaborating community and use the tools of the WFAS?

Collaborating sites must agree to train fidelity reviewers fully using the procedures described in the User's Manual, to implement data collection and scoring procedures fully, and to provide WERT with a user's fee. To sign up please visit our Express Licensing site and search for one of the following tools: WFI-4, TOM, or WFI-EZ (http://c4c.uwc4c.com/express-license). To become a CSWI collaborator, please email us at wrapeval@uw.edu.

What type of training do we need and does WERT provide training?

It is important for all collaborating sites to be trained to criteria in order to ensure reliability and validity of interview data that are collected. All WFAS instruments have user's manuals and methods to train data collectors to criteria. However, WERT does not have the capacity to provide training to all sites using the WFI-4 or other WFAS measures. If communities are interested in being supported to use the measures (e.g. via training on the measures, assistance in setting up the evaluation, and support in analyzing and interpreting data), we may be able to help arrange for such support to be provided by consultants who are involved with our research team.

We are ready to use one or more of the WFAS instruments. Who should we use to collect data?

Our expectation is that with adequate training and supports, many types of stakeholders should be able to administer the WFI tools and serve as TOM observers. Communities have employed family members, evaluation staff, graduate students, undergraduates, and other types of data collectors. The key is that they are fully trained on both the wraparound process and the use of the tool(s) and that their work is overseen by an individual with evaluation expertise. Supports that allow for practice administrations and assessment of data collector skills are available for the WFI-4 and TOM. Such supports are currently being developed for the WFI-EZ and are not necessary for the CSWI.

We serve a lot of families using wraparound. Do we have to collect fidelity data on every family?

In general, each community needs to create an evaluation plan that is based on its own context and learning needs. Communities that serve a large number of youth and families need to determine how many interviewers/observers it can train and oversee, and how much data collection it can support. It has been estimated that completion of each WFI-4 interview requires approximately 1-2 hours of work, when considering the process of arranging interviews, completing interviews (including call-backs), entering data and so forth. Communities that choose to complete interviews in person will need to add time to this estimate. Team observations are even more resource intensive, given the need to coordinate around time and date of team meetings, travel time by observers, and the length of team meetings, which can often take 1.5- 2 hours. Because of the effort involved in completing data collection for just one data point, sampling is a common approach to data collection using the WFAS tools. Use of the brief self-report WFI-EZ is also an option for keeping evaluation costs lower.

We have decided to take the approach of sampling. How many families should we include in our sample?

Again, this decision should be based on the size and context of the local wraparound effort as well as its learning needs and evaluation resources. More important than the number of families included in a sample are several other considerations:

1. The sample should be random or at least representative of the families served by the wraparound effort.
2. If the evaluation wants to generate information about different levels of wraparound implementation (e.g. multiple provider agencies, counties, supervisors), the sample must be stratified or representative of each of these levels.
3. Once the sample is chosen, adequate effort must be expended toward obtaining a high completion rate. Preferably, at least 70% of all proposed data collection (e.g. the total number of WFI surveys to be completed or teams to be observed) should be completed. Eighty percent or more would be ideal. Ultimately, the data collection completion rate is more important than the number of youth/families in the sample.
4. If fidelity data collection is going to proceed over time, then once a sampling method is determined, the same method should be used consistently across data collection waves.

Should we collect data on the same families at multiple timepoints?

Many sites propose to conduct fidelity data collection consistently over time, such as every three months, six months, or every year. If a site is sampling families from their overall roster, we recommend drawing a new sample at each evaluation time point, and conducting a cross-sectional evaluation, rather than interview the same families over time. This is partly because the WFI-4 and WFI-EZ asks a family about the wraparound process they have participated in from the beginning of the process to the current time; thus interviewing the same family again six months later may not be the best use of evaluation resources. The TOM does allow more flexibility in terms of sampling. Since the observer is simply documenting what happened at one meeting at one point in time, it would be acceptable if one youth/family was observed more than once in the evaluation period.

How long should a family have been enrolled in wraparound before we interview them?

Given that the WFI-4 and WFI-EZ ask a family about the wraparound process they have participated in from the beginning of the process to the current time, we recommend that families not be included in the evaluation until they have participated in the process for at least two months. Such restrictions are not necessary for the TOM. Teams may be observed as soon as they begin team meetings.

Do we need approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to collect data using the WFAS tools?

Local sites need to determine if their local evaluation requires review and approval by a human subjects protection entity. This is likely to be determined based on the proposed use of the data and who will collect the data. When data is likely to be used for research rather than quality assurance purposes, it is more likely that IRB approval will be necessary. In addition, data collection by a university partner will make it more likely there is an IRB that will need to review and sign off on the proposed evaluation plan. For communities that will be integrating the WFAS instruments into their everyday quality assurance, the need for IRB approval may be less likely. Regardless of your local requirements, WERT can provide a boilerplate "information statement" for families and participating providers that can also be used as the basis for constructing consent forms.

We want to know whether our scores are good or not. Are there standards for the WFAS tools to which we can compare our results?

Results from the WFI-4, TOM, and CSWI administered in your community can be compared to a national dataset of other wraparound programs. In addition, results from the WFI-4, TOM, and CSWI can be used to generate relative strengths and areas of improvement as compared to the national sample. WFI-4 results can be used to provide fidelity scores to the 10 principles and four phases of wraparound. TOM results can be used to provide fidelity scores for each of the 20 items as well as the 10 principles of wraparound. The WFI-EZ is still collecting data in order to establish national means, and rather than providing principle and phase scores, the WFI-EZ uses 5 essential process components to produce subscale results for the tool.

We have used the WFI-4 to collect fidelity data and would now like to transition to the WFI-EZ. Are there ways to compare these two tools?

Unfortunately, direct comparisons can't be made between the WFI-EZ and the WFI-4. The WFI-EZ doesn't include scores for Principles or Phases, for example. And while the "Total Scores" will look similar between the two measures, the items and administration are so different, direct comparisons are still not appropriate.

How should we use the data in our quality assurance efforts?

As described above, scores from the WFI-4, TOM, and CSWI can be used by collaborating communities to identify relative strengths and weaknesses in implementation quality, assess progress over time, and compare fidelity and system support across programs and implementation contexts. In general, we have seen data from the WFI-4, TOM, and CSWI used in several ways:
1. Item scores for each tool are used to identify areas of strength and needs for improvement.
2. Total respondent scores can be compared across provider organizations, sub-programs, or jurisdictions.
3. Data are presented to a community team to brainstorm potential quality improvement efforts to be undertaken.
4. Data are reviewed with providers who use them to generate ideas about how wraparound can be better supported by the host agency, collaborating agencies, and the system overall.
5. Data are reviewed over time to assess success in quality improvement efforts and celebrate success.

We want to use the WFI-4 or WFI-EZ Team Member form. What type of team member should we interview or survey for participating families?

The Team Member form of the WFI is provided for those communities who wish to systematically assess fidelity from a perspective other than the parent, facilitator, and youth. Ideally, the community will set criteria for who is interviewed using the Team Member form, to help facilitate interpretability. For example, some communities may incorporate parent partners on every team, and thus wish the form to be systematically used with each team's parent partner. Other wraparound efforts may be intended to support positive child welfare outcomes, and thus, the social services case worker will be identified for interviews in each case. Finally, some communities may not have such consistent team membership, and choose to interview a natural support for the family. As for all forms of the WFI, use of the Team Member form is optional, not a requirement. Each community's use of the Team Member forms should be based on its own unique implementation effort and evaluation goals and resources.

Who can I contact with further questions? Call April Sather, Program Director, at 206-285-2310. Information is also available on our website: *www.wrapinfo.org*.