

Measuring What Matters: Consultation Feedback form

Meeting details

Meeting host name/ organisation: Orygen

Meeting host contact details [phone or email]: David Baker david.baker@orygen.org.au

Meeting host

- ☐ Member of Parliament
- ☐ Local government
- ☒ Non-government organisation
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Academic
- ☐ Community group
- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Other Click or tap here to enter text.

Meeting date: May

Meeting location: Internal

Participants attending:

- ☐ Member of a community organisation
- ☐ Businesses
- ☒ Academics
- ☐ Union members
- ☐ Individuals
- ☒ Other Policy analysts, executive management

Number of participants: Nine

What matters to Australians?

1. Did the five emerging policy themes Prosperous, Inclusive, Sustainable, Cohesive and Healthy resonate with meeting participants?

☒ Yes ☐ No if not, why not [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

2. Which of the following themes are most important to you? (Select three)

☒ **Prosperous:**

A growing, productive and resilient economy

☒ **Inclusive:**

A society that shares opportunities and enables people to fully participate

☐ **Sustainable:**

A natural environment that is valued and sustainably managed in the face of a changing climate for current and future generations

☐ **Cohesive:**

A safe and cohesive society that celebrates culture and encourages participation

☒ **Healthy:**

A society in which people feel well and are in good physical and mental health now and into the future

3. Which themes or descriptions were most frequently discussed? (Select three)

☐ **Prosperous:**

A growing, productive and resilient economy

☒ **Inclusive:**

A society that shares opportunities and enables people to fully participate

☐ **Sustainable:**

A natural environment that is valued and sustainably managed in the face of a changing climate for current and future generations

☐ **Cohesive:**

A safe and cohesive society that celebrates culture and encourages participation

☒ **Healthy:**

A society in which people feel well and are in good physical and mental health now and into the future

4. What do you see as the most important issues for future wellbeing? Are these captured by the emerging policy themes?

A national wellbeing framework must balance, measure, and inform service investment to improve societal, community and individual wellbeing. Equitable access to public services sufficient to support physical and mental health and social and economic participation (broadly defined) are important issues for future wellbeing. The OECD Policy Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19): *Supporting young people's mental health through the COVID-19 crisis* illustrates the integrated approach needed. Such

an approach requires integration of investment and outcome measures across government departments and agencies and between levels of government.

Mental health outcomes are one component of societal, community and individual wellbeing. Measurements of the onset, access to services and long-term prevalence are required to inform service evaluation and public investment in future wellbeing. This is particularly true for young people whose personal development and large number of life transitions intersect across the five wellbeing themes.

In considering data collection and the measures to be used it is important to consider the accessibility and acceptability of measures to young people. Young people's literacy, cultural background and housing are examples of barriers in existing measurements and data collection. For example, the selection of measures and having supports and different formats for data collection need to be incorporated into the Measuring What Matters project.

5. How might the descriptions be amended to best reflect our priorities?

Orygen suggests that the description of the Prosperous and Healthy themes should recognise the importance of participation in society. As such we propose the following descriptions:

Prosperous: a, growing, productive, resilient, and equitable economy

Healthy: A society in which people's physical and mental health enable them to participate in community life and contribute to society now and into the future

6. Are there any indicators and existing data sources that will be critical to inform the emerging policy themes?

Wellbeing is a contested term. This is evident in the number and breadth of existing wellbeing measures. Once Treasury has settled on the Measuring What Matters themes it will need to identify gaps in existing data collections that need to be filled. An Australian wellbeing measure combining existing data and new indicators will be required.

Expanding existing data collections is a resource intensive process, both financially and in the time it takes. It is proposed that an annual wellbeing census be undertaken to complement existing data to fill the data gaps. This wellbeing census must be theoretically robust and validated for a national population and its different social, cultural, and geographic contexts. It is suggested that a periodic measure of wellbeing should be trialled for the first three years. A wellbeing dataset would be constructed from (1) an annual wellbeing census, and (2) existing datasets.

(1) Each year, publicly funded services would collect data from clients seen during a two-week period. These services would include all three levels of government and extend from maternal health to aged care services.

(2) Corresponding data would be extracted from existing sources to provide a complete wellbeing dataset.

The timing of the census and data extraction will be determined by the time required for collation of a wellbeing dataset and subsequent analysis and reporting to inform annual budget submission

processes. Wellbeing data should be published annually with the budget and included in department, service, and agency public reporting requirements. The data analysis model would integrate investment and outcomes across and between government to inform whole of government budget priorities and spending.

Mental health

Mental health will be one component of a wellbeing measure. Measuring mental health is a critical indicator of community wellbeing and potential socioeconomic progress. Along with physical health, mental health intersects with and determines participation across a range of wellbeing indicators.

To measure mental health, data is needed on the (1) onset and prevalence of mental ill-health, (2) access to care, and (3) long-term conditions. These measures will provide data on the need for early intervention following onset; and the level and types of services needed to support functional recovery from long-term conditions.

Measuring the onset and prevalence of mental ill-health will enable the targeting of funding of prevention and early intervention programs in the budget. The onset of mental ill-health will be part of the annual wellbeing data collection.

Measuring levels of access to care is required to determine who is missing out on support and where this support is missing. Uneven or inequitable service access undermines national wellbeing.

Measuring service access requires data on the prevalence of mental health and service delivery; the gap between these two is the unmet need for mental health services. The gaps in existing national data sets and opportunities to improve the coverage across all levels of mental health services for young people is currently being considered by the Department of Health. Orygen encourages Treasury to consult with the Department of Health on the development of a service access measure that would inform the design and measurement of improvements in service access.

Measuring the prevalence of long-term mental health conditions is important for ensuring the integration of wellbeing indicators and measuring where they are impacted by mental ill-health, for example workforce participation. Existing data collections are available to be incorporated into the Measuring What Matters framework.

7. Is there any additional information you would like to see in the Measuring What Matters Statement? If so, please outline.

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