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**MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE:
A CASE STUDY OF A NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION**

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Abstract

This study looked at methods that one nonprofit organization uses to measure organizational performance. A local branch of the Intellectually Handicapped Society (Inc.) was chosen because of the high level of interest in evaluation and monitoring of services and facilities.

A number of research methods were used in this case study. These include a review of documents, reports and written material, interviews and on site visits to the organization. The focus of the study was examining the formal monitoring practices used and identifying perspectives of users, user advocates, providers and decision makers in relation to the review activities.

The findings showed that the formal processes used in the local branch of the Intellectually Handicapped Society (Inc.) are developed at the national office and were not seen to be relevant to people involved at the local level. User advocates and providers did not feel that they were involved in the formal review activities nor had input into the evaluation of services.

The author concludes that people within the organization have different conceptions of goals, accomplishments and shortcomings of the methods used for measuring organizational performance. The utilization of information may be increased if local criteria were established for measuring organizational performance.

the direction of health and social programmes assess performance in terms of certain criteria or standards which are defined as indicators of the programmes effectiveness (Filstead, 1982). Although a number of research studies of organizational performance have been published, this research looks at evaluation practice in the environment in which it occurs rather than in an idealized setting.

In addition, in much of the research findings to date, theoretical frameworks have provided the basis for the study, the focus and methodology used, and therefore, the kind of results documented. This study seeks to avoid an 'a priori' perspective by using case study methodology in order to generate data deemed pertinent by both managers and others involved with measuring the performance of this nonprofit organization. This data is then examined in the light of theoretical issues set out in the literature.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research has affirmed the importance of reviewing and monitoring performance through quality assurance programmes, peer review, internal and external audits, and reviewing organizational effectiveness (Flaherty and Olsen, 1982). Most of the research conducted to date has focused on problems of evaluation and monitoring from the perspective of researchers, funding agencies and management. To date there have been few evaluative studies from a user perspective.

The consumer movement has demonstrated that aspects of evaluation and monitoring which serve the purposes of

bureaucrats and professionals do not necessarily meet the requirements of consumers of the service. Coney (1988) demonstrated inadequacies in such monitoring practices in her exposure of professional misconduct at National Women's Hospital in New Zealand. The involvement of consumers in reviewing and monitoring services, policies, and operations of the organization is frequently restricted by the professional, operational, ideological and time constraints that are part of any bureaucratic organization (Stipak, 1982).

Another reason why this study of a nonprofit organization is important is that most research has been conducted within North American or United Kingdom contexts. The generalizability of findings to New Zealand is therefore limited. The present study has a broad focus, utilizes a local setting and is particularly timely as the review process is expensive and the nonprofit organization under study faces financial hardship. The study provides findings and information not available from other sources.

As an observational description of a particular organization, this study is significant for individuals and groups involved with nonprofit agencies. It is particularly important for those who are involved with resource allocation. The information gained may be useful in reviewing the performance of other consumer oriented nonprofit organizations. With the assistance of users, advocates and providers, it establishes criteria for performance review procedures.

THE FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The study aims to look at a nonprofit agency which addresses specifically identified health or social needs within the local community. Financial criteria are often used to determine the level of organizational performance in profit organizations. A nonprofit organization was selected for the study because it was assumed that social as well as economic criteria would be used to measure performance.

Certain factors were looked at in selecting the nonprofit community based organization. One was that there were users, providers and user groups directly involved with the local management structure. Another was that activities were concentrated in a specific geographical region. In addition, it was felt that some commitment to evaluation, monitoring or reviewing aspects of the organization was important.

The Manawatu branch of the Intellectually Handicapped Society, (IHC) has adopted a number of measures to ensure the attainment of standards and incorporating the external monitoring of services in its review practices. The organization has a local reputation for being committed to carrying out reviews of its services and facilities.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To date there has been a great deal of published research on organizational performance and many attempts to arrive at the best construct or framework for analysis. As yet, there has been no agreement in the literature on the best way to look at organizations in terms of analyzing criteria based on performance measures (Weick, 1972; Stears, 1977; Kanter, 1981). The purpose of this discussion is to look at what the literature says about a variety of issues in relation to measuring performance of nonprofit organizations.

There are a number of motivations and reasons for using specific criteria in determining performance. From a management or decision making perspective, differences in performance criteria between profit and nonprofit organizations are important to recognize. The literature suggests that organizational information in the nonprofit sector is largely generated to support funding applications. Although there may be strong reasons for obtaining performance information and establishing specific criteria, the review of literature highlights the fact that the use of such information to improve aspects of the operations of the organization is limited.

PROFIT VERSUS NONPROFIT EMPHASIS

Methods used for assessing the organizational performance differ. They are based on the various purposes, values of decision

makers and expectations of funding bodies. Wholey (1986) suggests that much of the literature focuses on the perspective of decision makers.

The primary goal of profit oriented organizations is using financial criteria to promote survival in the economic climate. The goal of nonprofit and public organizations is based on meeting the perceived needs of consumers, constituents, volunteers and contributors. Although some goals such as maintaining financial viability are shared between the two types of organizations, the characteristics and needs of decision makers in each type of organization may differ.

Anthony (1984) states that a profit orientation guides the process of setting goals and objectives in many organizations. Objectives are used to target economic goals. Organizational performance is then assessed in terms of those objectives. Profit oriented entities use economic criteria and financial information as a major component of public reporting.

He suggests that management uses a variety of information about the various activities to monitor performance. The financial emphasis on performance criteria can be seen in organizations with profit oriented objectives. Results of economic objectives can be determined by quantitative measures including financial security, assets, budgets, capital expenditure and work efficiency measures.

In profit focused organizations, the use of operating and capital budgets and accounts, financial reports, statistical data, performance appraisals and service evaluation are some methods used by managers to monitor overall performance. Methods commonly used for providing information to the public include publishing the annual report, financial statements, and holding annual general meetings.

Anthony (1984) believes that nonprofit and government sectors must respond to many constituencies and may lack effective substitutes for the profit-and-loss and return-on-equity criteria that influence activities in the business sector. In addition to financial criteria, the review emphasis in nonprofit and public organizations includes nonquantitative criteria.

Nonfinancial criteria may address different aspects of the organization's operations. These may include the method of service delivery, outcomes or benefits to users, or evaluating the level to which specific needs are met (Wholey, 1986). Reviewing the types of activities, numbers of staff and consumers and their distribution throughout the organization is considered a large component in determining the organization's performance in the nonprofit sector.

While growth and survival of profit driven companies is dependent on maximizing the use of resources to produce a profit,

the nonprofit organization must focus on satisfying consumer and constituents needs in the most appropriate way. Mason (1984) states:

the nonprofit and public service organization adapts to meet the needs of contributors or volunteers, satisfy organizational needs or to respond to the needs of it's constituents or clients (p133).

Mason feels that nonprofit organizations or services often have numerous goals and purposes. Sometimes these are stated but often these are unclear. Purposes and goals change with influx of new members, changing needs of clients or consumers and changing environmental conditions and climate. It would seem that the extent to which the organization responds to these perceived or expressed needs would influence the ability of the organization to maintain support and adapt effectively to the internal and external environment.

Nonprofit organizations are increasingly looking for affordable approaches for monitoring the performance of services or programmes for which they are responsible. It has been determined by Mason (1984), that managers of nonprofit organizations need to look further than profit measures and specific programme or service evaluations to ensure the organizational resources as a whole are utilized at a maximum level to meet the needs of the constituents and clients.

Evaluation information collected from a nonprofit organization is used for a variety of specific purposes. Information reported by individual services or organisations to external agencies can be used for accountability and advocacy purposes. An example is gathering data to monitor financial and service activities.

SUPPORT FOR FUNDING REQUESTS

A major reason for establishing and measuring performance criteria is to seek funding. Kovner, (1978) has found that supporters of nonprofit public services and programmes increasingly are faced with finding appropriate accountability measures to satisfy funding requirements. Gibbs (1988) transformed the climate of public health services in New Zealand by drawing attention to the need for increased information to make the health services more accountable for public expenditure.

Due to the dependent nature of nonprofit or public services on external funding sources, information is required to demonstrate the extent that organizational resources are used efficiently in meeting constituents' needs. In the current economic environment, competition for resources calls for increasing support to rationalize funding. In the community, data is increasingly necessary when supporting funding applications.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Organizational performance literature allows one to analyze methods which look at integrating theories of organizations with

criteria for determining performance. The following discussion will address research and theory relating to criteria for monitoring organizational performance in the nonprofit sector.

MEETING STANDARDS AND ATTAINING GOALS

Approaches used by managers for determining organizational performance usually involve establishing goals, objectives and operational standards and then evaluating the level to which these criteria are met. Bickel (1986) states that approaches using organizational objectives and standards as a basis for measuring the performance are limited. Frequently organizational objectives do not exist or are incomplete. In addition, goals, objectives and operational standards are often limited in the extent to which they reflect all the various activities of the organization.

Social service and health organizations often use monitoring and evaluation studies to demonstrate accountability. In addition to reviewing specific programme and activities, studies are carried out which look at establishing appropriate criteria for determining organizational performance.

New orientations utilizing nonfinancial criteria has brought about social research in performance evaluation. Shapiro (1984) suggests that more complex methods of evaluation research for determining performance criteria in nonprofit organizations are being adopted.

FORMAL EVALUATION RESEARCH

Formal evaluations may be carried out by individuals or groups, internal or external to the organization. Furler, (1979) states that many purposes have been suggested for carrying out evaluations. Although research serves many interests, the main use in organizations is to provide information to make decisions such as establishing priorities and allocating resources. External organizational evaluation of the activities is often used as a basis for establishing the credibility of performance information.

Shapiro, (1984) suggests that much of the evaluation research has focused on three major areas in light of needs and expectations of the users of this information. These areas include determining the success of programmes or services, determining outcomes and reviewing the level of performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency.

These expectations form the basis for developing criteria. Veney and Kaluzny (1984) give their support to this purpose of evaluations. They take the discussion still further. They describe how decision-makers use evaluations for determining the relevance, progress, efficiency, effectiveness and impact, of program activities (p. 2).

An objective of those funding evaluation research would be that the information will be used to improve the way the organization operates. In the years ahead, the public will continue to demand more effective services and to debate the

level of resources that should be available to government and nonprofit organizations (Wholey, 1986). Wholey believes that evaluation research will become more important in determining the effective use of an organization's resources.

LIMITED USE OF EVALUATION INFORMATION

The literature on performance criteria in nonprofit and the public sector details extensive debate as to the usefulness of the evaluations for decision-makers (Shapiro, 1984). Studies have been carried out relating the decision making process to utilizing evaluation information. It has been found that many organizations fail to incorporate evaluation information. Although the importance of evaluation studies is widely recognized in theory, there is some question as to the usefulness of information generated from evaluation studies in practice.

It is suggested that the results of evaluation studies are either not used, ineffectively used, or misused. Guba and Lincoln, (1986) note that many managers and decision-makers have grown *skeptical of traditional* evaluation studies because they perceive the results to be insignificant and with little relation to current problems. The researchers found that traditional research based evaluation processes were expensive, seldom utilized and provided little ongoing information for management on outcomes or results of services or programmes.

Blacker and McLennan, (1987) found that the utilization of formal evaluation is limited in spite of the emphasis received in social and health research literature. A survey of program

evaluation and service monitoring activity was carried out in 49 Victorian community health centres. It was found that evaluation and monitoring were not considered to be a significant activity in the organization.

The researchers identified three main factors associated with limited utilization. Inadequate staff preparation in evaluation methods, reluctance to divert funds from the provision of services to their evaluation, and inadequate support resources for evaluation activities from the central health authority, Practical difficulties in day to day operations of the organization restricted the effective integration of regular evaluations in the health centres. One reason Blacker and McLennan (1987) found for the ineffective use of evaluation information is that evaluations are often initiated by those removed from daily operations of the organization.

Other studies in the United States have examined the way evaluation information is generated and perceived by the users of the information. For example, Flaherty and Olsen (1982) looked at the impact from a requirement for self-evaluation studies in community mental health centres.

United States legislation requires three approaches to evaluation studies by the organization. These include annual self evaluation studies targeting specific areas, development of an ongoing quality assurance program alongside clinical care evaluation studies, and the review of evaluation by local

citizens. To obtain funding, organizations comply with government requirements.

In this study, the researchers investigated perceptions of respondents on favoured methods of review and the usefulness of the review information. Three relationships were discovered including: (1) the reason for conducting the study, (2) the topic of the study and (3) the role of the evaluator in disseminating information and making it useful. From analyzing preferred methods it was found that respondents favoured self-selection of evaluation topic areas based on individual centre needs (p 56-58).

New Zealand has similar examples to support this. Recently in New Zealand, developments within government policy and legislation in the public sector have required the establishment of specific performance criteria to satisfy funding requirements. The practice of developing business, management and academic plans in the health and education sectors has been directly influenced by new performance criteria for public funding.

Buhl and Lindquist (1986) make the point that if evaluation studies are funded for the purpose of improving the performance of the organization, that information rather than data should be presented which should be **designed to catalyze and inform action** (p83). Four aspects of evaluation information have been identified to promote its usefulness to interested parties.

Establishing the kind of information and criteria for assessment that will be useful to decision makers appears to be critical. Major issues in the underutilization of information include timeliness, relevance, generality, and cost. (Veney and Kaluzney, 1984, Smith and Cantley, 1985, Cameron and Whetten, 1983) Information needs to address issues perceived important, be timely and understandable for use at different stages of decisionmaking. Information must then be presented in such a way to ensure an understanding of the manner in which evaluation findings can be applied. The following discussion will address problems of utilization of evaluation information in decision making.

GENERATING INFORMATION FOR DECISION MAKING

Wholey (1984) sees that evaluation research is carried out on the basis of establishing performance criteria based on identified expectations. A purpose of evaluation research is considered to be impacting upon decisions that set priorities and involve the allocation of resources.

Information is used in determining the success of programmes or services and the outcomes or the level of performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Review activities are centered around whether decision makers consider the program or service to be addressing what was intended and whether positive results are achieved.

Veney and Kaluzney (p. 4) support this perspective. They state that:

If there are no decisions to be made or the decisions are not ones that can be improved with the addition of information, then evaluation is meaningless.

They suggest that criteria for evaluation depends on the decision making process.

In using decision making models, there are some limitations. There is an assumption that all organizations start out with realistic, measurable objectives and follow a specific process of decision making after studying and analyzing data. Many decisions regarding organizational operations are made without a full analysis of data.

Though limitations are evident, models of decision making may help to understand how organizations integrate evaluation information. Shapiro (1984) studied alternative models of organizational decision making. The study provided a useful summary of the relationship between models of decision making and the extent to which information is used.

He extends Theil's (1971) thesis to suggest that models of decision making can be used to emphasize different elements of the decision making process, but aspects of all the models are present to some degree in any decision (1984, p 639). Shapiro analysed characteristics of decision making under each decision

making model and concluded that the usefulness was based on the individual needs of decision makers, not the collective needs of the organization .

POLITICAL INFLUENCES

Utilizing evaluation information is affected by political influences. Wells (1982, p 621) suggests that performance criteria are most often determined by those outside the population served, e.g. funding bodies, paid evaluators or staff. Evaluation is accomplished through identifying goals of the organization that are seen to provide an index to program success. Standards and criteria for evaluating aspects of the organisation can limit information of actual consequences and outcomes of programmes. Performance criteria may be established to serve specific purposes and ensure that results are weighted favorably or unfavorably.

PROBLEMS OF DEFINING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

While the definition and theory of organizational performance remains the subject of much controversy in the research and literature, many attempts have been made to reach an all encompassing definition. Several factors contribute to this difficulty in arriving at a consensus. One reason is that organization models are founded upon abstract theories which are not clearly differentiated.

Organizations comprise multiple characteristics which are difficult to tie in with any one organizational model or theory. In

addition to a lack of agreement on the definition of organization, boundaries between constructs of organizational performance are unclear. Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus on meaningful criteria which establishes effective and ineffective relationships between the organization and its external environment. The following discussion will outline reasons for these problems.

DEFINING ORGANIZATIONS

There are many ways to conceptualize organizations. From an early period Taylor (1911) developed a machine analogy and Weber (1947) used classical bureaucracies as a basis of organizational theory while establishing efficiency measures as performance criteria of work. Increasingly complex theories of organizations have emerged including information- processing units (Galbraith, 1977), rational goal pursuing entities (Perrow, 1970), and open systems (Thompson 1967).

Observations and research over a number of years has uncovered numerous approaches and theoretical frameworks about relationships and characteristics of organizations. With the development of new theories and frameworks for analyzing organizations, new measures and definitions of performance have developed. Each theoretical approach to defining organizations and their relationship to the external environment results in different models for analyzing the organizations performance. Although there have been many attempts at arriving at a

consensus on organizational theory, no consensus has been reached on determining a best way to defining organizations.

FAILURE TO ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES OF CONSTRUCT

The basis for the confusion and the difficulty in developing a consensus on the meaning of organizational performance is explained by defining the term as a construct. Organizational performance is usefully described by Cameron and Whetten, (1983) as a construct which gives meaning to ideas or interpretations but which is not based in objective reality. Constructs are different from concepts.

Concepts can be identified specifically by observing objective events. On the other hand, Cameron sees that the boundary of constructs is unable to be precisely defined. Although researchers have found specific indicators to be components of organizational performance, attempts to find a total meaning have failed to date due to the lack of objectivity in defining the construct.

Authors have sought to delineate empirically the boundaries of indicators which characterize organizational performance. Mahoney (1967) factor analyzed 114 variables taken from the literature and developed 24 independent criteria dimensions. When establishing the appropriateness of these dimensions as criteria in the construct space, Mahoney made a comparison with overall manager ratings of organizational performance.

Results showed that organizations using different types of technologies had different characteristics in their construct space. It was found that each group of researchers tackled the problem with a different methodology, and each derived a different set of indicators. Reviewing the research has proved that there are different boundaries and meanings of the construct. Three major reasons for this were cited by Cameron and Whetten (1983).

The first problem was that limited types of organizations, each with unique characteristics were used. It has been found by Molnar and Rogers (1976) that public and private sector organizations define "performance" differently. The second problem was that a number of important constituencies who hold different performance criteria for the organization were ignored. The third reason was that the selected criteria in the various studies had different focuses and levels of analysis and specificity. Thus research findings to date have demonstrated that it is difficult to support a single set of indices of organizational performance.

CRITERIA INCONCLUSIVE

As the definitions and constructs of organizational performance are often unclear, so criteria and indicators for measuring performance are also unclear. Determining performance of the organization is primarily subjective, value laden and based on individual preferences.

Bluedorn (1980) sees that organizational goals stem from individual preferences and values. He sees that establishing agreement on organizational goals as the framework for establishing organizational performance criteria. Through establishing perceptions of preferences by the relevant constituencies of organization, he believes one then has a basis for measurement of performance.

DIFFICULTIES IDENTIFYING PREFERENCES

Empirical evidence suggests that individuals do not necessarily report their implicit criteria for determining organizational performance accurately. It was found by Nisbet and Wilson (1977) for example that from a review of evidence of a large number of empirical studies, they concluded that individuals have little or no ability to accurately report their cognitive preferences. There has been little correlation between objective choices and knowledge of motivating factors or implicit preferences. Cameron (1983) concluded that when researchers ask various constituency members to specify important criteria of performance, there is no assurance that the criteria they give will be consistent with the criteria they use implicitly to judge performance.

Another major problem is that preferences of constituents tend to change significantly over time. Expectations of productivity in the initial stages of business activity would be

different than when the organization was at a mature point in its life cycle. Changing sets of constituencies would also be expected to result in different preferences of performance criteria. The criteria selected for judging performance and the relevant group of constituencies may differ significantly.

Organizations have been found to pursue contradictory preferences. Weick (1976) found that a defining characteristic of educational organizations are the contradictory preferences in the organization. These organizations are described as examples of **loosely coupled systems**.

Studying different domains of performance in universities has demonstrated that organizations pursue different sets of criteria in different domains of activity. For example achievements in research and academic development of faculty may be contradictory to achievements in their ability to respond to community needs. Contradictory preferences can exist at the same time when one domain of activities is independent of another.

Researchers have highlighted coping strategies when organizations are faced with contradictory preferences. When preference do not exist in independent domains, three strategies for resolving conflict take place. The first was described by Lindblom in 1959 as **incrementalism** which involves trading one set of preferences for another. Cyert and March, (1963) describe two additional methods to deal with conflict. **Satisficing** is

described as fulfilling all preferences to only a limited extent and **sequencing** which occurs when the emphasis is altered among preferences. Contradictory preferences or criteria must be recognized to effectively approach the problem.

The next area making establishing criteria difficult is when expressed preferences of an organizations constituencies have little or negative relationships with one another and have conflicting viewpoints. One major issue is that it is difficult to identify appropriate constituents. There have been many approaches made to this problem.

Approaches to establishing constituent criteria that have been cited in the literature include identifying dominant coalitions, key constituents, powerful constituents and multiple constituent perspectives. Choices in selecting appropriate constituents to establish or review performance criteria are limited. This is due to the fact that they rely on the selection of certain constituencies excluding others or they rely on subjective selection processes such as determining powerful or dominant constituencies.

In summary, arriving at a consensus on frameworks for analyzing organizational performance is difficult due to a differences in definitions and theories of organizations, lack of established boundaries defining the construct and an inability to agree on criteria for determining performance.

CHAPTER 3

HOW THE DATA WAS OBTAINED

Several different activities have contributed to shaping this case study. The process of reviewing the literature on measuring organizational performance in nonprofit settings has generated background data on which to build the framework for the study. This study uses a case study method as the basis for investigating organizational performance.

An overview of community based nonprofit organizations operating in an urban community has been carried out and the Manawatu Branch of the Intellectually Handicapped Society was selected for the case study. Study questions were defined and developed and form a basis for the data collection. Permission from the branch manager was sought and the review of documents began.

A variety of methods were used to gather data on the organization's services, programmes, activities, policies and procedures. Data was collected from records, publications, periodicals and interviews. The following are examples of the types of documents reviewed:

REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

- Organizational chart, management and staff job descriptions
- Past evaluations
- Philosophy and policy

- List of goals and objectives
- Descriptions of services, minutes of meetings, brochures
- Descriptions of historical development
- Literature on the intellectually disabled, normalization, mental retardation from New Zealand and overseas
- Descriptions of related services and community groups e.g. People's First Movement, Disabled Person's Association, etc.
- Current literature on organization in journals
- Annual reports, social audits
- Information about programmes, including number and types of services and facilities and their distribution
- Performance review methods of staff both existing and planned
- Relevant reports, guidelines, operational manuals from national office

Data collection began with document and record analysis from different aspects of the services. The analysis of statistics, content and record keeping format of clinical reports and notes highlighted formal monitoring by certain providers. Policy statements and procedure manuals provided data on aspects of the services considered important. Information from these reports and documents was analyzed. This data facilitated the development of focused interview questions and a schedule for interviews was then developed.

STUDY QUESTIONS

The interviews were based on the following questions:

1. Do all individuals have shared perceptions of the organization's purpose, goals and objectives?
2. What do individuals see as important aspects of the organization to review and monitor?
3. What ways do individuals perceive the organization to use in determining whether or not it is doing its job and who is responsible for reviewing the activities of the organization?
4. Are the current methods of review appropriate to the needs of the organization?

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Each person interviewed was directly involved with services available within the Palmerston North and outlying districts. The process of selection involved choosing one person involved with different aspects of the organization's services and structure who worked within the Palmerston North area.

Several types of people were targeted for interviews and views about how the organization monitors performance were presented. In order to simplify the discussion, people who were interviewed were categorized into four major groups. These include users, user advocates, providers and decision makers (Appendix 3). The user of the IHC services or programmes is a person with an intellectual disability. User advocates include families, parents, volunteers, or independent friends of people

with intellectual disabilities. User advocates involve both families and other individuals and groups in the community who are unpaid but promote services to meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities.

Providers include staff, and middle management involved in the different operations of the organization. Decision makers include the branch manager and committee members who are directly responsible for allocating funds in the local branch. A parent serving as committee member and the branch manager were identified as key decision makers.

Initially, the concept of monitoring and evaluating the services and facilities and monitoring performance by the IHC was outlined. One interview was carried out with each participant. Consent to record the conversation was obtained prior to each interview. Eleven interviews were carried out in total. These lasted from forty five minutes to over two hours. The interviews took place over a three week period in August, 1989. The following is a selection of questions asked:

1. What kinds of services or activities does the IHC do?
2. How do people involved know that the IHC is doing its job?
3. What methods are used to measure that the IHC is fulfilling its purpose or doing its job?

4. What aspects of the services are addressed by these methods?
5. Are the methods used adequate? Please describe how effective you feel these methods are?
6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these methods?
7. Are the methods easy to use and easy to understand?
8. Are they a hassle to put in place?
9. Would you like to see any other areas of the IHC addressed in relation to measuring the performance.

In line with the case study method, study questions were altered and new questions developed as data collection and analysis progressed, thus the study's direction continued to be revised in the process.

It was found that there were different levels and amount of involvement amongst users, user advocates, management and decision makers in the IHC. Although the content of the discussions varied, most topic areas were addressed in each interview. A content analysis was then carried out on the interviews. Common data and themes were grouped. This process was completed in approximately one month.

Methods of evaluation cited by people involved with the interviews will be described. The report will highlight those methods used by the IHC which people see as significant. In addition, particular concerns expressed by each group will be presented. Increased awareness of performance criteria was hoped to be gained through studying the methods commonly used and identified by key people.

CHAPTER 4
FACTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MANAWATU BRANCH
OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED

DEVELOPMENT

The IHC began in 1949, founded by a group of parents in response to changes in government's education policy towards people with intellectual disabilities. This policy introduced compulsory education for children with learning disabilities. The group began as a pressure group facilitating the development of government supported services to address needs of their children.

The term 'intellectually handicapped' was defined in 1951 as those children who were not able to gain instruction from special classes in the public school system. The founding name of the parent's pressure group was the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Parents Association (IHCPA). This was changed to the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society (IHCS) and later in 1975 to the New Zealand Society for the Intellectually Handicapped (Inc.); registered trademark IHC. Only parents and legal guardians hold office and voted in the organization. (Risenborough, 1986).

The parent's association was initially set up to fill the gap and provide services for the intellectually handicap. In the initial period their needs were unmet by the Department's of Health and Education. With committed parent involvement and established credibility, the government increased their funding. These

additional finances allowed for the replacement of parent volunteers with paid professional staff. The organization expanded to develop vocational training, residential and educational services for the intellectually disabled. Operational procedures were standardized and facilities established with the organization's expansion.

In the early period, short term relief was administered by parents. The IHC has grown to employ a total of 1850 staff in 1988. The 1987/88 IHC report stated the Society spent a budget of \$66 million, plus \$10 million in capital works. \$32 million of this was funded by the Government (IHC,1988). The organization has grown in size to employ a number of staff providing a range of services.

DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL BRANCH

The Manawatu-Wanganui branch of the IHC encompasses one of the largest geographical areas served from one branch. Services are offered for the intellectually disabled in several different areas. Service areas include education, recreation, residential, social work and vocational services. In the 1988 Social Audit it states that there were over 350 people registered under different service areas within the Manawatu Branch area. A service management team functions in the local branch to coordinate and plan services.

BRANCH STRUCTURE

In 1988 there were approximately 200 members of the local

branch of the IHC.. Approximately fifty people were listed on committees including twelve on the Branch committee. There are about 90 providers with over half employed in residential services and a third in vocational services. A branch President and a branch manager are responsible for the operations. Management is carried out through a team including the manager and co-ordinators of service areas including residential, social work and vocational. A National Operations Manual is available as the guideline for branch operations. The geographical region covered by branch operations can be seen in Appendix 2.

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES

The last social audit stated that ten staff residential homes with 64 residents were under the control of the local branch. At that time there were fourteen community homes providing 23 beds. In addition 16 people live in the community without live-in staff. These numbers are in continual fluctuation with the emphasis on the least restrictive residential alternative. The majority of the homes are in Palmerston North.

Other facilities include four workshops/vocational training centres serving approximately 200 people. One is located beneath the Administration Centre in the central city, another within a short distance, a third is located in Dannevirke, and a fourth at Aokautere north of the city.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

There are a variety of education services being offered by the

Branch. Examples include preschool education and other education programmes offered in facilities or workshops. At the time of the interviews, the Branch operates a Centre for Developmentally Handicapped children primarily for pre-schoolers with a roll of approximately 20. In addition, the Branch promotes mainstreaming through associations with various schools, and offers education programmes such as self care, social development and language skills.

PEOPLE INVOLVED WITH THE LOCAL BRANCH

USERS - INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

The primary user of the IHC services is the intellectually disabled individual. In the 1988 social audit **consumers** of the local branch of the IHC were defined as:

those with intellectual handicap who receive services from the branch or benefit from the advocacy activities of the branch and their parents/family members. (Palmerston North Branch, IHC, 1988)

Services are offered to individuals through the lifespan from children through adults. One interview was carried out with one intellectually disabled woman in her 20's who had been involved with education, vocational, and residential services for most of her life.

The woman interviewed works five days a week and lives in a residential home with four other adults. All adults in her residential home work during the day. A staff support person is available through the evening and night. The interview took place in her home after work.

USER ADVOCATES

Parents

Parents receive services from the IHC on behalf of their sons and daughters. The local branch of the IHC has parents involved with decision making and advocacy in relation to intellectually disabled people in their own families or within their local community. (A) Parents of a preschooler and (B) parents of an adult son who received services from the IHC were asked about the way they saw the organization measuring performance.

(A) One couple had been involved with a service for their preschool child with an for a period of three years. They received services for their intellectually disabled child on a regular basis during the week, had direct contact with the service staff, but had little contact with other aspects of the organization such as committees, meetings or activities.

One parent worked outside the home during the day. The other parent worked in the home, looked after her two preschoolers and had a full day getting the children back and forth between schools. She was grateful she could work in the home. The

major contact these parents had with other parents of preschoolers was through informal chats when delivering and picking up their preschooler at the IHC education facility.

(B) Parents of an adult intellectually disabled son have had a long relationship with the organization stemming from education and work related services the IHC provided. Currently their adult son goes to work on a daily basis during the day. Lately he has been involved with vocational services in workshop activities but recently he has been employed with a local private business. His employment was coordinated by staff at the IHC.

These parents have retired and now have more leisure time to be involved with the organization. One parent keeps involved largely through attending coffee mornings and networking with other parents of adult children. The other parent is a primary volunteer supporting the involvement of intellectually disabled individuals in recreation services in the local branch. This parent spends a good deal of the week transporting intellectually disabled individuals around the area to and from sports and after work activities. Both parents are regularly involved with dances and parties offered by the IHC in the local area.

Other User Advocates

Other user advocates can be identified in the IHC. Some of these identified in this study include family members who meet at coffee mornings in the Palmerston North Area, a parent's group called the Down's Association who meet regularly

in Palmerston North, and members of the People's First, a group comprised of people with intellectual disabilities.

One major parent support network which operates within the local branch area holds coffee mornings for parents of intellectually disabled sons and daughters. These are held once a month at different venues. Mothers and fathers are both welcomed but primarily mothers of adult sons and daughters attend. From the interviews with a mother who attends these coffee mornings it was found that this group is recently becoming more involved in progress reports from the branch manager on operations and activities within the local branch.

The People's First movement is increasingly being recognized as an advocacy body for people with intellectual disabilities. The People's First movement is a recently developed national initiative for the intellectually disabled. The intent in this organization is that the intellectually disabled advocate for themselves to ensure clients of the service are represented in decision making processes within the organization. In the future, more attention is likely to be given to the relationship between this organization and the review processes of the IHC at local and national levels.

Due to limited time, only one of these groups were targeted for an interview. Although all three groups are significant, Down's Association representatives were selected for interviews

because of their focus on the needs of school aged children having intellectual disabilities.

The Down's Association

The Down's Association is relatively new and has become more active in the local community over the last five years. The Association is a support group targeted for parents of sons and daughters with Down's Syndrome. Many people with intellectual disabilities that receive services from the IHC have been diagnosed as having Down's syndrome. In the local community, this association is seen as a major support group for parents, particularly for parents of school aged children.

Parent representatives of the Down's Association who were interviewed have worked in the same community as the local branch of the IHC and have been familiar with available IHC services for about six years. They network closely with other parents, sharing concerns, resources and taking action within the community to make positive changes on behalf of their sons and daughters.

PROVIDERS

The extent of staff and management involvement in formal evaluation varies. Five were selected for interviews from varying levels and areas within the local branch. It was found that the staff knowledge level about review practices varied. Some reasons for this may have been the different areas in which

they worked, the length of time exposed to the IHC and their interest in the field.

(A) One group of staff/management targeted were those operating as middle managers responsible for running one of the services, supervising IHC workshops and/or residential facilities.

Interviews were carried out with representatives from middle management who have been involved with the organization for a few years.

(B) Other staff were selected based on direct responsibility for planning, implementing and monitoring one of the smaller service programmes in the local branch. One staff member has been employed by the local IHC for a number of years functioning as a professional manager of a service centre. Up until the time of the interview this manager had no experience with formal evaluation or monitoring practices in the organization.

(C) Additionally staff were selected due to their role in providing direct support to the intellectually disabled and not holding management responsibilities. Staff interviewed were employed for less than two years by the organization and worked with intellectually disabled adults in a residential home.

KEY DECISION MAKERS

Key decision makers at the local branch level include committee members and the branch manager. The branch committee is comprised of parents and interested members of the

community meeting regularly and functioning as a management body. The responsibilities of the branch manager are closely linked to the responsibility of the committee.

(A) Parents serve as representatives on the local management committee. One parent was selected to interview based on her experience serving as a committee member. Over fifteen years involvement with the organization and an interest in review practices led this parent onto training programmes for evaluation and monitoring teams.

(B) The local branch manager has been operating in the same position for a number of years. He described and commented on each formal method developed by the national office. He considers evaluation and monitoring an important activity to be carried out within the local branch.

CHAPTER 5

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FORMAL MONITORING PRACTICES

It has been found in the IHC that over the years, evaluation procedures have grown increasingly complex. Methods used vary from from self evaluation initiated by professionals and managers to the use of more formal methods of external evaluation. Staff and a committee member believe current practices of self evaluation and monitoring of facilities using standards, procedures, and teams to be a thorough process.

The IHC national organization has committed resources to the development of policy, guidelines and standards to promote evaluation and review practices in local branches of the organization (see organizational chart, Appendix 1). At the national level skilled staff are responsible for ensuring policy and standards for evaluation of services and programmes are implemented.

The national office allocates budgets to regional branches for evaluation. The budgets allow the employment of support staff to promote evaluation and monitoring at the local level. The national office has recently begun collating statistics on formal evaluation and monitoring practices within regional branches. The formal methods are used in the the Manawatu branch of the IHC. Due to limited time, each specific review process will not be described in detail. In order to provide background

information, a brief overview will highlight specific aspects of the review process which are relevant to this study.

BACKGROUND

In 1979, a philosophy and policy document was published by the IHC establishing standards for residential services. The aim in establishing standards was to determine the aspects of services and programmes which enable people who are intellectually disabled to lead a fulfilled life in the community. The standards were to serve as a guide for programme development. Parent representatives were involved with the formation of philosophy and policy by servicing national committees.

IHC POLICY ON MONITORING

Under the 1986 Philosophy and Policy statement (#22) it states:

22.1 IHC, as an advocate for all individuals with an intellectual handicap, has a responsibility to monitor its services.

22.2 IHC also encourages regular monitoring of all facilities where people with an intellectual handicap live and work whether run by IHC or not.

22.3 This can be done within IHC by having regular internal and external evaluations of IHC facilities. An internal evaluation can be carried out by a

Branch on an annual basis using a trained team of people who are not closely linked with the facility being looked at.

22.4 An external evaluation should be undertaken a least every three years by a team from outside the Branch using a recognised evaluation system such as the Standards for Residential Services.

22.5 IHC supports the establishment of inter-agency monitoring groups who could effectively monitor all services for people with intellectual handicaps, independently.

Standards, policy and guidelines have continually being revised since this time. In 1988 the Department of Health published **Guidelines For Standards for services for people with intellectual handicaps.** In recognizing the level of care that should be provided, the guidelines suggest that all services be regularly evaluated based on recommended standards.

INCORPORATING POLICY

National policy has been developed over the years to address evaluation and monitoring of services. In 1985, at the Annual General Meeting held in Masterton, the Society states:

Our aim is to see that internal monitoring of branch services be carried out on an annual basis by a

trained evaluation team not connected with the facility, and that external evaluations by a team from outside the branch be undertaken at least every three years using a recognised evaluation system.

Initially the procedures for evaluation concentrated on residential services. Since the publication in 1981 of the **Standards for Residential Services** steps have been taken to implement evaluations in a number of branches and facilities.

BRANCH EVALUATION

In relation to the local branch, the 1988 Social Audit report of the Manawatu branch it states that providers and consumer/community representatives are involved with regular evaluations and monitoring meetings held within the Manawatu branch. It also states that a type of evaluation promoted by the branch includes weekly visits by the branch manager to one of the service facilities.

In addition to these methods stated in the Social Audit, interviews and the review of documents reveal that formal methods have been adopted to measure organizational performance. Evaluation and monitoring in the local branch has been adopted to serve two major purposes. The first is to comment on the ways way services are delivered. The second is to identify steps for promoting the quality of life of people with intellectual disabilities (Palmerston North Hospital, 1988).

Three primary methods are used for monitoring services. At the local level formal methods include the individual programme plan, the evaluation and monitoring teams and social audits.

Individual Programme Plan (IPP)

As a regular review tool for individual client services, the Individual Program Plan (IPP) is recommended for use during the lifespan of each handicapped person (Department of Health, 1988). The individual programme plan involves formalized case conferences where a group consisting of providers, users (people with intellectual disabilities) and user advocates plan services for the individual.

Bring up systems have been implemented within the middle management team for the IPP. Goals, objectives and plans are set out for each person with disability. These goals and objectives are monitored through ongoing case conferences. Most people interviewed want to see the frequency of the IPP's increased. There is a current move to complete at least two a year for each person receiving services. To date, this has yet to be achieved.

Evaluation and Monitoring Teams

The quality of home life was considered the priority area for evaluations when these standards were published. After pilot studies were undertaken on a variety of methods, protocols and recommendations were developed and included in the **Procedures for Evaluation and Monitoring** which was then published by

the IHC. The criteria for review procedures was listed as follows:

1. **It must be easy to train personnel in the use of the procedure.**
2. **The procedure must be applicable across services to encompass the total client lifestyle.**
3. **The procedure must be affordable and able to be frequently used.**

Extensive standards for evaluations were then adopted in the New Zealand IHC as a result. The Society incorporated new protocols, contracts, and checklists for evaluators. The evaluation and monitoring teams evolved as a result of these pilot studies.

Evaluation and monitoring teams conduct formal reviews of facilities and services based on specific standards. This review is *carried out* by a team from outside the service which is being monitored. The teams are under contract to address specific standards for evaluation and monitoring. Teams address the evaluation policy by investigating a targeted service, programme or *facility for review*. The team members spend time observing, collecting information and interviewing.

The review team utilizes criteria from the **Standards for Evaluation and Monitoring** as indicators. The tool which is used is called the PREM checklist which aims at addressing

quality of life in four areas. The PREM checklist was designed as a simple to collect objective data on whether the local branch meets predetermined standards. These standards stem from the IHC's **Philosophy and Policy Document**. These include:

1. The physical environment
2. The structure of services
3. Management and staffing procedures
4. Specific services.

Team members are given training and these criteria are then applied to the review process as checklist items or interview questions. Teams undertake activities such as reviewing documents, making visits to facilities and gathering perspectives of staff, management, and committee members on different aspects of the IHC operations.

Interviews are carried out as a component of the team's evaluation protocol. These are targeted at a variety of people including the intellectually disabled, parents or advocates. Additionally, volunteers and staff members at operational, administrative and advisory levels may be included.

Interviews may be carried out with people outside the branch. These individuals or groups may include those in related services including employers, special education programmes and community groups. (Although this activity was mentioned in the

documents, no formal methods of comprehensively reviewing key individuals or groups was identified in the context of this study).

Results are provided within a specified period of time to the national evaluation coordinator and the local branch management after the information is collated and recommendations made by team members. There is little delay in getting the evaluation information back to management. The team is responsible to the national director. The service, the branch manager and national director receive copies of the team's report.

Based on recommendations, the branch manager is required to take action within three months. The national office takes responsibility for monitoring the outcomes of recommendations from the different regions. The national office collates information from formal reviews to obtain feedback on the operations of regional branches.

The Social Audit

The social audit is the third method which is currently being adopted within the local branch for the external monitoring of goals, objectives and outcomes of the local organization as a whole. In the local branch, the timing of the Social Audit report is meant to coincide with the financial report. The Social Audit involves an external auditor or group of auditors who facilitate the process of writing a management plan for the local branch as a whole.

The audit process involves developing a social statement written by members of the organization which identifies resources used, activities carried out and expected results. The local branch is responsible for setting objectives and writing a social statement. Providers state that it is used for the purpose of demonstrating that the branch is providing a service in a predetermined manner.

Some effort is required by providers to identifying goals and objectives of services based on policy guidelines. An emphasis is placed on establishing objectives for different activities. Communication, residential facilities, social work services are some examples of programme areas for which objectives are developed. The statement addresses activities which are planned and achievements made within a specified period of time.

There is an assumption that representative users, user advocates and providers are involved with developing this management plan. After the planning is carried out, an external social auditor then reviews whether the goals and objectives are being appropriately addressed by the organization. An auditor from an independent agency verifies the accuracy of the social statement through consultation and observation at the local level. One social audit has been completed to date and another is now being carried out in the regional branch studied.

VIEWS OF PEOPLE IN THE BRANCH

Discussions with the branch manager outlined specific activities which are undertaken to measure organizational performance. Initially only formal evaluations were highlighted. Then when inquiring about informal or internal methods, the branch manager discussed additional methods.

Methods for measuring organizational performance

The branch manager listed reviewing numbers of beds, facilities, services and programmes as major methods for monitoring performance at the local level. Holding an annual general meeting, publishing the annual report, and having available policy, and financial statements were other methods which were identified for public reporting purposes. Although these activities were regularly carried out, the branch manager felt that these activities were not considered crucial to determining organizational performance.

In addition he feels that in relation to these monitoring activities, more formal evaluations are undertaken in the local branch. Formal evaluations have evolved primarily as a result of national support and resources. The usefulness of the different methods for management decisions vary, but the external evaluations are considered extremely important to ensure credibility.

Formal evaluations are seen by the branch manager to provide external feedback on the management and professional practices

of the organization. To date the formal methods used in evaluation, monitoring, and review have had limited direct benefit for management purposes. Two reasons were given. First their branch has not been able to implement the evaluations on a regular basis. Secondly he states:

I wonder how useful the information from evaluation and monitoring teams or the social audit have been in the past. There haven't been too many significant things that have come out of the reviews that we didn't already know.

Although the branch manager considers the information from evaluations and monitoring of limited use for himself, he commented that he has yet to find out staff perspectives of the methods, particularly in relation to the timing and appropriateness of the social audit tool.

Interviews with providers, users and user advocate provided information in relation to the specific formal methods used by the local branch. The following will highlight these viewpoints.

Evaluation and Monitoring Teams

This study revealed some limitations of the evaluation team information at the local level. The branch manager wonders about the relationship between the costs of paid staff time and resources to implement the review and the limited benefits derived from the review outcomes. The branch manager states,

resources are stretched. More frequent team reviews would be very costly. A committee member adds to this comment in stating, I don't think many major changes have been made after the evaluation team has given their feedback.

Although the staff being evaluated deserve to be forewarned beforehand, providers are concerned that the objectiveness is limited because, **they are well prepared for the review to take place.** Another concern was the limited exposure the team members had in the service or facility. One provider states:

What depth can be reached in three days? Only one individual programme can be carried out in that short time. I think there needs to be more depth to it and have more than one case reviewed by the team.

The staff feel that since the IPP is such an essential component of ensuring appropriateness of services, the review needs more attention.

I think they could go a bit deeper and look more into an individual's lifestyle. Also specific routines of the facility are disrupted by this method and the costs of salaries for three people to review the IPP's are expensive.

Providers want to see more team evaluations but state:

We've waited a long time to just get two facilities reviewed. A desired goal is to evaluate half the branch in a year but this is highly unlikely. We just don't have the money or time to do it.

The time consuming tasks of training team members, implementing the review and writing the necessary reports make the process slow and limits its usefulness to providers of the service.

Parents from the local branch aren't involved in team reviews within their branch. Although there are important reasons for this, its been found that most parents in the local branch didn't know that a team review was carried out in their area. Furthermore, they did not understand support people, parent or advocates role in the review process.

Those interviewed felt that evaluations in the IHC are carried out to fulfill the needs of the branch manager and staff. One states:

I think they (team reviews) are done for the manager. What feedback he gets from the team, we don't hear about. Information rarely gets to us.

User advocates felt that they received limited benefits from formal evaluation information. They did not remember receiving information from previous evaluations. They lacked information on when the reviews were carried out, what services would be reviewed and results of the review process. If they did hear about results, information was gained by chance while attending unrelated meetings.

The Social Audit

The branch manager feels that the main benefit from this method is derived through meeting external accountability requirements through this method. Staff support this when stating: **involvement of people outside the branch is necessary to give credibility and ensure that reviews take place in an objective manner.**

Social audits are seen necessary to provide the branch with an independent assessment and a tool for demonstrating public accountability. In general, management and those staff directly involved in the audit feel it provides a positive opportunity to discuss and document issues, implement service planning, and increase accountability to people outside the IHC. As the social audit is in the developmental stage, the usefulness for the branch manager is still unclear.

It is felt that providers have too much direct involvement with determining goals and objectives for the social audit. One of the biggest problems stemmed from parents making requests

which are **against the philosophy so staff had to veto a lot of their ideas. . . we had to talk that parent around and talk the meeting around to find an acceptable goal.**

Providers consider that the philosophy should come from the parents up rather than the staff down. **Staff are contributing to the philosophy and cutting out a lot of the parent's input.** The person interviewed feels that getting parents and consumers more actively involved will need to be addressed by the consumers organization called the "People First Movement." Discussions then led to where the staff felt responsibility should fall for evaluating services.

Providers offered a number of important issues. One staff member responsible for one of the service areas said that she and her staff were unfamiliar with the content of the audit, even though specific goals for her service had been included. Other concerns were expressed by providers, including staff who were involved with the first social audit. They stated that:

We've never looked at all the things we're doing and then planned for the next year before. This is new to us. I think it's really been good to get outside help at first, but I wonder what improvements we're going to see as a result.

Input from people outside the branch is important but the issue that stands out is that, **it takes too long and costs too**

much. Both providers and the committee member are concerned over taking money from direct services to the intellectually disabled in the local branch to pay for the social audit process when benefits to the users are unclear.

Although parent and community group consultation is advocated in the social audit process, the extent to which this takes place and its effectiveness may be limited. It was interesting to find that user support groups and parents who were interviewed were unfamiliar with the social audit practices which are used in the local branch. The limited awareness of the social audit may be due to the fact that there has only been one social audit completed to date.

CHAPTER 6

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

It was found that each person interviewed had different levels of awareness about the review practices, different attitudes as to the usefulness of review information and varying perspectives of which aspects of the organization are important to address in evaluations. The primary issues of measuring organizational performance that were addressed include responsibility, parent involvement, resources, and available support. The first discussion will highlight the views of key decision makers who include the branch manager and parent committee member.

KEY DECISION MAKERS

Key decision makers emphasized formal evaluation procedures when addressing criteria which is used by the local branch of the IHC in determining organizational performance. They believe these methods are effective as summarized in the following statement:

The evaluation and monitoring teams, PREM checklist and the social audit are to provide us with an objective opinion that we're doing what we're suppose to. When they are carried out, the evaluation teams and individual programme plans meet their stated purposes.

It was found that decision makers feel few benefits come out of the review information. The branch manager states:

The recommendations have been made over minor things like changing signs. Little has been brought to light from the results that we weren't already aware of.

The usefulness of the review processes were dependent on three main factors. The first factor identified was the timeliness of feedback from reviews. Fast feedback enhances the likelihood that action will be taken on the recommendations.

The second factor was to have external people carry out the review. Involving people from outside the local branch is seen to be necessary to enhance credibility of the process of reviewing performance. The third factor is that the reviews are funded from the national office. This outside funding ensured the reviews would be carried out. Resourcing reviews in the local branch is considered the responsibility of the national office.

The branch manager believes that team reviews of facilities are the major way parents or advocates have a voice in measuring performance. He states: **We involve parents by inviting them to be trained and to carry out the reviews.** It was agreed that there are limitations to this parent involvement since the last review was carried by people outside the branch. This makes it difficult for parents in the local branch to feel they have a voice.

Another way to involve users and their advocates in determining performance is through discussions when developing

the social audit statement. The branch manager felt that people were effectively consulted when the goals and objectives were established for the social audit. The branch manager stated, **we fully involved parents.** No recommendations could be made to improve the thoroughness of involving users and their advocates in these review practices.

The parent serving on the committee comments differently on her experience with actual parent involvement. In relation to the last social audit that was carried out she states:

I'm not sure whether parents are involved. I know I saw it and read through the information because it came past the committee. I don't know whether I understood it. There is so much material you know. I'm not sure what happened with it.

Although she gives high priority to involving parents, she questions the extent to which this actually takes place.

Even though no suggestions for improvement could be made by the branch manager, decision makers agree that providers dominate performance reviews of the local branch activities. One reason for this is that the length of the review process limits the extent of consultation that can be carried out. Decision makers agree that although consultation with parents is sought, to date there has been limited success. A common theme

identified by decision makers was summarized when one person suggested that:

so far I haven't seen consultation with parents work very well, particularly with the social audit. It's really hard when your in a meeting trying to get consensus with parents and you find they're still caught up with protecting their son's and daughters from having relationships. It takes too long. Staff end up pushing their views forth and cutting out what parents have to say because staff feel a lot of parents are overly protective.

Resources in the local branch are stretched. In particular, decision makers state that: **additional staff hours are needed for drafting the audit, consulting with appropriate people, redrafting, then gaining committee approval for funding.** Costs to implement the social audit are high and decision makers are doubtful that financial resources will be available on an ongoing basis to carry these out. Regularly reviewing organizational performance through formal methods adopted in the local branch was found to be difficult by decision makers.

FOCUS OF A PERSON WITH AN INTELLECUTAL DISABILITY

An interview with a user of the services of the IHC was important with regard to reviewing activities and operations. One person was selected because she had been involved for a long

time with the organization and was very talkative. It was found that the consumer interviewed was unfamiliar with formal reviews cited in reports and documents and discussed by management.

The person with intellectually disabilities focused on aspects of the services she felt were important. She talked about her work, available support and leisure time activities. The interview was carried out on a sofa in her livingroom one afternoon after work.

"IHC" was first related to the workshop at which she spent **quite a bit of time**. In responding to questions about the IHC the woman focused on **her job** and workshop activities such as doing kitchen dishes and making morning tea as told in her description:

That's where I used to do my job. They (the staff) gave us jobs and gave us some other jobs if we didn't like it. I used to do the kitchen dishes and make the morning tea. If any of us had any troubles we could talk to the social worker about it and they would change our job if we wanted.

Available support was next discussed. The ability to talk to staff about **any troubles** and have them help her, appeared important. The woman could visit the social worker who was there to **help with hassels**. At one time **troubles with the**

manager prompted a visit to the social worker. Another time she stated:

I picked up the phone and rang the social worker when I wasn't paid. Sometimes I don't remember (to get paid). I go to her if that happens.

The women has goals for her future. Presently she is preparing to live independently. **I'd love to live with somebody else, just a friend or something. Just like other people.** Did other staff know of her goal? She states:

I haven't really talked to anyone. A long time ago somebody talked about it. I said not on my own, I'm not . . . I don't know about that.

She feels good about the future prospect of living independently. At present however, it appears that she lacks confidence in her abilities and skills. Evidence for this arose in discussions about money. The ability to manage her money seems important. This was shown through the following example:

No, I don't like it around, having it with you makes you feel funny. I'm lucky because she (the hostel manager) buys me shoes and clothes and I don't have to pay her back until I get my money. I don't know how I'm going to pay for things myself when I'm on my own.

At present carrying the bank book seems a big responsibility to the woman and it is presently looked after by someone else.

Sleeping is her favorite activity. She states, **its what I like to do best.** Sewing is something she likes in her leisure time. **I want to learn to sew a skirt; something to do for the weekend.** She doesn't know if the staff have enough time to teach her to sew but **they know I'd like to.** Another activity is to crochet a blanket.

They used to have wool at the workshop but the price of wool has gone up. That's why I haven't made blankets lately.

Outside of work hours she'd like to be more involved with sewing and sports.

Her conversation suggested that her view of performance criteria may include opportunities to discuss concerns if they arise, opportunity and access to desired leisure activities, and the extent of support she feels in daily living such as managing her bank book.

PROVIDERS

Providers active in managing and reviewing IHC services and activities reinforced the focus on formal evaluation methods in monitoring the performance of the IHC. The majority of providers freely listed the team reviews, the social audit and

social, health, and fire service inspection of facilities as the methods the IHC uses to measure performance.

One service provider who is not directly involved with the management team or formal reviews stated:

I don't think there are any methods used to measure the performance in this service. No formal reviews have ever been carried out on us.

Another feels methods used to monitor performance in the IHC include case conferences with parents and liaising and consulting with other professionals.

This provider feels that checking the way case conferences operate enable staff to make necessary revisions in their process. Improvements are regularly made as a result of feedback on the process used during meetings with parents. An example of one improvement was that: **case conference processes have been revamped to ensure that parents aren't overwhelmed by large numbers of professionals.** The provider went on to say that measuring the performance of her service through reviewing the case conference process is important to ensure the providers **adapt to the needs of families with intellectually disabled people.**

Other providers state that regular staff meetings and yearly performance reviews with staff are extremely important for

enhancing staff performance and plans of care. Another benefit cited by a provider was that: **much of our service and individual planning is carried out during staff meetings.**

Methods are used to address a number of performance areas within the organization. These include facilities, services and education programmes for the intellectually disabled, etc. Organizational performance in relation to staff training and development opportunities was commonly mentioned as a concern of providers.

Due to lack of funds, it is believed that IHC plays a ineffective role in training and development for staff in this service. One person said:

If people want training we have to look outside the organization. A lot of us have our own training and we pass it on between each other.

Self initiative is seen as very important in meeting training and development needs.

If performance is measured, one provider felt that few changes would be adopted as a result. Also, criteria she sees as important isn't necessarily important to those allocating the budget. For example, she states:

I've given them the information which shows that we need new equipment to provide these services and nothing ever happens. My request has been in for two years now. I don't bother submitting requests anymore because there is no money for equipment. Equipment doesn't seem important to the managers.

Due to lack of funds reviews and upgrading equipment takes place infrequently.

One of the biggest factors impeding any development of the service is a lack of planning. The provider would like to see a review of staff skills, preparation and development to provide support services. One person feels that:

I don't remember any review of performance in our service which looked at our qualifications, updates or skills and whether they matched the needs of people who we work with.

This is a result of a lack of resources. There is concern that since resources are inadequate, performance criteria aren't used which providers feel should be used. The provider states,

it may be difficult to ensure a maintainable standard of quality or consistency in the way we provide a service to families.

Providers weren't aware of any methods which addressed the content of the records. **We keep records for ourselves and for the parents. No one else appears to be concerned with what's in them.** Although the provider sees the community services coordinator as the main person involved in reviewing statistics and records of the services offered in the local branch, she states:

I know people are aware of what areas are included in the records but I don't remember anyone looking at them. I don't know why anyone would want to look at our records. The parents always get a full report of what we write.

Overall, the providers suggest that currently there are few procedures in place to attract family involvement or proactively seek information on families needs. One person summed it up. **Only through involvement do people know what we do.** To date, little attention has been given to written information on services or programmes. On the whole providers feel that no one is responsible for reviewing how well the information on available services reaches families or individuals in the community.

Due to the lack of time, imposed changes, and financial constraints, providers feel that many areas have yet to be addressed to ensure families needs are effectively identified and met.

Providers feel that there may need to be increased coordination and management communication, involvement, and commitment so that families will take a more active role in establishing criteria and measuring the performance of the local branch.

Providers suggested they would look favorably on criteria and performance measures carried out on their services which encompassed forward planning of the organizations resource requirements to meet identified needs in the community. Major blocks to this taking place are felt to be time, money and lack of planning activities within the organization.

USER ADVOCATES-THE DOWN'S ASSOCIATION

The Down's Association is the largest community based group of parents holding a vested interest in the IHC. Parent representatives were interviewed to find out their perceptions of the methods and criteria used for monitoring performance in the local IHC branch. An interview was carried out in the home of parent representatives one day after school.

These user advocates are unaware of the methods used for reviewing that the organization is doing an effective job. They were quite clear about criteria they would like the IHC to adopt in measuring performance. These parents believe there is a lack of emphasis on appropriate supportive systems for parents.

The IHC was set up by parents because parents have needs. Initially the organization empathized with these needs. Now they've moved away and have adopted an attachment to bricks and mortar.

Specific examples were given of a the direction they would like to see the organization take to keep up with changing attitudes of parents towards early intervention services and the needs of their children. They would like the IHC to monitor the education and support services to families regarding mainstreaming. They believe that at present, few needs are being addressed for children under the age of ten or their parents.

The user advocates would like to see a move towards emphasizing mainstreaming rather than respite care for preschoolers. One parent states:

Outside respite care we found that the organization doesn't address the developmental needs of our children or give appropriate support which we feel we need to cope in the community.

The IHC National Library in Wellington is one of the few support services considered to be effective for parents with young children. They would like the organization to better target current needs of parents. Since the agency receives government funds to provide support services to families, the local IHC

should be more effectively linked with the consumer group. Parents went on with further recommendations.

To increase acceptability of the organization to parents of young children, public images need to be updated. Another change suggested is to;

get rid of the name and change it to something more with it. . the name 'IHC' conjured up images that I wasn't prepared to put on top of my child. . . I didn't think she was that affected.

The Down's Association representatives believe that parents need practical support from others who share similar experiences. In her experience she found that:

Although professionals can be very good at their job, social workers can't make practical recommendations. They don't know what that doctor is going to be like when you go to see them. Social workers don't know key people or the best way parents can act as advocates to influence key people.

The parent felt that social workers may be subjective to professional constraints. The parent believes:

Parents don't feel free to complain because they feel grateful for any services they receive from

the IHC. They don't feel they can complain about something that is offered for free to them.

These people see an urgent need for an objective parent advocate service available from outside the strings of the IHC organisation.

Written data from the IHC on available services were considered inadequate. They lacked effective communication as can be seen in the following statement:

We may have sought information ourselves but we were given nothing that spelled out what services were available.

Parents stated they would like to use minutes of committee meetings for information on the direction of the services. Time is considered precious and involvement with the IHC would take them away from the Down's Association. Parents feel encouraged about the new development of national policy which will ensure liason takes place between parent support groups and the IHC organization at local levels.

In summary, the parent representatives of the Down's Association would like to see the organization measure the extent of the liason and channels of communication for parents. The IHC could provide support so that parents needs are met

within the community through establishing an objective parent advocate service.

USER ADVOCATES-PARENTS

The branch committee works with management to make decisions about the direction of the organization and its services.

One parent representative serving on the committee feels that responsibility for monitoring and measuring performance of the IHC should fall with the committee.

Although overall she feels that she is kept informed, the parent doesn't feel that information generated from evaluations is fully utilized or updated as frequently as it should be. To be effective, she suggests:

there should be a closer working relationship between management, parents and the committee about issues surrounding review practices.

Suggestions were offered by the committee member as to where the responsibility should lie for updating evaluation procedures at the local level. She stated that review activities should be delegated by the committee and shared between committee members, parents and management.

The parent wants the IHC to increase the frequency of reviews. **So much can happen, change of people, residence, staff and circumstances.** Throughout many years involvement only

once a review has been completed on the facilities with which she has had direct links.

Other parents felt that management's focus is to obtain beds for disabled people. As parents and volunteers their priority is to make sure users are happy in what they are doing.

We know this by listening to them talk with us and with their friends. If it wasn't for parent volunteers, I'm not sure many would be involved at all in sports. After they get home from work or school, staff should help in getting them around to swimming or other things they may like to do.

They wish the IHC would place an emphasis on reviewing recreational activities to meet the needs of the consumer.

Parents don't know what orientation or educational updates are given to staff. There was no knowledge of the content of training programmes offered or staff qualifications required by the IHC. One parent stated, **I get the feeling that for the most part, they learn it on the job.**

One parent felt that services provided by the IHC were fragmented. Circumstances change for those receiving services. Their sons and daughters get older, develop new friends and relationships, and have changing needs. Although parents anticipate these changes there is appears to be little opportunity

to discuss concerns with staff. **I can think of a lot of things I'd like changed but I don't want staff to think that I'm complaining,** said another parent.

Although she feels her concerns are important, one mother doesn't feel comfortable discussing these concerns with management. There is a real fear of being considered **x ingratuitous by staff** if they complained formally.

The care is considered very good on the whole and I am grateful to them for looking after my daughter.

There is no advocate service to support parents outside the IHC. One couple feels that social workers are there for the intellectually disabled but not for parents. Although the only advocates available for their son, they don't feel they are consulted regarding major issues. They stated, **staff and social workers aren't interested in you, they are only interested in what they feel is right for the disabled person.** Often times, parents have found that arrangements for their children are made and parents are consulted only after the fact. These decisions surround issues such as education, training, work experience or obtaining health care. Parents discussed possible reasons.

One parent felt that a continual crisis orientation and lack of planning or foresight by management led to delays in making

decisions about her daughter's education. Parent involvement in decisions are left to the last minute, leaving little time to weigh options.

We know some parents may not be so interested in being involved but we are. The plans for our child could be reviewed more frequently to keep us informed.

Parents sometimes feel they are purposely excluded from the decision making process. One parent summarized, **It takes too long to involve us.**

Parents want involvement with establishing the frequency of case conferences to ask questions as they arise, voice concerns and give input.

We here from social workers when things aren't going so well. If anything goes wrong at the workshop, they come and talk to you. The social workers don't know us or our situation. It's rather embarrassing.

Parents also commented that they want to speak directly to staff in the organization who are familiar to their family when sensitive issues arise. One parent states: **I don't want to be told what to do by some stranger after bringing up several children quite successfully.** They would like to get to know social workers outside crisis situations.

Moving on

Most parents want to have some picture of what the plans look like for their sons and daughters in the future. One parent is concerned about mainstreaming which will affect the education service available to her daughter within the month. She says that:

Mainstreaming is taking place and I don't know what is going to happen with my daughter. I know their busy (IHC staff) and we just had a case conference about six months ago. This makes it really hard because you don't know at what point and in what areas you can actually contact them.

Parents want more support from the IHC. The only support group mentioned by user advocates is coffee mornings. These were seen to be available for the **older women** but are not seen to be appropriate for men.

Most parents didn't fully understand what being a member of the IHC was all about. One mother **confessed** that she has never actually been a member of the IHC though she received services for over three years. She states:

I don't remember receiving information on membership or any reasons why I should join. They send you information about costs to join but I have no knowledge of what it would offer

me. Pay membership for what . . . maybe for nothing.

One parent was frustrated with the process of goal setting used in the case conference for her preschooler. She feels that the disability makes it difficult to use this technique. She wants information and discussions with other parents and professionals on how to view this whole issue in relation to people with disabilities.

Parental involvement with evaluations

In general parents feel that there has not been a high profile of parent involvement with review and monitoring within the local organization. Although some parents play a big role on committees and review teams, other parents are not aware of their involvement in the local branch.

Parents recommended improvements in how performance information is distributed in the local branch. Although parents serve on the committee, information isn't seen to be reaching other parents. They feel that most review information and recommendations only reach as far as management.

Measuring the performance is not seen as one of the purposes of the annual general meeting from the eyes of parents. Rather it is **administering a report to the membership**. The general manager feels it is a means of public consultation. Parents don't feel this way. One parent stated that; **It's not a chance to draw attention to any concerns that may be troublesome**. Parents are reluctant to raise issues at the annual general

meeting because they know management want the meetings concise and problem free. Consumer feedback is not seen to be welcomed at the annual general meeting.

It was found that each person has a different awareness of the methods that the IHC uses to measure its performance. Although the intellectually disabled person doesn't list specific methods, she identified criteria she feels important in relation to the ability to approach staff and assistance with daily activities she finds difficult. User advocates relate to the direct methods they have been involved with such as case conferences and identified many concerns about the areas the IHC might focus measurement on in the future.

Providers and decision makers emphasize the formal methods and see limitations in the usefulness of the information gained from review practices. This highlights a wide range of perspectives of individuals based on the varying levels of involvement with the local branch of the IHC.

CHAPTER 7

THE VIEWS OF THE AUTHOR

Reviewing and measuring organizational performance in the IHC is viewed differently by a variety of people who hold a range of values, perspectives and motives. Both community and national response to needs of people with intellectual disabilities, has promoted developments in measuring organizational performance.

There is an increasing recognition and investment in researching and developing different approaches and formal methods of evaluation and monitoring for use in local branches of the IHC.

The scope of the study is vast and the methods used yielded a wealth of data. For the purpose of this study, only the findings related to the evaluation of organizational performance that have been identified by people involved with the local branch of the IHC will be used in the following discussion.

Setting the scene for this discussion will be background information from Mr. A. Capie (1988) who has been facilitating the process of policy and standards development at the national office. In commenting on local branch performance measurement activities, it may be helpful to briefly look at evaluation in relation to the national perspective. The following will briefly mention coordination at the national level.

The adoption of standards and policy is used as criteria by the national office in measuring the performance of the local

branches of the IHC. Angus Capie is a national office coordinator for evaluation and monitoring of IHC. He completed his first review of evaluation and monitoring results team results and compiled information in his 1988 document on evaluation and monitoring procedures in the IHC. He found that as of 1988, fifty team reviews had been carried out.

Capie, (1988) states that the IHC is a parent/consumer controlled agency that employs 200 staff throughout New Zealand. Funding has been set aside at the national office to fund formal evaluations carried out within local branches. Residential and vocational services addressing the needs of the intellectually disabled have been the primary focus in applying evaluation and monitoring team methods to date.

Capie (1988) comments as to the purpose of team reviews. The purpose is threefold. The first is to measure that the IHC standards are achieved, the second to ensure services promote the quality of life offered to consumers and the third is staff reinforcement for doing good things. Currently the first evaluation of the social audit is being carried out at the national level.

Both activities at the national level and environmental activities have influenced the ability of the local branch to undertake measures of the performance of the organization. In this study it was found that in addition to consumer pressures and public demands for accountability, the unique history of the

IHC has impacted the development of policy, standards and formal methods of evaluation on which organizational performance may be reviewed. The literature on organizational performance proved helpful in looking at the methods used in the local branch of the IHC.

In looking at the methods used for monitoring performance in the IHC, there are many issues to consider. Examples include the influx of professional and paid staff, changes in attitudes towards education and developmental needs of the intellectually disabled, and the move towards deinstitutionalization. This study suggests two concerns in relation to measuring organizational performance through the use of team reviews.

One is that to date, the professionals, providers and decision makers have focused on criteria which look at quality of specific services. The in depth review of standards and policy in only one service in the local branch has its limitations. The second is the limited usefulness of this method within the local branch. Examples of other limitations include the high costs, lack of local commitment amongst users and user advocates, and the infrequent use made of the findings. In addition decision makers found an inability to apply this method to the range of services which the local branch provides.

The social audit is a new monitoring tool which uses a management plan that looks at various aspects of the local branch. The plan is evaluated as to whether the goals and

objectives are consistent with the philosophy, policy and standards as established at the national office. Although there has been only one implemented such audit carried out in the local branch, there is some evidence of concern as to its potential usefulness.

Examples of concerns include the limited ability to involve the relevant people such as users, user advocates and providers in the process. Another is the difficulty of gaining consensus on which goals and objectives should be monitored. A third is determining who benefits whether this is made clear to those funding the audit, and what are the outcomes of the process.

It has become clear that amongst those interviewed, providers, management and user advocates used different criteria in their discussions about measuring the performance. The study's findings showed the existence of multiple goals and multiple methods of evaluation. At the local level each person interviewed offered their personal perspective. Differences in perspectives about measuring performance were found among decision makers, providers, users and their advocates.

Decision makers see the formal processes of evaluation such as monitoring teams and the social audit as methods which are used by local branch to measure its performance. Decision makers and staff involved with formal reviews also emphasized the involvement of people from outside the branch in order to demonstrate public accountability. It became evident that

evaluative criteria for measuring performance are established by those outside the targeted population. A handful of people at national level, evaluators seconded from outside the area, and local providers of IHC services, establish the criteria for the organisational performance of the local branch.

Individuals such as parents or user advocates, unfamiliar with formal evaluation methods used, argued strongly for evaluative measurement in specific areas. These include evaluations of the groups and needs being targeted, the level of ongoing consultation in devising plans of care, and the need for improved information systems regarding available services and developments in the local branch. Additional criteria which were addressed by the woman with an intellectual disability involved the users perception of the availability of staff support.

User advocates were not overly concerned whether the policy and standards set at national level were consistent with the goals or the standards monitored in specific services at the local level. On the whole, parents were familiar that the organization had a policy statement which was developed by the National Office. Local parents were unable to describe any evaluation practices that were carried out to monitor the implementation of policy or standards. It was found that due to lack of available information, parents and some providers did not feel that the local branch of the IHC effectively monitors the ways in which it addresses the standards and policy set out by the national office.

User advocates stated they did not know how services or activities were being monitored in relation to the standards. If the purpose of the team reviews is to monitor that standards are being met, this was not clear to people who were interviewed. They did not share an awareness or understanding of the review's focus. Although decision makers and staff directly involved with the reviews may take on board Capie's (1988) perspective of the purpose, there was little to show this understanding was collectively shared by users and providers at the level of the local branch.

In that they were unaware of the purpose and outcomes from the formal reviews, these methods had little significance or relevance to people who are not directly involved with the review process. In light of this issue, it may be difficult for these people to justify the expense of organizational resources such as money, and staff time which is used up in training, implementation and feedback from the reviews.

If the methods funded by the national office are not known or understood by users, user advocates and providers, there must be a question as to who benefits from the information gleaned from the reviews. Even decision-makers suggested that other than increased confidence in the way they were providing services, few real benefits were gained from evaluation information. The purpose of using formal methods may appear to serve the needs of funding bodies more than the needs of user or user advocates in the local branch of the IHC.

McNight (1986) suggests that most benefits from social services to the poor, fall into the laps of professional providers rather than the poor themselves. This concept might be relevant to looking at who benefits from evaluation and monitoring activities in the IHC. Capie, (1988) points this out and further states that

it is possible that E & M procedures can be so complex that they either use up far too many resources or, because of their cost, can be carried out so infrequently that their value to the consumers is diminished.

Both decision makers and providers in the local branch are concerned about the amount of resources used up in a single evaluation of one service or facility. This impacts on the ability of the branch to apply other different methods which may be more useful to the target group at the local branch level. There are three major sets of findings from this study which give support to this statement by Capie.

The evaluation and monitoring procedures are used infrequently in the local branch. Over an extended period of direct involvement with the local branch, one parent has few recollections of formal reviews carried out. People want more reviews of the performance of services and activities.

Staff and decision makers involved with the formal reviews stated that although only one facility had been evaluated in the past year, their desire would involve team reviews to be carried out on over half the branch in the same period. In light of the broad spectrum of services and facilities in the local branch, it seems the ongoing use of the team review process lacks effective application as the primary method for measuring the IHC's performance.

Secondly, the outcomes from the most recent team review proved to have extremely limited use to decision makers in the local branch. The branch manager stated that the information gained from the reviews for the most part, offered only minor recommendations of which there was already some awareness. In addition, the study found that the information, outcomes or recommendations never effectively reached a majority of people interviewed. There is some question regarding the usefulness of the information not only to decision makers, but also to the wide range of people involved with the organization.

The third issue which was addressed by those interviewed is the concern over the costs stemming from the team reviews. Both decision makers and providers in the local branch are concerned about the amount of resources used up in a single evaluation of one service or facility. These are viewed as the disruption in the service, staff time and resources used up in training and implementing the three day review, and the inability to go into detail or depth because of the restricted time made

available. These three issues suggest the costs of the review process, may be considered greater than benefits from the viewpoint of people at local branch level.

Different perspectives of relevant groups may be related to the various needs for information or attitudes towards why reviews are carried out. If decision makers desire to demonstrate accountability to the national office that standards and policy are being formally monitored, then methods they select must address and cover the broad spectrum of standards and policies. Conflict of interests may arise if this need to be accountable is not shared by people involved in the local branch.

Different interpretations were found regarding criteria for determining performance. Parents suggest this difference relates to people's various roles in the organization. Parents expressed concern over differences in opinion between themselves and the branch manager. They would like the organization to put more emphasis on aspects of the services and activities they see as important. Placing the major emphasis on formal methods currently used may take necessary resources from criteria and areas seen to be important by parents and families.

This impacts on the ability of the branch to apply other different methods which may be more useful to the target group at the local branch level. For example, parents felt that management is concerned with the size of the branch, actual

numbers of beds and facilities while they were more interested in quality of live, access to leisure time and sports activites, amount of stability in the daily life and quality of accomodation.

Parents and some staff view regular frequent case conferences as one of the most important methods for giving and obtaining feedback on what is happening with their sons and daughters. Both parents and providers believe these to take place once or twice a year. Although these case conferences or IPP's are designed to address issues that concern parents, the frequency and extensiveness of review appears to limit their usefulness.

One provider sees the importance she places on case conferences and staff meetings is not necessarily shared by management. This staff member feels that management is more concerned with formal review processes for monitoring performance. Reviews carried out throught evaluation teams serve little use to this provider. Methods addressing overall standards have less value to her than methods which are used in her service to monitor parent involvement and interaction in discussions and planning with professionals.

Different perspectives of relevant groups may be related to the various needs for information or attitudes towards why reviews are carried out. If decision makers desire to demonstrate accountability to the national office that standards and policy are being formally monitored, then methods they select

must address and cover the broad spectrum of standards and policies. Conflict of interests may arise if this need to be accountable is not shared by people involved in the local branch.

Even amongst parents who were interviewed, a wide range of criteria were used. Parents with preschool children emphasize criteria which monitored the extent of staff support available to prepare families for mainstreaming. Families with young children feel that they may be missing out on needed services due to management's emphasis on services to older children and adults.

Parents of an adult son emphasize criteria which monitors the way the IHC responds to recreational needs of the intellectually disabled. Parents of a young woman in residential facilities emphasize criteria addressing methods used to keep families informed about daily changes. These changes might involve activities, school work, health status or her level of interaction with peers. It was found that very different domains of criteria were used within one group of people with specific interests in the organization. Even amongst parents it may be difficult to agree on criteria for determining performance.

The wide number of needs identified within the limited scope of this study was consistent with Anthony's (1984) findings in the literature in relation to nonprofit organizations. The local branch of the IHC has many individuals and groups with different motives, values and goals for the organization. Anthony suggests

nonprofit organizations respond to these constituencies through using information about a number of criteria to monitor performance. It was found in this study that the use of the IHC's currently used formal methods and criteria to improve various aspects of the Manawatu Branch of the IHC may be limited. There may be several reasons for this.

One possible reason may be a lack of clear purpose as to the rationale for using the selected method such as evaluation and monitoring teams or through the social audit. The literature suggests that in the nonprofit sector, evaluations are primarily used to support applications for funds from funding bodies (Wholey, 1986). This is not the case in the Manawatu branch. They are one of fifty branches who are recipients of funds from the national office. Carrying out formal monitoring methods has little impact on whether or not the branch receives annual funding from the national office.

As Anthony (1984) states, profit focused organizations have strong motives to measure performance through financial criteria. Through interviews with decision makers and providers, formal nonfinancial methods of evaluation are used as the major criteria for measuring performance. There appears to be little incentive and few motives in ensuring the information is utilized to improve services in the local branch.

Monitoring consistency between adoption of the policy, philosophy and standards and the extent to which these are

demonstrated in branch activities is seen as the primary purpose. Some of the benefits to decision makers and people directly involved with reviews was that they affirmed their current practices and became publically accountable through the involvement of external reviewers. Limitations became evident when it was found that the users, user advocates, staff and management received few benefits from information gained from employing these methods. Although the purpose may have been clear, the outcomes were either not clear or not evident in this study.

The formal methods have been developed and adopted at the national level. The relationship between the national office and the Manawatu branch is such that people at the local level feel funding and overall responsibility for the provision of services lies, for the most part at national level. At present there is no one at the local level with the responsibility for developing and implementing criteria for monitoring the organization's performance. In the local branch, although there may be committment to do as they are told, a clear understanding of benefits for the organization as an outcome of monitoring performance is not apparent.

Satisfying the needs of people involved with the nonprofit organization has been determined to be important (Wholey, 1986; Mason, 1984; Anthony, 1986). One of the primary groups in the IHC includes parents. Without parent support, there is little doubt that the characteristic nature of the IHC as a voluntary

organization would be lost. The risk of being unaware of the needs of people involved such as parents is that the organization could lose the voluntary focus and be solely operated by professionals.

Although parents may be in a strong position at the national level, there is question as to their strength at the local level. As Mason (1984) recommends, it would seem there may be strong incentives for the local level to monitor whether the needs of parents are satisfied. Criteria for monitoring performance might include the method of service delivery, the extent of user satisfaction with services and the level to which specific needs are met.

Improved methods of determining the satisfaction levels of parents, key community groups and providers in relation to specific areas may be of benefit to the organization according to the literature. People interviewed had a number of potentially useful ideas regarding the criteria they'd like the organization to use in monitoring performance yet apparently didn't feel appropriate communication channels were in place.

It has been found that policy, standards, and processes for evaluating and monitoring services are developed and established at national rather than local level. Findings from formal reviews developed at national level are not seen as relevant to people in the local branch.

User advocates and providers feel they have not been involved with the formal reviews used within the branch nor had input into evaluation of services. There was little motivation for these people to utilize formal evaluation data. This may be a direct result of using methods of evaluation which are developed at the national rather than local level.

The Manawatu Branch of the IHC may increase the use of locally developed methods for measuring organizational performance by involving users, their advocates and providers. These people could become involved through establishing local criteria for monitoring performance, developing objectives and evaluating outcomes. Funding dependent on the use of locally developed evaluation or performance criteria, could increase motivation, utilization and relevance in the monitoring process. An example of this might be the funding requirement for locally developed business plans and performance criteria.

The study showed that people within the local branch of the IHC have quite different conceptions of goals, accomplishments, and shortcomings of the methods used for measuring organizational performance. The goals and purposes of using the identified formal methods within the IHC may have masked and undervalued the input from users and user advocates. Furthermore, the use of these complex and detailed formal evaluation methods may restrict progress in promoting the involvement of the targeted population at the local branch level in monitoring practices.

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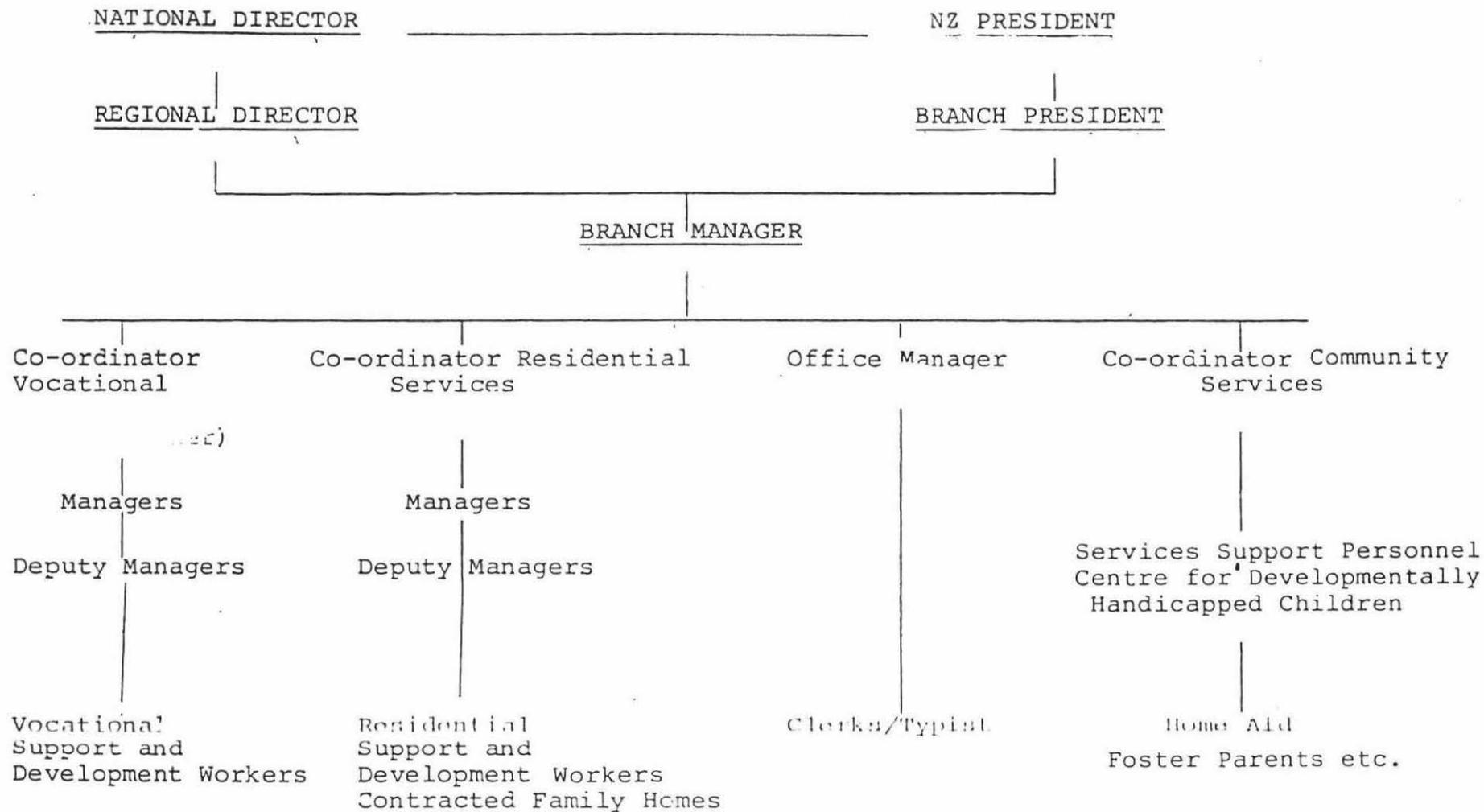
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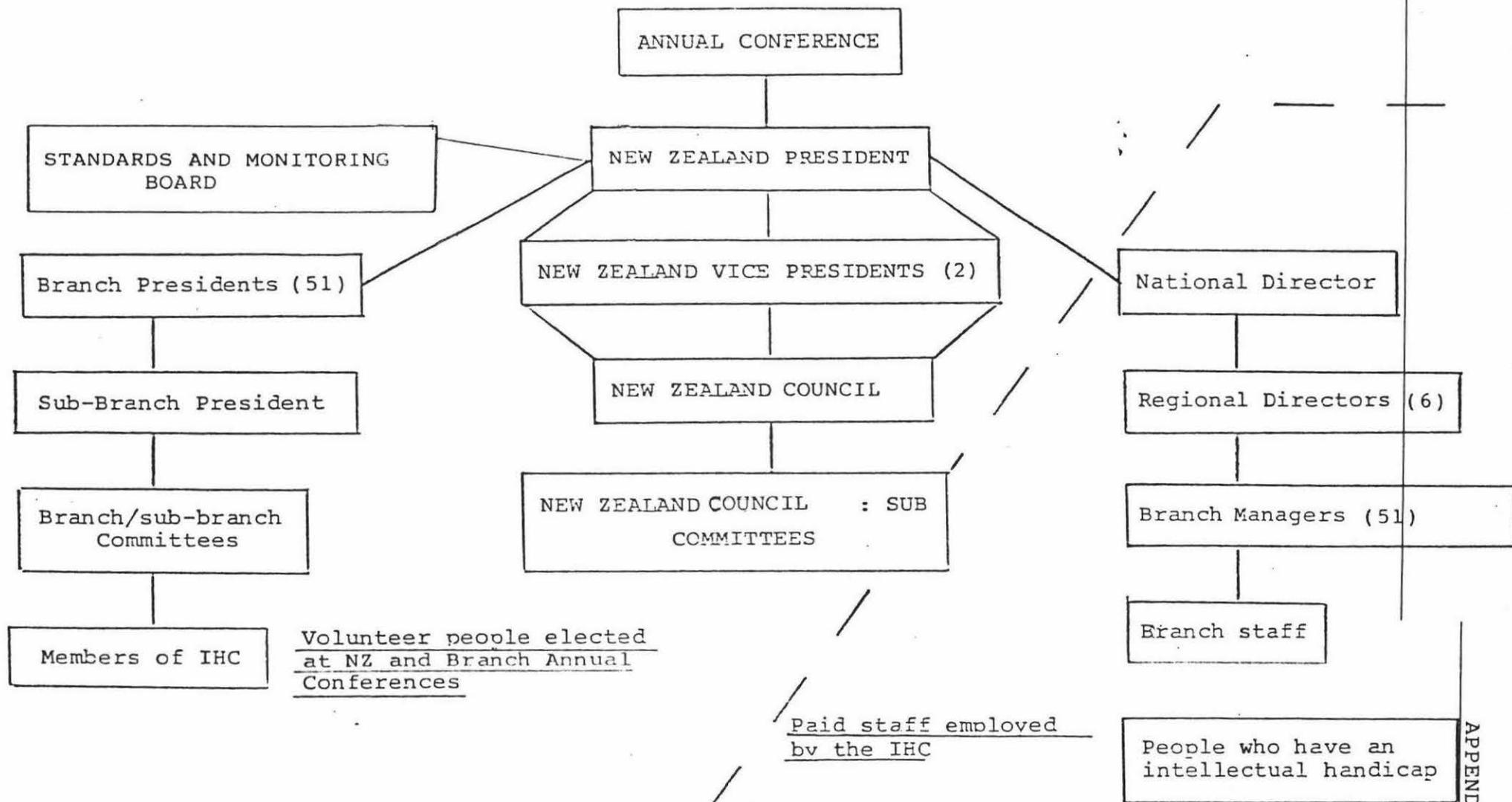
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IHC LINE OF COMMUNICATION FLOW CHART



STRUCTURE OF THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED (INC.)



Description of Those Interviewed

A. Users

One user of the IHC services was interviewed was an intellectually disabled woman who received services over a number of years.

B. User Advocates

Three sets of parents were interviewed. One couple were parents of a preschooler who received services over a three year period.

The second couple have a school aged daughter with Down's Syndrome who is currently involved with mainstreaming in her local school.

A third couple were parents of an adult son involved with the local IHC throughout his adolescence and adult life.

C. Providers

Three staff members were interviewed who provided vocational residential, and educational services to the intellectually disabled through the IHC.

D. Decision Makers

Two decision makers were interviewed. One was the branch manager and one was a parent serving on the IHC committee.

