

MCET COMMITMENT TO CONSUMERS

- ◇ We are **committed** to consumers serving in a meaningful and valued role in evaluation efforts.
- ◇ We seek to **advance** consumer development of core technical and substantive competencies of evaluation.
- ◇ We **believe** that the value of consumer involvement is in part reflected through financial compensation for their services.
- ◇ We **recognize** that through these efforts a more informed partnership will emerge between consumers and systems that manage and provide supports and services.
- ◇ We **realize** that it is through this partnership that continuous improvements in the system will be made that ultimately are evident in the quality of the lives of the people and community supported and served.

MCET is available to provide assistance in working with consumers and consumer groups in order to build local partnerships through evaluation efforts.

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OUR MISSION

Michigan's Center of Excellence for the state wide advancement of valued and meaningful consumer involvement in the evaluation and continuous improvement of the systems, organizations and agents charged with the management and/or delivery of supports, services, treatment and/or care intended to benefit people with disabilities.



CONSUMERS

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WHO ARE “CONSUMERS”?

First, it is unfortunate that a label is imposed on a group of individuals.

Consumers is currently the generally acceptable term used for identifying adults with a severe and persistent mental illness, individuals with a developmental disability and children with a serious emotional disturbance. Also, family members are considered **secondary consumers**.

Ultimately, consumers are individuals who are **intended to benefit** from the implementation (provision of supports and services) and management (planning, direction and oversight) as organized through the relationship between the Michigan Department of Community Health and the local public community mental health system. Communities are also intended to benefit.

WHY INVOLVE CONSUMERS IN EVALUATION EFFORTS?

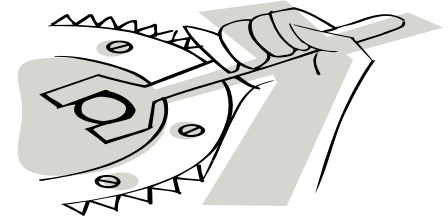
In free market business, consumers of goods and services are in full command. They seek to become as informed as possible regarding what they individually desire and value and determine their expected Return on Investment before making a purchase. The market desires to be as informed as possible regarding what can be sold and at what price. If the buyers don't purchase from a business, the business needs to make changes to attract buyers or simply exit the market.

Our system does not operate as a “vote with your feet” free market. However, public policy is moving us further down the path of consumers taking command of their lives and the system. As this progresses, it is critical that we expand consumers voice and influence of the system.



HOW CAN CONSUMERS BE INVOLVED IN EVALUATION EFFORTS?

There are a number of ways consumers can play a meaningful and valued role in evaluation efforts.



Examples include:

- * Identifying a proposed evaluation effort.
- * Planning the scope of an evaluation effort.
- * Carrying out an evaluation effort.
- * Participating in an evaluation effort.
- * Reporting findings and recommendations resulting from an evaluation effort.
- * Implementing recommended changes resulting from an evaluation effort.