



# Older Person's Star™

The Outcomes Star for later life

“ People really open up and sometimes it leads to whole new conversations

“ Service users really enjoyed the interaction – and there were statistical results!

“ I could feed back to my head office some really impressive results

... has made the support plans more imaginative and more individual

“ The Outcomes Star is an invaluable tool for our sector

“ Support is more systematic and structured

... e to ... l, even ... is needed

“ We have incorporated it into assessment and three monthly reviews

“ It helps identify training needs for staff and volunteers

... or

“ We can now assist clients better - we love the Star!

“ Some people can't understand written reports, but can understand this

“ The Star is collaborative, rather than something that is done to people

“ It enables a clear direction for collaborating with a client

... olistic approach ... l direction to the ... port

“ The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and in some cases life changing

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Please contact [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk) to enquire about buying a licence and training.

Licences are also available for those wishing to translate the document into other languages.

## The Outcomes Star™

This Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. Each tool includes a Star Chart, User Guide or Quiz and guidance on implementation and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk).

## Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the development of the Outcomes Star over its long evolution and we would like to thank all the clients, workers, managers, funders, academics and commissioners who have generously given their time and expertise.

The original commission for an outcome measurement system came from St Mungo's, with financial support from the London Housing Foundation, and Triangle recognises their vital roles in the development of the Outcomes Star. We would also like to acknowledge Kate Graham's important contribution to the development of the suite of Stars, both as a founding partner of Triangle and as co-author of the original Outcomes Star (now called the Outcomes Star for Homelessness).

We would particularly like to thank the following people and organisations for their contribution to this version of the Star:

- Camden, Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham and Brent Councils who commissioned this version of the Outcomes Star
- The following projects who participated in the working group with which we developed and piloted the Older Person's Star:
  - Camden Council's Review Team and Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre and Age Concern Camden's Great Croft, Hill Wood and Henderson Court Resource Centres
  - Westminster Re-enablement Team and Westminster Care Management Team
  - Elgin Resource Centre and Elders Housing Support, Hammersmith and Fulham
  - Intermediate Care Scheme and Adult Social Care within Brent Council
  - Age UK's Gifted Housing Project.

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# Introduction

## The Older Person's Star™

The Older Person's Star is a version of the Outcomes Star, a family of tools for supporting and measuring change when working with people.

The Older Person's Star is an outcomes tool, which means that it enables organisations to measure and summarise change across a range of service users and services. It is also a keywork tool and is intended to be helpful to older people themselves and those working directly with them by helping to identify key issues and the steps that they need to take to ensure that their lives are as good as they can possibly be.

The original version of the Outcomes Star was developed for the homelessness sector and tailored versions are now available for a wide range of client groups including mental health, people receiving support with work and learning, teenagers, and people with alcohol or drug misuse issues. These can all be viewed and downloaded at [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk).

The Older Person's Star focuses on seven core areas that have been found to be critical in enabling older people to live as well as possible in later life:

- Staying as well as you can
- Keeping in touch
- Feeling positive
- Being treated with dignity
- Looking after yourself
- Feeling safe
- Managing money and personal administration.

For each core area there is a ten-point defined scale. The scales measure the extent to which a person's independence and well-being has been maximised in relation to that area of their life. These scales are all underpinned by a model of change – a particular understanding of the journey people move through as they work towards living well. This model is referred to as the Journey of Change and comprises five stages:

- Cause for concern
- Talking about it
- Meeting basic needs
- Choice and control
- As good as it can be.

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A full description of the Journey of Change is given in section two of this guide and the Older Person's Star User Guide includes short scales and detailed scales for each of the seven core areas, incorporating and building on the five stages of the underlying Journey of Change.

## Values and assumptions

The Older Person's Star is underpinned by three core values.

### Optimising independence

Whatever their age and abilities, there is an optimum level of independence for each older person and services should work with each person to achieve this optimum level. Becoming more dependent than is necessary can hasten deterioration in physical functioning and mental well-being. At the same time it is recognised that many people need support services in order to enable them to function and that a lack of services can also put people at risk.

### Maximising well-being through choice and control

People should have as much control as possible over their life and the care they receive and the way their life is organised should reflect their own personal needs and preferences. It is also recognised that in some cases it is necessary for someone to hand over control to others. In this case, it is vital that there are people who understand and can act on that person's preferences.

### Focusing on prevention

Ensuring that someone's independence and well-being are optimised in all key areas of their life before they run into serious difficulties maximises their chances of staying in good health and avoiding accidents or other issues, thus giving them the best possible quality of life and minimising the need for care or hospital services.

These values are very much in tune with recent Government thinking as expressed in the Green Paper "Independence, Well-being and Choice"<sup>1</sup>, the White Paper "Our Care Our Say"<sup>2</sup> and "Putting People First"<sup>3</sup>.

### Recognising external factors

When working with older people using the Star it is important to recognise and acknowledge that there may be external conditions which affect their well-being and/or independence but are beyond their control or that of your service. This may be due to insufficient or reduced services to support people to manage at home, limited access to suitable sheltered housing or waiting lists for health treatment. Use the notes section to record those external factors when creating or reviewing their action plan. Your service may then be able to use this information to identify gaps in provision, plan future developments or raise issues with policy-makers.

The Star is a therapeutic tool because it allows a person to reflect on their life and focuses on their strengths and coping strategies. The Star celebrates well-being and does not set people up to fail.

Worker,  
Camden Great  
Croft Resource  
Centre, Age  
Concern Camden

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<sup>1</sup> Independence, Well-being and Choice: A Vision for the Future of Social Care for Adults in England, 2005, Department of Health Green Paper

<sup>2</sup> Our Care Our Say: A New Direction for Community Services, January 2006, Department of Health White Paper

<sup>3</sup> Putting People First: A Shared Vision and Commitment to the Transformation of Adult Social Care, December 2007, Department of Health

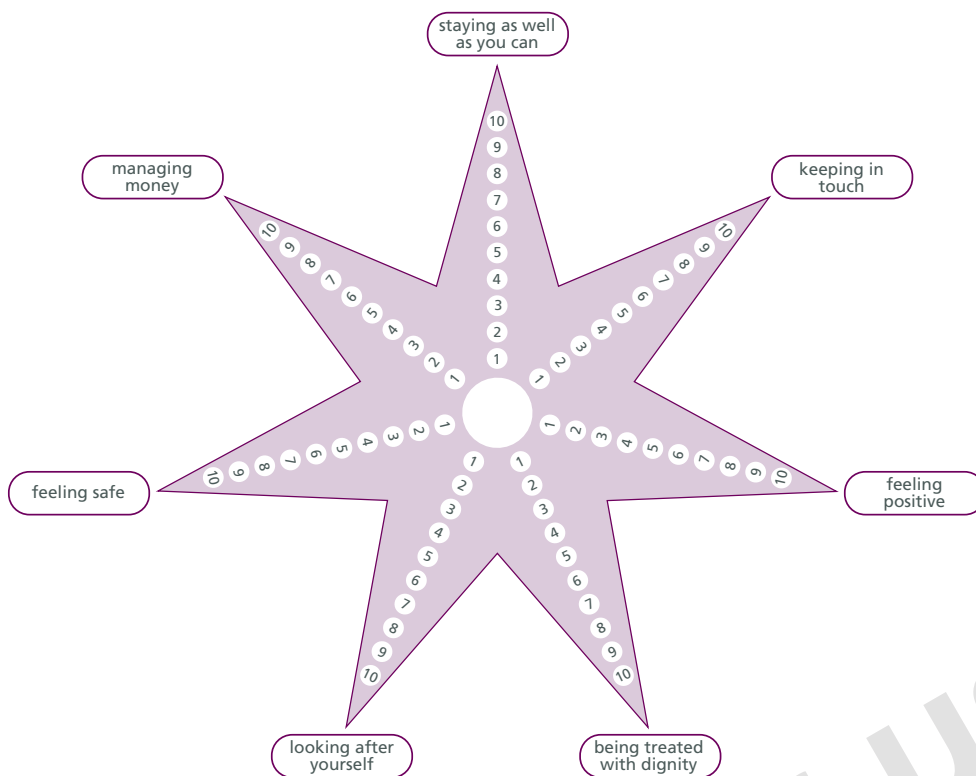


Figure 1: The Older Person's Star

## What the Older Person's Star™ measures and how it fits with existing tools

There are a variety of measurement tools already in existence for older people. There are tools that measure:

1. Support need
2. The achievement of personal goals
3. Quality of life.

**1) Support need:** There are many needs assessment tools currently in existence that provide a detailed picture of the areas in which an individual needs support. These are not designed to measure outcomes although if the same tool is used at review and the answers compared then they would show change. CSED (Care Services Efficiency Delivery) have developed a tool that is designed to do this and provides a visual representation of how a person's support need has changed over time.

These tools are essential for building a picture of support need for resource allocation and service delivery. However, when it comes to measuring whether services have been successful in achieving their intended outcomes, the data is difficult to interpret because it is difficult to know whether an increase or decrease in support need is a sign of success.

The time has come to build on best practice and replace paternalistic reactive care of variable quality with a mainstream system focused on prevention, early intervention, enablement and high quality, tailored services. In the future, we want people to have maximum choice, control and power over the support services they receive.

Putting People First, December 2007

**2) The achievement of personal goals:** Personal Support Plans identify the personal goals of the individual compiling the plan. Some local authorities have developed simple questionnaires to measure the extent to which these goals have been achieved.

These questionnaires provide helpful information on the achievement of personal goals but because the ambition of goals varies and their achievement has a different impact on independence and well-being it is difficult to compare achievements across service users or use the data to build a picture of the extent to which well-being and independence has been maximised for an individual or across a service.

**3) Quality of Life:** The ASCOT toolkit developed by PSSRU at the University of Kent measures quality of life. It also measures 'capability to improve' through questions such as, "Could you choose to have a fuller social life if you wanted given your current circumstances?" Another tool, OSCA, also developed by PSSRU, assesses quality of life and includes questions to assess the extent to which the service has impacted on quality of life by asking the person what their quality of life would be like without the service.

In addition, the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP) has published a tool to guide support planning. This includes a Wheel of Life on which people can score how satisfied they are with ten key areas of their life. Scores are given on a scale of 1 to 10 and are subjective as there are no guidelines regarding what 1, 2 or 3 means.

These quality of life tools also provide helpful information but do not give an indication of whether independence is being maximised, which is now an important governmental goal.

In contrast to the above, the Older Person's Star measures the extent to which both independence and well-being is being maximised. Exactly what this means in terms of level of independence and well-being will vary between people and will also be different for the same person at different times. In that sense the Older Person's Star does not give an absolute measure of well-being or independence but rather gives a measure of the extent to which that has been maximised.

This means that anyone, no matter what their health and circumstances can reach the end of the scale (and a 10) as long as effective services are in place and the person is doing all they can to maximise their independence and well-being. The actual quality of life and level of independence of two people choosing a scale point of 10 might be very different. One might be living independently in their own home, active in their local community and attending regular classes at a local resource centre. Another might be recently bereaved, living in sheltered accommodation with a chronic illness that severely limits their mobility and means that they require a high level of personal care. However, if both these people are doing all they can and receiving all the services they need to maximise their independence and well-being then both would be at the top of the scale because their life is **as good as it can be**.

I like the way that anybody can choose a scale point of ten no matter what health problems or disabilities they may have. That is very motivating for people and very person centred.

Locality team manager,  
London Borough of Westminster



The key factor that is being measured is not absolute quality of life or independence (over which neither the services nor the individual have complete control) but whether independence and well-being are as good as they possibly can be in the circumstances, which the individual and service providers working together can ensure.

This has the advantage that it is easy to interpret the readings, a higher scale point is good and a lower one is bad no matter what the individual's abilities or circumstances, and that it provides a clear picture of what the end goal and progress towards it looks like.

It is important to note that the Outcomes Star cannot replace a detailed Care Assessment. For more information on how to use the Outcomes Star within care management, please see part one, section four.

## How the Older Person's Star™ was developed

The prototype on which the Outcomes Star is based was originally developed by Triangle in 2003 for St Mungo's, a London-based charity providing a wide range of services to homeless people. The model developed in the work for St Mungo's was then applied within a wide range of organisations working in homelessness and related fields. The learning across all these projects was brought together to create the first version of the Outcomes Star for Homelessness, which was published by the London Housing Foundation in 2006.

Following this, new versions were developed for more client groups, including people with mental health issues, people getting back to work, people with alcohol issues and teenagers.

In January 2009, the West London Procurement Group (Camden, Westminster, Brent and Hammersmith and Fulham Councils) expressed an interest in commissioning an Outcomes Star for older people and decided to commission a scoping study to explore the feasibility of developing a version of the Outcomes Star for this client group. The scoping study involved interviews with commissioners in all four boroughs plus a study of the literature and other tools relating to outcomes and older people.

The study concluded that whilst there were tools to measure support need and quality of life there was a need for a tool that would measure the maximisation of independence and well-being and that such a tool would support the achievement of current government goals, especially regarding re-enablement. In the light of this the group commissioned Triangle to develop an Outcomes Star for older people.

The development of the Star was carried out in collaboration with 11 projects across these four boroughs and one project from Age UK. The projects included:

- Five resource centres
- One review team
- Two care management teams
- One re-enablement team
- One intermediate care service
- One housing support service
- One gifted housing scheme.

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Managers and front-line workers from each of these teams together with commissioners from each borough participated in a workshop to identify the outcomes of their work and the steps older people take towards these outcomes. On the basis of this, a draft version of the Older Person's Star was developed and then refined following feedback at a second workshop.

The Older Person's Star was then piloted with 62 service users across these projects and questionnaires were completed by service users and workers to assess how the Star worked in practice and how well it reflected service users' positions and issues. See below for highlights of the findings. These findings together with verbal feedback from those participating in the workshops were then drawn together to identify further amendments and develop the final version of the Older Person's Star.

As well as providing valuable feedback on the Older Person's Star and the services for which it is most applicable, the pilot also identified a number of challenges in using the Older Person's Star that have broader implications for services for older people. These are summarised on page 11.

## Pilot findings

- 81% of older people said they enjoyed completing the Star
- 87% of older people and 61% of workers reported that the Star described their current position 'very well' or 'fairly well'
- 68% of older people said the scales helped them to describe where they were but only 39% of workers said the Star helped them get a picture of their service users' needs
- 57% of older people said the scales helped them understand what they needed to do next. 33% of workers said the scale descriptors helped them understand where to focus next
- 54% of older people said that their progress was encouraging but only 18% of workers reported this
- 22% of older people and 31% of workers said the process was too long.

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## Services the Older Person's Star™ is suitable for

The Older Person's Star is suitable for use in services where:

- There is an ongoing keywork relationship<sup>4</sup> between the worker and the older person
- The aim of the service is to maximise the independence and well-being of older people
- The service is holistic so the older person and professional together are taking an overview of the person's life rather than focusing in-depth on one aspect
- The Journey of Change reflects the service's understanding of the steps towards maximising independence and well-being.

### The Star is therefore most likely to be useful in:

- Sheltered housing and extra care services
- Care management where there is an ongoing relationship between a care manager and an older person which continues over several months
- Resource centres where there is some kind of keywork relationship
- The tool has not been tested in residential care and telecare services but it is likely that it will be appropriate for these services.

### The Star is not likely to be suitable for:

- Re-enablement and intermediate care services where the focus is on a small number of aspects of someone's life for a short period of time
- Care management where older people are only seen a few times by the care manager
- Resource centres where there is no keywork.

In addition, because completing the Older Person's Star requires a meaningful dialogue between the older person and the person working with them and sets the goal of maximising independence and well-being rather than just meeting needs, it is likely to work best in services that share these values. Where these values are not shared, the Older Person's Star may be at odds with the service culture and some culture change work may be needed in order for the Star to sit comfortably within the service.

Often, when we are rushing around providing teas, lunches, bingo, art, quizzes, ISPs and so on, we don't take the time to discuss people's lives with them in such depth. The Outcome Star will enable us to engage with our service users more deeply.

**Worker,  
Charlie Ratchford  
Resource Centre,  
Camden Council**

<sup>4</sup> The term 'keywork' is used in this document to refer to an ongoing one-to-one relationship between a worker and an older person in which the two people take an overview of the person's situation and needs and set goals, make plans for achieving those goals and periodically review progress.

## Broader challenges in using the Star™ in services for older people

The pilot identified a lack of fit between the approach and beliefs underpinning the Older Person's Star and the way services for older people tend to be orientated. This could mean the Star has limited suitability within services for older people, or it could also point to ways in which older people could benefit from a shift or reorientation to a more outcomes-focused approach, concentrating more on dialogue, choice, prevention and maximising independence. These issues are wider than the Star and its suitability and it will be for services and commissioners to decide whether this kind of change would be both beneficial for older people and viable to implement. However, if services and commissioners wish to reorient services in this way, it is possible that the implementation of the Older Person's Star could play a helpful part in a wider culture-change process. These issues are as follows:

### a) There is often no ongoing keywork relationship

There is often no ongoing keywork relationship between a professional and the older person. The person carrying out the assessment may be different from the person helping to develop the support plan who will also be different from the person delivering services and the person carrying out a review. It may be that if the agenda of choice and maximising independence is to be fully realised, it will be necessary to look at how greater consistency and continuity can be provided to older people.

### b) Services focus primarily on meeting basic needs rather than maximising well-being and independence

Although services and commissioners are aware of and talk about the goal of maximising well-being and independence, in practice much service delivery for older people is about meeting basic practical needs and assessment forms and working practices are usually focused on this. In this context, the outcomes measured by the Older Person's Star can appear to be peripheral to the immediate concerns of those delivering the service. This raises the question as to the extent to which these services are intended to focus on the broader goal of maximising well-being and independence or whether the actual goal is to focus on basic needs.

### c) There is often no sense of partnership between an older person and professional

The Older Person's Star is based on an understanding that both service provider and service user have an important role in ensuring that independence is maximised and life is as good as it can be for the older person. However in services for older people it is often the case that there is less emphasis on the role of the older person in achieving outcomes and no explicit understanding that part of the purpose of the service is to support them in making changes for themselves. For some services it may be necessary to challenge this culture of doing things for older people rather than engaging them in a meaningful dialogue about their lives.

### d) Older people themselves are often not familiar with or do not embrace the idea of a journey

The Outcomes Star is always based on the understanding that an individual can be supported on a positive journey towards greater independence and well-being. In most client groups, this seems to fit well with the understanding of people receiving a service. They usually know they are there because change is needed in their lives and at some point realise they are part of that change. Younger people especially are often familiar with the radial shape underpinning the Star and the concept of growth and progress. However, this whole concept appears to resonate less with older people. There is not necessarily an assumption that they are there to make progress on a journey; they may also focus on their immediate needs. This too is a challenge in using the Star well and a wider challenge in terms of older people being on board with the concept of themselves as having a role in creating change in their lives as well as receiving services.

or 020 7272 8765

## Questions on which we would like further feedback

Although the Older Person's Star was tested in 11 services across four London boroughs, we are aware that the scope of services for older people and the range of needs that older people can have is very wide. In addition, the Older Person's Star was tested at a time when services were in a state of change and flux due to the implementation of self-directed support. We are therefore aware that the Older Person's Star is likely to need further testing and development and is likely ultimately to be one part of a toolkit for measuring the outcomes of work with Older People.

We are very keen that the Older Person's Star be implemented by services in the spirit of collaborative learning and would encourage those using the Star to feedback to us their experiences. We are particularly interested to hear the views of those who have used the Star on the following questions:

- Which types of service have found that the Older Person's Star works well for them and which have found that it does not. We are particularly interested to hear whether the Older Person's Star is suitable for residential services as none took part in the development or piloting of the tool. It may be that a different version is required for residential services and we would be keen to hear from organisations interested in commissioning such a tool.
- How people have approached integrating the Older Person's Star with assessment and support planning, particularly in the context of personalisation.
- Whether the Older Person's Star can be used when someone's situation is changing rapidly and what adaptations might be required to make it relevant in such circumstances.
- How people have used the data from the Older Person's Star and whether services feel it has provided a fair reflection of their outcomes.
- Please contact Joy MacKeith at [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk) with your feedback.

There is a real culture change issue here. We need to challenge older people to have higher expectations. We need to have meaningful conversations, we must not deny older people the opportunity to enhance their lives.

Locality team  
manager,  
Westminster

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# Older Person's Star™ resources

## Older Person's Star™ Chart and Action Plan

This part of the Older Person's Star is for completion with older people when using the Older Person's Star as a paper-based system. It is a four-page document including the Star Chart itself on which the Star reading is marked, space for notes and a simple action plan, which your organisation may or may not choose to use.

## Older Person's Star™ User Guide

The User Guide contains brief, user-friendly scales for each core area on the Star plus additional, detailed descriptions for all the scales. There is also a brief introduction to the Older Person's Star for older people to read. The User Guide is essential for all workers using the Older Person's Star and is designed so that it can also be given to older people if that would be helpful.

## Star Online

Most versions of the Outcomes Star are available to use online in addition to the paper tools. The online versions have a facility for on-screen completion of the Star Chart with service users, incorporating the scales from the User Guide. Alternatively, they can be used in conjunction with paper versions of the Star, completing the Star on paper with service users and then inputting the reading onto the system later.

The secure Star Online provides a wide range of facilities for analysing the outcomes data generated through using the Star and allows services to compare their outcomes with national or regional averages for similar services and client groups.

For more information on the Older Person's Star online, licence fees and conditions go to [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk) or email [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk).

## This guide

The guidance that follows is intended to support the implementation and use of the Older Person's Star. Part one is intended for service managers and provides guidance and good practice examples of implementing the Older Person's Star across a service or organisation. Part two presents guidance for workers in using the Older Person's Star with service users.

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## Outcomes Star website

The Outcomes Star website – [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk) – contains comprehensive information about the Outcomes Star. Specific areas covered by the website include:

- How the Star was developed
- Research and validation on the Star
- What people say about using the Star
- Good practice on implementation
- Use of Outcomes Star data for outcome measurement
- Use of the Star as a keywork tool
- Information for commissioners on using the Star.

## Training

Triangle provides in-house training on the use of the Older Person's Star. See the Outcomes Star website for details or email [training@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:training@triangleconsulting.co.uk) for a quote or to discuss your needs.

Not for use  
Sample for information only

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# Part 1: Implementing the Older Person's Star™ in your service or organisation

Implementing the Older Person's Star can affect the way the service is delivered and managed in a number of ways:

- Providing greater clarity about what the service is trying to achieve and the process of change for older people and those working with them, resulting in more focused support
- Changing the way that work with older people is carried out and documented and/or supervised, depending on your existing systems
- Introducing new data collection and therefore the opportunity to consolidate paperwork, avoid duplication, integrate with other frameworks and with IT systems and ensure all levels of management have the information they need
- Demonstrating effectiveness and highlighting the areas for improvement that workers and managers need to engage with
- Providing a focus for discussion about the role and contribution of the service in the wider local strategic context.

Implementing the Star effectively and achieving the full benefits of using it can therefore take time as well as continuous attention and a commitment to follow the process through and address issues as they arise. For these reasons, we strongly recommend that the implementation of the Star is led from the top of the organisation. Only in this way will the Star receive the profile and backing it requires for developments to be co-ordinated across the organisation.

There are eight steps to introducing the Star to your organisation:

1. Review your reasons for introducing the Star
2. Assess the suitability of the Star for your service
3. Run a pilot
4. Integrate the Star into your ways of working, paperwork and IT
5. Train staff to use the Star
6. Ensure quality and consistency in the use of the Star
7. Analyse and interpret the data
8. Share and act on the learning.

My advice is to see the implementation of the Outcomes Star as a change management process. It is vital to communicate to keyworkers how it will help them to do their job and that it will help the organisation as a whole to make its case to the outside world.

**St Mungo's**

(Refers to the Outcomes Star for Homelessness)

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# 1 Review your reasons for introducing the Star™

There are a number of reasons why organisations decide to introduce the Star.

## Internal reasons:

- They want to take an outcomes approach to their work in order to measure the impact of services on older people and to use this information to inform their service delivery
- They feel it will improve the support they provide to older people.

## External reasons:

- To demonstrate the value of the service to funders or commissioners or, in the case of commissioners, to meet the requirement placed upon them by central government that they measure outcomes
- Because a funder or commissioner requires that they use the Star as a condition of contract.

Our experience and research indicates that implementation is smoother and satisfaction is higher when organisations are motivated primarily by internal reasons. Even if you are introducing the Star for external reasons, we recommend that you adopt it in the spirit of learning and service improvement and capitalise on the internal benefits, too.

# 2 Assess the suitability of the Star™ for your service

There are four key questions that will help you decide whether the Older Person's Star is a suitable tool to use in your service.

## i) Do you provide ongoing support for older people?

The Older Person's Star is designed to be used in situations where an older person and worker are engaged in a one-to-one support relationship over a period of time. We would suggest at least six weeks.

If you only see an older person once or twice, for a short period of time, or have a drop-in service with little or no one-to-one contact, then it is probably not suitable for your service. For this reason it may be difficult to use the Older Person's Star in care management if care managers only meet the older person once or twice before referring to others. However, this is something that we hope to receive feedback on, so we would encourage you to test this for yourself and very much welcome your views and experience.

## ii) Are you aiming to help older people maximise their independence and well-being?

The Star is designed to help you and the older people you work with to assess changes towards maximising their independence and well-being. For some people this may be about helping to change their circumstances, such as finding more suitable accommodation or helping with appropriate benefits. For others, it may be about supporting them to change their attitudes and behaviour, for example recognising that there are things they can do to preserve good health or slow deterioration in their health. For many, it will be a combination of the two. If your service is intended to work on these changes, the Star is suitable for you.

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### **iii) Do you work holistically with older people?**

Do you aim to support older people in a number of aspects of their life? If your service only supports older people with one or two areas, such as ensuring the necessary housing and aids are in place before someone leaves hospital, the Star will not be suitable. The Older Person's Star is designed to be holistic, covering seven core areas of an older person's life. For this reason it is probably not suitable for short-term re-enablement services and intermediate care services. However, it will still work well if you are aiming to support older people in most but not all of the areas described in the Star, for example if you work on all areas except Managing Money and Personal Administration.

It is possible that you are aiming to help older people make changes in areas that are not included in the Star. If this is the case, you may wish to assess their progress towards these goals in another way.

Organisations are not allowed to make changes to the Star under the terms of copyright for the tool. For more information, please refer to the copyright statement in each guide.

### **iv) Does the Journey of Change describe the journey you help older people to take?**

The Journey of Change underpinning the scales in the User Guide (outlined in detail in part two, section one of this guide) is a key feature of the Older Person's Star. If this journey does not fit with your understanding of the steps you are helping people to take then the Star is probably not suitable for your service.

Some services concentrate on one or two parts of the journey. It is helpful to have a sense of which part of the journey your service or services focus on.

If you have answered yes to these four questions, it is likely that the Older Person's Star will be appropriate for your service. If you have answered no to one or more of them, it may not be.

You may find that the Older Person's Star is the right tool for some of your services and not for others. For example, it may work well for supported housing but be too time consuming for use in resource centres where the amount of contact with each older person is quite small and there is no ongoing keywork-type relationship. If this is the case, it is recommended that you introduce the Star where it works and to create a simple but outcomes-focused feedback questionnaire or form for the drop-in or other service that is structured around the same seven outcome areas as the Older Person's Star.

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### 3 Run a pilot

The benefits of running a pilot are that:

- It enables you to test how the Star works for you in practice
- It helps you to answer the practical questions set out under point four about how to integrate the Star into your ways of working prior to full implementation
- If it goes well, it creates a demonstration project and staff with experience of using the Star who can reassure, motivate and possibly also support others
- If there are problems, these can be addressed before it is rolled out across the organisation.

Piloting the Star can raise questions about the duplication of paperwork and systems. Organisations therefore need to decide whether to amend existing paperwork before the pilot begins or to use the Star in parallel with existing paperwork during the pilot and then consolidate these afterwards.

A pilot is also likely to create a lot of change for the workers involved.

Research has indicated that the following provisions can help workers get to grips with this new approach:

- **Taking time to allow people to realise the benefits** so that workers see the Star as making their job easier and better, rather than another administrative loop. This can be done through formal training and/or discussions in team meetings.
- **Allowing people to express reservations and ask questions.** The Star represents a significantly new way of working and staff may need to have their concerns and questions heard and responded to.
- **A flexible approach at first.** Allowing the more willing and enthusiastic workers to 'just give it a try' can work well. If these workers come back to the team with positive experiences, this can enthuse others. Further, feedback from the older people they are working with can provide invaluable concrete evidence of the benefits and popularity of the Star and offset fears that service users will find it lengthy or intrusive.
- **Involving older people in the process.** This not only means that older people understand and have a say in what is happening but their support also adds credibility and legitimacy to the use of Star within the service.

Workers were unsure at first but my approach was to give the Star to those workers likely to be most open and encourage them to just have a go with it in their own way. Almost immediately, positive feedback from those workers and their clients encouraged others to try it too.

**Manager,  
Croftlands Trust**

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The above will also be helpful when rolling the Star out across the organisation following a pilot.

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## 4 Integrate the Star™ into your ways of working, paperwork and IT

### The Star™ should not duplicate other discussions or paperwork

The Star works best as an integral part of the process of working with an older person, with Star readings taking place at the point when support planning and reviews would normally occur in your service. It is important that the Star is fully incorporated into this process.

Most services find that the Star Chart, Star notes and Action Plan can fully or partially replace their existing support planning process. Alternatively, your organisation could use the Star in combination with an existing support plan format, in which case it is not necessary to also complete the Star Action Plan.

If your service does not prepare support plans for older people it is likely that a questionnaire, based on the same seven outcome areas as the Older Person's Star would be the best approach.

### It is up to your organisation to set a policy on when to use the Star™

This policy will depend on the length and intensity of a service and how quickly it is anticipated that people will change. For most types of service we recommend:

- A first reading at the point of developing a support plan, ideally within the first four weeks
- Using the Star every three to six months, linking it to reviews of support or action plans
- Using the Star on exit from the service.

It is not usually appropriate to complete the Star at the first meeting with an older person. This is often too soon for something as in-depth as the completion of the Star and the worker may be solely reliant on the testimony of the older person for the accuracy of the readings. It works better once there is some relationship and the worker already has some knowledge of the older person.

There is a balance between getting to know the person and the need to record a baseline before much change happens. If an older person is not willing or able to engage in meaningful discussion of the Star areas in their first month, workers can complete a worker-only initial reading to provide a baseline. There is space on the Star Chart to note that the older person was not involved at that stage.

### The Star™ readings need to be stored on file and in an IT system

It is advisable to keep a copy of each Star reading and Star notes on the older person's file. The older person themselves may also want their own copy, and this can be shared, if it is appropriate. It is also necessary to enter the Star readings onto some kind of database so that the information can be summarised and analysed for a whole organisation or group of projects.

We recommend that you use the Star Online for this. However, it may also be possible to revise an existing software system to include the seven Star readings or, in small services of a pilot period, to use a simple Excel spreadsheet.

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## Using the Older Person's Star™ within care management and self-directed support

The pilot of the Older Person's Star indicated that there are difficulties in integrating the Star into care management and reviews. One issue is that care managers and reviewers often do not have an ongoing relationship with the older person and this is one of the fundamental preconditions for using the Star. Another issue is that the focus of care management is often on dealing with immediate pressing issues rather than prevention and maximising independence and well-being. However, if commissioners do experiment with using the Older Person's Star in this setting we recommend the following approach:

- The first reading is carried out by the care manager
- A follow up reading is completed by the reviewer
- Interim Stars can be carried out by service providers
- Share readings with service providers to ensure cohesion.

### First reading by the care manager

The first Star reading could be taken by the care manager or support broker, probably at the support planning stage. Being used at this stage it could provide both a baseline measurement and a positive discussion tool, helping the individual to locate themselves on a scale and possibly raising their expectations about what might be possible.

The Star reading could then be used to help the older person and care manager identify broad goals, which would be turned into specific personal goals as a basis for the support plan. Although there is already a tool which is designed to support the identification of personal goals published by CSIP, this tool does not provide a picture of what maximising independence and well-being looks like, or the steps towards it. It therefore does not help place re-enablement issues on the agenda (see pages 6 to 8 for more on existing tools).

### Follow-up readings by the reviewer

The reviewer would take another Star reading, repeat the needs assessment and review the extent to which personal goals had been achieved. The difference between the Star readings would give the outcomes in relation to maximising independence and well-being.

### Possible interim Stars and sharing of readings with service providers

Between the first and review readings, the Star could follow the service user to the different services they were using. It would help to inform the services about the intended outcomes for that person. In some cases authorities could ask service providers to use the Star to provide a detailed service provision plan for an individual and to review progress.

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## 5 Train staff to use the Star™

The Star will only be as good as the workers who use it, so it is vital that all members of staff working directly with older people receive training. Triangle can provide in-house training and licensed trainers within your organisation – see the resources section of this guide for details. Training enables workers to:

- Understand the background and development of the Star
- Express both hopes for how the Star will improve the service they offer and any concerns they have, for example around the time it may take to complete or how older people might respond
- Try various exercises to engage with and familiarise themselves with the Journey of Change and the seven scales
- Find ways to introduce the Star to an older person and approaches to using it in keywork that feel right for them
- Gain an understanding of the data generated by the Star and how this could be used, both internally within the service and externally to evidence outcomes
- Become clear about how the Star will be used in their organisation, including the aspects covered in the following section
- Ask a wide range of questions and have them answered.

Effective use of the Star requires that those using it are skilled in working with older people. Introducing the Star may be an opportunity to review the training needs of your staff in this area and address any outstanding concerns.

Early on we found that some clients had high readings on the Star and realised they were making unrealistic assessments and staff were just agreeing with them. Training helped considerably... Staff now understand scales and readings are more consistent and realistic.

**Manager,  
Croftlands Trust**

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## 6 Ensure quality and consistency in the use of the Star™

Star data will only provide an accurate picture of the progress of older people if those using it have a good understanding of the tool and apply the scales consistently, in line with the Journey of Change. This is particularly important for service level data – it is only possible to meaningfully collate the data across a service if workers understand and have used the defined steps. We recommend that you ensure this happens in the following ways.

### Staff supervision

When discussing a worker's caseload, draw on the completed Stars – using either all or a sample, depending on the size of the caseload. This will help managers to ensure that the Star is being used as planned and is being completed accurately, with an understanding of the Journey of Change. It can also provide the manager with a quick, visual overview of a worker's caseload.

### File auditing

As part of the normal process of auditing files, managers should ensure that Star records are present, accurate and stored confidentially.

### Team meetings

When discussing older people in team meetings, look at their Stars and explore where they are on the Journey of Change. This kind of discussion enables the team to develop a shared understanding of how to use the scales and to become more familiar with the framework.

### Data quality

Users of the Star Online will need to confirm that the quality of the data being entered is ensured through the measures described above, or that plans are in place to do this.

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