

**Submission
No 4**

**A FRAMEWORK FOR PERFORMANCE REPORTING AND DRIVING
WELLBEING OUTCOMES IN NSW**

Organisation: Orygen

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ORYGEN SUBMISSION



ABOUT ORYGEN

Orygen is the world's leading research and knowledge translation organisation focusing on mental ill-health in young people. At Orygen, our leadership and staff work to deliver cutting-edge research, policy development, innovative clinical services, and evidence-based training and education to ensure that there is continuous improvement in the treatments and care provided to young people experiencing mental ill-health.

Orygen conducts clinical research, runs clinical services (five headspace centres), supports the professional development of the youth mental health workforce and provides policy advice relating to young people's mental health. Our current research strengths include: early psychosis, mood disorders, personality disorders, functional recovery, suicide prevention, online interventions, neurobiology and health economics.

ABOUT THIS SUBMISSION

Orygen welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Public Accounts Committee by the Minister for Finance to look into an effective framework for reporting on the performance of NSW Government services and driving wellbeing outcomes for NSW residents. This submission highlights the importance of collecting sufficient data to analyse the wellbeing of sub-groups within the population and advises the Committee to develop and apply a budget wellbeing analysis model.

This submission was written on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. Orygen acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we are on and pays respect to their Elders past and present. Orygen recognises and respects their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationships to Country, which continue to be important to the First Nations people living today.

CONTACT DETAILS

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INTRODUCTION

Wellbeing outcomes have been centred in government budgets in a number of countries (i.e. Canada, Wales, Scotland, New Zealand) as well as nationally in Australia. In NSW, the government is implementing a Performance and Wellbeing Framework in annual budget papers to support improved social outcomes.(1) In preparation for this policy the Public Accounts Committee (the Committee) has invited submissions to inform the development of an effective framework for reporting on how NSW Government services drive wellbeing outcomes.

Existing work in this area provides a basis for the Committee's project. For example, a five stage toolkit has been adapted from the international Wellbeing Economy Alliance for the Australian context.(2) Stages one and five in this toolkit are pertinent to the Committee remit to measure and report on wellbeing outcomes.

Stage 1: Develop a wellbeing vision, framework and measurements

Stage 5: Evaluate policy impacts on wellbeing for learning, adaptation and success.

DATA REQUIREMENTS

The Federal government's *Measuring what matters* initiative provides a framework for measuring wellbeing nationally. While there are shortcomings to this dataset (e.g. insights by age, limited measures of mental health) it would be a sizeable – and largely duplicative – task for the NSW government to collate and report its own wellbeing dataset.

The General Social Survey (Australian Bureau of Statistics) is to be expanded to provide enhanced national annual wellbeing data.(3) This expansion will include targeted sampling of population sub-groups. The Committee (and NSW government) should confirm that the sample for will be sufficient to enable detailed demographic data analysis of wellbeing in New South Wales. The NSW government may wish to contribute financially to the survey to bolster the NSW sample to provide greater data insights.

It is important that wellbeing data can be analysed for the 12-to-25-year age range. This period is one of significant, social, emotional, developmental change, during which most young people navigate more life transitions than at any other age.(4) It is also the period during which the majority of life experiences of mental ill-health begin.(5) These personal developments, life transitions and the possible onset of mental ill-health are all factors in an individual's wellbeing, as well as that of their families and communities.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Analysing the wellbeing of young people

The Committee suggest to the NSW government that engage with the ABS to ensure that the sample size for young people in the General Social Survey is sufficient generally, to enable analysis at a state level.

There is an opportunity for the NSW government to add value to the national wellbeing data through collecting and analysing qualitative data. Qualitative data provides insights into people's subjective wellbeing.(6) These personal insights will also reflect to some extent their family and communal contexts. Generating local qualitative data adds to the collection and analysis of quantitative data.(2) The development of a qualitative study of subjective wellbeing would recognise the greater complexity of evaluating the wellbeing impact of budget measures compared with traditional evaluations.(7) Collecting annual qualitative data from a representative (e.g., age, socio-economic, education, employment, cultural and identity diversity) sample of NSW residents would provide greater insights into the experience of wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Understanding the subjective experience of wellbeing

The Committee suggest to the NSW government that it collects qualitative data annually from a representative cross-section of the New South Wales population to understand their subjective experiences of wellbeing. The samples size should be large enough to enable data analysis across various demographic, cultural and identity cohorts.

MEASURING THE WELLBEING OUTCOMES OF THE BUDGET

In an ideal world data design and collection aligns with the intended measuring purpose. In the real world, data analysts most often have to utilise existing datasets. Pragmatically, the Committee will have to rely on existing data to measure wellbeing outcomes of NSW government budgets. This task requires aligning measurements in the wellbeing dataset and additional subjective wellbeing data (Recommendation 2) with budget items and portfolios.

There are examples for designing budget wellbeing analysis models. For example, the Community Development Evaluation Framework and Toolkit developed by the Local Government Professionals Australia WA.(8) Once established, the budget wellbeing analysis model could be routinely applied by the Committee for its reporting requirements.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Develop and implement a budget wellbeing analysis model

The Committee request funding for development of a budget wellbeing analysis model.

The Committee consider a secretariat position for undertaking budget wellbeing analysis in support of its reporting remit.

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