

Using Systematic Evaluation Processes in Social Workers' Direct Practice

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Many social services are now required to evaluate intervention programs in order to guarantee their continued employment. Such evaluation could be performed by the practitioners who carry out the intervention or by external evaluators from universities or research institutes. Program evaluation conducted by external evaluators may suffer from several disadvantages, such as lack of collaboration and little relevance of the findings to practice. At the same time, evaluation performed by practitioners as an integral part of their daily practice has many advantages, such as increased use of the knowledge produced in the evaluation process and the creation and use of common language both between practitioners and within organizations. The purpose of this article is to review and discuss concepts and issues related to the utilization of systematic evaluation and its integration as part of daily routine. First, the partners involved in the evaluation effort are introduced, followed by presentation of the factors that may enhance or decrease utilizing such processes. Finally, the article reviews the pros and cons of incorporating systematic evaluation in the direct practice of social workers.

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