

**MOVING TOWARDS A  
KNOWLEDGE-GUIDED, KNOWLEDGE-CREATING  
FRAMEWORK FOR  
SYSTEMS ADVOCACY.**

**BY**

**Darrell W. Cole**

**A Practicum  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of**

**MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Faculty of Social Work  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

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**DARRELL W. COLE**

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University  
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### **Abstract**

As a worker employed in a variety of sectors and settings within the field of social services over the past thirteen years, the author was consistently struck by the contrast between the responsibilities that workers undertook and the work that workers wished to undertake. More specifically, many workers believed the work that they were undertaking on behalf of the people they served was superficial and symptom-focused. Their work did not address those conditions which workers felt were *creating* the problems which people were experiencing. This frustration was exacerbated by the workers' perception (real or otherwise) that few, if any, individuals or organizations within the field were addressing these conditions at a more fundamental level. This situation, left unaddressed, often led to feelings of fatalism, professional failure and ultimately, burnout, among social service workers (Cherniss, 1980; Freudenberg, 1974; Maslach, 1976; Schwartz, 1961; The Berkely Planning Associates, 1977). This state resulted in negative impacts to the worker, her or his organization and ultimately, the people they served (Cherniss, 1980).

The practicum intervention endeavoured to address the stated concern through the construction of a theoretical framework for guiding systems advocacy efforts at the intervention site, The Canadian Mental Health Association-Winnipeg Region. Utilizing the works of such authors as Black (1987), Cox (1984), and Brookfield (1985) in the development of the Framework, the student worked in conjunction with the agency's Systems Advocacy Committee to refine the Framework and develop a formal process that would assist the agency in undertaking systems advocacy efforts in a planned, objective and empowering manner. This was accomplished by having the student facilitate discussion on the Framework through ten committee meetings and ultimately, through a partial simulated dry-run of the developed process. Dougherty's (1990) Generic Model for Consultation was employed by author to assist in the development of skills necessary for successfully undertaking the consultation process.

The results of the intervention showed that a number of refinements were needed in the Framework. As well, the intervention process also identified a number of process and

content issues which were relevant to both the student's learning, and the agency's future advocacy efforts.

Based on the aforementioned results, the author concluded that the Systems Advocacy Framework had considerable potential for assisting The Canadian Mental Health Association-Winnipeg Region, and other agencies, in successfully carrying out systems advocacy efforts. In order to do so however, a number of critical issues, such as levels of consumer involvement, levels of organizational commitment, organizational structure and culture, need to be addressed.

**Dedicated to  
those who believe that  
real change is both possible  
and desirable**

### Acknowledgements

As I reflect on my struggles to complete school, and consider all of the personal sacrifices and pains that I made to realize the day of completion, I am also reminded of how that day could not possibly have occurred without the guidance and support of others.

**To Mom & Dad:** Not bad for a high school flop, eh? I hope this is a reward for all of your patience and support.

**To Dwayne:** Lord, it hurts to say this but, thanks for being my brother.

**To "The Boys" (Blair Hamilton, Gordon Hannon, Peter Okolita, Michael Trick, Victor Bellay, Scott Swanson, Yuns Oh, Ronald and Harold Zeller):** "He may not know much, but he knows how to pick friends". That was a comment made by my Junior High teacher to my parents during parent-teacher interviews. This comment identified one of my few talents. Thanks for being my friends.

**To Mrs Pearce:** You were right. I am a procrastinator. But I always finish.

**To the members of Village Canadien Housing Co-operative:** Thank you for providing us with the support that you did when we were of limited means.

**To Mrs. Allen:** For her kind gesture of support in sending me off to school. It gave me hope at a time when I so desperately needed some.

**To all the people I've worked for and with:** thank you for your influence.

**To Rosanna Caruso, Rosalind Husband, June Laronde & Margie Kadyniuk:** Thank you for believing in me and all of our work in the Faculty. I am sure that there were times that you were the only ones who did.

**To my advisor, Professor Paul Newman:** For everything you have done for me, especially in my first and last years when I was the most vulnerable. I will be forever grateful.

**To Sid Frankel:** Many thanks for your work and insights. They have made me a better academic and professional.

**To Ellen Kruger:** Thank you for sticking with me Ellen! I truly hope this work is useful for you as you continue to represent the rights of individuals with serious mental illnesses.

**Carolyn Strutt and other members of the Systems Advocacy Working Committee:** Many thanks for your participation and enthusiasm. Special thanks to you Carolyn, for always remaining open and not bailing on the process when it became tenuous. I know how easy it would have been to take the other road.

**To Norma Hoepner and Leanne Cusitar: Thank you for your support and camaraderie. Make a difference!**

**To a proud Dakota woman: Yvonne, there is too much to say. Thank you for making me a better human being.**

**To Mac Doupe: Thanks for listening to all of my inane questions and giving me academic sanctuary when I was ready to write.**

**To Joyce Fromson: For giving me the needed impetus (kicking my ass) when I was dead in the water.**

**To my children, Krysel and William: You may never realize how much you mean to me. I'm sorry for all the nights that you had to go to bed without me, but I always kissed you goodnight when I came home. Make the world a better place for everyone.**

**To my wife, Hong: For all the time apart, for all the work you carried at home when I was doing my school work, for all the lost income, for all of the late night suppers you prepared for me...I love you. Now it is time for you to soar!**



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## **Definitions.**

1. **Burnout**: “A process that begins with excessive and prolonged levels of job stress. This stress produces strain in the worker (feelings of tension, irritability and fatigue). The process is completed when workers defensively cope with job stress by psychologically detaching themselves from the job and becoming apathetic, cynical and rigid”. (Cheriss, 1980).
2. **Advocacy**: “The act of representing the interests of an individual or group of individuals on social justice issues in such a way that the process becomes as empowering as the outcome of the advocacy action itself. Ideally, that such a process be undertaken while remaining free from any conflict of interest”.
3. **“Systemic” Advocacy**: The process by which systems advocacy is undertaken.
4. **“Systems” Advocacy**: Refers to the focus of the advocacy efforts.
5. **Empowerment**: “An interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live” (Whitmore & Kerans, 1988).
6. **Critical Thinking**: “A way of understanding why things are the way that they are” (Brookfield, 1987).
7. **Issue Gathering and Filtering**: The process of compiling “eligible” systems advocacy issues.
8. **Issue Selection**: The process of determining which issues from among a number of qualifying issues will be selected for action.
9. **Issue Prioritization**: The process of ranking the selected issues on the basis of perceived importance.
10. **Issue Action**: The process of developing and implementing a plan for the successful undertaking of previously selected and/or prioritized systems issues.
11. **Issue Evaluation**: “A social process of making judgments about the merit, worth, or value of a change. Evaluation makes judgments about those change episode inputs, throughputs, outputs, and outcomes that have been monitored” (Kettner, Daley and Moroney, 1985).
12. **Consultation**: “A process in which a human services professional assists a consultee with a work - related (or caretaking - related) problem with a client system, with the goal of helping both the consultee and the client system in some specified way”.
13. **Organizational consultation**: “Organizational consultation is the process in which a professional, functioning either internally or externally to an organization, provides assistance of a technical, diagnostic/prescriptive, or facilitative nature to an individual or group from that organization in order to enhance the organization’s ability to deal with change and maintain or enhance its effectiveness in some designated way” (Dougherty,

1990, p. 187).

14. **Systems:** “Legislative, policy, service, and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric consumer/survivors.

15. **Proactive advocacy:** “Identifying and confronting an issue which has yet to become a problem for consumers of mental health services (ie. impending legislation, proposed institutional policies, etc.), or has not yet maximized the its negative effects on consumers of mental health services (ie. a new, negative practice is adopted in response to an individual case but is not yet widespread), or has serious effects on consumers/survivors but has not yet become a public issue”.

16. **Reactive advocacy:** “Where advocacy efforts respond to an identified problem which has become entrenched, accepted as general policy, or has achieved maximum negative impact”.

17. **Winnability:** “The relative chance of attaining the identified goal”.

18. **Expertise:** “The knowledge, skills and attitudes requires to successfully undertake an identified issue”.

19. **Power:** “The degree of control and autonomy which consumers/survivors exercise over their own lives vis-a-vis the mental health system and/or its allied systems”.

20. **Mental Health system:** “Those laws, policies, institutions, personnel, services and products whose primary purpose is to meet the needs of mental health consumers/survivors”.

21. **Severity of Harm:** “The degree to which a particular problem adversely affects consumers/survivors”.

22. **Number of People Affected:** “The number of consumers/survivors adversely affected by a particular issue”.

23. **Urgency:** “Need for action is immediate. The issue presenting is extreme, either through its time limitations and/or the potential damage/good that could be generated by acting/not acting on the issue”.

24. **Motivation:** “The degree of interest and commitment that the agency is willing to demonstrate towards the successful achievement of the identified goal”.

25. **Level of encouragement/support:** “The amount of tangible support that can be amassed to achieve the identified goal”.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **The Problem**

As a worker employed in a variety of sectors and settings within the field of social services over the past thirteen years, the author has consistently been struck by the contrast between the responsibilities that workers undertake and the work that workers wish to undertake. More specifically, many workers believe the work that they are undertaking on behalf of the people they serve is superficial and symptom-focused. Their work does not address those conditions which workers feel are *creating* the problems which people are experiencing. This frustration is exacerbated by the workers' perception (real or otherwise) that few, if any, individuals or organizations within the field are addressing these conditions at a more fundamental level. This situation, left unaddressed, often leads to feelings of fatalism, professional failure and ultimately, burnout, among social service workers (Cherniss, 1980; Freudenberger, 1974; Maslach, 1976; Schwartz, 1961; The Berkely Planning Associates, 1977).<sup>1</sup> This state results in negative impacts to the worker, her or his organization and ultimately, the people they serve (Cherniss, 1980).

In a review of relevant literature, support for the author's experiences was identified in those branches of social work known as "radical" or "structural" social work. Galper (1980), for example, spoke of the increasing difficulty in believing

"...that conventional processes of reform can create conditions in which the majority of people can have adequate access to the material necessities of life and can have reasonable opportunities for achievement, satisfaction and personal growth" (p.3).

He went on to talk of the "underlying discontent" that social service workers feel as a result of their experiences with the traditional interventions of the social service system (p.3).

These experiences he added, were often "...more at an intuitive level than at a fully conscious level...". Moreau (1989), in his writings on structural social work, attributed these feelings of discontent among social service workers to the fact that

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<sup>1</sup> The term "social service workers" refers to those employed in the social service field including, but not limited to, individuals with professional degrees.

**“the way social workers most commonly work results in clients being mystified about the helping process and having their power diminished. Social workers also commonly help clients to adapt to their situations by individualizing and psychologizing their problems” (p.29).**

**Another proponent of structural social work, Robert Mullaly (1993), identified the increasing frustration that social workers experience as a result of, among other things, being made to perform job tasks which are contrary to the best interests of their clients. If the positions put forward by Galper, Mullaly and Moreau are valid, then it seems clear why social service workers are indeed becoming frustrated by their jobs. Many social service workers enter the social service field because they wish to help people better their lives. Yet many workers realize that they are in fact employed in roles performing duties which are either contrary to the needs of the people they serve, or else guaranteeing an endless supply of dysfunctional situations by failing to address the problem-generators themselves. Moreau bluntly suggested that the choice facing social workers in such a situation is a simple one; they can either “reinforce individual and personal responsibility” or they can “highlight the inadequacies of the...system and the collective...experience” (p.29).**

**It was the author’s contention that in some situations, workers became aware enough and committed enough to attempt some form of action which could be viewed as being more causal-focused. Unfortunately, such attempts were usually hampered by the workers’ lack of knowledge about how to successfully undertake such actions (Burghardt, 1992; Corrigan & Leonard, 1978). While these endeavours may be made with the best of intentions, they are often unsuccessful as workers become overwhelmed by issues such as where to start, what their goals and objectives should be, what strategies and tactics to use and how to evaluate their efforts. Failed attempts at systems changes appears to increase the workers’ feelings that *real* change is impossible (Hallsten, 1993).**

**As a result of the author’s personal experiences within the field of advocacy, he was particularly interested in how the experiences of advocates related to social service workers at large. The results of the literature review revealed that little information on this topic was available. Cole (1992), in his interviews with local advocates in the City of Winnipeg, found that “advocate burnout” was a motivator for advocacy organizations in the**

shift from individual client focused advocacy to something called systems advocacy. This shift was attributed in part to the fact that agency advocates were developing feelings of hopelessness and fatalism by having to deal with the same individual issues on a continual basis without being able to do anything about the situations which were producing the complaints.<sup>2</sup> Church's program development paper for the Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office, (Ontario, 1991) clearly demonstrated the increased emphasis that program had placed on "systemic" advocacy but unfortunately, did not cover those events that led to the initial establishment of a systems advocacy component for that program. It was clear that the Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office saw the need to move toward a broader form of advocacy. Lord (1987), however, in his evaluation of the same Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office, stated that "systemic issues were usually initiated by the advocates based upon a succession of similar individual cases" (p.74). He quoted one of the two program advocates as saying: 'You get tired of doing individual cases over and over and decide to tackle the damn thing' (p.74). Cole (1992), in his interviews with local advocates in the City of Winnipeg, found that virtually all programs which undertook advocacy on a broader scale did so because they felt that this was necessary in order to bring about real and lasting change. The need to move away from traditional individual, client-focused advocacy toward a broader advocacy approach which includes systems-focused advocacy, was recognized by The Canadian Mental Health Association (C.M.H.A.) - Winnipeg Region (Newman & Newman, 1990). In fact, the organization had already moved in this direction,<sup>3</sup> although no formal process yet existed for undertaking systems advocacy issues at the time of the author's intervention.

While the information on the advocate "experience" was limited, the material that existed seemed to indicate that the feelings of and experiences of advocates appeared to mirror those of their social service co-workers with regard to burnout. However, it still remained unclear to the author what value the field of advocacy had with regard to

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<sup>2</sup> Of course, the simple adoption of systems advocacy is no cure for all burnout. As was mentioned earlier, well intentioned but poorly done systems advocacy efforts will no doubt have a profound negative impact on workers undertaking such attempts.

<sup>3</sup> Twenty five percent of the advocate's time and resources had been allotted for systemic advocacy at the time of the author's intervention.

undertaking change of a more fundamental nature.

### **Understanding Advocacy.**

While the author's literature review did not focus on the different types of advocacy, per se., it was felt by him that it was important to explore the different forms and understandings of the term "advocacy". Lourie (1975) explored the many faces of advocacy. He talked of the common understanding of advocacy as 'raising a fuss' in behalf of a cause. Lourie noted that advocacy, originally limited to the field of law, later became embraced by consumers and professionals alike, as an instrument for increasing pressure on the social structure to achieve social justice. As such, advocacy became a mechanism for affecting how "...social policy values and priority decisions *are made* with respect to how resources are spread and managed (p.71)"<sup>4</sup> Poskanzer (1972), in his expansion of Bisno's "methods", saw advocacy as a parallel to adversarial strategies.

The adversarial role is used in situations in which the resolution of differences is attempted through efforts directed to foster the interests of one party over the interests of the other (p.1).

For Poskanzer, then, advocacy was a conflict-driven model for self-interest issues. Greer (1986), in his exploration of hospice advocacy, critiqued advocacy as a "rhetoric or orchestrated action designed to alter balances of power for the benefit of a particular group" (p.23). Greer argued such methods of advocacy are group-based (the needs of many) and have proven to be divisive. Simpson (1978) employed Walton's definition of advocacy in "Advocacy and Social Change", as "serving the inarticulate and disadvantaged in contact with welfare bureaucracy, or mediator in disputes" (p.54). This definition, though not exclusively conflict-driven, is clearly seen as a mechanism for promoting social justice. As well, Simpson noted his concerns around the purely "professional" nature of this definition. Sethi's (1977) work on corporate "advocacy advertising" defined advocacy as "...presenting facts and arguments that project the sponsor in the most positive light and opponent's arguments in the worst (p.8)". Wolfensberger (1977), in lamenting the wide array of claims to the term advocacy, proposed a list of elements that he believes must be

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<sup>4</sup> Italics are the author's.

found in order for an action to qualify as true advocacy. These elements included “vigour and vehemence” on the part of the advocate, “a distinct cost to the advocate” and maximally, “to be free from conflict of interest” (p.19-20).

The overwhelming number of types and definitions of advocacy was most succinctly dealt with by Milner (1986). Milner was struck by his advocacy experiences within in the mental health field. He was confused by how two diametrically opposed groups (medical staff and consumer groups) could both be “advocating” on behalf of the “best interests” of psychiatric patients. He attributed this phenomenon to the symbolic value of the term advocacy, which suggested a higher order of commitment, mandate and social justice on the part of those acting as advocates. Milner argued that real advocacy had become perverted by those who were seeking to mask both professional control and political dissensus. He went on to suggest that conflict was an essential component of real advocacy, which professionals, their organizations and coalitions, sought to minimize.

It was the author’s belief that none of these definitions, on their own, presented an acceptable definition of the term “advocacy.” They did however, raise a number of elements which should be found in a definition. However, none of these elements could be found in entirety within one all-encompassing definition. As such, the author proposed for the purposes of this practicum report, the following definition of the term “advocacy”.

The act of representing<sup>5</sup> the interests of an individual or group of individuals on social justice issues in such a way that the process becomes as empowering as the outcome of the advocacy action itself.

In addition to containing many of the important elements mentioned by other authors, this definition established a clear commitment towards advocacy as a process and as a tool for undertaking social justice issues.

#### **Systemic/Systems Advocacy.**

The only form of advocacy that was identified as an appropriate to the type of action that the author wished to undertake was Systems /Systemic Advocacy. In his interviews

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<sup>5</sup> “representing”: Minimally, the type and nature of the representation(s) is done in such a manner as to give the individuals(s) being represented (or their agents\*), the greatest degree of control possible. “agent”: refers to a duly appointed substitute decision-maker.

with local advocates, Cole (1992) found that the terms most commonly used to describe broad, issue-based advocacy efforts: systemic advocacy and systems advocacy, were often used interchangeably. This fact, coupled with the lack of working definitions for such terms in most of the agencies, suggested that advocates and/or their organizations often viewed these terms as being one in the same. The little information which was available through the literature however, made clear that the distinction between these two terms was a significant one.

In his evaluation of the Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office (P.P.A.O.), Lord (1990) defined systemic advocacy as a "...process addressing rights and issues that affect patients in general as opposed to a single patient" (p.74). Valentine (1991), in her preface to Church's (1991) program development paper for the P.P.A.O., related the "directional statement" of systemic advocacy as it is found in the P.P.A.O.'s strategic plan as:

To develop policy and procedural guidelines, improve skills and increase resources of the P.P.A.O. to more consistently and effectively impact upon systems changes at legislative, policy and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric patients.

The National Association of Protection and Advocacy Services (1991), in its document on "Standards for Advocacy Programs Serving People with Developmental Disabilities and People with Mental Illnesses", used the terms "systems" and "systemic" interchangeably. Dubick (1991), referred to systemic advocacy as "...a process in which general issues or concerns affecting a number of [individuals] are addressed" (p.17). Such definitions as these suggested that the term "systemic" referred to the process of undertaking systems changes. This distinction was made more clear by Black, (1985) who argued that systems work is best understood as a method, not as a statement about the nature of a case. He argued that the focus should be on the process, "a systemic approach to advocacy", not on the target of the advocacy efforts "systems advocacy". Black's argument is based on the concept that the critical decision is with "how the case can be dealt with systemically," not whether the case is systemic or not. Black suggested that by adopting such an approach, criteria could be developed which would determine whether or not a case was a systems case, thereby relieving the advocate/organization of the decision to

determine whether a case “is or isn’t”. This view was a useful one, although it was unclear to this author whether or not there was a need to emphasise the process at the expense of the target of the advocacy efforts. For the purpose of this report then, “systemic” refers to the process of undertaking “systems” advocacy. “Systems” refers to the focus of the advocacy efforts. That is, interventions which occur against “generators” of individual problems i.e. policies, legislation, etc. These problem generators may occur at any and all levels of society i.e. interpersonal, organizational, institutional, municipal, provincial, federal, etc.

#### **Identification of Existing Models for Systems Advocacy.**

The literature search/review carried out by the author was unsuccessful in locating any existing models for knowledge-based systems advocacy. In fact, Cole (1992) in his interviews with local advocates showed that virtually all organizations undertaking systems advocacy, (however it was defined by these organizations), did so without a formal framework. Many advocates felt that the lack of a formal framework needed to be addressed within their organizations. In addition, most of these organizations relied on specific individuals to internally coordinate advocacy activities. These individuals appeared to enjoy considerable autonomy within their organizations. This was attributed by some of the advocates to the fact that they were deemed to have the most knowledge about undertaking advocacy. Given the lack of formal processes within these organizations, however, it appears that organizations tend to rely on the “natural” abilities of advocates. Without diminishing the importance of personal skills and knowledge to a particular position, even these advocates suggested that the creation of a formal knowledge-based framework within their organizations would make the organization more effective advocates through increased accountability and ensuring a greater degree of organizational consistency and continuity.

The literature review also revealed a lack of information on the general topic of systems advocacy. The review did, however, identify a wide range of themes relevant to the construction of a process for successfully undertaking systems advocacy. These

themes, as identified through various sources, could be generalised into the following categories:

1. The need for a formal framework which incorporated a strong theoretical foundation (Cole, 1992; Black, 1985; Human Services Research Institute, 1991) .
2. The need to construct a formal framework that was both knowledge-based and knowledge-creating (Cole, 1992; Black, 1985; Newman, 1990; Brookfield, 1987; Church, 1991).
3. The need to develop a framework which moved workers/organizations from the simple definition and selection of issues to the successful undertaking of the issues identified (Cole, 1992; Black, 1987; Church, 1991).
4. Given that advocacy had a strong “empowerment” focus, there was a need to build a strong “empowerment” focus into the model (Wolfensberger, 1977; Black, 1987; Church, 1991; Cole, 1992; Whitmore and Keran, 1988).

Following the identification of the aforementioned themes, the author focused on the development of the Framework per se. This development, realized primarily through the works of such authors as Wolfensberger (1977), Black (1985), Rose (1985), Church (1991) and Whitmore and Kerans (1988) established a strong rationale for the fact that advocacy is ultimately about empowerment. More specifically, that systemic/systems advocacy is about empowerment through system change. This realization led to a further analysis regarding the components of empowerment. It was assumed that if systems advocacy was to be successful, then it had to incorporate those elements which together comprised empowerment.

Three distinct elements of empowerment were identified. These were Participation, Learning and Productivity. As identified by such authors as Arnstein (1969), The Aboriginal Advisory Group (1992), Gruber and Trickett (1987) and Cole (1992), participation spoke strongly to the need to include mental health system consumers/survivors within the advocacy process, but in a substantive and meaningful way.



Learning, as identified by The Cornell Empowerment Group (1989), Alinsky (1971) and Brookfield (1987), was seen as vital in creating awareness among those involved in advocacy efforts. Further to this was that awareness was best achieved through mastery of critical thinking (Brookfield, 1987).

The final element of empowerment related to productivity. Authors such as Whitmore and Kerans (1988) and Asch (1986) substantiated the need for advocacy efforts to result in meaningful outcomes. Further to this, authors such as Cole (1992), Black (1987) and Church (1991) noted the need for the process (means) to also be productive for those involved.

These elements of empowerment served as the basis for the construction of a theoretical foundation for the Framework. This theoretical foundation was also influenced by the recognition of various philosophical and practice dilemmas (see "Issues for Consideration") that existed with regard to advocacy and systems/systemic advocacy.

As a result of the author's work, a four stage model was developed for undertaking systems advocacy. The first stage, *Issue Gathering and Filtering*, referred to the process of collecting and sorting through issues "eligible" for consideration for action. This stage relied heavily on the works of Cole (1992), Warheit, Bell & Schwab (1977), Kome (1989) and Arrow and Renaud (1986) for guidance.

The second stage, *Issue Selection*, dealt with the step of determining which issues would be selected for action out of the many "eligible" issues. This stage relied heavily on Black's (1985) employment equality selection criteria as a method for undertaking such a selection.

The third stage, *Issue Priorization*, referred to the process of prioritizing selected systems issues on the basis of perceived importance. This stage also drew from Black's (1985) employment equity work.

The final stage, entitled *Issue Action and Evaluation*, proposed a framework for successfully undertaking those issues selected for action. This stage utilized Cox's model for community problem solving (1987) and supplemented it with the works of such author's as Hasenfeld (1983), Poskanzer (1982), Fisher and Ury (1971) and Bobo,

Kendal and Max (1991), among others. The evaluation component employed Kettner, Daly and Nichols' (1985) guidelines for evaluation as a general methodology for evaluating system advocacy efforts. This stage was further supplemented by Hale and William's work in the area of organizational change (1989).

Following the development of the theoretical model, the author undertook to identify a model or models for engaging in a consultation process with members of the organization acting as the site of the practicum intervention (The Canadian Mental Health Association - Winnipeg Region). The consultation process was viewed by the author as instrumental in testing the validity of the Framework within an actual work environment.

As was the case in his research with advocacy, the author set out to determine what the meaning of the term (consulting) was. Through Dougherty (1990), Gallesich (1982), Mannino and Shore (1986), and others, the author was able to identify the general purpose of consultation. Further to this was the identification of organizational consulting, and its unique attributes and demands vis - a - vis consulting in general.

Following a review of consultation and organizational consultation material, the author selected Dougherty's Generic Model of Consultation (1990) as the model best suited to the intervention process. Beyond Dougherty's (1990) four phase model for undertaking organizational consultation, he also identified attributes of the consultation process that were useful in developing and evaluating the author's work. Examples of such attributes included, but were not limited to, general consultation skills, consultation roles and consultation interventions.

Following the completion of the theoretical foundation for the Framework and the consultation process, negotiation were initiated regarding the intervention agreement. These negotiations were complicated by the fact that the author had unilaterally changed the original practicum agreement and developed the theoretical model without agency input. The negotiations carried out in meetings between the author, the Agency's Executive Director and Advocacy Program Manager, were successful in addressing outstanding issues related to the the author's arbitrary change in the practicum intervention agreement and the details related to the actual consultation process. This included closure related to

the issues of establishment of the consultation vehicle (Systems Advocacy Working Committee), development of Terms of Reference for the committee, the role of the author, and a decision to have the author develop an abridged version of the Framework for Committee members. As well, an analysis of the Agency and the Advocacy Program was jointly carried out using Hasenfeld's (1983) model for analyzing the organizational environment.

The practicum intervention entailed using the Framework to construct a formal systems advocacy process within the organization. The author acted as consultant to an agency committee comprised of management staff and one consumer/survivor community member. As well, a dry - run of the completed systems advocacy process<sup>6</sup> was undertaken to further refine the model. The development and dry - run of the model took place during the ten committee meetings held over a five month period.

The author employed an evaluation design comprised of both formative and summative evaluation methodology. This evaluation design had three distinct, complementary components. The first part entailed the use of Reflective Thinking techniques, as outlined by Schon (1987), for both formative and summative evaluation. This was the primary methodology utilized by the author. This was complemented by the use of Performance Feedback sheets (formative) that were completed by Committee members at the end of each meeting. The final component of the evaluation related to individual face-to-face interviews that the author carried out with each Committee member at the end of the consultation process (summative).

The consultation process was evaluated on two levels; content and process. Within each of these contexts, the author endeavoured to evaluate his personal performance (as manifested through the stated learning goals) and the overall validity of the Systems Advocacy Framework.

The final findings and conclusions of the author demonstrated achievement of the established goals. While areas for improvement were noted with regard to the author's performance and his role as consultant, overall performance was seen as competent. The

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<sup>6</sup> In as much as it was completed to that point in time.

validity of the model, within the context of The Canadian Mental Health Association - Winnipeg Region, was supported through the Agency's decision to continue to employ the Framework and to hire the author on a contractual basis to develop a working manual for the agency. It is the author's belief that the Framework, while requiring ongoing modification, holds considerable promise for the field in facilitating the undertaking of meaningful social justice work.

### **Delimitations.**

Due to time limitations, the model framework was only tested through a partial in-house simulation involving members of the organization's Systems Advocacy Working Committee. While this process provided a useful first step in testing the working validity of the Framework, the actual undertaking of a real-life issue would have, in the author's opinion, further tested the viability of the model.

Again, because of time constraints, the Framework was tested only within the mental health context. It is the author's belief that, however, with some modification, the Framework could be adapted to fit a wide range of settings, social service or otherwise.

The Framework is designed primarily for groups who not only wish to undertake some fundamental action, but are also facing multiple choices with regard to which action should be undertaken. Groups which have selected an issue, or have had an issue selected for them, need only concern themselves with those sections of the Framework which deal specifically with Issue Action and Evaluation.

### **Limitation(s)**

Within the context of the practicum intervention, limitations were normally identified as questions which would have to be addressed in the future by the Canadian Mental Health Association - Winnipeg Region. These limitations were largely as a result of the scope of the undertaking exceeding the time parameters of the practicum process. One limitation/unanswered question identified through the intervention process was how much time should be given to analyzing potential advocacy issues prior to selection. It was felt by the author and other committee members that a certain amount of analysis would have to be undertaken on each issue. However, it clearly did not make sense to spend much of the

organization's time analyzing issues that would never be undertaken.

Another limitation encountered by the author was related to research. While an intensive literature search failed to locate significant bodies of material related to systems/systemic advocacy, it should be noted that the author did not undertake such a search on the Internet. It is the author's belief that more material might have been identified had the author possessed the knowledge to undertake such a search.

A final limitation related to the "dry-running" of the Framework. Because no actual issues were undertaken, it was impossible to test the final component of the framework, Issue Evaluation.

### **Learning goals.**

As a result of the author's research, a primary goal was established to this end. The realization of this goal, however, was contingent upon the author developing substantial skills and knowledge in four distinct areas that were seen as critical to the achievement of the Primary Goal.

1. **Primary goal:** "To develop a knowledge-guided, knowledge-creating framework for systems advocacy".

Rationale: If successful, such a framework had the potential to greatly assist the author in successfully tackling issues/problems of a more fundamental nature. As opposed to developing a personal knowledge and skill around a particular model, a systems framework really develops a different way of thinking and processing information. In this sense, it is far more valuable than a simple intervention model because it allows the author to see and act on the "big picture" in every aspect of life, professional or otherwise.

2. **Learning objectives:** Learning objectives related to components of the successful achievement of the primary goal.

a) **Advocacy/Systems advocacy:** In order to successfully develop a formal

framework for systems advocacy it became necessary for the author to gain knowledge about advocacy itself. This knowledge was necessary in determining whether or not advocacy was an appropriate vehicle for large-scale change. If it was, what were the elements of advocacy that made it useful, and how would these elements be incorporated in the Framework.

b) Creation and guidance of knowledge: Given the apparent shortcomings of developing a framework that was informal and/or unstructured, it became important to understand how the Framework could not only increase knowledge and awareness, but also be guided by it. Again, such knowledge has wide applicability, although it is particularly valuable for those undertaking community development, consumer empowerment and advocacy.

c) Consultation: Development of knowledge and skills became important as the vehicle for refining the Framework and making it acceptable to the organization. While tailored to meet the specific needs of the practicum intervention, the general consultation skills developed by the author are applicable to variety of settings.

d) Evaluation: The final learning objective related to the development of knowledge and skills in the area of evaluation. The knowledge and skills required were not limited to simple one-method outcome evaluation, but to both formative and summative evaluation techniques that used different forms of evaluation. Because of the varied and general nature of the author's needs, such knowledge and skill had the potential to develop skills applicable to program and/or personal evaluation in a wide variety of settings.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SYSTEMS ADVOCACY.**

#### **Introduction.**

The author's work with regard to establishing a theoretical foundation for a systems advocacy framework can be divided into two sections. The first section deals specifically with the Framework itself. The second section deals with the consultation model used and the consultation process. Prior to this however, other issues related to the theoretical foundation of the Framework were identified as being worthy of discussion (see following).

#### **Developing a Theoretical Framework for Systems Advocacy.**

In developing a theoretical basis for the Framework, the author asked two questions; Why were we undertaking Systems Advocacy and what is it that we hoped to accomplish for the people we endeavour to serve. In addition to the works of Wolfensberger (1977), authors such as Black and Rose (1985), Church (1991) and Whitmore and Kerans (1988) established a strong foundation for the argument that systems advocacy was ultimately about empowerment. Further to this, if a model for undertaking systems advocacy was to be successful, it must incorporate the elements which were essential to empowerment; Participation, Learning and Productivity.

With regard to meaningful participation, Arnstein (1969) in his trend-setting work, identified that 'participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless' (p. 216 - 224). In other words, *that the process of systems advocacy should be as empowering to individuals/groups as the successful outcome of the initiative itself* (Aboriginal Advisory Group, 1992, p. 1 - 2). This position was also echoed by Gruber and Trickett (1987). As well, Cole (1992) in his research with local advocacy organizations, found that many organizations provided advocacy services through one or two individuals. Yet other members of the organization, without significant input into the advocacy process, were expected to "empower" the individuals who were the

focus of the advocacy actions(s). *It seemed inconceivable to the author then, that staff members who themselves had not been empowered, could realistically be expected to empower others.* It seemed that if advocacy organizations wished to successfully undertake systems advocacy they must create a climate of internal change and empowerment. Bluntly put, it seemed that empowerment must start at home (Freire, 1990, p. 56).

The second significant component identified was learning. That is to say, that the framework must be both knowledge guided and knowledge creating. The Cornell Empowerment Group (1989), believed that this aspect of empowerment was more important than ever given that our society has become increasingly complex and that instruments of oppression have become increasingly covert. The disempowered then, must develop skills that allow them to gain an awareness of what they are striving for and how the corresponding action should be carried out. To this end, a strong critical thinking component needed to be included.

Authors such as Alinsky (1971) and Brookfield (1987) provided compelling arguments for the inclusion of critical thinking in a systems advocacy process. Brookfield's work in critical thinking proved particularly useful because it clearly identified what Brookfield felt were the nine "themes" or components of critical thinking (p.5 - p.9).

- "Critical thinking is a positive and productive activity.
- "Critical thinking is a process, not an outcome".
- "Manifestations of critical thinking vary according to the contexts in which they occur".
- "Critical thinking is triggered by positive as well as negative events".
- "Critical thinking is emotive as well as rational".
- "Identifying and challenging assumptions is central to critical thinking".
- "Challenging the importance of context is crucial to critical thinking".
- "Critical thinkers try to imagine and explore alternatives".
- "Imagining and exploring alternatives leads to reflective criticism".



These components became an integral part of the framework by prompting agency staff to constantly rationalize their decisions regarding the construction of all aspects of the Framework.

The final component of empowerment related to the issue of productivity. In undertaking actions, advocacy organizations must be able to demonstrate to their participants a real and tangible “return on their investment”, through material improvements or improved status resulting from participation (Whitmore and Kerans, 1988). This “payback” becomes especially important for individuals who likely have deep-seated doubts about their ability to actually realize a return (Asch, 1986). As such, the issue of “winnability” seems to be an important factor when considering what issues to undertake during the early systems advocacy efforts as this is the time when those involved in the advocacy efforts will be most fragile. It should be noted that these feelings of powerlessness are not exclusive to consumers. As shown earlier, these same feelings apply to social service workers (Cheriss, 1980). By producing tangible benefits for the people they serve, workers are able to affirm their hopes and beliefs that they have something substantive to offer. When advocacy efforts are undertaken in conjunction with consumers and/or other elements of the organization (i.e. Board members, line staff), they help produce a sense of camaraderie, thereby facilitating an increased sense of the value of collective action.

#### **Theoretical Foundation - Summary.**

With regard to a theoretical foundation for a systems advocacy framework, the literature reviewed revealed a number of elements which appeared fundamental to the author in construction of the model. These elements were;

- a) Systems advocacy is about empowerment.
- b) Empowerment occurs when people take attain there desired goals.
- c) How advocacy is carried out is as important as reaching the desired goal.

- d) Successful action cannot occur without awareness.<sup>7</sup>
- e) Awareness occurs through critical thinking.

### **Issues for Consideration.**

The author's review of relevant readings also identified a number of important philosophical and structural considerations. These considerations could be generalized as being related to issues of "tension" between different philosophical and structural models of advocacy. These issues were raised as considerations (directly and indirectly) during the intervention process and became fundamental issues in the construction and revision of the Framework.

### **External Advocacy versus Internal Advocacy.**

The vast majority of authors read were opposed to the notion of "in-house" advocacy<sup>8</sup>. Authors such as Horowitz (1982), Kruger (1991), Galper (1980) Meyers-Chandler (1990) and Wolfensberger (1977) all rejected the notion of in-house advocacy as no more than an attempt by institutions to mollify the effects of complaints by mental health patients and external advocates. Even those who believed that in-house advocacy had a real and legitimate role to play within institutions, endorsed such models with caution (Rogers, 1986). In most forms, in-house advocates are limited to making recommendations and referrals. In such cases they are viewed more accurately as Ombudsman programs (Wolfensberger, p.24; *The Ombudsman [The University of Manitoba]*, 1992).

While there was much legitimacy to these arguments, it seemed that these views should be reexamined when viewed in different contexts. For example, if a government-funded, non-profit agency were advocating against social taboos or government directly, it

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<sup>7</sup> "Awareness" refers to more than the simple identification of one's state. It also refers to the development of the knowledge and skills that come with being able to think critically i.e. strategizing, analyzing, evaluating, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Wolfensberger defined "in-house" advocacy as "...internal safeguards designed [by institutions] to protect the individuality of a consumer, to prevent a client from "getting lost" in the system or to give consumers an easier internal route for voicing a grievance" (p. 18).

was in essence operating within a “in-house” environment. We had to then ask, if this organization had been operating effectively to this point in time, could such accomplishments not be duplicated by an in-house advocate within a hospital setting? Conversely, what efforts had so called “independent” advocates undertaken to ensure that the quality of their service had not been compromised<sup>9</sup>. *The notion of in-house advocacy appeared to be relative to the system within which the advocate was operating and the system which the advocate was targeting for action.* In large measure then, the distinction between internal and external advocacy appeared to be a one of semantics. While funding sources, target systems and the advocate’s operating system were all variables, it seemed that most advocacy organizations, at least locally (Cole, 1992), operated as both internal and external advocates. The challenge then, was to determine what measures would be taken to ensure that services were not compromised when a potential conflict-of-interest arose.

#### **Proactive Advocacy versus Reactive Advocacy.**

One potential problem with relying solely on individual, consumer-complaint cases as a source for systems issues was that consumer complaints were generally reactive in nature. Black (1985) suggested that such cases traditionally responded to those barriers which were already in place. This meant that only actual problems were dealt with, not potential problems. Since one of the primary reasons for establishing a systemic framework was to stop the seemingly endless cycle of crisis interventions, steps had to be taken to develop a system whose task was to identify and intervene on issues which had the potential to be problematic for consumers, such as government legislation, institutional policies. The development of a proactive component to the framework had the potential to present particular problems to a organization operating without formal input into such bureaucracies and institutions. The need to be proactive could challenge programs that have traditionally relied on reacting to government or institutional policy after the fact, to develop relationships with other systems if they are to be successful in identifying potential problems.

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<sup>9</sup> Wolfensberger proposed the use of volunteer advocates in such situations in order to guarantee that no conflict of interest exists.

### **Directed Advocacy versus Non-Directed Advocacy.**

From a professional perspective, the “consumer-directed” model of advocacy seemed a relatively empowering methodology for consumers because it placed advocates under the direction of consumers. Consumers were able to direct the advocate to undertake efforts which reflected their wishes. Unfortunately, such models, when employed alone, failed to recognize and protect the needs of those who were among the most vulnerable members of the mental health community (Church, 1991), such as the profoundly ill and non-English speakers. In other words, direction was contingent on the particular consumer(s) ability to initiate and follow through with these directions. Consideration had to be given as to how concerns affecting such populations would be accounted for when decisions were being held as to which systems issues would be undertaken. Again, such concerns had the potential to present considerable problems for organizations operating without some degree of legislated input.<sup>10</sup> Such status is useful because it essentially enshrines the ability to have early access to potentially problematic issues. This in turn can assist in proactive, early responses to these potentially problematic issues. Given that certain sub - groups of consumers and/or their concerns are more difficult to access, how would the agency consider dealing with this issue?

### **Levels of Consumer Input and Control.**

As was stated earlier, consumer participation in advocacy efforts is a cornerstone of empowerment (Whitmore and Kerans, 1980). With this in mind, consideration had to be given to what role consumers will play within systems advocacy efforts. More specifically, the organization had to determine how much ownership the consumer community would have and at what points it would be involved. For example, would the consumer community have input into which issues are chosen or would they become directly involved only when specific actions were being undertaken? Cole's (1992) research identified considerable concern to the notion of extensive considerable involvement during his interviews of local advocates. This concern was almost exclusive to those organizations whose mandate and philosophy spoke to the need for consumer

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<sup>10</sup> In Ontario for example, advocates can initiate action in such cases. Lord (1990) cited reviews of daily ward reports as the primary source for such cases.

empowerment but in practice, appeared to involve consumers in only limited roles. Some of the rationales provided in defense of limiting consumer involvement were “lack of consumer knowledge”, “political divisions within the consumer community”, and “not involving consumers in the process until the agency itself knew what it was doing”.

### **System Changing versus System Tuning.**

Perhaps the most significant consideration in determining what type of advocacy would be done was the determination of the type of cases which the advocate/organization would involve itself. Organizations may find that they are content to “fine tune” the existing system by limiting themselves to issues which focus on “accessing” the system but do not really address fundamental change. For some authors, such as Havemann (1988) and Speck (1989), programs of this nature represented a co-optation by the governing system and only served to perpetuate people’s oppression. Conversely, other organizations may be interested in more fundamental changes and find themselves dealing with issues which are more complex, difficult to influence and/or contentious in nature such as poverty. Such organizations may find that by taking on such issues, they must give consideration to alternative forms of staffing and funding.<sup>11</sup> Such programs run the possibility of not meeting the short-term needs of their clients by neglecting such issues as “right to treatment” or “shorter waits in emergency wards.” The question arose as to how the organization would endeavour to balance these issues, and more importantly, ensure that the issues of a more fundamental nature be addressed, especially since a significant part of its current program budget relied on government funding (Newman, 1990).

### **Spontaneity and Instinct versus Planning and Knowledge.**

Considerable debate has occurred among advocates in the field of social services as to the validity of knowledge-guided systems. Many change agents seemed to feel that the process of change was one which relied heavily on spontaneity and flexibility and as such, required “special people” for such undertakings.

An issue actually becomes systemic through a process of subjective decision-making by advocates in which their training, experience, sensitivity and ‘suspicions’ are key factors. The capacity to decide

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<sup>11</sup> For example, The Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office, Ontario, now manages itself with only 20% of its funding coming from public funding (Church, 1991).

which cases should become an issue within a system develops with practice. Thus, a systemic issue is not so much born as it is created by people who learn to use specific cases to reveal more general problems (Church, p.11).

In this author's estimation, such a view had serious implications for the successful undertaking of positive social change and systems advocacy. While it was important to acknowledge the value of experience, personal skills and knowledge in any job, such attitudes toward "natural" change agents can undermine the efforts of organizations to successfully undertake change. In interviews with local advocates, this author found that many organizations relied on the "agency advocate" for much of their advocacy undertakings. Such individuals often admitted to not having formal criteria, definitions or guidelines for such undertakings, although many felt that this was something that their program needed (Cole, 1992). Cole also found that even those organizations which spoke of collective decision-making processes, were often unable to state what formal criteria the collective used to identify and select issues. Although no follow-up questions were asked with regard to this issue, this author draws on his own experience to speculate as to why this might be. Individual advocates, knowing that many of their accomplishments were achieved on the strength of their personality and personal skills, realized that their achievements will be short-lived if the organization cannot carry on the initiatives started by the advocate. For these individuals then, the importance of a formal system for advocacy becomes more apparent. What was unclear was why such advocates did not develop such criteria if they felt it was useful (lack of knowledge, lack of time).

The common reliance on individual advocates created a number of potential barriers to systemic advocacy efforts. As was just hypothesized, failure to provide documented systems and processes meant that other workers in the organization do not learn the skills and knowledge that the advocate possesses. This can have traumatic repercussions should this individual leave the organization. A vacuum is created which no one is able to fill, individually or collectively. Another problem can be encountered when the personality of the advocate is allowed to operate in an unstructured manner. The position of the advocate can become highly personalized, with the advocate determining the priorities and methods

of the program. If this person leaves the organization and is replaced by another individual who is allowed to operate in the same manner as the previous advocate, confusion may occur in the organization and in the community as to the priorities of the organization/program/advocate. In other words, the style and priorities of the agency's advocacy efforts are determined by the individual style and priorities of the advocate. Even in those settings where collective and supposedly consensual decision-making formats are employed, the lack of clear and articulated criteria can allow situations to develop where decisions are made by dominant personalities.<sup>12</sup> Such advocacy models also can be in opposition to the empowering nature of advocacy efforts. If advocacy must be undertaken by an "expert," this can hinder the development of empowering skills in other staff and consumers if the advocate chooses not to work in a collegial manner.

It is recognized that change does not occur in a static world. Advocates must be adaptable to changing circumstances, especially as they occur in the middle of actions. However, the ability of an organization to properly plan and document its change efforts improves accountability. It also improves the likelihood of success in future undertakings by providing a system which can assess and evaluate initiatives undertaken and finally, reduces the need to be a "natural" advocate by reducing the margin of the unknown. Conversely, overplanning can impede successful initiatives by stifling initiative and reducing the organization's ability to respond to rapidly changing circumstances. The question facing the organization then, is at what level does the balance occur between overplanning and underplanning.

#### **Systems Advocacy versus Individual Advocacy.**

A final point of consideration was the of balance between systems advocacy and individual advocacy (Church, 1991). Despite recognizing the value of systems advocacy, this type of advocacy has been significantly under-utilized by advocates, even when their program mandate allowed for such (Newman, 1990). The research suggested that this could be attributed to two primary factors: a) Lack of time in the advocate's day for

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<sup>12</sup> Two of the agencies that espoused a commitment to consensual and egalitarian decision - making processes expressed concerns regarding their decision - making processes, such as dominant personalities, varying levels of skills, awareness and competence among decision - makers.

undertaking such issues (Cole, 1992; Newman, 1990; The Human Services Research Institute, 1992) and b) Lack of knowledge on the part of the advocate and/or the organization about undertaking systems advocacy (Centre for Research Education in Human Services, 1987; Cole, 1992).

These factors raised important considerations relevant to constructing a framework for systems advocacy. First, these findings suggested that the advocate's time designated to be spent on systems advocacy be protected so that the advocate is not overwhelmed by other job duties (i.e individual case work). Advocates, overwhelmed by the need to help people on a more individual level, found it difficult to make time for systems work. Secondly, the lack of existing skills (or the perception of a lack of skills) related to systems advocacy work suggested a need for staff development and training. It also reaffirmed the value of a formal process which was knowledge-creating.

### **THE SYSTEMS ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK.**

In giving consideration to the factors identified as being pertinent to a formal systems advocacy process (empowerment, critical thinking, productivity, etc), the author developed a Framework which could be identified as having five separate components (see Appendix B). These components have been identified by the author in the following manner:

- Issue Gathering and Filtering.
- Issue Selection.
- Issue Priorization.
- Issue Action.
- Issue Evaluation.

These components were identified primarily through the experiences and research of the author and the findings of the existing literature in the field. Overall, the literature was useful in identifying and elaborating on the final four stages, as was demonstrated through such models found in The Active Living Alliance (1990), Alinsky (1971), Bobo, Kendall & Max (1991), Chapin and Stirling (1977), Cole (1992), Cox (1984), Kome



(1989), among others. The first stage was identified primarily through the experiences and research of the author. This was largely a result of the fact that much of the material used was from the Community Development field, which assumed that problematic issues had been identified by the community.

In total, these components allow the Framework's user(s) to start at a point where they know nothing, except that they want to take more fundamental action, and move from identifying and gathering of potential issues, to selecting and prioritizing issues, culminating in the successful conclusion of selected issues.

The Framework itself can be divided into two relatively distinct sections, Pre-Action (Issues Gathering and Filtering, Issue Selection and Issue Priorization), and Issue Action (and Evaluation). It should be noted that, in the author's experience (Cole, 1992), the first section (Pre-Action) represents the most difficult aspect of the systems advocacy process for organizations. This is because organizations seem to undervalue/misunderstand the importance of preliminary work prior to actually undertaking an action.

#### **Issue Gathering and Filtering.**

Issue Gathering and Filtering (see Appendix B, p. 1 - 6) refers to the process of compiling "eligible" systems advocacy issues. Very little literature existed that was useful to the author in developing a process that helped with the onerous task of describing the factors relevant for determining what a systems issue was, how these issues would be collected and what additional criteria, if any, needed to be developed to assist in reducing the number of issues upon which the organization might consider.

One aspect of the Framework which was of particular concern to the author was how Brookfield's (1987) critical thinking component could be incorporated within the model. More specifically, the author's personal experience was that organizations have a tendency to avoid, ostensibly because of time constraints, providing written material around why decisions were made in certain ways and by whom. This became a major concern to the author because it was felt that internal vigilance around the critical thinking

process was primary to the success of the Framework. To this end, the author attempted to employ Brookfield's work in two ways. First, each aspect of the Framework was formed as a question to which the organization had to respond. It was hoped that such a format would prove effective in providing an atmosphere where organizational staff could think and act in a critical manner. The other way in which the author attempted to provoke discussion and accountability was through the inclusion of specific questions which directly confronted the Framework's user(s) to respond (ex. "Who will decide and why"). These questions or similar ones, were included in all components of the Framework.

With regard to how issues are gathered, Warheit, Bell and Schwab (1977) produced the only material relevant to the Framework. They identified five different approaches to gathering information (Key Informant, Community Forum, Rates - Under - Treatment, Social Indicators, and Survey), as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each approach (p. 19 - 48). Kome (1989) identified the need for organizations to let people identify their issues as problems<sup>13</sup>. On the topic of establishing criteria to assist in determining what constitutes an eligible issue, Arrow and Renaud (1986) stated the need for criteria to be specific to individual organizations because while some general criteria would likely exist between all organizations, each organization was an individual entity with its own priorities. This spoke to the need for the agency involved in the intervention to develop criteria unique to itself. Beyond this, this only literature available was the author's personal research. In his work interviewing local advocacy organizations (1992), Cole identified a number of sub-issues that appeared relevant to inclusion in the Issue Gathering and Filtering section of the Framework, such as the need for a working definition on an advocacy "issue", who will (and won't) make decisions regarding the advocacy process and when issues will be "gathered".

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<sup>13</sup> It is important to understand the meaning of "problem" vis-a-vis "issue". For example, consumers may identify the high cost of medication and their inability to afford it as "the problem". In fact, the issue may be government legislation which provides pharmaceutical companies with exclusive patents for extended periods of time which serve to inflate drug costs. This is not to say that these problems are not valid. It just means that the agency must be vigilant to ensure that their efforts are dealing with the real problem and not simply some symptom.

### **Issue Selection.**

Issue selection referred to the stage of determining which issues from among the many “eligible” issues would be selected at a given point in time for action.

As was the case in the Issue gathering and filtering stage, little information was located in the existing literature. Fortunately, the literature which was located was extremely useful. Black (1985), in his work on employment equity, argued forcefully for the inclusion of formal, agreed - upon criteria as a mechanism for deciding which issues should be selected from among many. This viewpoint was echoed by Bobo, Kendall and Max (1991). Unlike Black, who comes from an employment equity perspective, Bobo, Kendall and Max focused on process-related criteria (see appendix B, p. ???). These authors spoke to the need to incorporate criteria that validated the empowerment value of a particular issue, as opposed to its financial cost, etc. This suggested that, if Arrow and Renaud (1986) were correct, criteria must be developed which consider a wide range of types of considerations.

While identified criteria formed an important part of selecting issues, it must be said that the provision of such criteria, without some form of quantitative rating system, really was no more than a subjective ranking on a higher level. That is to say, that while a given organization had to articulate criteria, how these criteria were weighted/scored relative to each other was still open to many of the same subjective, informal decision - making processes that would have otherwise occurred. Ultimately then, scoring systems must be based wherever possible on valid data. Black questions how such criteria can be quantified (p. 170), but the need to attempt to create some form of quantifying mechanism was included in both the Issue Selection and Issue Priorization sections (see Appendix B). While such a system can seem difficult to implement, ultimately it makes for more effective planning and evaluation of advocacy efforts.

### **Issue Priorization.**

The need to prioritize (The ranking of selected systems issues on the basis of perceived importance.<sup>14</sup>) selected issues was also put forward by Black (1985). Black saw the need to establish criteria (new or selected from previously developed criteria) to avoid potential conflict among selected issues (see Appendix B). These potential conflicts, which could occur any time the organization's changing environment calls for a reassessment of the organization's priorities, had the potential to negatively affect the organization's advocacy efforts. Such incidents were identified by Cole (1992) during his research. These included such events as changes in personnel, the fall of a government, changes in funding, etc. Further to this, Black identified conflicts which could possibly occur between criteria, such as "the cases with the greatest potential benefit are often the most costly" and "fairness to protected groups and the likelihood of success". These "criteria dilemmas" represented some of the decisions that any organization could anticipate struggling with as they endeavour to develop criteria for prioritizing selected issues.

### **Issue Action and Evaluation.**

"The process of developing and implementing a plan for the successful undertaking of previously selected and/or prioritized systems issues".

Relative to the Pre-Action stage, Issue action revealed a relatively large amount of material. This material was almost exclusive to the field of community development. Authors such as Kome (1989); The Active Living Alliance (1990); Gera (1983) and Thomas (1976) all provided models for undertaking action. However, these models were found to be too not sophisticated enough for the purposes of the Framework. They were adequate on a more introductory level of detail required for the author's needs. Other models, such as those developed by Bobo, Kendall & Max (1991) and Coover, Deacon, Esser & Moore (1977) were designed primarily for citizen coalitions and not totally applicable for organizational-based change. This was because they paid no attention to the difficult process of identifying and gathering issues. These models were constructed on the

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<sup>14</sup> "Importance" is defined through the criteria developed by the agency.

assumption that a problem had previously been identified. Consideration was also given to models designed by Brooten, Hayman & Taylor (1988), The Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped (undated) and Mauksch & Miller (1981). While these models were not without merit, they were designed for use within certain specific contexts (nursing, rural areas, etc.) and as such, required to much modification. Based on the author's desire to find a detailed model which processed an issue from beginning to end, it was Cox's model for community problem solving (1987) that was most appropriate.

Cox's model encompassed nine stages in developing a plan for action (see Appendix B). These stages were *Preliminary considerations, Problems, Social context of the Problem, The client, Goals, Strategy, Tactics, Evaluation and Modification*. Of particular note was Cox's section of Preliminary Considerations, which dealt with the issue of organizational self-assessment (see Appendix B). While Cox's model was the only model which identified the importance of an organization strategically analyzing itself, it did not, in the author's estimation, go far enough in assisting the user(s) in undertaking this assessment. As a result, the author employed Hasenfeld's (1983) model for internal and external organizational analysis (see Appendix B).

A similar shortcoming was identified by the author in Cox's section on Strategy and Tactics. Cox provides no definition of the terms "strategy" and "tactic". This was seen by the author as especially problematic because like the terms "goals" and "objectives", people often seem unclear as to the difference between the two. As well, most individuals, even where an understanding has been reached regarding the differences between the terms "strategies" and "tactics" (see "Definitions"), are unaware of the diversity that exists within these two areas. To this end, the author supplemented Cox's work on Strategies with Poskanzer's (1972) "Expansion of Bisno's Methods". This work outlined various strategies and the circumstances in which one or more of them might be used. Further to this, it seemed equally important to provide the same guidance with regard to tactics, especially in light of the works of Behn (1980); Bowe and Williams (1979); Tefft (undated); Holley and Peltz (1986); Yuan (1991); Currie (1991) and The Social Action Committee, Archdiocese of Charlottetown (1987), which touched on tactics in a variety of

forms. Unfortunately, these works gave little indication as to when such tactics might be used.

The number of tactics available under each strategy seemed almost as diverse as one's imagination. Dear And Patti (1984) provided some examples regarding legislative advocacy, as did Fisher and Ury (1971) with regard to negotiating. While wanting to avoid the identification of all forms of tactics, it was felt necessary by the author to provide an example of some tactics. As such, the author utilized Alinsky's (1971) famous rules governing adversarial tactics. It was hoped these would serve as a useful example in helping organizations develop their own lists under each strategy.

- 1) *Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.*
2. *Never go outside the experience of your people.*
3. *Whenever possible go outside the experience of The enemy.*
4. *Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules.*
5. *Ridicule is...the most important weapon.*
6. *A good tactic is one that your people enjoy.*
7. *A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag.*
8. *Keep the pressure on.*
9. *The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.*
10. *The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure on the opposition.*
11. *If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterside.*
12. *The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.*
13. *Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.*

Another area not directly addressed by Cox was the Media. This was an area that the author felt deserved specific attention, given the power and potential impact of the media on actions. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (undated); Chapin and Stirling (1977) and Bobo, Kendall and Max (1991) not only provided considerable rationale for inclusion of such a section, but also guidelines for using the media to one's advantage.

These included such headings as “develop relationships”, “develop a media list”, “think pictures”, “mail press (news) releases”, “follow up press releases with calls” and “recognize who controls the media”.

For the purposes of the Framework, Cox’s section also was inadequate in its level of detail around action evaluation. One of the author’s basic assumptions regarding his work was that the user(s) of the Framework may not be experienced with such topics as selecting strategies, undertaking evaluation, etc. As a result, it was deemed necessary by the author to provide guidelines without burdening the user(s) with inordinate amounts of detail.

With regard to evaluation, Legge (1984) and Kettner, Martin & Moroney (1990) provided the author with the information to define different types of evaluation and the circumstances under which they might be used. Kettner, Daley and Nichols (1985) defined evaluation as “ a social process of making judgments about the merit, worth, or value of a change. Evaluation makes judgments about those change episode inputs, throughputs, outputs and outcomes that have been monitored” (p.259). The ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses (evaluation) in a campaign is essential if the organization hopes to adapt to the rapidly changing circumstances of the advocacy campaign. Evaluation then, represents the first step in demonstrating the ability to learn from one’s successes and mistakes.

Many different types of evaluations exist, each with a specific purpose. While noting the importance of evaluation, Cox’s guide fails to provide the detail necessary for determining which type of evaluation should be used at any given time. Fortunately, such information is provided by Legge (1984) and Kettner, Moroney and Martin (1990). These evaluation types can roughly be categorized in the following way:

<u>Evaluation type</u>	<u>Focus of evaluation</u>
1. Effort	Examines quantity of activity
2. Outcome	Examines results of services as they affected clients.
3. Adequacy of Performance	Examines extent to which the program has met community need.

- |    |                    |   |
|----|--------------------|---|
| 4. | Cost-Effectiveness | Examines ratio of resources to outcome.           |
| 5. | Cost-Efficiency    | Examines ratio of resources to services provided. |

The different types of evaluations just mentioned can be divided into two different categories of evaluation methodologies, *formative* and *summative*. These two categories correspond with Cox's two types of goals, *process* and *task*. Formative evaluation relates to the monitoring of, in this case, the process of the advocacy efforts (during intervention), so that the intervention process can be improved. Summative focuses on the outcome of the intervention so that outcome can be confirmed and if need be, improved. Formative and summative evaluation then, serve a distinct but complementary function. It seems clear that both will have a place for the advocate in designing an evaluation mechanism.

Further to this, Kettner, Daley and Nichols (1985) outlined a model for undertaking evaluation which met the author's aforementioned requirements. This model, The Change Episode Evaluation Model, will be outlined for the consideration of the advocacy organization.

1) Identify Key Decisions: The first step in is to identify key decisions in the change episode (advocacy campaign). This includes decisions made before, during and after the change episode. Key decisions could include such factors as goals (task and process), selection of personnel, selection of strategies and tactics, etc.<sup>15</sup>

2) Identify the Decision Makers: Whether individuals or groups, the organization needs to be aware of who is responsible for the decisions being made. This is important because it allows the organization to identify potential trends with regard to failures in the process that might be attributed to individual and/or group performances. This can enable the organization to make such decisions as providing new or additional training for decision makers or adjust decision making roles. Attention must also be paid to who will be responsible for providing required information to the evaluation team.

3) Identify the Time Frame: This stage is the "deadline examination stage". The

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<sup>15</sup> Ideally, all significant components of the Systems advocacy framework would be included for evaluation.



organization is asked to ensure that deadlines have been established for key decisions. This allows the evaluation team to determine what time lines were established and which ones have been met. As well, time frames must be established for the evaluation team so that evaluation results can be given to the advocacy team as quickly as possible.

4) Identify the Kinds and Amounts of Information Needed: A decision must be made as to what type of information is needed by the advocacy team in order to make positive changes to their efforts. Kettner, Daley & Nichols suggest that the best way is to ask the advocacy team what they need. This author suggests that , done in conjunction with the evaluation team, this provides the best in determining the type of questions and answers that will be needed.

5) Design and Execute an Evaluation Plan: This stage sees the selection and construction of one of the aforementioned evaluation methodologies. In doing so, Kettner, Daley & Nichols suggest that the decision on the type of methodology should be guided by the following questions:

- What is the intended use of the information that is to be generated?
- What are the realities (limitations) of the change episode?

6) Communicate the Information: The final step of the evaluation process involves getting the results of the evaluation to the key decision makers by the agreed upon time frames and in a form that is the most useful to the advocates.

Kettner, Daley and Nichols (1985) also outlined some guidelines for assisting with the evaluation process (p. 282).

- 1) "Recognize the limits of the evaluation process."
- 2) "Specify the purpose and objectives of the evaluation process."
- 3) "Specify who will use the the evaluation findings, for which decision, at which time."
- 4) "Involve [advocacy team] collaboratively in the process."
- 5) "Stress positive as well as negative results."
- 6) "Ensure effective communication to decision makers."
- 7) "Tie the evaluation process to ongoing organizational or community

structures and processes.”

The final “guideline” related to tying the evaluation process into ongoing organizational structures and processes (p. 282). This comment identified the important need for an organization to realize that undertaking systems advocacy would likely require at least a minimal degree of organizational change. While the limitations of the practicum process eliminated any chance of dealing with organizational change within the intervention, it still became necessary to identify the issue and provide some guidance in this area.

Organizational change, or what Harrison (1987) called “system fitting”, had the potential to undermine the agency’s advocacy efforts if not properly undertaken. Issues such as staff anxiety, trepidation, fear, resistance might be encountered, especially if the organization had made unilateral decisions around systems advocacy without the participation of all of its members. Hale and Williams (1989) suggested that those considering organizational change must consider three fundamental issues (p. 10):

- “What does the organization change”?
- “How does the organization effectively put the change into place”?
- “Who will manage the change”?

A number of types of models exist for organizing internal change. Some models, such as Greiner and Schein’s (1988), were quite power oriented and designed more for organizational “guerrilla warfare” than for collective, co-operative change. Others, such as Harrison’s (1987) were unnecessarily elaborate, at least for the purposes of this paper. Models such as the one proposed by Christian, Hannah and Glahn (1984) were designed with a specific type of organization in mind (institutions). The nine-step process proposed by Hale and Williams (1989) however, was attractive for many of the same reasons that the author employed Kettner, Daly and Nichols’ (1985) model for evaluation. This model appeared easy to use, both in terms of volume and readability. It was basic in nature and focused on key points. It is for these reasons that the author proposed using it as the basis for organizational change, although with some modification.

No matter what methodology is employed, the formal provision of written rationales throughout the process will make the job of the evaluators and the advocates much easier. Evaluators will have a clear and articulated point against which they will be able to measure.

### **Consultation.**

Bloom (1975) defined consultation as a 'process of indirect services in which the consultant works with a consultor or group of consultors who provide direct service to clients'. Parson and Meyers (1984, p. 5 - 6) viewed consulting as somewhat more diverse. They saw consulting as having a number of possible levels. That is to say, that consulting was not necessarily a process of indirect services, but might be a direct service to a client (consultant works directly with the client), a direct service to a consultee (consultant works directly with the consultee for its benefit, not the client's), an indirect service to a client (consultant works for the betterment of the client, but through the agency), or a service to a system (consultant works directly with clients and consultee to improve organizational functioning for all parties). Other definitions, such as those by Schmidt and Osborne (1981), saw consultation and counselling as being one in the same. While there appeared to be agreement on consultation as a problem-solving process (Brown, Pryzwansky & Schulte, 1987; Gallesich, 1982), there was no clear consensus on what constituted a "problem".

Another aspect of consultation that was generally agreed upon was that consultation was tripartite in its form (Mannino and Shore, 1986). It appeared that consultation was usually delivered to a consultee (professional) on behalf of a client population. Such a view was consistent with the arrangement that was negotiated with the author's intervention partner, although not entirely consistent with empowerment - based processes.

The final area of agreement appeared to be that consultation was meant to improve (in some way) the consultee and the client system (Dougherty, 1990).

For the purposes of the Practicum, the author employed Dougherty's general definition on consultation (see "Definitions"). It should be noted however, that the

definition was accepted recognizing limitations around the concept of not consulting with clients in a more direct manner. In this regard, Parson and Meyers' (1984) view of consultation is more accommodating. It should also be noted that in addition to those characteristics of consultation identified, Dougherty (1990) also identified a number of other common characteristics of consultation (p. 9).

### **What is Organizational Consultation?**

A number of interpretations existed of what organizational consultation was. These perspectives were defined from the perspective of what the consultant does (Sinha, 1979), as well as from other perspectives (Schein, 1969; Goodstein, 1978). These views were conveniently amalgamated into a definition brought forward by Dougherty (p. 187):

Organizational consultation is the process in which a professional, functioning either internally or externally to an organization, provides assistance of a technical, diagnostic/prescriptive, or facilitative nature to an individual or group from that organization in order to enhance the organization's ability to deal with change and maintain or enhance its effectiveness in some designated way (p. 187).

Dougherty also clarified his earlier comments on one of the hallmarks of consultation. At this time, Dougherty referred to the tripartite relationship between consultant, consultee and client. Within the organizational context, Dougherty sees the consultee as those people from the organization who are directly involved with the consultation process. The clients being the remaining aspect of the organization.

### **Consultation Skills.**

The most extensive documentation of skills required by a successful consultant was produced by Dougherty (1990). He identified five basic skill areas (p. 20 - 25). These areas were Attitudes; Interpersonal Skills; Problem - Solving Skills; Ethical and Professional Behaviour Skills, and Skills in Working with Organizations (see following heading). Under each heading, Dougherty (1990) identified a number of individual skills under each skill area. This work provided the most exhaustive listing of individual skills needed to become a successful consultant. While the skills themselves were to numerous

to list individually, an exception was made for the area of “Skills in Working with Organizations” because it was more workable based on the more limited number of elements.

### **Consultation Skills in Working with Organizations.**

In his skill profile, Dougherty (1990) identified nine specific skills or behaviours which he felt were instrumental in working successfully within the organizational context (p. 23 - 24).

- 1) Becoming accepted by the members of the organization in which consulting is to occur.
- 2) Using organizational analysis .
- 3) Providing feedback.
- 4) Gathering information.
- 5) Using a repertoire of organization-wide interventions (see “The Consultation Process”).
- 6) Determining the climate of the organization.
- 7) Determining the culture of the organization.
- 8) Using program planning.
- 9) Determining how to utilize human resources within the organization.

Following the identification of these skills, it became incumbent on the author to identify more specific methods for developing these skills, as such detail was not provided in Dougherty’s works. To this end, the following models were identified to assist the author in developing the appropriate skills:

a) **Becoming accepted by organizational members:** The author employed two works in assisting him to become accepted by the organization. The first work was Argyris’ (1990 ) material on “Overcoming Organizational Defenses”. This work was selected primarily as a precautionary measure as the author felt that, as an individual who had traditionally enjoyed a strong, working relationship with the organization, he had

achieved some measure of acceptance prior to the intervention. While it seemed apparent that specific issues around acceptance would need to be dealt with when they were identified during the assessment period, it seemed necessary to identify some general mechanism for how to approach the situation. The author identified Fisher and Ury's (1981) work on non-positional negotiating as a useful tool and one that appeared more consistent with the philosophical base being utilized by the author. It was felt that such a model might be particularly useful during the negotiation of the intervention contract.

b) Using Organizational Analysis: As part of the Framework proper, Hasenfeld's model (1983) for organizational analysis was previously accepted as the model for undertaking such work.

Hasenfeld's model examined the organization on two levels, the Internal and the External. The Internal environment was made up of eleven, distinct elements which Hasenfeld identified as being critical for examination. These were the *Authority Structure, Accountability to Consumers, Rules, Decision - Making, Personnel (Paid and Voluntary), Division of Labour, Interpersonal Relationships, Job Duties, Nature of Service, Depth and Breadth of Mandate and Constitution and Goal Orientation.*

The External component of the organizational self-analysis referred to those structures and dynamics which Hasenfeld (1983) identifies as the "Organization-Environment Relationship". This relationship is viewed as existing on two levels, The General and The Task. Hasenfeld defined the general environment as "...those conditions in the environment (economic, socio-demographic, cultural, technological, and political-legal) that affect all organizations and must be assumed as given" (p.51). The task environment is "...a specific set of organizations and groups with which the organization exchanges resources and services and with whom it establishes specific modes of interaction" (p.51). The task environment is further defined as being made up of six distinct parts. These are *Providers of Fiscal Resources [Funders], Providers of Legitimation and Authority, Providers of Clients, Providers of Complementary Services, Competing Organizations,* and finally, *Consumers and Recipients of the Organization's Products.*

c) **Providing Feedback:** This was viewed by the author as occurring in two ways. First, an information system would be developed that would provide formal, written feedback to the organization (ex. meeting minutes). This would also be achieved verbally through the author's development in personal communication skills, such as paraphrasing, summarizing, providing oral feedback, etc.

d) **Gathering Information:** Methodologies for gathering information would be specific to the type of information being sought. With regard to formal aspects of the agency's functioning, information could be readily obtained through agency documents (Newman, 1990). With regard to other, potentially more delicate aspects of the organization, efforts would be made to solicit such information through staff surveys, pending the approval of the organization.

e) **Using a repertoire of organization - wide interventions:** see "The Organizational Consultation Process: Types of Interventions (p. 192-194)".

f) **Determining the climate of the organization:** This would be dealt with in two ways. First, the organization's response to some of the author's proposals would provide insight into the degree to which the organization was prepared to take on more progressive work. Second, a staff survey would likely be successful in identifying the nature of the organizational climate.

g) **Determining the culture of the organization:** This would be identified through a review of agency documents. As well, it was hoped that personal surveys and/or interviews would be useful in determining the "informal" issues that might be at work.

Points H (Using program planning) and I (Determining how to utilize human resources within the organization), were not pursued until it became clear whether or not these aspects of the consultation process would be dealt with.

### **Consultation Roles.**

According to Dougherty (1990), the skills required of a successful consultant are generic; but the roles they play are quite different. During the consultation process, the consultant may be required to adopt one or more particular roles depending on the

circumstances of the particular consultation intervention. Dougherty identified six different roles which he considered relatively common to consultation.

- a) **Advocate:** "Attempts to persuade the consultee to do something the consultant deems highly desirable" (p. 27).
- b) **Expert:** "The consultee needs some knowledge, advice, or service that the consultant can provide upon request" (p. 27).
- c) **Trainer/Educator:** "The consultant has both the expertise in certain skills and the ability to create the conditions under which consultees can acquire those skills. The role of the educator implies that the consultant possesses a body of knowledge that consultees desire and has the ability to teach them that knowledge" (p. 28).
- d) **Collaborator:** "The consultant engages the consultee in a joint endeavour to accomplish a particular task at a particular time" (p. 29).
- e) **Fact Finder:** "The consultant gathers information, analyzes it, and feeds it back to the consultee" (p. 29).
- f) **Process Specialist:** "When the consultant focuses on the problem - solving process itself and not the content" (p. 30).

In addition to the roles previously identified, Dougherty went on to further tackle the notion of *internal* and *external* consultants (p. 31). Internal consultants were defined as individuals who were already part of the organization in which the consultation was occurring. External consultants were individuals who were not already a part of the organization but consulting with it on a temporary basis.

Some authors, such as Alpert and Silverstein (1985), recommend that the concepts of internal and external consulting be viewed on a continuum rather than as discrete entities (Dougherty, p. 31). This particular view seems especially valid in the author's case. While not an employee of the organization, the author had an established working relationship with the agency, much of it as an employee. It seemed that the author's position incorporated elements of both the internal and external consultant.

Of particular interest to the author was what bearing the internal/external role would have on the consultation process. According to Brown (et al., 1987), the little empirical



evidence that exists shows no difference in the value of the internal consultant over the external consultant. Dougherty (p. 31) hypothesizes that the effectiveness of the consultant is a far greater determinant in the consultation process than whether or not the consultant is an employee of the organization. While no doubt true, it is the author's contention that the nature of the consultation assignment will also have considerable bearing on which role might be more effective during the intervention. It is not clear to the author what his status is in the eyes of the agency in question. While not currently employed by the agency, the author has a long and positive history with the organization which may give him de facto status. This status may indeed be important to the agency.

### **The Consultation Model.**

Based on the author's lack of experience in undertaking formal consultation, the author sought a model that was fairly simple in its structure and which provided some measure of detail regarding its different stages.

The author's review identified a number of models for undertaking consultation. Much of the literature reviewed was not appropriate for the reason that it was too field specific, such as Smyer, Cohn and Brannon's work on consultation in Nursing (1988); Ulschak and Snowantle's "Consultation for Health Care Professionals" (1990) and O'Neill and Trickett's work in community-based consultation. Another problem encountered was that much of the existing consultation material was based in the field of Management Studies. The author found much of this material to be too "business-focused" or at least, not as compatible with the author's consultee empowerment philosophy as desired. Examples of such work were Dalziel and Schoonover (1988) and the Manitoba Institute of Management's work on "Culture and Strategy" (undated). Other models, such as Parson and Meyers' guidelines for consultation (1987), lacked the detail that the author felt he required in guiding his work. It should be noted however, that the learning exercises in the Parson and Meyers framework made it an excellent teaching manual.

One model which did meet the author's needs was Dougherty's Generic model of Consultation (1990, p. 38 - 133). This model identified itself as having four distinct

phases; Entry; Diagnosis; Implementation and Disengagement. Dougherty chose the term phase because he saw the consultation process as a process that was far from static (p. 39), an assessment that the author agreed with. In other words, Dougherty (1990) advised that consultation did not occur in neat little boxes, with one phase being totally completed and then moving on to the next phase.

### Entry.

Phase one, the Entry phase, denotes the consultants “starting up” process. During this stage the consultant establishes entry into the organization and/or establishes relationships with the consultees. Four fundamental components are dealt with: relationship building, parameters of the problem are established, a (*practicum*) contract is agreed upon, and contact is made with consultees within the organization (p. 38).

Dougherty (1990) identified four components to the Entry stage. The first of these four components was “exploring organizational needs”. This referred to the process of the consultant, the consultee and other relevant parties meeting to discuss concerns and determine whether or not consultation should proceed (p. 40). The second component was referred to as “contracting”. Contracting denoted the process of formalizing the (*practicum intervention*) agreement between the consultant and the consultee (p. 40). The third component was “physically entering the system”. This component referred to the process of establishing relationships, obtaining a work site, studying the organization and implementing formal contact with the consultee (p. 40). The final component, “Psychologically entering the system”, demarks the consultant achieving status as a member of the organization (p. 40).

### Diagnosis.

Phase two of Dougherty’s model is the referred to as the diagnosis phase because this was when the consultant’s assessment occurred. Like the Entry phase, the Diagnosis phase was made up of four components; Gathering information; Defining the Problem; Setting Goals and Generating Possible Interventions.

“Gathering information” marked the stage where the consultant and the consultee attempt to increase the chances of understanding the problem by isolating factors which are

precipitating it (p. 41). During “defining the problem” the consultant and the consultee analyzed and interpreted the data that was gathered (p. 41). “Setting goals” meant establishing goals based on problem definition (p. 41). This carried directly into “generating possible interventions” for the beneficial resolution of the identified problems (p. 41).

#### Implementation.

This phase referred to the process of implementing the developed interventions. Like the previous phases, phase three also had four components; Choosing an intervention; Formulating a plan; Implementing a plan, and Evaluating a plan.

“Choosing an intervention” denoted the process of the consultant and the consultee selecting an intervention or intervention which they believe will deal most effectively with the problem (p. 42). Following this, “Formulating a plan” is incorporated. The consultant and consultee developed a plan that encompassed these interventions (p. 42).

“Implementation of the plan” then occurred, and the consultant’s role was to monitor the progress of the intervention (p. 42). This was finalized by “Evaluation of the plan”. Depending on the outcome of the evaluation, the consultant and the consultee may choose to move back or proceed to phase four (p. 42).

#### Disengagement.

Phase four, “disengagement”, referred to the “wrapping up” of the consultation process. The four components of this phase, as identified by Dougherty (1990), were; Evaluating the consultation process; planning post-consultation matters; Reducing involvement and following up, and terminating.

According to Dougherty, “evaluating the consultation process” could range from from assessing consultee satisfaction to to measurement of the intervention system - wide. Evaluation must be a planned event so that both the consultant and consultee will know who is being evaluated, in what way, etc., (p. 43). “Planning post-consultation matters” identified the process of deciding how the effects of the consultation were going to be maintained by the consultee and/or the organization (p. 43). “Reducing involvement and follow up” marks the stage where the consultant decreases contact with the consultee and

marks the period where the consultee takes over responsibility for the ongoing efforts (p. 43). Finally, "Termination" represents the formal end of the consultation process (p. 43).

### **Key Concepts in Organizational Consultation.**

In his work, Dougherty identified four concepts which he viewed as being especially important to those undertaking organizational consultation.

a) **The Organization as Client:** With regard to Dougherty's earlier comments of organizational employees as clients (non - consultees), he emphasizes the need for the consultant to recognize the significant impact of the consultation process on the whole of the organization. In doing so, the consultant will gain a greater appreciation for the complexity of his/her task, and the potential ramifications of oversimplified consultation interventions.

b) **The Cyclical Nature of Behaviour:** Behaviour becomes cyclical when "...a sequence of behaviour repeats its main features within specific time periods or within specifiable settings" (Blake and Mouton, 1976, p. 2). In essence, when behavioural patterns become dysfunctional (not all patterns are dysfunctional). In such cases, it becomes necessary for the consultant to identify and remove the blockages to healthy behaviour. Such blockages could be poor communication or low morale (Dougherty, p. 188). It should be noted that this behaviour might well be supported or sanctioned by the organization, thus making the consultant's job more difficult. Organizational support however, does not median the behaviour is a healthy one.

c) **Process is as important as content:** As was identified by the author in his discussions on advocacy, process is as important, if not more important, than content and/or outcome. Advocacy efforts which fail to involve consumers in meaningful ways only continue to perpetuate reliance on professionals and fail to make consumers/survivors self-reliant. This view was echoed by Dougherty (p. 188). From a more pragmatic perspective, the consultant had to be clear whether the issues facing her/him were of a process nature or a structural nature. Failure to identify the former had the potential to seriously undermine the effectiveness of the consultant's work. The model

itself could be flawless, yet could become inoperable if concerns regarding the process were not addressed. This could include such concerns as consumer involvement, intra-agency resistance, among others.

d) Satisfied Personnel are Crucial to Effective Organizations: As was identified in the author's earlier work on empowerment, staff who themselves have not been empowered are ill-prepared to empower others. By the same token, staff who are eliminated from having input into a consultation process are likely to feel unsatisfied, marginalized and threatened by the consultation process. Organizational consultation should help organizations to develop skills and climates necessary for a healthy staff/organization (Dougherty, p.189).

### **The Organizational Consultation Process.**

The organizational consultation process referred to the process of selecting intervention strategies used in attempts to break cycles. Blake and Mouton (1978) suggested that one of the most significant shortcomings of consultants was that they selected intervention strategies that they felt comfortable with, not necessarily those that were appropriate to the situation. To be effective, a consultant must become competent in a broad repertoire of intervention strategies. Dougherty outlined five intervention strategies that he felt were important for the consultant to master.

a) Acceptant Interventions: Acceptant interventions were used when the consultant identified that the intervention problem was related to the consultee's level of comfort with regard to the the consultation process and/or the consultant/consultee relationship. Such an intervention is most appropriate when the consultee is experiencing emotional tension that is hindering the consultation process (Blake & Mouton, 1976). The Acceptant Intervention endeavours to allow the the consultee to feel safe, accepted and validated through provision of supportive techniques from the consultant. For example, if a person was voicing a minority opinion, the consultant might state "that is an important observation. Lets spend some time talking about it".

b) **Catalytic Interventions**: Catalytic interventions are used when the consultant is trying to help the consultee better understand work - related experience either by corroborating and/or by gathering information (Goodstein, 1978). According to Dougherty, such interventions are best used when the consultee is experiencing an information deficit and/or a need to speed up the consultation process. For example, if the consultee was making a decision without the necessary information, such a decision could undermine the validity of the Framework's construction. The role of the consultant would be to gather or facilitate the gathering of the information required to make that decision.

c) **Confrontation Interventions**: Confrontation interventions challenge consultees to examine the values that underlie their thoughts and actions. Dougherty states that "Confrontation interventions are most effective when (used to address) discrepancies between a consultee's stated values and those that actually determine the consultee's behaviour reduce effectiveness in consultation" (p. 192). An example of such a situation might be where the consultant skills points out discrepancies between an organization's practices and its stated goals, objectives, mission statement, etc.

d) **Prescriptive Interventions**: Prescriptive interventions are used when the consultant's expertise is used in diagnosing problems and identifying potential solutions to those problems (Blake & Mouton, 1976). Commonly known as the "Doctor - Patient" intervention, this intervention is best used when the consultee perceives that everything that can be done to solve a problem has been done, and that the consultant's expertise is required to progress any further.

e) **Theory and Principles Interventions**: In this interventive technique, the consultant provides the consultee with theories and/or principles that are pertinent to the consultee's problems (Dougherty, p. 193). This strategy has special merit where the consultee might be operating on an issue where they might not possess theoretical knowledge. This is a likely intervention style during the early aspects of the author's intervention regarding the topic of Systems Advocacy.

### **Supplemental material.**

With regard to the identification of Dougherty's intervention strategies, and his

previously mentioned point that successful consultants have command of a broad repertoire of intervention skills, one intervention strategy caused the author specific concern. This was the acceptant intervention. Because this intervention encompassed such issues as conflict, fear, and similar emotions, this intervention was viewed as the one that was often used in the most volatile situations. As a result, the author pursued additional sources to supplement this intervention style, should the need to utilize this intervention style arise.

The first source identified was Ellis & Fisher's general work on small group decision making (1994). This work identified many of the same issues previously noted by Dougherty in his consultation model i.e., structural elements, group communication, roles and norms, etc. In this sense, there appeared to be an excellent fit between the two. Unlike Dougherty's material however, Ellis and Fisher went into far greater detail in the aforementioned areas.

Final sources utilized by the author was Fisher and Ury's (1981) material on non-positional negotiating, and Argyris (1990) work on dealing with organizational defenses

Because it was anticipated that considerable negotiation would likely occur, and given that negotiations by nature involve people with differing opinions and positions, the author felt it was appropriate to find some method for dealings with Negotiations as humanely as possible Fisher and Ury's (1981) work on non-positional negotiating was seen as important because it identified many of the author's concern's regarding typical negotiation proceedings. These author's rightfully identified that arguing over positions produces unwise agreements, that arguing over positions is inefficient, that arguing endangers ongoing relationships, and that this situation worsens when multiple parties are involved (p. 1 - 8).

Fisher and Ury detail a four - point model for dealing with such negotiations in a more effective manner;

- a) Separate the people from the problem.
- b) Focus on interests, not positions.
- c) Invent options, for mutual gain.
- d) Insist on objective criteria.

This methodology, both structurally and philosophically, represented a strong fit with that of the Framework.

Argyris (1990) detailed his relatively simple, if not technical, plan for reducing organizational defense patterns (p. 91 - 117). This model was simply a candid statement of approaching management and line staff and identifying the barriers, and identifying what caused staff to “adhere to, maintain, and proliferate actions...”. Knowledge of such a model was seen as necessary in the event that the Consultant encountered resistance to the initiative within the organization. It should be noted however that the model was not without its limitations, primarily lack of detail and the corporate context upon which it focused.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE INTERVENTION**

#### **Introduction.**

The intervention phase of the practicum report has been divided into two distinct parts, the negotiation phase and the intervention phase proper. The need to distinguish between the two was necessary as a result of the protracted negotiations which occurred around the author's practicum agreement with C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg Region. Phase I deals with the negotiation which occurred between the author and the agency regarding the "shape" of the intervention process. As well, this section provides a description of both the host agency and the host program. Phase II deals with the intervention proper. This section presents a summary of each of the ten meetings which together comprised the intervention process proper. Each meeting has been examined on the basis of content, process, outcome and evaluation. The original, expanded documentation from each meeting was attached as appendices.

#### **Phase I: Negotiation.**

Following the author's recognition of systems advocacy as a model for substantive change, negotiations were initiated with The Canadian Mental Health Association (C.M.H.A.) - Winnipeg Region to arrange for the development of a framework in a practice setting. As was earlier identified, C.M.H.A. - Wpg. Region had expressed an interest in expanding its traditional individual - focused advocacy service to include systems advocacy services. A preliminary contract was agreed to in July, 1992 between the author and the organization (see Appendix A) to develop a framework which would allow the agency to undertake systems advocacy in a logical and hopefully, rational manner.

During the Spring of 1994, it became necessary for the author to renegotiate the original practicum contract. Due to the fact that two years had passed since the original contractual agreement without the agreement being implemented (author unable to attend due to other commitments), and the fact that the organization had experienced the appointment of a new Executive Director. During this meeting, a verbal "renewal" of the

original contract occurred, with an understanding that the organization and the author would engage in a process by which the Framework would be mutually developed (this relationship was undefined in the original agreement), with the author taking on a leadership role.

Following the verbal agreement between the author and the organization, the author started to encounter difficulties in carrying out the agreement. The time of year resulted in a slowdown at the agency in the practicum process. As well, it became more apparent that the organization's workload, coupled with the lack of knowledge among agency staff with regard to systems advocacy, would make mutual development of a systems advocacy framework unlikely. In response, an arbitrary decision was made by the author to develop a preliminary framework which would serve as a starting-off point for the organization. It was felt by the author that it would be far more practical to jointly modify an existing framework than to engage in building a practice framework from the ground up. The author believed that, given his increasing insight into agency dealings and their level of readiness and knowledge regarding systems advocacy, that it would be far easier from the agency to have a "starting point". Unfortunately, the author decided to proceed with the drafting of a practice framework without the approval of the organization. This essentially resulted in a breach of the intervention contract by the author. When the author's work was eventually presented to the organization, the agency, quite rightfully, was forced into a period of "reflection" regarding the practicum agreement. Eventually, the agency responded with a request for additional clarification on a number of the logistical issues and concerns regarding the proposed intervention format. Of particular note was the organization's desire for a reduced time commitment in the intervention and a co - facilitator. In response to this, the author presented the organization and Practicum Steering Committee Meeting with a brief intervention proposal (see Appendix C) which was to have acted as a catalyst for a more detailed intervention proposal. The result was a response from the organization that consideration should be given to terminating the intervention contract, in apparent reference to their displeasure with how the intervention was proceeding.

In response to the organization's position, the author and the Practicum Steering

Committee met in December, 1994. The purpose of this meeting was to have the Committee identify and remove, directly or indirectly, barriers to the continuation of the practicum agreement. Miscommunications and positions were addressed and agreement was reached on ways to improve communication between the agency and the author (formal, regular meetings and documented meeting minutes). As a result of this meeting, a decision was made by the organization to meet with the author and attempt to renegotiate a mutually agreeable intervention format.

In reflecting on Dougherty's material regarding entry into the organization, this meeting represented the stage of *exploring organizational needs* (p.40). Unfortunately, the author's decision to move forward unilaterally had appeared to very much jeopardize the entry process. The author's unilateral action appeared to exclude the agency. This reduced the level of trust between the two parties and as a result, hampered the author's ability to gain access and have the agency share in a truly collegial manner. To this end, it was deemed appropriate by the author to utilize an Acceptance intervention strategy. It was hoped that such a strategy would assist the author in regaining the confidence of the organization. To this end, Fisher and Ury's work on non - positional bargaining was also consulted with the hope that this would assist the author in finding common ground.

This approach was largely successful in meeting the author's goals (see Appendix F1). Agreement was reached around changes in wording, restructuring of the intervention process and completing an analysis of the organization. As well, initial discussions were held around some of the more substantive issues around "who was to blame" for the current situation (see Appendix F1). During this time, the author accepted responsibility for placing unreasonable demands time wise on the agency. As a result of his own anxieties regarding the need to complete his work, the author was forcing the agency to adopt his timeline. This admission seemed to satisfy the agency representatives, who then identified that they could also improve with regard to communication. Ultimately, the meeting was successful in leading to a second meeting.

On January 19, 1995 another meeting was held between the author, the Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager (see Appendix G). The purpose of this

meeting was to further clarify the intervention agreement and potentially, to collaborate on areas of interest. Through the successful implementation of Fisher and Ury's work, settlement was realized on both personal issues and issues related to the final construction of the consultation process (see Appendix H). Most importantly were the following points:

- a) Agreement on the establishment of a Systems Advocacy Advisory Committee.
- b) Agreement on Terms of Reference for the Committee (see Appendix I).
- c) Agreement on the role of the author.
- d) Development of an abridged version of the systems advocacy framework (see Appendix J).

a) A major factor in determining the "shape" of the intervention was to utilize a model that seemed congruent with the agency's method's and yet compatible with the Framework. A decision was reached to employ a staff committee, with some consumer representation.

b) The Terms of Reference were negotiated at this time. Closure was reached on the makeup of the Committee (agency to decide), the role of the author, the Committee's goals, and the power of the Committee (recommend to the Executive Director).

c) It was decided that the author would be a full member of the Committee. The author would be responsible for all research related to the Committee and would act as facilitator during the process.

d) The author was to develop an abridged version of the Framework and provide it to the Committee members for review prior to the first Committee meeting.

By the end of these meetings, the author identified himself as having successfully completed stages one (exploring organizational needs) and two (contracting) of the Entry phase and achieving partial closure on the third stage (physically entering the system). As outlined by Dougherty (1990), the stage of "exploring organizational needs" is achieved

when the consultant and the consultee agree that a consultation should proceed after discussion of mutual needs. Successful completion of the contract stage is achieved when the two parties formally agree on the nature of the consultation (intervention agreement).

**The Setting: The Canadian Mental Health Association - Winnipeg Region.**

As part of the negotiation process, a profile of the agency was developed in conjunction with the consultees (The Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager). This profile was completed using Hasenfeld's (1983) model for identifying the internal and external environment of the organization. The purpose of the profile was twofold. First, the author wished to formally establish a rationale for why the agency seemed particularly well placed to test such a framework, as demonstrated through its services and commitment to consumer empowerment. Second, as identified by Cox (1984), it was important for the agency to have a firm understanding of itself for purposes of undertaking actions, as such a profile can help identify organizational strengths and weaknesses.

The agency profile was based on Newman and Newman's Advocacy Program Evaluation report (1990), various agency documents, and the opinions and statements of the agency's Executive Director and Advocacy Program Manager. Consultation did not occur with consumer groups or agency line staff regarding this profile.

The Canadian Mental Health Association-Winnipeg Region was home to the office of the Mental Health Advocacy Program, only one of two programs (the other being the Ombudsman at The Canadian Mental Health Association - Manitoba Division) in Winnipeg that was providing advocacy services specifically for individuals with serious mental health issues. This program had traditionally provided individual, client-based advocacy services. However, in 1992, the organization received a mandate from its Board of Directors to move towards incorporating a systems advocacy approach, hence the desire to participate in a mutual exploration of the proposed framework. The other factor which was prominent in selecting C.M.H.A. as the site of the practicum intervention was the organization's strong formal commitment to consumer empowerment.

1. "Services should be oriented to integration and independence" (C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg Region, 1990).
2. "Services should recognize the rights of individuals to define their own needs" (C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg Region, 1990).
3. "Programs should increase an individuals capabilities and competencies" (C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg Region, 1990).
4. "Services should ensure and facilitate effective consumer participation in planning and design" (C.M.H.A. - Wpg. Region,1990).
5. "C.M.H.A. advocates, in full partnership with consumers, for consumers' rights to total participation in society. This includes advocating for provision of consumers' basic needs, their special needs related to their disability, the recognition of their abilities and their right to participate in decisions about their own lives" (C.M.H.A. National, 1992).

It was felt by the author that because C.M.H.A. presented a strong consumer empowerment philosophy, that it would be compatible with the ideological foundations of the systems advocacy framework.

### **The Setting/The Organization.**

#### **Brief Historical Overview:**

The Canadian Mental Health Association-Winnipeg Region was created in 1983. The organization was founded out of the recognition that there was a need within the City of Winnipeg for mental health services, both in terms of numbers but additionally, and perhaps most importantly, an increase in mental health services that were more consumer-oriented. At this time, the organization identified two objectives of primary concern:

- a) To redress the imbalance in institutional/community based mental health services.
- b) To establish a mental health advocacy program (Newman and Newman, 1990).

The second objective was realized in 1987 when funding was acquired for the establishment of the Mental Health Advocate Program (Newman and Newman, p.10).

### **Organizational/Program Analysis.**

As was discussed earlier in the practicum report, it was imperative that the organization

undertaking the change efforts have a clear understanding of itself. Such an analysis was necessary in determining such factors as what resources the organization possessed (or did not possess), what strategies and tactics it would condone, under what circumstances it functioned the best, etc. For this reason, an analysis of both the internal and external environment of the organization and the mental health advocacy program were undertaken. The analysis was used to gain a better understanding of the organization's and the program's structures and dynamics (both formal and informal), for the purpose of determining those factors which might be deemed relevant when considering what strategies would be acceptable as part of the advocacy process. The analysis was completed using the organizational assessment component from within a systems advocacy framework (Issue Action).<sup>16</sup>

### INTERNAL

1) AUTHORITY: Formal structure-Hierarchical, Informal structure-Collegial.

Background: C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg Region employed a typical structure for a non-profit organization ie. standard hierarchical pyramid (See appendix a: "Organizational Structure"). However, it would appear that current personal management styles were far more collegial in manner than implied by the structure of the organization.

C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg Region had been headed by a volunteer board of directors with a composition which "reflected the diverse nature of the general community". The board played a fairly active role in the day-to-day affairs of the organization through the many committees and subcommittees which were established between the board level and the program level. This situation created a number of problems:

a) Board members did not always possess a value base consistent with that of the organization. Many initiatives were slowed by fundamental value differences within the board.

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<sup>16</sup> For the purposes of this practicum, an in-depth analysis is being completed only of the advocacy program. In the event that the organizational change may impact on or involve other agency programs, then a similar analysis should also be undertaken on those programs.

b) Roles and responsibilities (board members *vis - a - vis* staff) were not clearly delineated. Staff often waited for guidance from board and or committees while board often waited for guidance from staff.

c) Some board members were relatively active in the day to day affairs of the organization, although not always productively. Some board members became enveloped in staffing issues, many of which were of a more mundane matter. No clear parameters for board involvement in the day-to-day functioning of the organization existed.

As a result of these issues, the organization made a decision in 1992 to undertake the following changes:

a) The “Carver Model of Board Governance” (Carver, 1990) was adopted. This model was established to clearly delineate the role of staff and board members. Board members concerned themselves with “ends” ie. organizational goals and objectives, mandates, etc., while staff concerned themselves with “means” ie. day to day activities related to the fulfilment of the above. As such, board members were no longer inappropriately involved with day-to-day operations.

b) Individuals had to have a value base consistent with that of the organization (see organization’s statement of philosophy) in order to be eligible to sit on the Board of Directors.

c) Most committees, given their relation to process issues, were now offshoots of the organization’s various programs. Board members who sat on these committees did so as private individuals, not as board representatives. The board currently had but two committees. The Nominating Committee, whose sole purpose was the recruitment of board members, and the Steering Committee. This was a psuedo-executive committee whose job it was to act as primary advisors to the Board at large by preparing agenda material for discussion and analysis. This differed from the previous Steering Committee, which really



was a power clique within the Board that essentially made all critical decisions. Under the current structure, this group was less powerful and critical decision-making has been returned to the Board at large. It was, then, an attempt to have organizational guidance by system rather than by dominant personality(ies).

The relationship between the Board and the Executive Director was an employer - employee one. The Executive Director was hired to run the organization and was responsible for the hiring and supervision of other agency personnel, both administration and service program staff. Each program area was supervised by a Program Manager. These individuals acted as liaisons between their programs and the Executive Director. They were directly responsible for the performance of their particular program. This relationship was unchanged from the model used prior to the Carver model but it clarified this relationship.

Essentially, these changes made clear distinctions between Board duties (Ends) and staff duties (Means), and ameliorated the often misplaced personal power of Board members. This model of Board governance then, gave the agency power to develop the Board's mandated goal of systems advocacy as they saw fit (within established boundaries set by the agency).

2) PRODUCT (SERVICES): In its current form, C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg Region. provided services through three different programs<sup>17</sup> other than the Advocacy program.

a) Options in Support and Housing: Assisted "...adults with psychiatric disabilities to become satisfied and successful in their chosen homes and communities through the development of skills and supports" (C.M.H.A. Annual Report-1992). The program provided such services as assisting in the development of skills needed to live in a particular environment, assisting in the locating of safe and affordable housing and assisting people in developing relationships with their community.

b) Employment Dimensions: A "...supported employment service for persons who have experienced mental health problems to choose, get and keep' employment in the

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<sup>17</sup> It should be mentioned that at the time this report was written, C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg. Region had just received funding to establish a consumer-controlled safe house for mental health consumers. Analysis of the Mental Health Advocacy Program will be detailed separately.

competitive workplace” (C.M.H.A. Annual Report-1992). The program provided assistance in the areas of needs assessment, career counselling, employment searches and on-site employment support. As well, the program has recently taken on the responsibility of private fundraising for the organization.

c) Public Communications: The Public Education program “promotes positive images of individuals with mental health problems, to inform the public about mental health issues and to reduce the stigma associated with serious mental health problems” (C.M.H.A. Annual Report-1992). The program achieved this goal through distribution of information, speaking engagements, participation in police recruit training and the sponsorship of the Winnipeg Mental Health Network.

3) ACCOUNTABILITY TO CONSUMERS: No clearly defined role/process for consumer accountability.

Organization: The organization had a (formal) philosophy which was based on a consumer/client directed model of service. This philosophy appeared to be limited almost exclusively to individual case situations, as identified by the services provided by the organization (Cole, 1992).

With regard to hiring, part of the formal criteria gave additional weight to those individuals who identified themselves as consumers. However, no formal affirmative action recruitment program was in place.

Board: C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg Region has always welcomed and endeavoured to recruit self - identifying consumers. No specific number of seats were set aside on the Board for consumer representatives. At the time of the practicum intervention, there was one identified consumer sitting on the Board.

Programs: The “Options in Support and Housing” program operated two consumer committees, both of which were more of a recreational nature. However, the program was establishing a “Participant Advisory committee” which would facilitate consumer input into more fundamental issues. The “Employment Dimensions” project also had established a “Participant support group” which provided consumers with input into the program. As well, The Mental Health Advocacy Program was in the process of establishing a “Peer

Advocacy Committee”, which would provide individual consumers with formal advocacy training.

While consumers appeared to enjoy a certain level of input into the organization and its programs, there appeared to be little in the way of formal accountability to, and control by, consumers. Given the strong empowerment component attached to the Framework, the author wondered how this aspect of the model might be received by the agency.

4) **RULES**: Staff had formal input into procedures and policies related to “means”.<sup>18</sup>

5) **DECISION-MAKING**: Formal: relatively centralized, Informal: relatively collegial. Decision-making power was vested in a few key individuals (executive director and program managers). Staff have formal input into but not control over, the decision-making process.

6) **PERSONNEL (Paid and Volunteer)**: The staff of C.M.H.A. could be generally be categorized as Caucasian, and female.

Among the paid staff, twenty five of the twenty six staff could be labelled as “Caucasian”. Twenty of the twenty six staff were female. Half the staff possessed social work degrees. Four of the paid staff were self-identifying consumers.

7) **DIVISION OF LABOUR**: Can generally be categorized as “specialist” (skills are non-transferable within the organization),but degree of “generalization” (transferable skills within the organization) among staff varied within the organization.

Generally, staff were hired for specialized skills. Staff hired for one program would not necessarily be appropriate for another program. This was less true of the more senior staff, who enjoyed more generalist roles within the organization at earlier dates. Staff in the Employment and Housing programs had some transferable skills because both were rehabilitation-based programs. As well, all staff had been hired in part for their perceived commitment to the organization’s value base. Also, all positions within the organization that deal with consumers had an active advocacy component to the job. This advocacy was largely case specific and individual in nature. Staff then, appeared to have a shared value base, if not always transferable skills.

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<sup>18</sup> Carver (1990) defines “means” as items related to “How to get the job done”.

8) **INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS**: Relationships among staff could generally be categorized as informal, both within and between authority levels.

A number of factors come into play when examining the nature of relationships among employees. While factors such as individual personality traits, variant groupings, etc. all played roles, two of the most significant factors for C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg. appeared to be the "nature of work" and "physical proximity of programs". The two programs that were seen as being the most isolated were the Mental Health Advocacy Program and the Public Communications Program. These two programs were physically the most removed within the organization's building. As well, both involved a considerable amount of "out of office" work.<sup>19</sup> The other two programs also had a certain degree of commonality and thus, had more opportunity for interplay. Relationships were informal, then, but tended to be stronger among programs that consistently inter-related. The organization was attempting to increase communication among programs by having staff make rotating presentations to other agency staff on a topic in their area. As well, the organization had an active social committee. The agency also had monthly general staff meetings and Program Manager meetings.

9) **JOB DUTIES**: Job postings were based on a number of formal criteria, such as value base, consumer experience, appropriate skills, etc. Job duties were determined by formal job description, although a number of positions needed revised descriptions. Delegation of duties may also be determined by seniority and other (unspecified) informal factors. Job performance evaluations were still largely informal and needed to be made more formalized as the agency felt that formal job descriptions that accurately reflected the work done in individual positions were important. This issue was currently a priority for the organization.

10) **CONSTITUTION AND GOAL ORIENTATION**: Organizational and program goals were formally articulated and to which it was believed to be largely adhered.

Constitution and goals were all formally articulated, although the recent adoption of the

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<sup>19</sup> The one person from the advocacy program who is in the office all day also has her ability to establish relationships curtailed by the fact that, as the information referral person, she is on the phone most of the day and is relatively isolated from interacting with co-workers.

“Carver Model of Board Governance” has resulted in changes, some of which were in the transition phase. For example, some of the “ends” statements were still in process, as were aspects of the Public Communications Program, which had incorporated fundraising into its program responsibilities.

11) **NATURE OF SERVICES**: The services of the agency were primarily change-oriented ie., advocacy, consumer safe house, etc. Much of the change action appeared to be individually based. All agency programs espoused some degree of client directiveness.

12) **DEPTH AND BREADTH OF MANDATE**: The geographic mandate of the organization was limited to the City of Winnipeg. However, the Advocacy Program included the Selkirk Mental Health Centre within its informal operating boundaries. As well, the Advocacy Program had dealt with cases in other areas of Manitoba, primarily because no formal advocacy services existed for consumers in these areas.

The only limiting aspect of the organization’s mandate was that services applied to individuals with serious mental health issues. While the organization theoretically would undertake any case within this mandate, it has no real capacity for dealing with the issues and concerns of many non - mainstream consumer groups ie. immigrant, refugee, Aboriginal, mental health capacity. This was viewed by the agency as an area of concern given the ethnic diversity of the City of Winnipeg.

#### External (General)

##### 1) Factors in the larger environment:

a) National: The primary factor appeared to be the current national economic and fiscal situations. The stress caused by the recession (unemployment, poverty, family stress, health cutbacks) caused an increase in the incidence of mental health problems (C.M.H.A. internal documents, undated). This situation was exacerbated by current revamping of the Canadian social safety net, the nature of which threatened mental health consumers and other vulnerable people through potential reductions in funding and services.

b) Provincial: The Provincial government’s mental health reform had created the most positive atmosphere for community mental health in recent memory. There appeared

to be aspects of the health reform movement which threatened this change, however. For example, there appeared to be an imbalance in terms of the over-representation of members of Manitoba's medical community on the Provincial Advisory Committee on Mental Health Reform. As well, it was not clear how committed the government was to implementing this reform and the concern was that the "reform" was simply an attempt to reduce funding to institutionally-based services under the guise of health reform.

c) **Municipal:** While the municipal government remained a relatively minor player in the local mental health field, it had the potential to play a greater role through its provision of public health nurses. At this time however, the public health program was relatively unstructured and, according to the agency, public health nurses do not play a prominent role in providing mental health services.

#### External (Task)

1) Providers of Fiscal Resources: Provincial Government-66%, United Way-30%. Fundraising-4%.

The organization had only recently undertaken active fundraising efforts. Until recently, fundraising was a relatively informal process which was the responsibility of a Board committee. This area was now a program function. This move was made in recognition by the agency of the fact that the agency must develop a more concerted approach to fundraising, given the current economic climate. As well, based on the cuts to programs providing advocacy services in the last provincial budget, independent funding would be needed to support advocacy campaigns that involved the government as a target. This suggested a very real need for the agency to find alternative sources of revenue or potentially jeopardize its funding to the Advocacy Program, as well as others.

2) Providers of Legitimation and Authority: Supporters were primarily defined by value base. C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg Region saw itself as closest to those with similar value bases (Community-based service system, consumer control, choice and empowerment, and finally integration), even if they were outside the field of mental health. This would include such organizations as Association for Community Living, the Independent Living

Resource Centre, etc. Other providers of legitimation and authority were individual consumers, families and friends, divisional and national office of C.M.H.A., individual professionals, board members, the provincial government, various laws and acts, any organizations and institutions which employed its services, and funders.

3) Providers of Clients: As above, although many clients were “provided” involuntarily by institutions ie. human rights violations.

4) Perception: The mental health “community” was informally defined by the agency “as the conglomeration of all stakeholders ie. individuals, self-help groups, families, professionals, etc.” Within each sub-community there were supporters and detractors, although relatively few supporters within the medical community.

5) Providers of Complementary Services: primarily affiliations were based on advocacy and social justice.

6) Competing Organizations: Positive “competition” with self-help groups. The agency was not interested in maintaining ownership, but more concerned with winning “value battles” with those organizations seen as less supportive of consumer controlled philosophies, such as the medical system. In other words, the agency may lose clients to more philosophically aligned groups, such as self - help groups and disability organizations. This was seen as positive if a progressive (consumer empowerment model) agency or group was the recipient of clients. The concern was losing consumers to less empowerment focused groups, such as hospitals, and other medical model groups.

7) Consumers and Recipients of Organization’s Products: Primarily individuals with serious mental health problems. Other parties benefiting included all previously mentioned stakeholders.

### **Organizational Analysis/Summary.**

In order to determine what significance the results of the organizational analysis might have had to the construction of the actual practicum intervention, the author critically examined the results of the analysis. A number of (potential) issues were identified as being relevant for discussion with agency representatives during the consultation process.

a) **Authority:** Despite C.M.H.A.'s rather formal hierarchical structure, the day-to-day workings of the organization were quite informal. This suggested that management staff had a relatively high degree of informal accountability to staff, as well as indicating that staff have a fair degree of input into the daily decision-making process. Such a situation seemed to lend itself well to an intervention which Hale & Williams (1989) described as having a strong "bottom-up" approach, that was, an intervention that provided all staff with input into the process.

The organization's decision to adopt the Carver Model of Board Governance also provided some indicators that the organization itself was moving towards greater competence in dealing with issues in a more systemic manner. The Carver model moved away from the more traditional models of governance by personality and ad hoc management. The adoption of a process which used system-based management was viewed as positive in helping to develop an organizational mindset that would generally be more attuned to approaching issues in a more systemic way.

b) **Product:** C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg currently provided services through its four programs, each dealing with specific aspects of the consumer community ie. housing, employment, advocacy, etc. As it was likely that all programs would be involved in systems advocacy efforts in some way, shape or form, it seemed appropriate that each program has some formal representation within the change process. What was unclear was which staff would be involved and in what way.

c) **Consumer Accountability:** C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg had made a strong formal commitment to the concept of consumer empowerment, as established in the agency's mission statement and goals. This commitment helped establish a theoretical foundation for the involvement of consumers in the advocacy process. Despite this strong theoretical commitment, C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg acknowledged that there was considerable room in the organization for improvement in the areas of consumer control and accountability. The author felt that identification of those barriers (lack of consumer knowledge around certain areas, political divisions within the consumer community, etc), if any, which might have led to the current situation, might be central to determining the levels of consumer



involvement in the process.

d) **Rules:** Under the Carver model “ends” were determined by the organization’s Board. This suggested that advocacy efforts, while undertaken by agency staff, were shaped in some degree by a framework determined by the Board. This framework could include such issues as codes of conduct (which types of actions would be condoned), types of issues selected for systems advocacy, etc. This suggested that greater information was needed on the Framework and the role of the Board in the practicum process.

e) **Decision-Making:** The decision-making process mirrored the authority structure of the organization. Powers were vested in the hands of a few key individuals, but decisions were normally made only after consultation had occurred with staff. This again would suggest that even if only a small group of people were responsible for working directly with the author, that all staff should have some degree of input into the process.

f) **Personnel:** The vast majority of the organization’s staff could be categorized as Caucasian and female. While this in and of itself does not raise any particular concerns, it was the author’s opinion that those developing the advocacy process should be representative as the community they serve. In this way, there would seem to be less likelihood of a bias developing against a particular segment of the consumer community.

g) **Division of Labour:** Two significant issues could be identified when examining the division of labour within the organization. First, staff had fairly specialized skills. This would again suggest the need to involve individuals from all agency programs in order to ensure that the wealth of all of the different skill bases were involved. Second, all staff had been identified by the agency’s Executive Director as sharing a common value and skill base with regard to consumer empowerment and individual advocacy. This should be conducive to the support and establishment of an agency-wide systems advocacy program, although the focus on individual advocacy will likely result in the need for additional skill development. As well, it was possible that some workers who had espoused consumer empowerment on an individual level, might feel differently towards a systems approach to empowerment. This process had the potential to identify through action, staff people who paid lip service to the agency’s goals and those who actively embraced them.

h) Interpersonal Relations: As previously mentioned, the workplace environment of C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg had been identified as being relatively informal and collegial, even between line staff and management. This reiterated once again the need for a formal process that was largely inclusive of the staff population. Another observation worthy of note was the reference to the relative isolation of the Advocacy and Public Communication programs. These programs were numerically smaller (total of three staff in the two programs), were geographically isolated from the larger programs, tended to work individually (especially the Program Managers, who often worked out of the office<sup>20</sup>) and do not often need to work in close conjunction with the other programs. With regard to the systems advocacy process, this might have suggested a need to provide the staff from outside the Program with some additional insight into the workings of the Advocacy Program. More importantly, however, the development of an intervention which included members from throughout the organization, had the potential to form a much greater working bond between the Advocacy Program and the other programs. This was particularly true if it would ultimately increase the organization's efficiency within the realm of systems advocacy being developed by the whole agency.

i) Job Duties: No doubt one of the most significant questions that would be asked by staff was "How will the move to systems advocacy affect my job duties"? "Will these changes increase my workload"? "Will I be forced to undertake duties that I don't understand or do not wish to do"? As Hale and Williams (1989) observed, failure to involve staff in a meaningful way in the change process could lead to feelings of fear and vulnerability among staff members. The organization had identified the need to make the performance evaluation process more formal. This process could have acted as a catalyst for that process, as the organization examined the possibility of role and process changes.

j) Services: Services provided by C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg had been identified as being change-oriented in nature. In this sense, the move towards systems advocacy could be viewed as a simple extension of existing services. Again, most of this change was individually-based and the movement toward system advocacy might present problems to

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<sup>20</sup> The author is reminded of many of his informal conversations with agency staff re: the program manager of the advocacy program, "She's a damn hard worker. I just don't know what she's working on!".

some staff who had become accustomed or supportive of a specific type of change focus.

### **The Mental Health Advocacy Program.**

At the time of the analysis the Mental health Advocacy Program employed two full-time staff. Services provided by the program were reflective of the five program goals:

*1. To advance the human and legal rights of psychiatric patients in hospitals and consumers of community-based mental health services;*

*2. To inform consumers, families, institutional and community-based service providers, and the community at large about psychiatric services and human and legal rights;*

*3. To receive and investigate the complaints of consumers, both in institutions and in the community, and to negotiate or assist with negotiation of solutions based on the consumer's instructions;*

*4. To refer consumers, when necessary, to other community advocacy resources, such as lawyers, physicians, and community-based help organizations and*

*5. To monitor existing legislative-based practices with a view to identifying areas for law reform either through proposed law amendments or class action litigation. (C.M.H.A. program outline, p.1).*

While both program members were involved in undertaking the program goals, goals three and five were handled primarily by the Program Manager, while goal number four was dealt with largely by the other program staff person, the Information Coordinator.

With regard to program goal #1, the focus of the program's work had traditionally focused on issues relating to rights violations in/by institutional settings. According to the Program Manager, this institutional focus has decreased. While it was not totally clear why the number of complaints involving hospital settings has dropped significantly, it was the Program Manager's belief that this could be attributed to three factors. First, Legal Aid

access has greatly improved for consumers with complaints. Whereas the Advocate's Office would have been previously involved in order to gain legal representation, many people were now able to go directly to the Legal Aid offices and be heard. Second, a greater number of private lawyers seemed prepared to take on casework involving the mental health system or consumers of mental health services. Finally, many hospital staff appeared to be more forthcoming in advising consumers of their rights and assisting them in completing paperwork. This seemed to indicate that the role of the advocate within the mental health system was finally coming to be accepted.

Public education around the Mental Health Act and the rights of consumers had, and continues to be, an integral part of the advocate's role. Public education tended to focus on various professional groups ie. nurses, medical students, public health nurses, police, social workers, etc., although work was also done with groups such as high school students and other citizen groups.

The majority of the Program Manager's time<sup>21</sup> was spent dealing with issues of advocacy related to individual complaints by consumers of mental health services. This service was a consumer-directed one, with the advocate acting on the instructions of the complainant or their appointed designate (public trustee, family member, etc.). Issues which had been identified as being the most prominent were "review of committal", "access to legal services", "discharge plans", (Newman & Newman, 1990) etc. Issues traditionally had been dealt with on a first-come, first-serve basis, although this process was affected by many other factors, including the discretion of the advocate, who could make decisions to reprioritize as she saw fit, although primarily on the basis of urgency.

Another significant service provided by the advocacy program was resource referral. This aspect of the program was the primary responsibility of the Program's Information Officer.

Despite the existence of a program mandate to undertake systems issues through legal advocacy mechanisms, few, if any, cases had historically been undertaken. This had

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<sup>21</sup> It should also be noted that under the program structure at that time, the Mental Health Advocacy Program staff enjoyed considerable autonomy, especially the Program Manager, much of whom's work occurred outside of the office.

occurred even though the advocates identified systems advocacy as critical to achieving real and lasting change (Newman & Newman, 1990). Unfortunately, time limitations forced the program to focus exclusively on areas relating to individual case work, primarily around issues relating to abuses of the provincial Mental Health Act.

In 1992 the Board of C.M.H.A. - Winnipeg Region made a decision to start the development of a systems advocacy component to the existing Advocacy Program. As established under the Carver Model for Board Governance, the Board developed a set of four primary "ends" to guide the efforts of the advocacy program. These "ends" were (and remain);

- a) Advocacy efforts must support and promote the concept of consumer empowerment.
- b) Advocacy efforts must lead to the creation of a community based service system.
- c) Advocacy efforts must support and promote the philosophy of consumer directed service.
- d) Advocacy efforts must strive to alter existing societal public attitudes towards mental illness and people with mental illnesses (Agency "end" statements, undated).

Program staff were directed to develop and implement, as they saw fit, a process for selecting and undertaking systems advocacy issues.<sup>22</sup> At this time the program staff developed an informal process for the one - time selection of issues to be undertaken. No formal objectives were set and the process was viewed as open-ended.

Systems issues were informally defined as "any problem which appeared to have a root in some larger system", as well as having been encountered (the problem) by the Advocacy Program in large numbers (Kruger, 1994).

Selection of systems advocacy issues was undertaken by program staff. Five issues were chosen from among those that the Advocacy program staff and the Executive Director felt were most important. Using informal consensus, these individuals then

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<sup>22</sup> At this time, the program manager was Ms. Brenda Silver and the Assistant Manager was Ms. Ellen Kruger, now the Program Manager.

selected on the basis of the program staff's past experiences with client issues<sup>23</sup>. The five issues chosen (and which were currently being worked on) were as follows:

- a) Increased access to Legal Aid for consumers (campaign successfully completed).
- b) Assaults on consumers in institutions.
- c) Removal of institutional policies which were viewed as an infringement of basic human rights.<sup>24</sup>
- d) Issues affecting consumers which were related to the social assistance system.<sup>25</sup>
- e) Therapy services for low income victims of abuse.

A decision was made between the Advocacy Program Manager and the Executive Director at this time that 25 per cent of the advocate's time would be delegated towards work on systems advocacy issues.

#### **Program Analysis/Summary.**

The author's cursory analysis of the advocacy program, aided by commentary from the Program Manager, revealed a number of issues worthy of consideration in the development of the organization's systems advocacy program.

The lack of a formal systems advocacy structure, combined with the lack of existing advocacy supports for consumers, had made it extremely difficult for the advocate to ensure that 25 per cent of her work time was indeed spent on systems advocacy. This would seem to indicate the need for some form of structure that "protects" the program's time delegated to this area.

Another issue related to the above is the general need for structure. Program staff

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<sup>23</sup> Upon reflection, the Program Manger was able to identify a number of informal criteria that had been used in selecting issues. These included "severity of harm", "ethical obligation", "existing community linkages (for support)", and "quantity (of problem)".

<sup>24</sup> As manifested through efforts to remove hospital "pyjama policies".

<sup>25</sup> As manifested through efforts to have the costs of telephones and bus passes included in social assistance payments.

were essentially placed in a position where work had started before a planned method for undertaking such action was put in place for dealing with the concept of systems advocacy. The possible ramifications of undertaking such initiatives in this fashion were discussed earlier in the report (see Introduction). The current Advocacy Program Manager, as well as her predecessor, both related their concerns about this, especially in light of what they felt was their lack of experience with undertaking formal systems advocacy (Kruger, 1993 & Silver, 1992). This would seem to highlight the need for a formal structure, as well as underlining the potential need for determining the level of staff comfort, given their current skill base, with undertaking systems advocacy. The intervention, then, may also serve as a training mechanism for staff to gain a greater understanding and comfort level with systems advocacy. Further to this, the author speculated as to whether or not the systems advocacy initiative would result in a greater need for agency programs to work together, and what impact this might have on a program that had traditionally operated in a very autonomous fashion.

### **The Consultation Intervention.**

**The Committee:** As was agreed on in the intervention negotiation, a Systems Advocacy Advisory Committee<sup>26</sup> was established within the agency. The specific composition of the Committee was to be determined by the agency, but there was agreement that there would be representation from the consumer community. In the end, the Committee's composition was developed by the organization in a manner that they felt best fit with the the agency's methods, i.e. working committee.

- a) Executive Director.
- b) Program Manager (Advocacy).
- c) Program Manager (Employment Dimensions).
- d) Program Manager (Options in Support and Housing).
- e) Member (Consumer community).
- f) Board member.

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<sup>26</sup> AS clarified later, the Committee made its recommendations to the Executive Director.

**The Setting:** It was also established that meetings would be held in the Boardroom of C.M.H.A. - Wpg. Region.

**The Consultant:** The role of the consultant/author was recast by the organization to take on more of a facilitator/resource role, and placed the consultant more in the position of an internal consultant. This was most consistent with those consultation roles identified by Dougherty as being the “collaborator” and the “fact finder”.

### **Projected Intervention Strategies.**

Dougherty rightfully pointed out that the effective consultant is the one who can deal with a wide range of situations, and their corresponding intervention styles. Based on the context of the actual consultation and, the information gathered on the agency it was anticipated that all of the aforementioned interventions would be employed at one stage or another.

It was anticipated that the Acceptant style would generally be employed given the need for the consultant to demonstrate that he was sensitive to the needs and directions of the agency. As well, within the Committee itself, it was anticipated that there might be dissenting opinions and varying degrees of support for the systems advocacy program, and that these positions must be heard.

The Catalytic Intervention style was also seen as another style which would likely be employed on a fairly regular basis. This projection stemmed from the author’s feelings that the nature of the model, combined with the Advocacy Program’s relatively limited experience in using data to guide its advocacy efforts, suggested that some time would be needed to collect and provide such information to the Committee

The Theory and Principles Intervention was seen as the intervention style that would be first employed during the author’s coverage of the theoretical foundation of the model. It was anticipated that this intervention would be used on an as - needed basis whenever discussion arose about the theoretical aspects of the model.

It was hoped that the Prescriptive Intervention would not be used except where deemed truly necessary. The Consultant desired to employ a consultation process that was



as egalitarian and “accessible” as possible. As well, there was an identified need to develop an egalitarian context with the hope that this might help facilitate a mindset for putting the agency at ease as to consumer involvement. It was recognized, however, that the complex nature of the topic, combined with the Committee’s relative lack of experience with Systems Advocacy, would necessitate the use of this intervention on more than one occasion.

The greatest concern was with the Confrontation Intervention strategy. The concern centered around the fact that the state of trust that existed between consultant and the agency was relatively fragile. The fear was that the employment of the Confrontational intervention would be interpreted as an assault on the agency and lead to a further deterioration in the level of trust. Because the Consultant was loathe for this to happen, there was a fear that this would impair his ability to employ the Confrontational intervention style in situations where it was deemed appropriate.

### **Phase II. The Intervention.**

In the intervention contract it was agreed that a series of committee meetings would be held to meet the Terms of Reference of the Committee (see Appendix H). Informal agreement was reached between the organization and the consultant that the process would terminate in approximately June of 1995, or slightly later if the Committee was close to completing one of its objectives.

While goals were established with regard to what the anticipated outcomes of the Committee’s work, these goals were not broken down on a meeting - by - meeting basis. It was decided that this would be left to the discretion of the author/facilitator to develop on an ongoing basis. It was established that the author would lead the Committee meetings, although it was expected that other members could assist if there was an identified need by the agency or the author.

Prior to each meeting, an assessment was undertaken by the consultant to determine issues and/or problems with which the consultant might deal. As part of the intervention process, committee members were asked to sign an “Agreement on Participation in

Advisory Committee” (see Appendix D). This agreement requested the Committee member’s voluntary involvement in the practicum intervention process by outlining their involvement in the process, the information required by the author, and how the information would be used and protected. Following the meeting, the consultant then analyzed the content, process and outcome of each meeting in preparation for the next meeting. This was done through the review of the meetings using audio recordings.

Following each meeting, feedback forms were given to Committee members and were filled out at the end of each meeting (see Appendix E). These forms were used to assess the performance of the author and the perceived value of the particular meeting with regard to systems advocacy.

### **The Meetings of the Systems Advocacy Working Committee**

The intent of these meetings, from the author’s perspective, was to assess the validity of the Systems Advocacy Framework, in as much as this could be accomplished within the time frames established by the practicum process and the intervention agreement. This was also a goal of the agency, although additionally the intervention process provided the agency the opportunity to act as a catalyst for their long term systems advocacy plans, i.e. establishment of a working committee, consultation with the consumer community, and so on.

#### **Preparation**

Considerable attention was paid by the author to the preparing for the consultation process. This preparation was undertaken in a number of ways:

- Development of an abridged version of the Framework for ease of understanding.
- Creation of a “Guide for Considering Changes” that identified questions the committee might ask, and specific factors that members might watch for.
- A review of Dougherty’s (1990) sections on Consultation skills and intervention styles.

Prior to the first meeting modest attempts were made to prepare Committee members as much as possible for the intervention process. This proved somewhat difficult

given that lack of lead time that was involved (two weeks). Originally, the author had hoped to spend sometime focusing on teamwork exercises that would assist in developing a “team” focus for the Committee. This idea was not approved by the agency, who felt that this was unnecessary given that all members of the committee, save one, were co-workers.

In the end, committee preparation was limited to committee members receiving an abridged version of the Systems Advocacy Framework (see Appendix I) one week prior to the initial meeting. It was unclear to the author how many of the committee members had time to read the document prior to the first meeting, but it clearly was not all members.

**Meeting 1: (February 2, '95).**

a) **Content:** Based on the consultant’s understanding of the arrangement (see “Appendix G”), the meeting was intended to provide a general overview of the Systems Advocacy Framework prior to taking on more detailed work. Of particular concern to the consultant was the section relating to the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of the Systems Advocacy Framework. Understanding this component of the Framework was considered critical to understanding the functioning of the model, given its somewhat “radical” premises.

b) **Process:** Given the aforementioned concerns, the Consultant planned on using two intervention styles during the meeting. The first role would be that of the “expert” (Dougherty, p. 26). It was anticipated that the committee members might interpret the Framework as somewhat “ivory tower”, given the theoretical nature of the Framework, and its relative size. As such, it was felt that the meeting would generally be a presentation format, with the consultant reviewing the model. The Consultant was also aware of the need to establish working relationships with other Committee members and anticipated using an acceptant - style intervention if problems arose regarding acceptance.

c) **Outcome:** As a result of a miscommunication between the Executive Director and the Consultant, the agenda was not initially approved. The general review of the Framework was considered too time consuming. Instead, the Executive Director asked that a general review be made of the theoretical underpinnings of the Framework and that the

Committee start on an active review of the first stage of the Framework proper.

A second issue encountered was that the two of the Committee members were not present. The Manager of the Employment Dimension Program could not attend due to a crisis, and the Board member had declined the invitation to sit on the Committee due to work commitments. The Consultant was unaware that these individuals would not be present. This resulted in two members being absent from the critical initial meeting, one of which declining to participate altogether. While not formally dealt with, the author noted that he needed to try to connect with the missing committee member prior to the next meeting to advise her of the meetings outcome and its content.

With regard to the opening for a Board member on the Committee, a unilateral decision was made by the Executive Director to invite an external, professional advocate. This caused the consultant some concern (see "Appendix K2"). The first concern was that this situation had not been relayed to the author/consultant. The immediate effect was that a Committee which in the Consultant's mind might already be in danger of being too "narrow" in its makeup was becoming narrower. The second concern related to the need for a second advocate on the Committee and how this might be interpreted by the agency's own advocate. This issue was not addressed further by the Consultant who, quite frankly, was too overwhelmed by the process to adequately respond. With hindsight, both issues should have been raised privately with the Executive Director.

As to the dynamics of the Committee, two issues were identified by the consultant. The first issue related to the lack of involvement by the community member (see "Appendix K2"). This concern was noted, but was not viewed as a serious concern by the Consultant at this time unless it started to become a trend.

The second issue related to the prominence of the Executive Director within the Committee (see "Appendix K2"). During the meeting the Executive Director was very forceful in determining changes that needed to be made and how they would be made. Little response was forthcoming from the Consultant given his aforementioned frame of mind. Again, this situation was noted by the Consultant as something to concern himself with if it was seen as a trend.

d) **Evaluation**: Despite a considerable change in agenda, it was able to occur with relatively little disruption. A review of the philosophical and theoretical base was completed, although at times it was not clear to what level this was retained (see “Appendix K2”). Some changes were identified in the first stage of the Framework (see “Appendix K1”). These changes included, among others, revision of wording, identifying the need for a working definition of “systems”, general acceptance of those questions which dealt specifically with power decisions (who decides [and doesn’t decide], definitions for the terms “proactive” and “reactive”, and elimination of two points regarding *qualification criteria* as being inappropriate because they were viewed as being not applicable.

With regard to *physically entering the system* (Dougherty, p. 40), some progress was made in terms of being accepted by the attending committee members, although the progress was limited by the absence of two committee members and the distinct lack of participation by the community committee member.

A review of the performance feedback from the Committee members revealed a strong rating for the consultant’s performance. This was reaffirmed by comments made by some Committee members following the meeting (see “Appendix K2”, p. 6), who mentioned being “excited” and “validated” by the Systems Advocacy initiative. In giving consideration to the fact that this was the first meeting, the Consultant was generally pleased with the outcome of the meeting. An overall meeting median score of 1 was achieved (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 2: (February 16, ‘95).**

a) **Content**: Three issues were carried over from the previous meeting. The first issue related to the need for the organization to develop a working definition of the term “systems” (see “Appendix L”, p. 1). The Consultant provided four different working definitions of the term:

a) Oxford reference dictionary (1991): “a set of connected things or parts that form a whole or work together”.

b) **Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office:** "... legislative, policy and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric patients" (Church, 1991).

c) **National Association of Protection and Advocacy Services:** "...concerted action to reform the policies or mode of operations of a system of services such as the school system or the disabilities service system... The purpose of systemic advocacy is i) to reform the underlying structure of public and private institutions and systems which serve individuals with disabilities, in order to make them more accessible, fair, and effective; and ii) to expand the rights and entitlements of individuals with developmental disabilities or people with mental illnesses" (Human Services Research Institute-1991).

d) **Canadian Bar Association, Continuing Legal Education materials:** "The systemic approach is to identify the structural features of society which exclude certain groups, dismantle them and provide a substitute structure, or else to neutralize them in some other way" (Jurianz, 1983).

In the end, the Committee selected a slightly revised definition that was used by the Psychiatric Patient Advocate's Office in Ontario (see "Definitions") as the Committee felt that this definition came closest to meeting their needs. It was also agreed that a preamble should be added that defined the parameters of the recognized systems (what is the "mental health system"?). As well, it was agreed that it should include a statement identifying the concept of affecting the system by creating changes in its sub-systems.

The second issue also related to the development of working definitions, in this case for the terms "proactive" and "reactive". Identification of these, and other terms, were seen as necessary so that there was consistency in the interpretation and application of the terms.

Definitions were developed by the consultant (see "Appendix L"). Both definitions, as follows, were accepted, with some revision occurring to the definition of "proactive".

**Proactive advocacy:** "Identifying and confronting an issue which has yet to become a problem for consumers of mental health services (ie. impending legislation, proposed institutional policies, etc.), or has not yet maximized its negative effects on consumers of mental health services (ie. a new, negative practice is adopted in response to an individual case but is not yet widespread), or has serious effects on consumers/survivors but has not yet become a public issue".

**Reactive advocacy:** "Where advocacy efforts respond to an identified problem which has become entrenched, accepted as general policy, or has achieved maximum negative impact".

The final issue related to elaboration on different methods for information gathering (see "Appendix L"). Warheit, Bell and Schwab's (1984) elaboration on five different methods (key informant; community forum; rates-under treatment; social indicators and field survey) was used. All methods were seen as potentially acceptable. As well, it was noted that such methods would also be useful as guidelines for collecting information with regard to Issue Action (see "Appendix L1").

The last two points of the Framework's first stage were also covered. With regard to when issues should be gathered, the Committee determined that it was important to identify factors that might be of importance in determining when to collect potential issues(see "Appendix L1"). Ultimately, it was decided that the question would have to be answered at a later time, after other questions had been answered.

The final question related to what happened to issues after they had been gathered. This was identified as an important concern by Committee members, especially with regard to providing feedback to external individuals and/or groups (see "Appendix L1" ). The Committee noted the need for the organization to develop some form of information system for the overall processing of issue and information gathering.

b) **Process:** With regard to content, three issues of interest were noted. During the first Committee meeting the author raised his concerns regarding the need to pursue at least a cursory review of the Framework before starting detailed examination (see "Appendix K2"). At that time, the Executive Director had felt such a review would be unnecessary. During this meeting, however, one of the Committee members stated her concern that many of the questions asked by the consultant were not being answered (see "Appendix L2"). The Executive Director responded that these would be answered after the entire Framework had been reviewed. The fact was that the member was right in her or his observation, as was the Executive Director, who realized that some questions could not be answered until the entire Framework had been reviewed.

The second issue related to the overall structure of the intervention process. During the original intervention proposal in the Fall of 1994, the consultant proposed a number of components to the intervention process (focus on all stages the Framework equally, use of

a workshop format, committee made up of community members and line staff) that were rejected by the organization (see "Appendix L2"). By the end of the second Committee meeting then, all of the previously rejected structural aspects of the original proposal (workshop - type format and agency committee) seemed to be alive and well in the intervention process.

The final issue related to Committee composition. The agency was still unsuccessful to this point in time in attracting an external advocate to the Committee. This situation was magnified by the fact that the agency's own advocate was on holidays and unable to attend the February 16, '95 meeting. This was of some concern to the Consultant in light of the critical nature of the material being covered, and the important role that the Advocate would likely be expected to play within the systems advocacy process. To deal with this, the Consultant planned to meet with the Advocate prior to the next meeting to review the material on an individual basis.

With regard to non - structural process matters, a number of issues were identified (see "Appendix L2", p. 1 & 2). Primary to this was the issue of control. To this point in time the Executive Director was a prominent force in the Committee's operation. In fact, this dominance became so significant that at one point, after directing a question to the Committee, the consultant found himself turning directly to the Executive Director for the answer. In the Consultant's view, this situation related to two factors. The first had to do with the Executive Director's genuine level of enthusiasm for the process. Unfortunately, she often seemed unaware how her comments carried more weight as a result of her position. It was the author's opinion that these comments might be interpreted as "messages" by other Committee members. The second factor appeared to be one of trust. There still appeared a need on the part of the Executive Director to maintain control over the intervention process.

To ameliorate this situation, steps were taken to balance the viewpoints of Committee members. Because the Consultant was concerned about directly confronting the issue for fear of provoking fears around being too insensitive to agency concerns, he chose to indirectly respond this situation by focusing on supporting the views of other Committee



members . The Consultant recalled techniques employed in his mediation training, such as asking to hear other opinions and maintaining eye contact and congruent body position with others, as a way of saying that all would have a say, even when the discussion was deemed closed.

c) **Outcome:** The Committee was successful in meeting all agenda items identified for discussion. Closure was reached on the Issue Gathering and Filtering stage of the Framework. The Committee demonstrated more overall discussion and other Committee members were more involved. The Consultant attributed this to his change in handling committee discussion. The issue of the Executive Director's prominence was identified as an issue of potential concern for fear that she might overshadow other committee members.

d) **Evaluation:** While the review of the Framework sometimes seemed slow to Committee members, the overall progress was deemed satisfactory by the Consultant. Closure was reached on the first stage of the Framework, with increased input and insight from Committee members. As well, while concerns were noted regarding power imbalances within the group, the Consultant noted an overall increase in his abilities with regard to identifying issues during the meeting and not waiting until the next meeting. As well, some personal mannerisms, such as the repetitive use of certain words, were reduced or eliminated.

Feedback from Committee members indicated a high level of satisfaction with the consultation process and the consultant's performance. An overall median score of 1 was attained. As well, comments made by Committee members informally also spoke to positive progress in both the process and the Consultant's performance

In the Consultant's estimation, closure was achieved by the end of this meeting regarding the Entry phase, as identified by Dougherty (1990, p. 40). Every indication was that the Consultant had been accepted as an equal member of the committee and agency. Any outstanding concerns which might have existed could be attributed to the Framework itself and not the Consultant. With regard to the second consultation phase, Diagnosis, the stages of gathering information, defining the problem setting goals and generating possible

interventions were seen as specific to each step of the Framework review and as such, were constantly “in process” during the Framework review. An overall meeting median score of 1 was recognized (see Appendix X).

### **Meeting 3 (March 8, '95)**

a) **Content:** The first sixteen “considerations” related to the stage of Issue Selection were reviewed. While a number of factors were identified during this meeting (see “Appendix L1”), five in particular were of note. One such issue related to the introduction of some type of numerical scale to weight and/or score issues. While this suggestion was originally limited to the issues of how to assess the *gravity of harm* and *fairness to protected groups*, it was particularly noteworthy because it was the first tangible example of Committee members assessing and processing issues in a rational, logical, systemic manner. This “growth” was further identified in Committee members during the discussion regarding the meaning of issues being “selected” (Point “P”) for systems advocacy, when Committee members identified the need to create some type of formal information system to provide ongoing information.

The third issue identified pertained to the need to provide definitions (see “Definitions”) for some of the terms (winnability, expertise, power) identified within the components (see “Appendix M1”). Again, this identification by Committee members demonstrated a recognition of the need to “concretize” the systems advocacy process.

The fourth matter related to the issue selection components themselves. The Committee identified those components (*Give people a sense of their own power, Alter the relations of power, Be easy to understand, Be non - divisive, and Must build leadership*) utilized by Bobo, Kendall & Max (1991) as being important considerations, but not within the stage of Issue Selection (see “Appendix M1”). Instead, these considerations were placed within the stage of Issue Action, where their placement was deemed more appropriate.

The final issue related to content involved the Committee’s recognition of the value of the listed components. Even those considerations moved to a different section were

identified as valuable factors. Consideration of how issues were selected was seen as important, although the need to physically include it seemed redundant to Committee members.

**b) Process:** A number of issues were identified regarding the consulting process.

The first related to the Committee's attempts to grasp the notion of using some form of numerical scales to rate issues. Members were clearly having trouble visualizing the value/potential value of this concept. In order to help Committee members explore the viability of this concept, the Consultant assumed a trainer/educator role and had members go through a mock scoring exercise.

Another issue of note related to comments by the Manager of the Employment Program regarding the value of a component because it could be useful in helping the agency's efforts to remain consistent with its focus. This was personally validating for the Consultant, in that it showed that the individual member saw value in the notion of internal accountability. What was of real interest to the Consultant, however, was how this comment might be received by others on the committee (see "Appendix M2"). In the end, this comment was met by silence and seemed to indicate that there were some concerns existing regarding active consumer participation. This might have afforded the Consultant and the Committee an excellent opportunity to explore this issue, especially since the community member was not present; but this opportunity was not utilized as the event itself was enough for the committee to process at that time.

The prominence of the Executive Director continued to be the primary issue facing the Consultant with regard to the Committee's dynamics. An Attentive Intervention was applied by the Consultant with regard to the community member and the Employment Manager in the hopes of providing them with some support for their perspectives, which seemed more akin to the notion of consumer involvement and accountability. The Consultant attempted to support these individuals by specifically asking them for their opinions, even when discussion was declared closed, and by making direct eye contact with them. This seemed to assist in promoting discussion by others.

A final issue related to the physical environment of the meetings. Because of a need to restructure staff, the agency was forced to use a new boardroom for the intervention meetings. This room was less spacious, had far worse air circulation, and had no windows. The combined negative effects of these factors were increased lethargy that impacted greatly on the committee (and the consultant to a lesser degree), and steps were taken to offset these factors. These steps included fanning the room with the door to promote air circulation and provision of food to promote energy (and camaraderie).

c) **Outcome:** By the end of the meeting, the Committee had managed to review virtually all of the Issue Selection stage. The meeting saw the introduction of the need to test the use of numerical scales and the continued employment of working definitions. The use of a dry-run exercise was successful in helping Committee members deal with decision-making around construction of numerically weighted scales.

d) **Evaluation:** In general, it can be said that the meeting represented a significant step forward in the student's abilities. The dry-run exercise was an important example of such growth because it signified the use of alternative techniques (exercise using audio - visual aids). More importantly, the spontaneous decision to utilize such a technique successfully, helped to establish in the Committee's eyes, some degree of leadership and expertise.

The recognition of the impact of the setting on the performance of Committee members, and the consultant's attempts to deal with these factors also represented a demonstration of increased competence. In particular, the provision of food was very successful with regard to both increasing the Committee's energy levels and sense of informality and equality among members.

While viewed as a long - term process, the employment of Ellis and Fisher's (1994) techniques for offsetting power imbalance were quite helpful. The decision to make eye contact with individual members and solicit their opinion after issues appeared closed helped provide, in the author's opinion, certain members with increased input in the process.

With regard to the Committee's work, the virtual completion of the Issue Selection

stage review identified very good progress time - wise. Introduction by the Committee members of the need to employ numerically weighted scales demonstrated increased recognition and competence with regard to formalized advocacy work.

With respect to the Dougherty (1990) consultation model, consultation is viewed as a somewhat chronological process, moving from entry to diagnosis to implementation to disengagement. At this point in time, the Consultant's view was somewhat different with regard to the intervention process. As opposed to making single decisions regarding problems, goals, interventions and plans (Dougherty, p. 41 - 43), the consultant was employing this process on a meeting - by meeting basis. In other words, the intervention was almost a series of consultation processes.

Overall, the meeting and the consultant's performance were viewed as positive by the Committee members. An overall median score of 1 was attained (see Appendix X), with favourable commentary again received from Committee members

#### **Meeting 4 (March 20, '95)**

a) **Content:** The review of meeting content can be divided into two sections (see Appendix N); review of work carried over from the previous meeting and the continuing work on the Issue Selection stage.

During the previous meetings, the Committee had requested that the Consultant develop working definitions for the terms "winnability", "expertise" and "power" and "Severity of Harm" (see "Definitions"). As well, because there had been some initial confusion around who would develop the preamble for the section on Systems advocacy and the definition of the term "Mental Health System", these issues were all addressed in the meeting (see Appendix "N1").

The second and more substantial part of the meeting focused on the ongoing review of the Issue Selection stage. This involved establishing a working definition and the attributes of the criterion "Severity of Harm."

The majority of the Committee's time was then spent determining how issues would be weighted/scored. Matters addressed included how issues would be weighted and

differentiation of criterion with varying levels of priority. The Consultant utilized a scoring exercise to assess the range of opinions regarding prioritization of Issue Selection criterion (see Lists of Tables/Charts: "Issue Selection - Criterion scores: Raw). This was attempted because the Consultant felt that a "hands - on" exercise might be more effective in assisting committee members to understand the scoring process. Following this, a Committee Consensus approach was utilized to determine final rankings (see "Issue Selection - Criterion scores: Modified). This process was selected by the Committee as being expedient and relatively impartial in terms of ameliorating any potential conflicts around different priorities.

**b) Process:** The March 20 meeting proved to be the most difficult to that point in time as it was the most tedious and arduous. As well, much of the work was of a more technical/mathematical nature and this proved challenging for a couple of the Committee members. Attempts were made to lighten this burden by presenting the material in as concise, simple a manner as possible. An extra coffee break was also utilized. Finally, Committee members were addressed by the Consultant as to the importance of this tedious process. This morale speech was seconded by the Executive Director.

The ongoing issue of power imbalances took on a new and more complicated twist in this meeting. During the past meetings, the Consultant had encountered a certain level of personal frustration with the Executive Director's prominent role in the process, although the Consultant's frustration was as much with his own inability to deal effectively with the situation as it was the Executive Director's position. However, in this meeting the Consultant was placed in a dilemma. The Advocacy Program Manager, a person who had traditionally undertaken individual advocacy in a largely informal manner, clearly was ambivalent about the worth of a formal Framework. These doubts manifested themselves in a very strong way during this meeting with a number of "doubting" comments being made by her (see "Appendix N2"). These comments were especially pronounced during the Committee's work on the more technical aspects of the model. While wishing to validate all members and provide an atmosphere that was comfortable for all members to speak in, the Consultant found this situation quite difficult. The first concern was the

Consultant's own disagreement with Advocate's position. These feelings should not have been unexpected given that the Consultant was the creator of the model. They were, however, not acceptable in dealing with the consultation process. In the end, the Consultant simply strove to be as objective as possible. The Consultant believed however, that it was important to continue to employ an Acceptant Intervention over the long run because he felt that the Advocate's feelings could only be addressed with her active participation.

The greater dilemma arose when the Executive Director rose to support the consultation process. Her responses were slightly more directed with regard to the Advocate's comments, and appeared to have the effect of silencing the Advocate. While relieved to see the Executive Director responding in such a positive manner to the process and the Consultant's work, the Consultant was very worried about the Advocate going "underground" with her feelings. As the person who would ultimately be responsible for leading the systems advocacy efforts, it was imperative the the Advocate feel comfortable in tabling her true feelings so that the Consultant could address any misgivings she might have. The Consultant attempted to address some of these concerns as "good points" that could be answered. In this sense, the Consultant confronted the advocate's comments, but in a way that gave her permission to express them. Again, the Acceptant Intervention style was seen as the best approach to this situation, but it was recognized by the Consultant that it might only work over the long - term.

It should be noted that the committee, with the exception of the committee member, has a historical working relationship. The author had concerns that perhaps too much was being read into these dynamics and that in fact, this was simply an example of people operating freely and feeling comfortable with the group dynamics. Unfortunately, no formal evaluation of the group dynamics was undertaken.

An observation noted by the Consultant during the meeting was that since his spontaneous decision to use the wallboard to undertake a dry-run of the use of numerical scales, he was no longer sitting at the table with the other Committee members. The Consultant was now assuming a greater leadership role and this was manifested in part by

the more technical aspects of the Framework. This work required the Consultant to constantly use visual aids to assist in explaining the process to the members. As well, the process seemed to require the Consultant to take on more of an “Expert” intervention style. This style seemed desired by Committee members, not completely because they had trouble understanding the material, but more because they were tired of trying to understand it, and simply wanted to answers brought forward. This situation was especially difficult because of the Consultant’s earlier observations related to the Systems Advocacy process. In response to this situation, the Consultant persevered in not answering problems, and instead helping to facilitate the Committee to find its own solutions.

Prior to the time of this meeting, it became apparent that consideration must be given to initiating the disengagement process. This concern was prompted not so much by the Consultant’s need to complete the intervention, but by his concern about shouldering full responsibility for the agency’s advocacy process. To this point in time, the agency’s involvement had been limited to attendance at the meetings. The concern centered around the agency’s personnel not developing the expertise to continue their work on the systems advocacy initiative (see “Appendix N2”). While having the Consultant handle all duties was beneficial in the short-run, it could have grave consequences in the future. To this end, the Consultant employed a Process Intervention style with the hopes of making the Committee handle more of the mental work during the meetings. Again, the Consultant attempted to resist the urge to answer for the Committee and instead attempted to help them to find answers. Examples of how this was done initially was by guiding members with questions which helped lead them towards answers, and by asking provocative questions to stimulate discussion.

c) **Outcome:** The definition section was completed quickly. With the exception of the definition of “Expertise”, all definitions were accepted without modification, although the definition of “Mental Health system” required clarification regarding the term “products” (see “Appendix N1”). The term “attitude” was added to the definition of expertise.

The discussion on “Severity of harm” produced a consensus on the proposed



definition (see "Appendix N1"), as well as a request for the Consultant to produce a definition for "Breadth of Harm", although the Committee found this title wordy and retitled it to "Numbers of People Affected".

After considerable discussion, the Committee settled on three attributes for "Severity of Harm". These were Physical harm, Emotional/Psychological harm, and Financial harm.

The Committee had previously determined that a scale would be useful in assessing this criterion. While the committee had previously agreed on the use of a closed, five - point scale (one being low, five being high), no terminology had been developed to match these scores. The Committee eventually produced five terms to match the scale points. These were "Discomfort" (score of 1), "Harmful" (score of 2), "Traumatic" (score of 3), "Dangerous" (score of 4), and "Life - Threatening" (score of 5). While not undertaken at this meeting, it was also acknowledged that definitions should be developed for these terms.

The Committee's work regarding how criteria would be weighted produced a decision that all criterion should be scored on a closed five - point scale, with the result that the issues producing the highest score(s) would be selected for further work. Further to this, it was decided that the attributes of "Severity of Harm" would simply be amalgamated and that one scale would be used for this criterion.

The Committee also agreed that some method must be found to distinguish between criteria of varying levels of importance. The Consultant suggested each Committee member rating the individual criterion with a score of one (low priority), two (Medium priority), or three (high priority). Members then ranked the individual criteria (see "List of Tables/Charts, Issue Selection - Criterion rating: Raw scores"). The results of this exercise showed relative agreement on the criteria rankings. However, as total agreement was necessary, the Committee agreed that at the next meeting some method must be found to reconcile the different ratings. Consideration might have been given to how the Consultant would proceed if this became problematic at the following meeting. Little attention was paid to this, however, as the Consultant attributed this situation primarily to fatigue.

With regard to establishing a method of prioritizing selection criteria, the Consultant suggested a numerical multiplier that could be used against the raw score to weight the score of selected criterion. This was suggested by the Consultant as a relatively simple and rational method for discriminating between such criteria. This concept was difficult for some Committee members to understand so a dry-run exercise was undertaken, with a multiplier of one (low priority), two (Medium priority), or three (high priority) applied. This exercise greatly assisted Committee members in understanding these concepts.

With regard to process issues, the Consultant's attempts seemed to have positive results. The addition of food at the table clearly changed the atmosphere of the meeting to the better, and in some way, provided a more egalitarian setting as people shared food. The "talk" by the Consultant and Executive Director seemed to also have a positive effect. While the Consultant was originally concerned about waning commitment on the part of Committee members, it appeared that this was not an issue. The real issue was simply exhaustion. As demonstrated on the feedback forms for the meeting, members were not discouraged by the process, simply tired at the end of a long work day.

As previously identified, the one exception to this seemed to be the Advocacy Program Manager. This individual did not appear to be as invested in the process as did the other Committee members. The Consultant's approach to identifying the Advocate's concerns as "good points for discussion" seemed relatively successful. The Advocate seemed open to discussion, if not totally convinced by the Consultant's responses. While the Executive Director's assertiveness still left the Consultant concerned, it was reassuring to see it used to defend the process. In fact, it could be noted that the Executive Director seemed to be taking a more relaxed role overall. In the Consultant's view, this could be attributed to a greater trust being developed regarding, the Consultant, the Committee, and the process at large.

The Consultant's attempts around initiating the disengagement process met with interesting results, especially given the complexity of the meeting. The Consultant encountered considerable resistance (silence) whenever he refused to solve a problem for the Committee and instead tried to restructure an issue to help the Committee along. This

resistance was viewed by the Consultant as being attributable to two factors. First, there was a certain amount of dependency which had been created and perhaps, this change should have been started earlier. Second, this new approach was causing the Committee to “work harder” which, without being a comment on the perceived value of the Framework, may not have necessarily been embraced by the members. While this process did work on many occasions, it seemed that the group’s overall lack of energy was a primary factor in the results. The message to the Consultant was that ownership for the process will vary depending on the type of day individuals have had. This situation, especially in light of people not wanting additional work to do (a natural reaction), caused the Consultant some concern about the agency’s commitment to the process, or at least, an underestimation of the amount of time and energy that would be required to make this project work.

d) **Evaluation**: Despite all the issues confronted during the meeting (member resistance, exhaustion, etc.), the Consultant regarded the day as a success. The material dealt with was clearly the most technical and complex yet and despite this, the Committee made excellent progress. This progress could be measured not only in terms of time, but by the quality of their work. There appeared to be an increasing technical understanding of the Framework, and an overall commitment to the entire concept. While issues of power imbalance still remained between group members, there appeared to be a more relaxed atmosphere among Committee members.

The Consultant’s view of the day suggested continued personal growth. The Consultant found that he was more readily identifying issues and developing spontaneous strategies to deal with these issues, although this may be attributed in part to the Consultant’s decision to emotionally and intellectually “resign” from the Committee to concentrate fully on the Consultant role. As well, the intervention choices selected by the Consultant seemed to be bearing fruit i.e. the Process Intervention. This again suggested some degree of competence on the part of the Consultant.

The feedback from the Committee members suggested a strong recognition of the consultation process and the performance of the Consultant overall. One exception however was a slight drop in the Consultant’s personal knowledge rating (see Lists of

Tables/Charts, "Performance Feedback" graph: Overall performance rating"). This occurred at a time when the Consultant felt his skill and knowledge level was at its highest. The Consultant interpreted this drop to the change from a expert role to that of a process role. By refusing to provide all the answers for the Committee, some members may have interpreted this as a drop in skill because they wanted the expert role to continue. An overall median meeting score of 1 was attained (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 5 (April 10, '95).**

a) **Content:** The agenda for the April 10, '95 meeting was divided into three sections (see "Appendix O2") of substance. The first section dealt with the request for a working definition of "Numbers of People Affected" (see "Definitions"). The second section dealt with the completion of the section on issue weighting. This included final determination of how various selection criterion would be prioritized. In addition, the Committee needed to grapple with the task of operationalizing the prioritized criteria. Following this, the Committee needed to complete the section related to the attachment of a numerical weighting system to the individual criterion, including corresponding definitions. The third task related to review of the three final issues within the Issue Selection stage.

b) **Process:** Major issues identified within Meeting Five were threefold. The first issue encountered was the Consultant's inexplicable decision to alter the agenda at the last minute to discuss the value of the criterion multiplier *prior* to resolving the actual prioritization process. For some reason the Consultant felt that this would be something "easy to do" and could be quickly done. This proved disastrous (see "Appendix O2") for two reasons. The first, and most obvious reason, was that the Consultant had disrupted the natural flow of the process. The second and more problematic issue, was that some Committee members were actually opposed to this component now and actually felt that it should be eliminated. The corresponding chaos of this situation temporarily immobilized the Consultant, who was caught offguard by the situation he had helped to create. Attempts were made by the Consultant to end the ongoing debate and get the Committee back on track by refocusing the Committee to the tasks outlined in the original agenda.

The second issue related to the original agenda item, determination of the final rankings of the Issue Selection criteria. This section, which originally was viewed by the Consultant as one that was relatively open and shut, also became a complex and contentious matter. The Executive Director suggested that the Committee simply review the criteria one at a time and debate them individually. This process revealed considerable variation among members in criteria they felt were important, more so than their original scores had indicated. As well, the corresponding conversation indicated that many members had misinterpreted and forgotten the working definitions of the criteria. At this point, the meeting became rudderless. Eventually, the Executive Director suggested that the final rankings be determined by prioritizing on the basis of most votes cast for a particular criterion.

In hindsight, what might have helped to deal with this situation was simply to stop the meeting and have the Consultant share his feelings and ask the Committee to take a step backward and re approach the situation.

The final major issue identified related to the Advocacy Program Manager's ongoing concerns regarding the validity of the entire intervention process. During this meeting, the Advocacy Program Manager was quite vocal regarding her concerns about the process and her desire to focus efforts on the Issue Action stage. In response, the Consultant pursued his approach of validating the Advocate's concerns and using them as an opportunity to convince her as to the validity of the model, although at the time it was not clear how successful these endeavours were. The unfortunate situation caused by the Consultant was certainly ammunition for the Advocate's concerns regarding the process

c) **Outcome:** The proposed definition for "Number of People Affected" was adopted with a slight modification (see "Definitions").

While the Consultant was successful in having the Committee agree to ending their premature conversation on the Issue Selection criterion multiplier, he was unaware of the level of confusion that would continue to exist. The Executive Director's decision to determine how the criteria would be prioritized met with almost instant approval, despite the passionate debate which had been in process only moments before. It seemed that

everyone was prepared to exchange their interests in exchange for a solution with which all could live. This suggestion was approved and the previous scores were quickly reviewed to determine how the criteria would finally place (see "Lists of Tables/Charts, Issue Selection - Criterion rating: Modified scores"). The most surprising aspect of this was that some members had agreed to this process even though they ended up losing their positional battles around particular criteria. Unfortunately, this served as another example of the Consultant's shortcomings in this meeting, as efforts should have been made to have members focus on common interests, and not personal positions. In fact, it seemed that most agreed without having any idea how it would affect their personal position on the issue. In short, it appeared that this mechanism was accepted because Committee members were exasperated and may not have understood the impact. Having said that, the solution reached represented an excellent compromise and, in the Consultant's view, a perfectly viable method for determining how to prioritize criterion.

Having agreed on the relative priority of the Issue Selection criteria, the next task was to determine some numerical method for assessing the value of these criteria. A proposal was tabled by the Consultant to attach a numerical weight which would be multiplied against the score given to an individual issue (x3 if a high priority criterion, x2 if medium priority criterion, and x1 if low priority criterion). For example, an issue which scored three on a one - to - five scale would be multiplied by the three if the individual criterion was viewed as one being a high priority. This concept met with the approval of the Committee, even though it was clear that not all members fully grasped the concept. To assist in this regard, the Consultant undertook a mock scoring of two issues. This greatly assisted members in understanding it, especially those who previously had encountered problems with the concept.

The discussion regarding how individual criterion would be weighted was solved rather quickly. The Committee agreed to utilize a Leikert scale (five point scale with a neutral midpoint) for all criterion (see "Appendix O1"). It was agreed that this would make for a simple, consistent method for scoring issues for selection. Again, a dry-run exercise was held to go through the process of scoring three issues and determining their final

scores, with the knowledge that the highest scores would be selected. Again, a hands-on exercise was successful in taking what was largely abstract work and making it concrete for Committee members. It should be noted that the discussion around individual criteria led to a modification of four of the criteria titles (see "Appendix O1") as members identified perceived weaknesses in some of the previously agreed upon definitions.

It seemed clear that the Consultant's approach to the Advocacy Program Manager's concerns was having only modest effect. This was not surprising, given the Consultant's performance during the meeting, as this would only add to the doubts of anyone involved. The Consultant's opinion was that the Advocacy Program Manager seemed very much to be an experiential learner and as a result, probably would need to utilize the model in a practice setting before feeling more comfortable with the process. In the meantime, the Consultant continued his response style to assure the Advocacy Program Manager that her input, concerns and questions included, were badly needed if the Framework was to be successful.

What was interesting was the momentum that appeared to be building in support of the Framework. The previous meeting had seen the Executive Director rise in response to criticisms of the process. In this meeting, both the Housing and Employment Managers responded in a similar fashion.

As a result of the time spent on the noted issues, the Committee was unable to complete the remaining work on the Issue Selection stage.

**d) Evaluation:** While the Committee's work was often tedious and slow, the Consultant's view is that their overall performance and levels of commitment to the intervention process were excellent given the difficulty of the meeting. It was anticipated that the fourth and fifth meetings would be the most difficult for the Committee. These meetings were indeed difficult. However, by the end of the fifth meeting, apparent closure had been reached on how Issue Selection criteria would be defined and how issues would be scored and selected. While more work remained for the Committee, particularly in the area of defining the scales and Issue Priorization, it was felt by the Consultant that much of the groundwork for this section had been covered during the work on Issue Selection.

As was identified by the Committee members during their evaluation of the Consultant, the Consultant's performance was seen as being worse than in previous meetings (see "Lists of Tables/Charts, Charts 1 - 3"). The decrease was not unexpected given the fact that the Committee was dealing with the most difficult section of the consultation process. What was surprising to the Consultant was that his performance as seen by Committee members as being only marginally worse.

The Consultant's lack of referral to Dougherty's and Fisher and Ury's material was indicative of his work. The Consultant seemed to abandon any thought of particular intervention styles during the first half of the meeting, the amount of time it seemed to take him to regain his composure. The Consultant's arbitrary decision to change the sequence of the agenda was a considerable mistake. This situation reminded the Consultant of a previous unilateral decision he made regarding his agreement with the agency about the intervention process. It seemed that the Consultant had much to learn in this area.

The Consultant's initial decision to return to the original agenda appears to have been a good one, although it was too late in coming to avoid considerable confusion. Initially, the Consultant was surprised by how many Committee members had forgotten or misinterpreted previously agreed upon points. However, upon reflection, this was not surprising. Given the complexity of the issues and the time existing between meetings, it was surprising that Committee members remembered as much as they did. To this end, the Consultant identified the need to provide Committee members with a glossary of developed definitions so that members had an up - to - date compendium of terms to which to refer.

On a more positive note was the Consultant's use of exercises to assist members in dealing with complicated decisions and his suggestion around a method for weighting issues. The Consultant also felt that ongoing group dynamic issues were being dealt with as well as possible, although the need to review Fisher and Ury's work (1981) on non - positional negotiating was identified by the Consultant. As well, while the Executive Director still played a dominant role in the group, other members were becoming increasingly involved and comfortable in challenging her. Perhaps more importantly, the nature of the Executive Director's prominence appeared to be changing from one of initial



mistrust to one of exuberance. An overall median score of 1.5 was attained for this meeting (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 6: (April 24, '95).**

a) **Content:** In response to the identified need for something to assist members in recalling work from past meetings, the Consultant developed a Glossary of Definitions (see "Appendix P3") that provided members with a current synopsis of definitions developed by the Committee to that point in time.

Following the review of that document, the Consultant engaged the Committee members in the process of establishing dates for the final Committee meetings and individual member interviews. This was done for two reasons. First, as summertime approached, it became important to establish dates when Committee members would be available. Second, and most importantly, the meeting dates became a commitment to the process of disengagement (Dougherty, p. 43). It was felt that by having the Committee agree to final dates, this would help to establish a sense of finality to the consultation process and help the agency make the shift to preparing for the continuation of the systems advocacy process after the completion of the intervention process.

Discussion also occurred regarding whether or not formal requests for action from external organizations should be considered as a formal criterion with regard to Issue Selection.

Attention was also paid to the carryover issues of establishing minimum scores with regard to issue selection scoring, and how the agency would choose between two, closely scored issues.

The most significant aspect of the meeting related to the development of standardized definitions for the attached numerical scales.

The final scheduled component of the meeting was the completion of the last three components of the stage of Issue Selection.

b) **Process:** With regard to process, it was noted during the previous committee meeting that members were finding it increasingly difficult to absorb all of the work they

had accomplished. In addition to provision of a "Glossary of definitions", more time was spent reviewing the meeting minutes from past meetings, as opposed to simply asking members if they "had any questions or concerns".

With regard to the role of the Consultant, efforts were continued from the last meeting toward a strong Process role (Dougherty, p.30). This approach was considered integral in having members rely less on the provision of solutions from the "expert". Failure to make this role change was seen as detrimental in implementing the Disengagement process.

The Consultant's efforts to address the perceived power issue within the Committee were delayed through the absence of the Executive Director and the community member. This resulted in the meeting being held with only the Consultant and the Program Managers in attendance. The Consultant did not perceive the need to make any significant changes in role or intervention strategies as a result of this situation, although one unique exception was made. This exception was to meet individually with the Community member, who had missed two meetings to this point in time. As a result of these absences, and the member's often limited involvement, the Consultant attempted to have a discussion outside of the meeting to determine which issues, if any, were impacting on the member. An acceptant - style intervention was seen as most appropriate in this situation (Dougherty, p.192).

c) **Outcome:** Initial feedback from Committee members indicated that the Glossary of Definitions (see "Appendix P3") was much appreciated. Members felt that such a document would make it much easier for them to stay informed throughout the process.

The Consultant was successful in having the Committee approximate the amount of time needed to complete the review process and establish the remaining committee meeting dates (see "Appendix P1"). It was felt by the Consultant that this would assist the Committee in starting to make the emotional transition to life after the consultation process.

Initial discussion regarding the inclusion of formal requests for action from outside agencies/groups/individuals as an Issue Selection criterion had met with a mixed response

at the end of the last Committee meeting. There were concerns that such a criterion would lead to the agency being coerced and/or forced into selecting issues. However, after some discussion, it was agreed that this concern could be effectively dealt with through a proper definition of the term "request". The Committee decided that this task would be completed at a later date (see "Appendix P2", p. 3). While ultimately accepting this consideration as a criterion, the Committee agreed that it should be constructed such that both internal (organizational) and external requests could be considered.

The Consultant had originally expected the need to establish a minimum score in considering the selection of issues to be a relatively simple one. However, the debate became quite involved as the merits and demerits of different percentages were discussed. Eventually, the Committee decided to use the amount of 66% of the total possible score as a benchmark. This was a benchmark currently employed by the Options in Support and Housing Program. While it was agreed that any benchmark chosen would simply be viewed as a temporary one, the Committee agreed to apply the benchmark to the two previous issues which had been scored. The result of this process was that neither issue met the required minimum. Because both of the example issues were viewed as being of considerable importance to the agency, this caused an unexpected negative reaction as committee members immediately questioned the validity of the model. The Consultant attempted to reframe the process and attempted to have Committee members understand that a low score was not a reflection of the importance of an issue. Instead, it was measurement for determining if the issue would be better worked on at a later date. This was an important distinction and one which the members were able to appreciate.

With regard to issues which were scored closely together, the Committee determined that a tie - breaking mechanism would be used when two issues were within five points of one another. In such a situation, it was felt that the tie would be broken by scoring the issues exclusively on those criteria identified as being of high priority to the agency. Again, achievement of this matter was reached through consensual discussion.

With regard to the decision on such matters as what percentage of a total score an issue would be considered for action (66%), or what value should be used to discern

between closely scored issues, there was a feeling on the Committee that on some level the actual scores were not totally relevant until tested in a real life situation and at that point would need to be adjusted.

The final significant issue dealt with the difficult task of developing meaningful definitions for the terms utilized on the criteria scales. The Committee's work in this area culminated in a determination that, among other things, each issue must be looked at individually, its best and worst scenarios identified, and then scored relative to those benchmarks (see "Appendix P3", p. 3).

The need to assist the Committee in processing the large amount of information developed was achieved in part by the Consultant's creation of a Glossary of definitions. However, this alone was deemed insufficient. As a result, the Consultant implemented a mandatory review of past meeting minutes. While this process did not uncover any significant issues, it did allow members to clarify a variety of topics.

The absence of the Executive Director and the Community member had a significant impact on this meeting. With regard to the Executive Director, this impact was twofold. By allowing the meeting to occur in her absence, the Executive Director demonstrated a significant degree of trust in both the process and the Committee members. This was viewed as an important moment for the Consultant in terms of the validity of the consultation process. The second impact related to the uninhibited dynamics among Committee members. The group dynamics appeared much more egalitarian in nature. This might be attributed to the fact that the committee members had now spent considerable time together and were starting to function as a unit on the project.

The final concern related to the lack of involvement by the community member, both in terms of attendance and participation. In order to assess where the member was at with regard to the consultation process, a meeting was held between the consultant and the member. The outcome of this meeting was that the member felt involved and committed to the process and that his attendance was not a reflection of dissatisfaction with the process. However, he did admit to being disappointed in the lack of meaningful consumer/survivor input, especially given the philosophical basis of the Framework. He also noted that on

more than one occasion, comments by individual members had left him concerned about the agency's commitment to the process. It was agreed that these issues would be addressed in the final evaluation and within the process where relevant. This meeting was especially important from the Consultant's perspective because it also revealed to the Consultant that the Framework had worth in the Community member's eyes.

In considering the results of this meeting, the Consultant wished that he had arranged to have such a meeting at an earlier date, as some of these concerns could have been addressed sooner in the intervention process.

**d) Evaluation:** This meeting was very significant because it represented closure of the stage of Issue Selection. It was anticipated by the Consultant that this stage would be the most problematic. This was because the Issue Selection stage was the most complex, and was the Committee's first attempt at formalizing aspects of the agency's systems advocacy process and while it did present many challenges, it could be said that the Committee was very successful in developing a meaningful process.

The Consultant was able to identify the need to assist members in dealing with the increasingly complex issues being confronted. Responses were developed that met with the satisfaction of the members.

The employment of an acceptance intervention was successful in identifying the Community member's position with regard to the consultation process and solidifying his ongoing support.

The Consultant's increased emphasis on a process intervention style versus an expert intervention style continued to be successful in the Consultant's eyes in forcing members to take increased responsibility for developing the Framework. As was the case in the previous meeting, however, Committee members reacted by lowering their assessment of the Consultant's knowledge in this area ("Performance Feedback" graph: Questions 5). This served to signal two things. First, the author speculated that the evaluation mechanism might be flawed as he felt that his performance had not deteriorated. Second, it seemed to demonstrate continued reluctance from Committee members to the notion of accepting more responsibility for the Committee's work. Overall however, the

Consultant's feedback from the members indicated a high level of satisfaction with the process and the Consultant's performance. (Performance Feedback" graph: Overall rating per meeting). A median meeting score of 1 was attained (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 7: (May 8, '95).**

a) **Content:** As identified in the agenda for the May 8, '95 meeting (see "Appendix Q"), three issues were slated for discussion.

The first issue covered related to the review of the past meeting minutes. This review led to concerns being brought forward by the Executive Director regarding the need for standardized definitions on the Issue Selection criterion scales. Instead of intervening in this process, the Consultant allowed the Committee to struggle with this issue and played a more facilitative role by clarifying and recapping positions.

Another issue dealt with was the recently added Issue Selection criterion of "Requests for Action". In the Committee's haste during the previous meeting, the Committee had failed to identify whether the criterion was of a low, medium or high priority. As well, the Committee determined that there was a need to attach some form of numerical value to the attached definition scale in order to properly score issues against this criterion.

As was previously mentioned, the Consultant was concerned about the absence of the Community member. Unfortunately, the Consultant was not able to connect with the member prior to the meeting.

The final point of discussion related to the review of the third stage of the Framework; Issue Priorization. To this end, the Committee discussed factors relating to the various components of this stage.

b) **Process:** Two issues of substance were identified as being relevant for discussion. The first related to a by - product of the re - opened discussion on definitions for criterion scales. At this time, it was revealed by two of the Program Managers that the two issues being used as examples during the process were the two issues that the Program Managers hoped would be selected by the Framework for action. This caused some

concern to the Consultant who speculated that these wishes might result in some form of structural bias being incorporated into the Framework. In response to these comments, the Consultant endeavoured to have the members openly discuss their wishes. This led to a successful reaffirmation of the need for an objective process and clarification that the issues being used were only examples.

The second, and more serious issue, related to the ongoing lack of involvement by the Community member. The Consultant again attempted to employ an acceptant - style intervention, as this had shown some success in the past.

c) **Outcome:** The reintroduction of the discussion on the need to develop standardized definitions led to a compromise scale definition (see "Appendix Q", p. 1). This compromise was marked by a decision to allow a simple majority vote determine how particular scales would be prioritized. The Consultant had concerns that the compromise was agreed to by many members simply to appease the Executive Director, although the group may have simply agreed. The Consultant did not re - open this issue, however, because his feeling was that members were not committed to re - examining it and simply wished to move on. The Consultant was successful, however, in having the Committee recommit itself to the principle of using hard data to define scales whenever possible. This was done by discussing, in general terms, the notion of that simply escalating individual decisions to a group level, without any sound basis/data for those decision would undercut the Framework's effectiveness.

The Committee agreed quickly that the "Requests for Action" criterion should be rated as a high priority. As well numerical scores were developed, using group consensus - making, for the attached scale (see "Appendix Q1", p. 2).

The Committee was successful in completing the stage of Issue Priorization within this meeting. This stemmed from the Committee's decision for the need to develop scales and criteria that were consistent with those developed in the Issue Selection stage. To this end, the Committee decided that those criteria earlier identified as being of "high" priority would be the ones used to determine how selected issues would be prioritized. More specifically, that the "High" priority criteria would be used as tiebreakers. These criteria

were supplemented by the need to add additional criteria dealing with the topics of “Urgency”, “Motivation” and “Levels of encouragement/support”. These were the criteria that the Committee identified as being most critical to the agency.

The situation which caused the Committee members to reveal their private aspirations with regard to the Framework was dealt with in a surprising manner when the Executive Director firmly noted that the purpose of the Framework was not to provide a vehicle for the private interests of each program. This directive actually caused the members responsible to apologize. It marked an important moment where private issues were tabled and the need for an objective system was prioritized. While there was originally some concern on the Consultant’s part that this rebuke might force the member’s underground. In the Consultant’s opinion, however, the member’s were not affected in this manner and if anything, felt the mention was deserved.

The Consultant felt that his work in assisting the Community member to become more involved was of marginal use. Of note was that many of the members seemed to become aware of the situation and appeared to be soliciting his input. This situation caused such concern that the Consultant met with the Executive Director following the meeting to discuss this issue (see “Appendix Q2”, p. 3). This resulted in an agreement that as much as was being done as possible and that such an intervention style should continue.

**d) Evaluation:** With regard to output, this meeting could be viewed as the most successful to this point in time. Closure was reached on the stage of Issue Selection and pending the approval of the new Priorization criteria, the Issue Priorization stage was also completed. From the Consultant’s perspective, this represented the least stressful meeting overall when considering content. This was because much of the work around criteria development had been completed. This meant no significant new criteria development had to occur.

The Consultant’s performance was somewhat laid back in that many of the interventions planned were not utilized because the Committee was able to deal with the issues themselves. More importantly, they appeared comfortable doing so. Ironically, this comfort level appeared responsible for the Consultant’s improved score in the area of



personal knowledge (see “Lists of Tables and Charts, Performance Feedback graph: Question #5: Knowledge”). In the Consultant’s opinion, he did not especially exhibit increased mastery; but members were simply more confident in their role. If true, then this fact marked an issue of systematic error and a limitation in the validity of the evaluation vehicle used. It should be mentioned, however, that the Consultant’s contribution by continuing to apply the Process Intervention over the long - run, even when it appeared ineffective in the short term, was a factor in this development. This realization, it could be said, marked the successful implementation of the Consultant’s process of transferring power from him to the Committee. This also indicated the beginnings of a successful transition to the disengagement phase. It did, however, raise another significant question regarding the validity of the scale, which appeared unable to capture the reason for this change in rating.

The Consultant endeavoured to accommodate the Community member’s participation with limited success. Meeting with the Executive Director was seen as an attempt to alert the Executive Director to the situation and employ a more collaborative approach to the problem. It was also an attempt by the Consultant to “pass the baton” in terms of having the Executive Director start to assume a more active role in actual working tasks related to the systems advocacy initiative.

Written feedback from Committee members indicated considerable satisfaction with the Consultant’s performance and the worth of the meeting (see “List of Tables and Charts, Performance Feedback graph: Overall rating per meeting”). An overall meeting median score of 1 was achieved (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 8: (May 15, ‘95).**

a) **Content:** As identified by the Agenda (see “Appendix R”), four issues relating to the Framework were dealt with during this meeting. The first, review of past meeting minutes, led to a decision to increase numerical amounts attached to each point of the scale regarding “Requests for Action”.

The second issue related to the attached definitions for the new Issue Priorization

criteria. While these were approved with minor modification (see "Appendix R1"), this topic led to discussion of whether or not actual scoring would occur again within the Issue Priorization process.

Another issue carried over also related to Issue Priorization. The question was asked as to what constitutes a crisis for the purposes of determining when the agency should decide whether or not the issues might be repriorized. In other words, how does the agency know when to invoke the section on Issue Priorization.

The final work related to the Committee's review of the stage of Issue Action.

b) **Process:** Two issues of significance were identified during this meeting. The first issue related to the Consultant's ongoing struggle to support the Advocacy Program Manager within the consultation process while simultaneously addressing her apparent reservations regarding the Framework. The Consultant continued to employ an acceptant intervention style while supplementing this with a Catalytic intervention for educational purposes (Dougherty, p. 192). The Catalytic Intervention was employed by the Consultant providing evidence or data that helped alleviate concerns the advocacy program manager had during the process.

The second issue related to the Consultant's apparent lack of preparation for the meeting. A number of questions posed by the Committee went unanswered by the Consultant. While a variety of factors attributed to this situation (see "Appendix Q2, Analysis: May 15, '95"), it appears that complacency on the part of the Consultant greatly contributed to this situation. There was a misguided sense on the part of the Consultant that his skills were now developed enough that he might be able to "wing it" through the meeting, although this might have simply been a rationalization for the fact that the Consultant was tired and had little time to prepare for the meeting.

c) **Outcome:** A decision was made by the Committee not to rescore issues that might need to be prioritized. Committee members felt that it was important for the systems to be standardized because this would facilitate ease of use. While the original scoring would be a factor for the (unspecified) decision-makers, that some guiding questions would be useful to assist these individuals in coming to a decision. To this end, the

Committee requested that the Consultant prepare some guiding questions.

Unlike previous meetings, when the need for an operational definition was identified and was developed by the Consultant, the Committee chose a different route with regard to defining a “crisis”. With regard to “Requests for Action”, it was felt that it would be appropriate to allow the individual agency programs to determine what constituted a crisis and when the Issue prioritization process should be mobilized. Unfortunately, the Committee and the Consultant neglected to identify what impact might occur with regard to external identification.

The stage of Issue Action was reviewed in its entirety, with only cosmetic changes made at this point (see “Appendix R1, p. 2”). However, as previously noted, this process was plagued by the Consultant’s inability to answer a number of questions put forward by the Committee. Upon review, it appeared that the Consultant’s performance had little negative impact on the validity of the process, primarily because of the depth of detail related to this section. Ironically, the Consultant believes that his struggles continued to force the Committee to make decisions exclusive of the Consultant and further aided in the transition to disengagement. This was a fortunate, if unanticipated windfall, given the circumstances.

The final issue related to the paradoxical situation facing the Consultant regarding the involvement of the Advocacy Program Manager. While the Consultant observed a number of situations that he responded to regarding support of the aforementioned individual, he continued to note other opportunities for support that were missed. These missed opportunities continued to reduce the input that the author felt the Advocacy Program Manager had to contribute. These opportunities were missed because the Consultant was not always able to respond at the exact moment needed, either because of other demands on him, or because he simply failed to respond quickly enough. Other variables may also have been at work that the author was not aware of.

**d) Evaluation:** Closure was achieved on the stage of Issue Prioritization, pending review of guiding question for prioritizing issues. An overview analysis of the Issue Action stage was completed with relative ease.

Despite the aforementioned achievements, it can be said that this was largely achieved in spite of the Consultant's presumed knowledge relating to the Framework. The Consultant's performance was duly noted by Committee members, who responded with lower ratings in those questions regarding the Consultant's performance (see "List of Tables and Charts, Performance Feedback graph: Questions 5"). This resulted in the Consultant's worst overall rating to this point in time (see "Lists of Tables and Charts, "Performance Feedback" graph: Overall rating per meeting"). An overall meeting median score of 2 was attained (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 9: (June 5, '95).**

a) **Content:** Discussion of the meeting agenda (see "Appendix S") revealed two issues of significance. The first of these two issues related to the development of guiding questions for determining issue prioritization (see "Appendix S"). The Consultant developed relatively few questions for discussion. Again, conscious attempts were made to limit the "expert" intervention style. Instead, the few questions were designed to act as a catalyst for the Committee to form additional questions on their own.

The second, and more important issue, related to a review of those aspects of the Framework which were left unanswered pending a complete review. These questions were compiled into a single paper for ease of discussion (see "Appendix S"). These unanswered aspects of the Framework could be divided into three sections; "What body/ies will be responsible for the tasks related to the process"; "How will the information and/or issues be gathered and processed?" and "What changes will need to be made within the organization if systems advocacy is to be successfully undertaken?" eg. job roles, education, administration, etc. Again, the completion of these tasks related strongly to Dougherty's phase of *reducing involvement and following up* (p. 43) through determination of who was going to assume what responsibilities in the post - consultation process.

b) **Process:** The only issue concerning the Consultant at this stage was the ongoing issue related to dynamics within the group. Given the stage of the consultation process, it was considered somewhat irrelevant to take on some of the existing power

dynamics ie. Executive Director prominent role. Instead, the Consultant focused on mollifying any aspects of the process that appeared particularly problematic.

c) **Outcome:** With regard to the guiding questions, they were accepted as relevant, but with one modification (see “Appendix S1”). The criterion “Cost of undertaking an issue” was changed to read “Cost/benefit of undertaking an issue”. It appeared that the Committee had little to contribute to this section beyond the Consultant’s contribution, despite the Consultant’s attempts to generate some ideas. There appeared to be a certain amount of apathy about “dragging the process out”. Members realized that the process of systems advocacy would be ongoing and this fact, coupled with their ever increasing levels of exhaustion, made for limited discussion

Where members did become more involved was around the determination of the future process itself. With regard to what body/bodies would be responsible for tasks relating to the systems advocacy process, the Committee reached quick agreement on the following points:

a) That a Systems Advocacy Advisory Committee would be formed. This committee would have nine members. The members would be the Executive Director, the Advocacy Program Manager, three consumers/survivors,<sup>27</sup> one or two consumer activists and one or two professional advocates.

b) That the Committee would be a Program Advisory Committee. As such, its purpose would be to assist the appropriate agency personnel by advising them throughout the advocacy planning process. It was understood that all final decisions would rest with the agency ( as manifested through the Executive Director).

c) The Committee would meet on a regular basis and when the need arose.

In the Consultant’s estimation, such a committee was an appropriate fit with the Carver model of Board governance. However, the advisory role of the committee

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<sup>27</sup> One from each of the agency’s service areas.

continued to marginalize the impact/contribution of consumers/survivors. The Consultant was greatly interested in what the position of Committee members might be on this topic after the process was completed.

It was hoped that many of the issues related to issue gathering and processing could be answered at this meeting; but the Committee unanimously decided that there were still too many unanswered questions left remaining to continue. Instead, these issues were delegated to the Advocacy Program Manager for continued work. Such tasks included selection, recruitment and orientation of members; development and implementation of key informant survey with regard to collection of issues; development of a permanent, internal coordinating mechanism that would allow for the flow of information among programs; collection of potential advocacy issues; development of a working agency systems advocacy manual and orientation of staff to systems advocacy. However, after some discussion, it was proposed that the Consultant be retained to develop the working manual. This was because the Consultant was the individual with the most knowledge of the Committee's work to that point in time.

In response to the question of organizational change, the Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager had decided that 40% of her time would now be spent on systems advocacy work, and that the role of the other program staff person had been altered to move away from resource referral and into individual advocacy.

This work culminated in considerable closure of the consultation process. While many of the outstanding issues were resolved, directly or indirectly, it was noted that much of it was ultimately the responsibility of the Advocacy Program Manager. This was of concern because of the Advocate's apparent mixed feelings about the process. This viewpoint was not substantiated, although there had been indirect comments supporting this point of view in conversations between the Consultant and the Advocacy Program Manager. To assist in reducing the potential negative impact of this factor, the Consultant offered to remain "on board" to assist the Advocate whenever she felt it was appropriate. This offer, coupled with the decision to have the Consultant develop the systems advocacy

manual, appeared to meet with much agreement among Committee members.

The meeting was typified by considerable exchange. While the Executive Director remained prominent, especially with regard to her feelings regarding the advisory status of the Systems Advocacy Committee, discussion remained primarily active and equal (see Appendix S2).

**d) Evaluation:** The meeting marked the closure of the review of the Framework. The decisions reached in the meeting were responsible for agreement around virtual completion of the disengagement phase. The Committee stated that a dry-run process to culminate their work would be useful in a final assessment of the Framework. This was agreed to by the Consultant.

The Consultant noted his inability to totally deal with the issue of Executive Director's prominence within the consultation process. It should be noted, however, that this prominence was often to the benefit of the consultation process because it defended the work. As well, the nature of the control changed from the beginning, which was marked by a lack of trust (not undeserved) to simple enthusiasm and apparent lack of understanding regarding the weight of her comments. This change was identified by the nature of her involvement. Whereas early involvement was often marked by firmly suggesting how the process should be handled, such suggestions became less frequent as the consultation process went on. In this sense, the more serious concern around imposed limitations did work itself out as had been hoped by patiently convincing the Executive Director of the intent, skills and viability of the Consultant and the Framework.

Written feedback from the members demonstrated support for the Consultant and the consultation process overall (see "List of Tables and Charts; Performance Feedback graph: Questions 5 & overall rating per meeting"). An overall meeting median score of 1 was achieved (see Appendix X).

**Meeting 10: (June 12, '95).**

**a) Content:** The sole purpose of this final meeting was to undertake a "second level" of analysis by working through the revised Framework with two mock issues. The

issues chosen were the ones earlier used for some of the exercises relating to determining criteria scoring (Board and Care homes, Social Assistance rates). The idea was to identify issues and/or revisions that might otherwise go unnoticed in a purely theoretical review. As well, it was intended to provide the Committee members with some hands-on experience in utilizing the systems advocacy process, as it existed to that point in time.

**b) Process:** The role of the Consultant in this meeting was entirely that of a facilitator. In order to assist the members in this process, three documents were developed by the Consultant. The first document was a systems advocacy “worksheet” (see “Appendix T3”). This document was created to provide a comprehensive, organized way of allowing the members to work through each stage of the process and retain the information. The second was a final version of the Issue Selection criteria, complete with scales (see “Appendix T4”). This document was to be used for the actual scoring process and collection of scores. The final document was an abridged version of the Issue Action stage. This document was produced to assist the members in working through this stage in a pragmatic manner, although it must be recognized that the Committee did not review this crucial piece.

**c) Outcome:** The dry-run process resulted in a number of revisions to the Framework (see Appendix T1). These changes were numerous and relevant, but none of them could be viewed as significant in the sense that they revealed problems of a primary nature.

The nature of the meeting was relatively egalitarian and tended, for the first time, to be truly collaborative. This was no doubt due to the fact that the construction was completed and the Framework was simply being given a test.

**d) Evaluation:** Based on the written feedback from members, the Consultant and the consultation process were very successful (see “Lists of Tables and Charts: Performance Feedback” graph: Questions 5 & overall rating per meeting”). This could be attributed to the relative ease of the task laid out, the degree of collaborative workmanship and ultimately, to the Committee’s exhilaration of completing the consultation process. The dry-run process was invaluable in further defining the Framework, largely because of its



hands - on nature.

The completion of this meeting marked the end of the consultation process proper. *Evaluating the consultation process* was achieved following this meeting through compilation and analysis of feedback forms and individual, taped interviews with Committee members (see following chapter). *Planning postconsultation matters* was determined in the second last meeting where duties were discussed and responsibilities delegated. *Reducing involvement and following up* was achieved through the gradual process of shifting from an Expert intervention style to that of a process intervention style. As well, the decision to employ the Consultant to develop a working systems advocacy manual (see "Appendix U") also marked a transfer of power to agency staff and ultimately, the termination of the consultation process. An overall meeting median score of 1 was attained (see Appendix X).

### **Summary**

The practicum intervention revealed a number of important themes regarding both content and process.

#### **Process**

a) In the Consultant's mind, the Framework process may have been stunted by the lack of consumer/survivor representation and participation. Active participation from the consumer perspective likely would have enriched the model and made it more sensitive to the needs of the people who were to be served, not just the agency's needs. The same might be said of the lack of line staff involvement in the process. Even minimal representation might have brought different perspectives from different levels of the agency thereby making the Framework richer. The nature of this representation, however, would have had to recognized both the agency's relationship with the community and its standing in it.

b) With hindsight, the agency should have been more formally involved in sharing responsibility for the development of the advocacy process. This was especially true of the agency Advocate. Meaningful involvement in research, development of definitions and

scales, etc., would have been an opportunity for increased understanding and ownership of the model.

c) The board room used was inadequate for the Committee meetings. While there were no alternative sights available for the intervention process, the Consultant would give considerable location to the environment should he undertake another consultation .

d) The Advocacy Program Manager needed to be provided with an opportunity to “field test” the model. This presented a significant issue for the agency given that she would be the individual primarily responsible for undertaking systems advocacy within the agency. It was the Consultant’s belief that given the opportunity to try out the process with a real issue would provide the member with the opportunity to make a final decision regarding the viability of the model.

e) The Consultant’s original decision to arbitrarily start development of the model without the sanction of the agency was problematic and hindered his ability to perform during the entire process, although it can be said that at times the Consultant likely was more affected by the issue than he needed to be. Such an example was the Consultant’s inability to approach the Executive Director and openly discuss issues. Somewhat ironically, the Consultant’s inability to perform appears to have been the greatest contributor to those areas that he identified as being most problematic.

f) The decision to have the Consultant be an active Committee member and facilitator simultaneously was problematic. This situation originally caused the Consultant not to succeed at either role and eventually he was forced to drop his position of Committee member informally.

g) The Consultant demonstrated considerable growth relative to the previously identified learning goals. This was particularly true regarding consultation skills (fuller analysis in Chapter 4). The Consultant learned to function using a number of intervention styles and roles and if this was not always done successfully, he was able to identify reasons for this performance. Examples of this would be noting of difficulties in discussing with the Executive Director her role in the consultation process, developing a process that met the learning needs of all members, and others.

h) Overall, the performance of the Consultant and the Committee members was positive, with considerable personal and agency growth occurring, and much work on a difficult topic being accomplished.

#### Content

a) Greater attention needed to be paid to the theoretical and philosophical foundations of the model. Failure to understand and/or agree with these foundations has the ability to seriously impair any future development. Having said that however, it seems clear that this would have to be presented in a way that made sense for Committee members in a more practical way.

b) Based on the system being developed by the agency, there was a considerable need for sound, rational data. In order to facilitate this, some form of centralized, computerized information system was needed by the agency to assist in assessing trends in advocacy cases.

c) Additional exploration of the model was required before its value could be fully assessed. This included a pilot project utilizing the model in a real - life situation. As well, attention must be paid to the section on organizational change, both in terms of theory and the real impact of undertaking the work within the agency (restructuring, changing job roles, training, etc)

d) Overall, the model developed was seen as having utility. This was indicated by the agency's sponsorship of the corresponding development of a working manual to assist further efforts in the agency. The Framework provided members with a greater understanding of systems advocacy, and the need to carry out such work in a thoughtful and planned way.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EVALUATION**

#### **Introduction.**

The final chapter of the practicum report is divided into two sections. The first part will discuss the evaluation process relative to the author's learning goals. The second part will discuss the evaluation process as it related to the intervention. Each of the two parts has been divided into four sections. The first section discusses the evaluation design employed to assess the outcome of the established goals. The second section describes the measurement tools and data gathering techniques. The third section covers the student's findings based on the data gathered. The final section discusses the author's conclusions based on the findings, and their implications. These sections are then summarized by the author. The chapter is then completed through an examination of the author's primary goal.

#### **Section 1: Evaluation Design.**

As the author employed the same evaluation approach and tools for both learning goals and intervention goals, these are first described prior to detailed review of methodology and findings related to each set of goals.

The author employed both formative and summative evaluation techniques with the evaluation design. The need for formative (process) evaluation techniques was primarily related to the author's wish to employ a more developmental assessment of his work.

The evaluation design was comprised of three distinct components. The first component involved self - analysis through the use of reflective thinking techniques. The author employed Schon's (1987) guidelines for successful reflective thinking. Unlike traditional teaching methods, which rely on instructors to decipher the student's learning patterns and outcomes, reflective thinking encourages the use of critical thinking skills (Brookfield, 1987) and experiential learning. The student is encouraged to test and explore him or herself, with the instructor acting as a *coach* (Schon, p. 12 - 43). This form of evaluation, which was used for both formative and summative evaluation purposes, was

the primary component utilized in the author's evaluation design. The advantage of this method was that it placed significant emphasis on the student's abilities and the development of critical thinking skills, which, as outlined earlier in the report, were fundamental to the success of the Framework.

The second component employed was the use of solicited, written feedback (Committee Feedback form) from Committee members regarding both the Consultant's performance and the value of the consultation process to the members themselves. As the consultees, the Committee members were those individuals best suited to comment on the effectiveness of the Consultant's work. The solicited feedback was used as a formative evaluation methodology to assist the author in gaining information from the member's on a meeting - by - meeting basis. This information allowed the author to weigh his findings against those of Committee members and identify areas in the intervention that needed to be addressed prior to the next meeting. A brief statistical analysis of key segments of the information gained from committee members was also employed.

The final component utilized for both learning and intervention goals was again the use of solicited feedback from Committee members utilizing audio - taped interviews. Unlike the other aspect of the evaluation design, however, this component pertained exclusively to summative evaluation of the intervention process and the Consultant's performance. These tapes provided critical insight into the Consultant's performance, as related by the Committee members. Skopec's (1986) guidelines for situational interviewing were utilized as a basis for assisting the author in this process. These guidelines helped provide specific information regarding Information Gathering interviewing (P. 17 - 46), such as the need for co - operation, a supportive climate and constraints. As well, details were provided regarding the role of both the interviewer and the interviewee. With regard to the interviewer's role, Skopec (1986) identified such relevant considerations as *selecting appropriate questions, managing verbal and non - verbal behaviour, preparing answers to anticipated questions, and controlling yourself during the interview.*

## **Section 2: Measurement Tools and Data Gathering.**

Reflective thinking techniques were employed through the use of audio - taping of Committee meetings and note - taking during the Committee meetings. Following the meeting, the audio - tapes were reviewed by the author and assessed for issues relating to process and content. These observations were then documented. Following this process, the tapes and analysis (see analysis of various meetings in the attached appendices) were reviewed by the author's *coach* and academic advisor. This individual then met with the author to discuss his observations and interpretations. These meetings assisted the author in identifying missing aspects of his work and reframing other aspects. Note - taking was utilized in situations where the author felt a particular aspect of the intervention process was noteworthy, but could not be captured on audio - tape because it was visual. This process, while secondary in nature, became an important supplement to the author's work.

With regard to formative evaluation, member feedback was solicited at the end of each meeting through the use of written "Performance Appraisal" forms (see Appendix E).

The bulk of the questions (seven out of ten) focused on the performance of the Consultant, but questions were also included regarding the worth of the process to the Committee members. The feedback form was comprised primarily of specific, close - ended questions. Members were asked to respond to the questions by providing a numerical rating in response to the individual question. This was achieved through the use of five - point Likert scales (see Appendix E). The various item scores were then summed to yield a total score. This feedback model was developed by the author and then pre - tested on the Consultant's *coach*.. Results of the pre - test did not reveal any concerns regarding the model scoring employed. The rating form represents an attempt to directly measure aspects of the consultation process. However, the validity of the scale could not be assessed.

In addition to this, some open - ended questions were also used to allow members to fully express their feelings as it related to the Consultant's performance and the consultation process itself (see Appendix V).

Summative evaluation of the intervention process was undertaken through the use

of audio - taped interviews with individual committee members. Skopec's (1986) guidelines for *information gathering interviews* (p. 17 - 46) were employed in constructing the semi - structured interview schedule used by the author (see Appendix V). Questions were of an open - ended nature in order to provide both the author and the interviewee with as much flexibility as possible. The merits of using such question have been demonstrated by Patton (1980). These type of questions provided some measure of security to the author in the event that an important issue had gone unrecognized during the construction of the interview process. Note - taking during the interview also became an important supplement to the author's review of the audio - tapes following the interview. The responses were then reviewed to identify trends among the answers and/or individual comments of particular note. As a result of time restrictions, the Consultant was unable to pre - test the interview questions.

#### **Part 1. Evaluation of Learning Goals.**

In the initial chapter, four specific learning goals ( see p. 13 - 14) were identified. These goals have been examined, and the findings noted, on the basis of the three previously outlined data collection tools.

#### **Findings: Reflective analysis of Goal A (Advocacy and Systems Advocacy).**

Much of the author's knowledge gained in this area, especially with regard to advocacy, in general, was gained through his review of advocacy literature. This review led to a greater understanding of the meaning of advocacy and to a lesser extent, the various forms of advocacy. The identification of advocacy as a vehicle for social justice allowed for a corresponding identification of the elements of empowerment (critical thinking, participation and productivity). Because the author's vision of a systems advocacy framework was to promote social justice, he was able to verify the worth of advocacy as a mechanism for promoting social justice, and also identify those elements that would need to be incorporated into a systems advocacy framework, if it was to be successful in achieving the author's goal.

The same readings identified in the preceding paragraph were also useful in providing the author with the motivation for, and elements of, a systems advocacy

framework. While the literature was able to do little in terms of demonstrating existing frameworks, it was able to identify the need for such a mechanism, as well as elements that would need to be in any successful model (such as *criteria, the need to find some way to process a great number of issues, clarification of what constituted an issue*). This research endeavour also allowed the author to gain a greater appreciation for a number of theoretical and philosophical issues which needed to be considered in the construction of the model for systems advocacy (see Chapter 1).

The author's understanding of systems advocacy was greatly enhanced through the intervention as he was able to move beyond a theoretical knowledge of the issue. The intervention provided considerable insight into operationalizing the systems advocacy framework. This entailed development of skills in such areas as group work, organizational change, consultation, advocacy, evaluation and theory and practice. Within each of these areas, the author was able to identify more specific skills related to each of the aforementioned areas.

With regard to group work, the author identified increasingly levels of comfort and competence with such matters as conflict resolution, and identification of group dynamics.

While scant attention was paid to the topic of organizational change within the intervention process, the author identified the importance of this area in the shift to systems advocacy, and how such issues as job role competence, job security and changing agency structures can impact on the successful implementation of the Framework itself.

Consultation skills were acquired in a range of areas. These included intervention and role styles, an understanding of the importance of the physical environment on the consultation process, understanding of the different phases of consultation (as identified by Dougherty [1990] ) and the attributes related to them. The author also gained considerable knowledge related to the field of advocacy and especially, systems advocacy. This personal growth was noted through identification of such items as awareness of different forms of advocacy, the meaning of advocacy and elements related to undertaking systems advocacy.

Considerable knowledge and skills were developed relative to the field of



evaluation. A greater understanding and competence was seen regarding different forms of evaluation, development of tools related to undertaking evaluation, and finally, growth in skills related to undertaking qualitative and quantitative evaluation.

Finally, the author realized that the development of such a Framework and its implementation in a practice setting, are two related but distinct issues. More specifically, the author gained a greater appreciation for the “gap” which can exist between the theoretical and the practical and a recognition that skills need to bridge the two.

The intervention also helped identify skills and knowledge that the Consultant needed to continue to develop. First, it must be said that, despite the skills that the author previously identified as being gained during the intervention process, continued growth could be realized in all of the aforementioned areas.

With regard to specific areas that the author identified a number as being in need of more attention. One area previously identified was that of organizational change. This was not seen as an area where the author’s his skills and/or knowledge were weak, but it was simply seen as an area that would likely be critical to the successful development and implementation of a systems advocacy framework and one that the intervention process had not been able to adequately explore this area.

Another area for improvement was related to the topic of these areas. Greater efforts should have initially been made to gain a better understanding of evaluation theory and methodology. Unfortunately, the author felt his level of skills and knowledge were sufficient but during the evaluation process, felt that there were aspects that could have been improved, such as quantitative analysis.

**Findings: Formative analysis of Goal A (Advocacy and Systems Advocacy).**

With regard to the members’ perspective of the consultant’s level of knowledge as it applied to advocacy and systems advocacy, they indicated a strong recognition for their perception of the consultant’s abilities in this area (see Lists of Tables and Charts: “Performance Feedback” graph: Questions 3a & 3b). While members’ ratings for the consultant’s abilities were among the lowest in the area of personal knowledge, the overall grade was still very high. As well, it was hypothesized by the author that those

areas/meetings where the author scored lower appeared may have been, in part, a result of his attempts to have members assume responsibility for decision - making related to the process instead of providing direction himself (process versus expert). The resistance to this change may have strengthened the view that the author had a strong grasp of the material, as this is why members did not wish for a shift in intervention styles.

These findings, and the author's hypothesis, raise the issue of the relationship among the questions and of the validity of a total score. To this end, a Spearman Rank Order Correlation test was undertaken on one of the meetings to try and determine if all items were rated, and thus measuring aspects of the same phenomenon. Of particular note was to determine if there was a negative relationship between the questions which dealt with the author's learning versus those involving the committee members. In order to improve the chances of gaining the most accurate and reliable results, Meeting Five was used because it presented the greatest spread in rankings, both in terms of individual scores and the number of scores involved (six).

The results of this test (see Appendix Y) were largely positive. With regard to the individual items, the findings suggested a strong co-relationship, with nothing to suggest that Question Five should be separated from Question Four.

In considering the results versus the total score, the rank correlation test seemed to determine that the individual scores correlate well with the total score. Question 3d (Facilitator stayed true to the agenda) can be viewed as having the lowest rating, more so than the other questions. However, it should be noted that it still retains a positive value. This might suggest that adherence to the agenda was interpreted poorly by the committee as a sign of inflexibility and an inability to adapt to changing circumstances.

In reflecting on the results of the rank correlation test, however, the author questions these results. While these results do not demonstrate any reason to disprove the author's hypotheses, the small group size, combined with a number of flaws in the evaluation mechanism (identified more fully later in the chapter), give pause to consider the validity of these findings.

**Findings: Summative analysis of Goal A (Advocacy and Systems Advocacy).**

During the author's interviews with members, they indicated strong support for the author's level of knowledge in the areas of advocacy and systems advocacy. Of particular note was mention of the author's knowledge in the areas of advocacy/systems advocacy theory and philosophy. As well, some members expressed a further acknowledgement of the author's knowledge in this area by identifying how surprised they were regarding the "level of complexity"<sup>28</sup> of a formal, systems advocacy framework and "how difficult the work must have been to master".

**Findings: Reflective analysis of Goal B (Creation and Guidance of Knowledge).**

During the author's review of literature on empowerment, it became clear that one of the most fundamental aspects was awareness of one's situation. To this end, it became necessary to provide some mechanism for creating awareness in people involved in systems advocacy work. This fact turned the author's attention to critical thinking as a means for developing such awareness.

The author's work with regard to awareness and critical thinking can be noted in a number of areas. The research related to the intervention process did, in the author's estimation, enhance the author's level of knowledge in the area of critical thinking. This knowledge was perhaps most obviously demonstrated during the theoretical construction of the systems advocacy framework. Overt prompting within each stage of the Framework through the use of questions was designed to stimulate thought and challenge Committee members to think and rationalize their work.

Another example of the author's growth in this area was through the successful implementation of process intervention styles during the consultation process. Originally prompted by the author's need to move the Committee into the Disengagement phase of the consultation process, the use of process intervention styles forced the author/consultant to develop critical thinking skills in committee members by coaching them to come up with solutions, instead of relying on the consultant for such solutions.

Another example of the author's ability to create and be guided by knowledge can

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<sup>28</sup> The statement also raised possible issues around the model itself being too complex, ie. too difficult for the agency to use.

be found in the author's work in analyzing committee meetings. The meeting minutes and corresponding analysis demonstrated an increasing level of sophistication, not only in terms of the content, but also in terms of the consultation process. The author became increasingly adept at deciphering issues related to the consultation process. One example of this was that during some of the earlier meetings, the Consultant often responded with blaming when faced with resistance. By later in the process, the Consultant was able to resist personalizing such issues and instead seek out motivation for why Committee members might be feeling the way that they were. In this sense, the author's ability to use Reflective Thinking techniques was greatly enhanced by progress made in the area of critical thinking.

Another example of the author's increased ability in this area related to the analysis of three moments during the practicum process which were highly problematic. The event when the author decided to unilaterally develop the Framework was attributed to a lack of ability in discussing the issue face - to - face with the agency as a result of a fear that this would lead to further delays in the process, or perhaps even scuttle it. Another example occurred when the author was able to determine that the reason for a sudden and spontaneous change to the meeting agenda was because the Consultant felt that this would expedite the consultation process. Finally, the lack of readiness in preparing for one meeting was attributed to simple exhaustion on the part of the Consultant, who simply had not left himself enough time to prepare for the meeting.

Of concern, however, was the fact that this achievement of this learning goal was somewhat limited within the intervention process. The Consultant was unsuccessful in having the agency commit to, in a tangible way, the notion of empowerment through involvement of consumers/survivors and non - management staff. Greater emphasis might have been made by the Consultant once the intervention was started to raise the issue of empowerment in the process, although there was recognition in the end by some Committee members of the need to revisit this area.

**Findings: Formative analysis of Goal B (Creation and Guidance of Knowledge).**

Based on the feedback received from Committee members (see "Lists of Tables and

Charts: “Performance Feedback” graph: Questions 5”), the consultation process was identified as being useful in helping people understand systems advocacy. This conclusion was further supported by feedback received on the open - ended question regarding the value of the process from a knowledge perspective (see Appendix E, Performance Feedback sheet, Question 5a).

Of note was the fact that the Consultant’s worst individual criterion rating was related to Question #5 (“How useful was this review in increasing your understanding of systems advocacy”) on the Performance Feedback” sheet (see “Appendix E, Performance Feedback graph: Overall rating per meeting”). The author attributes this rating to two factors. First, that the Consultant’s change in intervention style forced Committee members to provide their own answers and when they had trouble accomplishing this, felt that they had learned less. The second issue may have been that the material covered was scored by members relative to their own levels of personal knowledge. If members had an understanding of systems advocacy, or elements of it, then they would naturally learn less. This would result in a lower rating.

In reviewing the Performance Feedback forms and the author’s analysis from individual meetings, it appears that the his performance and/or intervention styles were not necessarily the most significant factors in determining how much members learned regarding systems advocacy. It appeared that the topics of discussion during the actual meetings was a primary determinant in how members rated their learning experience. More specifically, the more complex the topic, the more people felt they learned. In the areas that people felt they already possessed some knowledge, the process was not as enlightening.

**Findings: Summative analysis of Goal B (Creation and Guidance of Knowledge).**

Results of the final interviews with Committee members revealed a number of significant findings relating to the achievement of Learning Goal B. For example, one trend in the answers showed that many members felt “validated” by the process. These statements referred to the fact that many members felt that they actually possessed skills or knowledge related to aspects of the Framework. Because they felt that the Framework and Systems Advocacy were valuable, this helped them feel that they were progressive and

competent workers. One member remarked how “great it felt to be finally working on systems changing”.

Despite the possession of the aforementioned knowledge, the Committee overwhelmingly identified that they had learned a lot during the consultation process regarding Systems Advocacy. Some members mentioned that this was especially true regarding the initial stages of the Framework. While mentioning that the process could feel overwhelming at times, members felt that, in the final analysis, they were able to “see” the worth of a Systems Advocacy Framework. Further, some members admitted to feeling somewhat important in gaining this new and complex “knowledge”. One member mentioned how she saw this as “an important new skill in my repertoire”.

Another factor identified relating to the Framework and knowledge was that members voiced their understanding regarding the value of the model as a logical, objective model for identifying and selecting issues. While acknowledging that everything has some form of bias, this process endeavoured to put the biases “up front” so that they could be accounted for and dealt with as needed. One example where this worth was cited related to the value of the Framework in helping to keep the agency on the “straight and narrow” by making them accountable to their mission statement. One member mentioned how the Framework would make the agency in practice more accountable to the agency in philosophy.

#### Findings: Reflective analysis of Goal C (Consultation).

For ease of examination, the author broke analysis into four distinct sections, as they related to Dougherty’s consultation model (1990). These four areas were Attributes, Organizational skills, Roles and Interventions. It was these four areas which together Dougherty identified as comprising the skills of a true consultant.

#### Attributes.

Dougherty outlined seven attributes which he felt epitomized the successful consultant (p. 19 - 25).

a) The first of these attributes related to the consultant’s *attitude*. This included such attitudinal behaviours as open - mindedness, patience, etc. It could be said by the

author/consultant going into the consultation process that this attribute was the one issue in which the author felt secure. However, the manifestation of these attitudes in the consultation process was another matter. On reflection, the author felt that he was successful in maintaining his positive attitude throughout the process. This was demonstrated in different areas. For example, the author strove to develop the process into one that was as egalitarian as possible. This was done because such a structure related to the need for different parties to operate as equals within the process. Every effort was made to identify issues relating to imbalance within the group and to address them accordingly, i.e. ensuring that all members participated equally. However, it can be also said that the author was able to become increasingly less judgmental throughout the process with regard to those in positions of power within the group, i.e. the Executive Director. Every attempt was made to “walk in her shoes” and appreciate her position and corresponding responsibilities. This often resulted in the Consultant employing intervention styles which otherwise might have been more confrontational.

Perhaps the best example of the author’s attitude was his ability to encourage and protect discussion that was critical of the Framework and the Systems Advocacy process. While this often proved stressful, the author believes that overall, he was successful in validating those who demonstrated alternative feelings towards elements of the model, and the model itself.

b) The author also believed that considerable knowledge was gained in the area of *inter-personal communication skills*. For example, within the confines of the consultation process, the author felt that he was successful in creating an atmosphere that was collegial and non - threatening. The author was clear about the parameters of the process, as identified through the meeting agendas, and was able to successfully employ conflict resolution skills on many occasions, and identify and respond to non - verbal forms of communication. Of particular note was the author’s ability to use humour as a method for reducing tension and demonstrating personal openness (laughed at own mistakes).

Some areas for improvement were also noted. For example, while noting the real limitations facing the author, more consideration should have been given to the actual

physical environment. The room used was cramped and often suffered from poor air circulation, a fatal combination when dealing with a complex issue and often tired staff. Further, more attention should have been paid to other aspects of the physical environment, such as seating patterns, lighting, etc.

On a number of occasions the author felt that he could have been firmer with committee members engaging in irrelevant discussion, although it should be noted that allowing for these types of discussions might have helped to produce a more informal and relaxed atmosphere.

c) Considerable growth also seemed to occur within the area of *communication*. Attention was, in the author's opinion, paid to such issues as body posture, empathy, questioning (as also demonstrated in the construction of the Model), self-sharing, and information giving. However, there were areas identified by the author that were initially problematic, but successfully dealt with during the course of the consultation process. One example of this was listening skills. During the initial two meetings the author found himself dominating conversation somewhat in an attempt to demonstrate his level of expertise (gain credibility). It was possible that this might have impacted on the low participation rates of members at this time. Once recognized, the author was able to eliminate this issue.

Another area that was of some concern dealt with the need to have members gain consensus on issues being discussed. This originally presented some frustration to the author, but this issue was eliminated when the author made greater attempts to focus on clarifying/paraphrasing and summarizing. This was because many of the problems encountered were not as a result of ideological differences, but simply communication issues.

One area that the author was very conscious of during the process was avoiding jargon and technical language that would alienate members. This was dealt with in one way by constantly having the Committee develop understandings (definitions) of various terminologies. While this was very successful in helping people, the author failed to account for the *cumulative* impact of this work. This resulted in members becoming



overwhelmed by the model. In response, the author developed a summary list of definitions (see Appendix P3) which proved helpful to Committee members, but should have been developed earlier.

One area of concern identified regarding communication was the often mentioned incident where the author arbitrarily moved to develop the Framework without consulting with the agency. Had the author communicated his assessment of the situation and sought their approval, this incident might have been avoided.

d) Problem - solving skills were another area outlined as critical by Dougherty (p. 22 - 23). While the construction of the Framework itself demonstrated considerable growth relative to problem - solving skills, the consultation process itself provided opportunity to further develop knowledge and skills in this area. The author identified problem - solving as one area where considerable competence was demonstrated. With regard to preparation, considerable effort was made to “prevent” problems from occurring, through the development and use of such items as agendas, process tools (Summary of Definitions, Abridged versions, etc), meeting minutes, etc. Where problems did arise during the consultation process, the author was able to increasingly demonstrate knowledge and skill acquisition through such vehicles as development of spontaneous, hands - on exercises, conflict resolution skills and reframing contentious issues. Overall, the author considered this area to be one of his strongest in terms of competence demonstrated.

#### Organizational Skills

Dougherty’s version of skills attributable to success in terms of working with organizations had only limited applicability (p. 23 - 24). Much of this section related to a much broader consultation process. In other words, it related to a consultation process whereby all members of the organization had input into the process. This was not the case during this consultation. There were however, areas of considerable importance that dealt with this issue.

The first, and most important demonstration, occurred when the author made an arbitrary decision to change the consultation arrangement made with the agency. This was a demonstration of a lack of skill in dealing with organizations. While the decision to

undertake the consultation process as the author decided was technically the right one, it most certainly was the wrong one with regard to process. In other words, the author believes that his assessment of the situation was correct in that it was unrealistic for the author and the agency to jointly develop the Framework as a result of time constraints on the agency. However, had the author simply chosen to identify this assessment to the agency, the agency likely would have simply endorsed the change and no damage would have been incurred to the author's relationship with the agency. The ramifications of this decision stayed with the author for much of the consultation process, especially with regard to the Advocacy Program Manager and the Executive Director. This failure was manifested primarily through the increased time it took to gain trusted entry into the organization. While the author was able to eventually demonstrate the usefulness and well - meaning intent of his arbitrary decision, it was clear that the situation could have been handled differently. On the other hand, when one considered the situation that the author had created, the fact that the process was able to end with the organization pleased with the Consultant's performance and the consultation process itself, this also demonstrates in the broadest sense that the author was able to deal effectively within the organizational context.

The final attribute mentioned by Dougherty was that of Ethical and Professional Behaviour Skills (p. 24 - 25). While it can be said that the author did not, to the best of his knowledge, encounter any ethical or professional dilemmas or breaches (save the aforementioned arbitrary decision to change the consultation agreement), the author felt that the process was able to demonstrate considerable integrity in this regard.

One area that was identified as being of potential concern were comments that were of a potentially sensitive nature on the audio - tapes. Such comments were either irrelevant (personal) or of a potentially provocative nature and had to be censored, often before being reviewed by the author's coach.

#### Roles.

As earlier mentioned, Dougherty identified six primary roles that consultant's play (p. 26 - 31) and that the ability of the consultant to master these roles does, in large part, determine the consultant's effectiveness.

a) Based on Dougherty's understanding of *advocacy* (p. 27), the author felt that his ability to utilize this role had been hampered somewhat as a result of the initial mistrust caused by the author's misguided, arbitrary decision to alter the practicum agreement. The author was leery to advocate on behalf of positions (empowerment) or individuals (consumers/survivors and staff) for fear of provoking a backlash to the consultation process. This unfortunate situation had the fortunate impact of causing the author to be more creative in his approach to advocacy. Subtler forms of advocacy had to be developed in order to assist disadvantaged individuals, groups or platforms. For example, if a decision appeared that it might marginalize the role of consumers/survivors within the process (a constant issue), the author would advocate by asking members to consider how they might react to a given situation if they were individuals with serious mental health issues. Such methods proved quite successful in bringing about change. As well, the decision to not utilize more confrontational forms of advocacy proved wise given the enjoyed outcome.

b) During the initial stages of the process, the primary role utilized was that of the *expert* (Dougherty, p.27). Given the initial levels of understanding on the topic, even on the part of the Advocacy Program Manager, it was clear this role would have to initially be used. The author's role in this regard was successful in developing a level of knowledge among members that eventually facilitated changes to other roles that placed more responsibility on the Committee members. Concern was noted on the part of the author that the expert role might have been carried on too long and impaired the transition process. While the author does believe that such a change might have occurred earlier, it did not, in the final analysis, negatively impact on the final outcome.

c) The *Trainer/Educator* role was one that was seldom utilized within the process, although it can be rightly said that the consultation process was an exercise in training agency staff to construct and implement the systems advocacy process.

With regard to this role, one area where it should have been implemented in a more direct manner was to encourage the Advocacy Program Manager to take a more active role in the process. As she was to be the person who would ultimately be responsible for the

agency's advocacy efforts, it seemed appropriate that she take a more active role in assisting with the consultation process. Unfortunately, for reasons unknown, this issue was not originally seen as important to the agency. It might have stemmed from a reluctance to take the Advocacy Program Manager away from her duties and have her spend time on this work. However, it was eventually identified as unfortunate that such an arrangement had not occurred, as this would have been an excellent opportunity for this individual to become more acquainted with the process.

d) In his role as a facilitator, the author generally attempted to use a more *collaborative* approach to the process. This was in part facilitated by the fact that the author was himself a committee member, a dual role that was later identified as being inconsistent with the role of the consultant. As well, for structural purposes, the use of a collaborative style helped in maintaining a relatively egalitarian structure and developing a sense of trust among members that the author was working with them, and not against them.

e) The role of *fact finder* was utilized during the entire consultation process. This was necessary as a result of the fact that this role had been designated as part of the practicum agreement (see Appendix H). The author felt that this role was carried out competently and that no problems were encountered. The role itself provided the author with increased understanding of advocacy and the advocacy process as the person responsible for researching definitions, etc. As previously mentioned, however, it would likely have served the agency's purposes better had this role been shared, especially with the Advocacy Program Manager.

f) Another role identified by Dougherty (p. 30), and one utilized by the author, was that of the *process specialist*. This role was viewed by the author as the least directive and most appropriate in having members start to assume responsibility for the advocacy process. To this end, this particular role was best suited to facilitating the disengagement phase of the consultation model. In the author's opinion, this role required the greatest level of skill because it demanded the highest level of "people" skills. The author identified his performance in this area as strong, as evidenced through the use of reflective

questioning, “intentional amnesia” (forcing members to answer instead of solving problems himself), and questioning. While the shift to this role did initially result in some resistance from committee members (not unexpectedly), it did in the end result in a successful conclusion to the intervention process.

#### Interventions.

a) The author’s use of the *acceptant* intervention style was extensive and occurred on two levels. As a result of the author’s original decision to unilaterally make changes to the Practicum Agreement, a sense of mistrust was developed. This resulted in the author having to pursue a style which, on a macro level, helped demonstrate that the author would act in a supportive and objective manner, one without ulterior motive. This intervention was particularly important during the initial meetings with the Advocacy Program manager and the Executive Director, as well as during the early committee meetings. On a micro level, the acceptant strategy was utilized in those situations where the author felt that individual committee members taking minority positions needed validation (Advocacy Program Manager and the Community member). From the author’s position, this strategy, while not wholly successful, achieved as much as could be expected given certain structural limitations. The author believes that it was ultimately successful in regaining a sense of trust between himself and the agency and facilitating the transition to having the agency assume responsibility for the process. Having said that, however, it is likely that the author could have still maintained a supportive atmosphere while gently challenging the committee in certain arenas.

b) The *catalytic* intervention style was seldom used, largely because the consultation did not dictate such a process. Where this style was used was on a more theoretical level. The agency, like many, often acted on feeling and impulse as opposed to theory and hard information. Much of the Consultant’s work focused on having the agency, on a more theoretical level, start to grasp the connection between a formal framework and the need to base decisions, wherever possible, on hard data. This need was highlighted particularly during the last meeting when members were scoring issues during the dry - run process. While members were struggling with which scores to give

issues, the Consultant was continually emphasizing that members should be thinking of what information they would need in order to score an issue in a more objective manner than a consensus of “gut feelings”.

c) The *confrontation* intervention style was not used during the consultation process, except in its most subtle forms. As a result of the author’s earlier, unfortunate decision, the agency had accumulated a sense of mistrust based on the assessment that, among other things, that the author might be too radical and insensitive in his approach to understanding agency needs. To this end, the use of the intervention style was viewed as potentially provocative. In the author’s estimation the decision to focus on other styles was seen as more productive. This view was born out in the author’s final analysis (see Goal 5: Summative Analysis).

d) The *prescriptive* intervention style was not utilized except in the most global sense. More specifically, the consultation process was in many ways a prescriptive response to the agency’s need for help in their struggling efforts in the area of systems advocacy. Beyond this however, there was little use of this style formally.

e) The *theory and principles* intervention was utilized exclusively in the first meeting of the Committee where emphasis was placed on explaining the theoretical foundation of the author’s work. It was identified by the author that there seemed to be a greater need for this approach throughout the process as the Committee members were often guilty of dealing with issues on a purely pragmatic level. However, there did not seem to be a great expressed need on the part of the agency to focus on this situation.

Findings: Formative analysis of Goal C (Consultation).

Based on the responses garnered from the Performance Feedback sheet (see Lists of Tables and Charts: Charts 1, 2 & 3), it can be said that Committee members rated the performance of the Consultant highly. The author ranked particularly well in the areas of knowledge, inclusiveness, and organizational abilities (see Lists of Tables and Charts: Questions 3a, 3c, 3d & 3e). Ratings in the area of presentation skills were also high overall (overall median score of 1.3), with only average scores in two meetings (see Lists of Tables and Charts: Question 3b). The overall rating for the Consultant was good (see

Lists of Tables and Charts: Question 4), with average ratings in meeting one, eight and nine).

In order to gain some understanding regarding the possible relationship between the author's scores relative to his assessed level of knowledge and the corresponding scores in other areas, a Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Ranks test was carried out between Question 3a and 3c. The hypothesis of the author being that a change in the author's role would be reflected in this rating, without necessarily effecting other ratings. The results of this test showed a Z rating of -1.6036.  $P=0.0514$ . This seemed to substantiate the author's hypothesis.

In all it can be said that the consultative performance by the author was an overall success based in the findings from individual meetings.

**Findings: Summative analysis of Goal C (Consultation).**

The final interviews reinforced the findings from the Performance feedback sheets and the author's own findings. Trends noted within the answers were the Consultant's high level of knowledge, ability to validate people, and general levels of organization. This was substantiated through such comments as "included all group members", "encouraged input", "listened", and "was knowledgeable around subject material".

The only potentially negative finding was that the author was "very thorough and detailed". It seemed during the interview process that this was a friendly way of telling the author that some members felt too much time was spent on detail issues. This was stated most clearly by the Executive Director who stated that "less attention could have been provided to detail on many occasions". This concern was identified at various times by the Consultant but was not seen as a concern. In the Consultant's view, agency members were often guilty of trying to rush matters and not paying attention to detail. This could be attributed, in the author's estimation, to the fact that worker's must often deal with day to day matters which had a priority for them. As well, some members did not appreciate how seemingly small items could have rather profound effects on the construction of the Framework. In short, the author had to ensure that the Committee, given its composition, did not lapse into a reactive manner that crisis work often entails. After all, it is this very

thing that underlines the value of a formal, systems advocacy process.

**Findings: Reflective analysis of Goal D (Evaluation).**

The first component utilized within the evaluation design was that of reflective thinking. The use of this evaluation methodology proved to be particularly valuable because of its highly complementary nature to the theoretical foundation of the Framework, i.e. critical thinking.

As demonstrated during the analysis of the meetings, the author's ability to effectively utilize reflective thinking techniques improved throughout the process. This growth was marked by an increase in the depth and range of the analysis. Of particular note was the author's ability to decipher and adjust to situations within the meeting context with increasing speed. This allowed the Consultant to operate in a much more timely, and thus effective, manner.

The utilization of the "coaching" aspect of reflective thinking was extremely useful to the author. This process allowed the author to identify many issues and sub - issue which otherwise might have gone unnoticed. Such an example was the coach's notations around some of the author's more judgmental aspects of his analysis. These observations, and corresponding adjustments, facilitated an improved "professional" approach to the consultation process. These lessons have served to encourage and teach the author to be more thorough and less judgmental in practice, and to seek out the underlying reasons for peoples' actions and behaviours.

One area of concern noted related to the logistical end of reflective thinking. In this case, the use of audio - tapes as a method for data gathering was not without its problems. In one meeting the author was caught without batteries when the batteries died in the micro - cassette recorder which resulted in extensive note keeping for the rest of the meeting. This made proper facilitation difficult as the author often had to choose between proper recording and proper facilitation. On two other occasions the debate was so lively that no one noticed that the tape had ended. This resulted in minor loss of meeting discussion. Finally, some members spoke in a very quiet manner which at times made it difficult for the author to recount their contributions within the consultation process. Clearly, greater



attention needed to be made regarding the technology utilized.

**Findings: Formative analysis of Goal D (Evaluation).**

The use of Performance Feedback sheets was a particularly useful evaluation methodology. As the individual comments were kept anonymous, the sheets provided a safe way for members to politely point out areas for improvement in the consultation process and the Consultant's performance. These sheets facilitated the ongoing feelings of the members on a meeting to meeting basis, allowing for rapid adjustment to issues encountered that might be problematic.

The use of feedback sheets were also helpful in providing the author with some feedback on his performance. This greatly assisted the author in measuring his performance and demonstrating in a tangible way, the attainment of his established goals.

Two flaws were identified within the Performance Feedback process, however. The first, and more minor of the two, was the inclusion of Question 2 and 2a ( See Appendix E). This question was only relevant for the first meeting and should have been excluded from all following meetings. As well, the lateness of utilizing the "Guide for Considering Changes" meant that members could not even score it in the original meeting

The second, and more serious issues related to intervention/role styles and scoring. As previously noted, the change from an "expert" intervention style to a "process" intervention style may have resulted in resistance from some members of the Committee. One consideration is that this might have been caused by resistance by committee members to assuming a greater level of responsibility. This might have resulted in lower scores in the area of personal knowledge even if the author felt his performance was good. This situation revealed to the author the dangers of utilizing purely quantitative evaluation format, at least where validity had not been established.

This situation, among others, raised for the author the issue of the importance to ensure that mechanisms are employed that allow the researcher to assess degrees of validity. As a result of the author's failure to employ a validated instrument, it is fair to say that much of the author's conclusions have been based on conjecture. With hindsight, greater efforts should have been made in selecting and testing the instruments.

**Findings: Summative analysis of Goal D (Evaluation).**

The use of personal interviews served as a perfect complement to the other methodologies chosen. This process allowed the author to undertake a more direct exploration of the consultation in collaboration with the interviewee.

This process was particularly useful in revealing opinions that members felt were under - represented or for personal or political reasons, could not publicly be brought forward. Such issues included individual staff capabilities, levels of agency skill and commitment, personal insecurities related to the systems advocacy process, etc.

The nature of the interviews also had another benefit. Given the frank and open nature of the discussions, the interviews also helped the author gauge the level of comfort that he enjoyed with committee members. On the basis of these interviews then, the author felt comfortable in making a determination that the level of comfort was high. It must be acknowledged however, that interviewing does have its limitations. Despite the author's personal feelings on the outcome of the interviews, it is possible that interviewees did not raise concerns that were of a sensitive nature, such as criticism of the author and/or co-workers.

**Findings: Analysis of Goal E (To develop a knowledge - guided, knowledge - creating framework for systems advocacy).**

The achievement of the primary learning goal can be examined in a number of ways. First and foremost is the achievement of the primary goal as accomplished through the achievement of the other four personal learning goals. As a result of the author's determination regarding the successful achievement of these goals, largely sub - goals of primary goal, he believed that de facto, success was also realized with regard to the primary goal.

Another indication of the realization of the aforementioned goal related to the feedback of Committee members, both within the Participant Feedback sheets and in the final interviews. One committee member stated that this was useful simply because they had "no real prior knowledge". Another stated that it "brought alot of pieces together" for her. One member even stated that he/she increased their knowledge from "observing the

facilitator". During the interviews, two members spoke of "feeling that this would present real opportunities for real and lasting change". These findings indicated strong support for the validity and continuation of the Framework and the systems advocacy process.

The final indicator related to the achievement of the primary goal was the decision by the agency to continue to utilize the Framework. This was manifested through an employment contract to the author to develop a working manual for the agency (see Appendix U).

### **Part 1. Conclusions.**

The findings of the author, through pre - practicum work, reviews of existing literature, and the consultation process itself, have allowed him to draw the following conclusion and corresponding recommendations. These conclusions and recommendations serve to demonstrate in part the achievement of the identified learning goals.

#### **Advocacy and Systems Advocacy.**

- Advocacy was identified as an important vehicle for social change (Newman, '90; Cole, '91; Freddolino, '87; Church, '91; etc.).
- Pre-practicum research and reviews of existing literature seemed to indicate that while much potential exists for systems advocacy, much of the focus of current advocacy work is of an individual focus. The argument could be made that in large part, individual advocacy reinforces the notion of individual pathology by itself failing to address larger systems change.
- While many advocates and advocacy organizations recognize the need for undertaking systems advocacy, and doing so in a formal manner, few such efforts seem to exist.
- Because advocacy is about empowerment, the process of undertaking advocacy is as important as the outcome. As a result, the process must involve consumers/survivors in a significant way at all of its levels of the process.
- Formal systems advocacy is a process which requires certain levels of

cooperation, organization, critical thinking, formalization and information gathering. These elements are ones often not found in mainstream social agencies, where the organizational environment is individualized, uncoordinated, routinized and hierarchical way. This means that, despite an agency's identification of the need to undertake such systemic action, it is likely that this process will challenge existing organizational cultures for carrying out change.

- Considerable recognition has occurred regarding the need for systems advocacy.

What is clear however, is that the relatively complexity of a formal systems advocacy framework is a double - edged sword. While the formal process is invaluable in helping organizations logically process the large range of complex issues facing them with regard to systems advocacy, the relative complexity (and lack of organizational experience) of the Framework makes construction of such a process difficult. The production of prototype models should greatly assist other organizations who need only modify existing frameworks to suit their needs, unless some factor(s) varies sufficiently to require reformulation.

- Systems advocacy is dangerous to those benefiting from the current status quo.

Given the current political and economic climate, this likely means that systems advocacy, if properly undertaken, may cause the organization undertaking action to encounter some considerable resistance. Serious consideration must be given to developing secure forms of independent funding that allow systems advocacy to occur in relative safety and security.

#### Creating and Guiding Knowledge.

- Because advocacy is about empowerment, and knowledge is one of the primary components of empowerment, the ability to create knowledge became instrumental for the development of a successful model for systems advocacy. As was demonstrated, knowledge is best attained through critical thinking. This can create problems however. Social service organizations, business, schools and government often talk of the need for workers/students who possess critical thinking abilities. This appears to be a falsehood.

What such places really seem to want are *limited* critical thinkers. That is to say, they want workers/students who think critically on the organization's behalf, but not against them. This is of course, an impossibility. To this end, the author suggests that only organization's which truly encourage commitment and accountability to stated philosophies and mission statements of empowerment engage in a formal systems advocacy process.

- Based on the feedback received, it seems that the Framework greatly assists individuals involved in the systems advocacy process to gain knowledge and efficiently utilize it. Committee members spoke of being able to "see" the value of the Framework, in reference to being able to overcome previously overwhelming process issues and undertake change of a more fundamental nature.

- The knowledge created is not related solely to systems advocacy, but takes in a wide range of areas, such as critical thinking, organizational analysis, research, program development, evaluation and staffing, etc.

- One of the traditional problems encountered when undertaking action that is related to larger, more complex issues is that it has a greater likelihood of failure as a result of the aforementioned factors. It seems that the Framework will increase the likelihood of an action being successful because it addresses these issues.

#### Consultation.

- The consultation process was as important to the final product as the Framework itself. This was because the consultation process moved the Framework from the realm of theory to the realm of practice. The consultation process then, is integral to the successful development of a systems advocacy framework.

- The decision to unilaterally change the practicum agreement seriously jeopardized the successful outcome of the consultation process. While not a factor in the final analysis, this act had implications throughout the consultation process, particularly in terms of how confrontational the author could be.

- While somewhat limited in options, the author became aware of the importance of the physical environment to the successful outcome of the consultation process. In future consultations, greater attention would have been paid to this aspect of the consultation process.

- On a personal level, the author demonstrated many of the attributes that Dougherty (1990) identified as important in an effective consultant. Problems and shortcomings in the consultant's performance were readily identified and there were no ongoing, problematic issues (from the author's perspective). The author demonstrated an ability to identify and perform competently in a variety of consultation roles and intervention styles.

#### Evaluation.

- Overall, the evaluation design employed by the author worked well. The three components were highly complementary and together provided a balanced view of the consultation process and the Consultant's performance.

- The Reflective Thinking component of the evaluation design was particularly effective for two reasons. First, The author had the luxury of utilizing a performance coach. This arrangement, especially early in the consultation process, was extremely useful to the author in identifying areas of note that might otherwise have been missed. It seems that the old adage "two heads are better than one" is certainly a valid one. The second issue related to the natural "fit" that existed between reflective thinking and the Framework itself. As well, the process of learning reflective thinking techniques through dialogue and reflection on proceedings helped in realizing growth in this area. From the author's perspective, reflective thinking very much enhanced his ability to utilize critical thinking techniques, which were a fundamental aspect of the Framework.

- While the Performance Feedback sheets were an extremely useful component in the evaluation design, they were, in the author's estimation, the "weak link". With hindsight, more questions should have been included in the sheet regarding the

performance of the Consultant, in order to give a broader and more detailed view of his work. In addition, far greater attention should have been given to the factors of reliability and validity. The author's failure to utilize statistically functional instruments resulted in conclusions that were far less powerful than they might have been.

On a few occasions, due to time constraints, Committee members were not able to complete their feedback sheets immediately, these sheets were often filled out just prior to the next Committee meeting. It was clear that the validity of such information had diminished at a corresponding rate to the member's ability to actually recall events from the meeting in question. Members often stated that they "couldn't remember" while filling out the sheet in the committee room.

Further examination of the scales themselves showed that the author had failed to space equally between the points on the feedback form. This likely created a bias in how people scored issues.

The scale itself provided an apparently unrealistically full spectrum of choices for committee members. In fact, no individual score was ever garnered over 2.5. As a result, the scores were tightly compressed, with very little variation among them. This fact, coupled with the small group sizes, made it extremely difficult to gain useful and reliable information.

Codification of the Performance Feedback sheets would have allowed for individual comparisons and greater statistical rigor.

- As pointed out earlier, a significant flaw was identified in the Performance Feedback sheet relating to the change from an *expert* intervention style to a *process* intervention style. Given this occurrence, considerable thought would be given by the author to restructuring the feedback sheet to eliminate such a situation.

- The only ongoing area of concern identified related to the logistical pieces related to the audio - tapings. The author encountered a number of problems related to audio - tapings which could be related to his inexperience in such work. This resulted in several

pieces, albeit minor ones, of lost information. Preparation in this area was identified as an area for improvement.

- Further to the need for greater statistical analysis was the need for such examination of the group processes. Such data would have been useful in helping to verify the author's reflective findings.

#### Primary goal.

- Based on the author's work at this time, indications are that the Framework has met all original expectations and has considerable validity as a tool for social justice work. The author contends that the Framework has the potential to help professional and self - help organizations undertake change of a broad, meaningful nature that otherwise might not have been possible. It should be noted however, that the Framework has yet to be tested on a real life issue. This will not doubt result in further modifications to it. Such changes however, are simply viewed as part of the natural evolution of the Framework and not a sign of shortcomings.

### **Part 1. Evaluation of Workshops.**

The workshops have been evaluated on a basis consistent with the chapter on Intervention (see Chapter 3). The evaluation first examines the content of the workshops (the Framework ) and draws conclusions on the workshop process itself. These major observations have been undertaken on a general level and not on a meeting - by - meeting basis.

#### Findings: Content.

- One shortcoming identified in the model (and the process) was the lack of attention paid to the theoretical and philosophical foundation of the Framework. This was attributable in part to a lack of recognition on the part of the author of the value of this section, and the agency's zeal to focus on the more pragmatic aspects of the Framework. This shortcoming was noticed by the author at the end of the first full committee meeting, but as a result of the author's indiscretion involving the practicum agreement, he felt



somewhat powerless to challenge this situation. This situation was unfortunate. The philosophical and theoretical premises form the foundation upon which the entire Framework is based. Failure to comprehend or agree with this section has significant implications for how the Framework is developed, and the understanding with which it is utilized.

- Another aspect of the Framework which was undervalued by both the Committee and the Consultant was the brief section in the Framework on Organizational Change. It became increasingly clear to the author that the implementation of a systems advocacy framework does not occur in a vacuum. The introduction of such a model can signal a change in both the culture of the organization and job duties. This can give rise, if not properly undertaken, to such issues as resistance, apathy, fears of job loss or professional incompetence, etc. Organizational change therefore, appears to be part and parcel of any move towards meaningful systems advocacy.

- The development of numerical scales with regard to the selection of potential systems advocacy issues was one such example of a possible shift in organizational culture. Prior to the consultation process, the agency's advocacy efforts, especially systems advocacy, was based on the experiences of the Advocacy Program Manager and the Agency. The adoption of formal, numerical scales was important not just because it made sense for the selection of issues, but also because it signalled a shift in agency thinking from the traditional informal method, to a system based on hard data. This represented, in the author's opinion, an important first development in having the agency recognize the need to base situations on, wherever possible, hard data. Once again, however, greater consideration should have been given to developing a system which ensured the reliability and validity of the data produced. It now is apparent to the author that the move to a more formal system will be quickly undermined if the system is not a reliable and valid one.

- One issue that was identified as potentially problematic and that was never

resolved was how much analysis should be undertaken on issues prior to Issue Selection versus the amount of analysis after selection. This was an important issue. In order to accurately rate a particular issue, one must have a certain level of understanding regarding the issue. On the other hand, one cannot spend an infinite amount of time analyzing dozens of issues. This “chicken and egg” dilemma was left to the organization to establish as an issue of individual organizational “balance”.

- The method of constructing the Framework by having Committee members answer a series of thought - provoking questions proved extremely useful. Committee members felt that this was a very “natural” way of approaching the model’s development.

#### Findings: Process.

- During the original intervention negotiations, the author had proposed that a group of people be selected to go through a series of workshops on the Systems Advocacy Framework. The proposed makeup of the workshop group was to have been similar to that of the Systems Advocacy Committee, but had greater representation from consumers/survivors and agency line staff. This concept was rejected because it did not “fit” with the agency’s traditional method of doing things. Thus, the Committee was established.

In considering this change in format, the author identified two issues of note. First, that the following evaluation consultation identified that members felt the process was somewhat compromised as a result of an under - representation on the Committee by consumers/survivors. The dilemma of course was that, without consumers/survivors raising each pertinent to themselves, it would be difficult for other Committee members to appreciate what they were missing with regard to construction of the model. Members mentioned that having one member was tokenism. As well, that if the member who was involved did not participate or was not well, the entire consumer/survivor perspective was lost. This position was in contrast to earlier discussions around the makeup of the Committee, where there appeared to be some apprehension around involving consumers/survivors in a more substantive way. This might be attributable to a

recognition among committee members that there should have been greater representation consumer representation, or simply that the agency was now in a better position after a “once through” to more effectively involve consumers.

The second observation related to the fact that, for all intents and purposes, the Consultant acted as a workshop leader for all meetings. In the end, the change in structures appeared to be a moot one.

- Another issue related to the structure of the group, i.e. committee, was that the author was both consultant and committee member. While the status of committee member was, in the author’s eyes, an important gesture by the agency regarding his status in the group, it proved to be a cumbersome arrangement. Many of the Consultant’s problems early in the consultation process related to the author trying to wear two hats. Inevitably, when the author tried to contribute to the group as a member, Consultant duties flagged. This resulted in the Consultant forfeiting his member status on a practical level, in order to concentrate solely on his consultant role.

- Another problematic issue appeared to be the lack of responsibility that the agency assumed for duties related to the development of the Framework. This was particularly true with regard to the situation of the Advocacy Program Manager. While the agreed upon arrangement was advantageous to the agency in the short term because there was little work stress on the agency, in the long run the relevant agency staff failed to gain any hands - on experience with the process. This issue was raised during mid - process but, for a variety of reasons, rejected. In the end, this decision was viewed as unfortunate by the agency. In future consultations, the author would have been more forceful in demonstrating the need for the agency to become more involved by pointing the benefits of participating mutually through the process ie. availability of the Consultant to assist means gradual development of skills and workload.

- As mentioned earlier, the physical surroundings had a significant impact on the

Committees ability to perform. Poor air circulation, coupled with no natural light, resulted in decreases committee performance in meetings.

- The Executive Director played a prominent role in the proceedings of the Committee. This role seemed to have a significant impact on the committee's direction. During the initial meetings, the Executive Director seemed very concerned regarding the direction of the consultation process and took an active role in establishing parameters and direction. The greatest example of this was the fact that she was on the Committee but the final recommendations of the Committee had to be submitted to her for her approval. The author believes that this situation could be attributed largely to his decision to move unilaterally in changing the practicum agreement and the resultant concerns it created around the author's reliability.

As the consultation process advanced, the Executive Director continued to play an active role, but of a much less "concerned" nature, as the author developed a sense of trust with her.

### **Part 2. Recommendations.**

With regard to the final conclusions related to the evaluation of the consultation meetings, the author has identified six significant issues;

- Agreement around the theoretical and philosophical foundation of the model is critical to the validity of the Framework. This component appears especially important when trying to develop such a model within the environment of a service organization, where there may not be a real understanding of the need to examine theory. It is necessary for optimal implementation of the Framework. As well, as people who are under considerable pressure from a service perspective, there inevitably will be the need to "get on with it" and get to what they might perceive to be the "nitty gritty" of the work, i.e. the more tangible aspects of the model.

- The shift to systems advocacy work will very likely lead to some changes in the

organizational structure and culture. The impact of these changes should not be underestimated, especially with regard to culture. Based on the model presented, the adoption of systems advocacy can lead to considerable organizational disruption, as manifested through logistical problems, philosophical clashes, job and professional insecurities, etc. Concurrently, the same risks are posed with regard to the organizational structure. The adoption of systems advocacy will no doubt result in staffing modifications, changing job duties, and perhaps, the organizational hierarchy. Failure to address this aspect of the adoption of systems advocacy could destroy such an initiative, no matter how effective the model *per se* is.

- Further to the conclusion regarding a commitment to the philosophical foundation of the Framework, it is clear that within the mental health context, that agencies and organizations must involve consumers/survivors in a substantive way. Such a process is necessary not only in realising a positive outcome for individual actions, but also in terms of helping consumers/survivors to develop the knowledge to undertake such action themselves. The systems advocacy becomes, in real terms, a test of an agency's espoused commitment to the people they serve.

- The attempts to undertake the consultation process with the dual role of committee member and consultant was extremely difficult and where the author attempted to "wear both hats", the consultation process was compromised. This arrangement also has the potential to set up conflicts of interests depending on the specific context of the consultation process. It is recommended that consultants concentrate on consulting.

- Assuming that an organization has no previous experience with systems advocacy, the possible changes in tasks and ways of thinking could be very difficult. Agencies must be willing to assume responsibility for the tasks related to the development and refinement of a Framework and the Framework process or else jeopardize their work by failing to develop the actual knowledge to operate the systems advocacy process

### **Summary.**

The intervention process was originally undertaken in response to the author's stated concerns regarding the plight of disadvantaged people in our society and the apparent inability of the social service profession to do anything about this situation in a meaningful way.

Based initially on Cole's (1992) research, the author substantiated the validity and need for a mechanism for bringing about change of a more fundamental nature. Utilizing primarily Brookfield's work in the area of critical thinking (1987), Black's research related to employment equity (1985) and Cox's model for undertaking community action (1984), the author developed a theoretical framework for assisting organizations in defining, gathering, selecting, prioritizing and acting on issues related to the positive modification of social systems, and for evaluating that action.

Utilizing Dougherty's Generic Model of Consultation (1990), the author guided an agency committee through the process of understanding, developing and revising the Systems Advocacy Framework in meeting the specific needs of the agency.

The consultation process was evaluated using both formative and summative evaluation techniques. An evaluation design which utilized three distinct evaluation mechanisms (reflective thinking, questionnaires and individual interviews) was employed.

The evaluation process demonstrated that the Systems Advocacy Framework had considerable validity with regard to undertaking system changing. As well, the evaluation process also helped identify considerable personal growth in the skill and knowledge base of the author, which fulfilled the learning goals related to the intervention process,

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A**  
**Consultation Agreement (1992)**



June 22, 1992

Bev Gutray  
Executive Director  
Canadian Mental Health Association  
Winnipeg Region  
Ellice Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Bev,

Re: Darrell Cole  
C.M.H.A. as Practicum Site

This will follow up on our conversation of April 8th, 1992, as well as updated events including Brenda's announced resignation on June 22nd, concerning our agreement about the parameters, objectives and processes of the practicum. Based on your request, I have attempted to outline the practicum process and then apply it to Darrell's proposal.

The MSW practicum is a knowledge guided piece of intervention. It usually involves the careful definition of a problem, the application of appropriate knowledge and skills to the problem, an evaluation of the application, and a report of the results in a manner suitable for evaluation by an "examining committee." In total this involves about 500 hours or about 6 months @ 1/2 time involvement.

The Practicum Committee consists of an advisor (myself) as chair, Sid Frankel as a second faculty person and a member from outside the Faculty (we had agreed that it be the Executive Director, so Nancy Testor in the interim). The function of the Committee is to assist Darrell in achieving and in overseeing the progress of the practicum.

There are essentially two phases: the Practicum Proposal and the Practicum Report.

The Proposal is presented to the Committee for approval and contains: !!! a clear statement of objectives and rationale, a literature review providing the

theoretical underpinnings in approaching the intervention, (3) a clear description of the proposed intervention as well as (4) a clear description of how the intervention will be evaluated.

The Presentation and Report will require Committee approval and will describe and analyze the interventive activities outlined in the Proposal in accordance with the rationale and objectives of the intervention.

We have mutually agreed that the general topic area to be addressed by Darrell is to develop a functional means by which case advocacy can be translated into systemic advocacy within a CMHA organizational context. Based on literature, the practicum will explore: (1) the most effective means by which a specific mental health issue becomes prioritized as a systemic issue, and (2) the process by which the components of the organization can explore and analyze the advocacy objectives and viability of those objectives given the community reaction to the issue and the contextual environment within and external to the agency. The anticipated outcome will be: (1) an organizational process, (2) specific agency accepted strategies, (3) a generally perceived confidence in those strategies for vetting case issues, translating them into class action, and (4) carrying forward appropriate class action decisions. As such, the interventive component of the practicum will be the productive engagement of the Agency to that end.

As such we have mutually agreed that:

(1) The purpose of Darrell's involvement in the Agency shall be clearly stated.

(2) He will not be required to engage in any of the normal work activity unless it can clearly be defined as achieving the objectives of the practicum.

(3) Darrell concurs to try this proto type out with a case example only to the extent that he feels that this case example can be appropriately be incorporated into the time lines of the practicum.

(4) It is expected that the Practicum Proposal will be completed by October 1992 and the Practicum Report by April, 1993

(5) Any initiatives toward development of systemic advocacy taken by either the Agency or the practicum will attempt to integrate direction of both through liaison between Nancy representing the Agency and Darrell/ myself representing the Faculty.


(6) Day to day support and facilitation will be provided by Nancy and Ellen. While supervision in terms of the practicum, between Advisory meetings, will be provided by me.

We hereby agree to the above and thereby confirm the commitment of Darrell to complete his practicum as specified and the Canadian Mental Health Association, Winnipeg Region, to continue as his practicum placement until the completion of the practicum as specified.


For the Agency

  
Nancy Lester  
Executive Director

For the Practicum

  
Paul R. Newman, Practum Advisor

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Darrell Cole, Practicum Student

**Appendix B**  
**Systems Advocacy Framework (Prototype)**

### **Issue Gathering and Filtering**

The stage of “Issue Gathering and Filtering” refers to the process of compiling “eligible” systems advocacy issues. Once compiled, organizations can then determine what issue(s) will be selected for action. The process of gathering issues can be proactive or reactive. That is to say, the organization can actively solicit issues, or it can be satisfied with determining the issues itself. The organization may even choose to incorporate elements of both.

Both proactive and reactive issue gathering have some advantages and disadvantages. For example, reactive issue gathering gives the organization greater control of the advocacy agenda. It also requires less time and resources because it is a less complex process. Proactive issue gathering on the other hand, tends to reveal a greater breadth of issues because the issues are not limited to a single source (the organization). If done properly, proactive issue gathering also can help to cultivate relationships with other groups by approaching them for their opinions and knowledge. This can lead to external support for advocacy actions.

While acknowledging the limitations that face every organization in terms of time and resources, it must be said that the proactive method of issue gathering has the potential to be far more encompassing and empowering. The degree to which an organization is able to employ this method however, likely will be determined by its responses to the following questions.

The stage of issue gathering and filtering also includes the most basic elements in establishing parameters for gathering issues. Formal recognition of such factors is important to both the organization and potential issue submitters as it helps to define what constitutes an issue.

A) **What is the organization’s definition of a “systems” issue?** The definition decided on will act as a major filter in deciding what issues the organization will consider for action. For example, the definition may limit the scope of the advocacy efforts to only certain levels of systems, i.e., medical institutions. Careful consideration must be given to developing a definition which reflects the true intentions of the advocate.

**B) Who decides (and doesn't decide) on the definition of "systems" issues? Why?**

In developing any framework, one must ask "who" is making these decisions? Are all the major stakeholders gaining input into the process i.e. staff, consumers, etc., or is the decision-making process being limited to a certain, select group of individuals. Again, cooperation is a foundation of successful empowerment actions. Decisions which are made without considering the interests and knowledge of certain groups will only serve to dilute the effectiveness of the organization's advocacy campaigns.

It is important to remember that for many decisions there is no "right" or "wrong" answer. Tradeoffs must often be made. In doing so however, organizations always should be conscious of what are the tradeoffs, and exactly what the implications of their decisions might be.<sup>29</sup> In this way, organizations will gain a more intimate self-understanding.

**C) Does the issue fall within the philosophy, mandate, goals and objectives of the organization and/or programs?** Issues that do not meet this most basic criterion should not be pursued. However, if an issue strikes the organization as being important, consideration may be given to referring the issue to an appropriate location i.e. another group that may be prepared to deal with this issue. As well, if the issue appears important enough, consideration may also be given to reexamining the organization's mandate.

**D) How are issues gathered? Why?** Consideration must be given to the mechanisms which will be used to solicit issues from different individuals and/or bodies. Will survey forms be sent out? Will a public forum be held? Will issues be developed from the organization's individual casework? Will a combination of all or some of these methods be used? The types and combinations of methods are almost limitless, with each having its own inherent advantages and disadvantages. Factors such as available resources, visibility, reliability of methodology etc., must all be considered in the final analysis. Warheit, Bell & Schwab (1977) list five possible approaches for undertaking

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<sup>29</sup> All decisions and accompanying rationale should be made in written form. By doing so, the organization increases accountability and its ability to evaluate its efforts. This is not meant to equate written form as a definition of the term "formal" beyond the scope of this practicum report. Many cultures employ formal systems which are oral in nature. This report is designed primarily for mainstream social service organizations and as such, is written for that context.

needs assessment. Whatever method or methods are chosen, Kome (1989) stresses the need of letting people define their issues as problems, as such a way of expression is most natural for many people.<sup>30</sup> From these problems the advocacy organization can then develop the appropriate issue.

E) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how issues will be gathered? Why? Will the individuals making this decision represent a broad cross-section of the stakeholders, or will the decision-makers be made up of individuals from a relatively narrow group?<sup>31</sup> What are the reasons for this decision?

F) Based on the process being used and who is being approached, what types of issues likely won't be gathered? Why? While such trends should become clearer after the issue gathering process, it is important to consider this topic prior to the actual gathering process so that potential gaps can be filled in. For example, failure to consult with individuals living in group homes may result in the omission of an entire sector of community-based issues.

G) When are issues gathered? Why? The issue-gathering process may occur at set intervals, or it may be implemented on an as-needed basis. One advantage with timing such events at regular intervals is that this will make it easier for supportive individuals and organization to produce submissions. If groups know that submissions are taken every May for example, this will allow them time to develop their own internal processes accordingly, thereby ensuring a constant supply of relevant issues. On the other hand, if the advocacy organization already has an ample supply of relevant issues, such regular collections may represent a waste of time and resources for all involved. The organization undertaking the advocacy efforts must strike a balance between regularly "hearing people" and providing a hollow public-relations exercise. Whether issue-gathering events occur regularly or not, the advocacy organization must also consider what time is a good time for such an event, both for itself and others. Is it a good time to

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<sup>30</sup> It is critical to understand the true nature of the terms "problem" and "issue". For example, consumers may identify the high cost of medication and their inability to afford it as "the problem". In fact, the issue may be government legislation which provides pharmaceutical companies with exclusive patents for extended periods of time which serve to inflate drug costs.

<sup>31</sup> The term "narrow" refers to an ideological narrowness, not necessarily just a numerical narrowness.

solicit issues just before the end of a fiscal year, just after a fiscal year or during a fiscal year?

H) What happens to gathered issues? Why? As stated earlier, the provision of clear outlines for issue submission to potential submitters helps to ease any potential confusion or misunderstanding. Certainly, solicited organizations will be anxious to know what happens to issues they submit, at least in general terms. Perhaps most importantly, outside organizations will want to know how long it will take before a submission is accepted or rejected. Such a decision may have a significant impact on the resource allocation of an organization and they will no doubt be anxious to know where they stand with regard to their submission.

I) What additional criteria, if any, will the organization develop to screen issues? Organizations may choose to develop any number of criteria to reduce the number of issues which will be considered for action.<sup>32</sup> These criteria will be specific to the needs and goals of the organization (Arrow & Raynaud, 1986). At this stage, the organization must consider how many issues should “qualify” for consideration for selection, and what the merits (and demerits) are in “qualifying” a large number of issues vs. a smaller number of issues. For example, accepting an issue for consideration may serve to give the issue some legitimization in the eyes of other parties. It may also raise false expectations on the part of others. As well it may be more practical to screen heavily so that the remaining issues can be looked at more intensely. These are the type of effects which should be considered.

J) Who decides (and doesn't decide) on the qualification criteria, or whether or not there will be any? Why? Again, this question challenges the organization to look at who is involved in the construction of the process, not just its byproducts (issue actions). By sharing in the construction process, organization's achieve a greater level of power-sharing, thereby facilitating education, egalitarianism and empowerment.

K) How will qualification criteria be weighted? Why? Consideration must be given not only to what criteria will be used, but also how issues will be rated against the criteria. For example, will the developed criteria be ranked equally, or will the criteria have

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<sup>32</sup> Types of criteria will be examined more closely in the stage of “Issue Selection”.



weights attached so that certain elements can be given greater preference? While such a system is likely more appropriate for "Issue Selection", organizations may also consider implementing such measures at this stage. Again, all decisions should be accompanied with a rationale for the decision. The rationale should explain all options considered and reasons given for not employing these options.

L) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how issues are weighted? Again, decisions on how criteria are weighted will reflect the values and priorities of the group attempting systems advocacy. By being aware of such, the organization will be more effective in its advocacy efforts by being able to maintain a balance between its own values and priorities and those other parties who have a stake in the process, especially consumers.

#### Issue Selection

Issue selection refers to the stage of determining which issues from among the many "eligible" issues will be selected at a given point in time for action. The process of selecting an issue(s), can be a daunting one. This is especially true when one realizes the number of important issues that need to be addressed. Feelings of fatalism and insignificance are natural at this point. Undertaking systems advocacy with the limited resources available can be even more frustrating when one wishes to produce happy endings to all the issues. There also can be a hesitancy in daring to presume that some issues are more important than others. What is important to remember however, is that the development of a systemic process does not attempt to take the magnitude of crisis as the only factor for consideration when choosing an issue. This may be but one of many factors used in determining whether or not an issue is appropriate for selection. It is important to remember then, the rejection of an issue is not a rejection of its importance! Issue selection then, concerns itself with determining which issues from among a number of qualifying issues will be selected for action.

Once again, the existing literature on selecting issues revealed little in the way of useful information. Virtually all relevant literature is developed on the premise that those undertaking change/advocacy have already selected an issue. Unfortunately, this ignores the problems facing organizations prior to the stage of "issue action". Fortunately, a small

body of material has acknowledged the need for determining which issues are selected. Kome (1989) states “When you hear your friends and people on the street saying, ‘Somebody ought to do something about this; there ought to be a law’, that’s an issue” (p.8). Unfortunately, such a loose definition does little to assist in selecting one issue from a multitude.

Out of the literature reviewed, only two authors, Black (1985); Bobo, Kendall and Max (1991), speak to the need of developing criteria for determining which issue(s) will be selected. Black argues that the only realistic way of doing so is through the establishment of agreed upon criteria. He goes on to propose a number of such criteria for consideration. These include;

a) *the gravity of the harm*: One of the criteria Black proposes for consideration is the depth and breadth of harm that an issue presents. In other words, that which impacts the greatest number with the most severity should be considered for selection. Black goes on to cite two concerns with this particular criteria.

First, the advocacy organization must determine what the balance is between depth and breadth of harm. For example, will an issue be selected that is a widespread inconvenience to consumers, or will the issue focused on be something that is adversely affecting a smaller group of individuals? Second, Black asks how the degree of harm will be measured [or at least approximated]. Will “harm” be measured in dollar terms? Will the formula consider emotional harm? If so, how? Black argues that emotional value should be considered and that the answer probably rests with measuring “harm” in qualitative terms, not quantitative terms.

b) *the benefits from modifying the system*: Black suggests that consideration also be given to selecting an issue for its long-term impact on the larger system. While the successful resolution of a given issue may have an immediate and positive impact for those being advocated, it may not present any long-term benefits of significance for the system in question (refer to “system changing vs. system tuning”).

c) *the efficacy and enforceability of a remedy*: Black argues that in order to be effective, the resolution must be able to be put into effect. One time fixes do not represent

an adequate response to a given situation and as such, should be less valued. For example, if the goal of the advocacy effort is to create jobs for individuals with mental illnesses, and there is no provision for long-term guarantees, then it is likely that the allotted jobs will disappear as soon as the original job placements leave. As well, the settlement of the issue should ensure that suitable resources are set aside in order to guarantee full effect.

Winning a battle that cannot be supported is indeed a hollow victory!

d) the usefulness of the (issue) as a model: Black proposes a fourth criteria for consideration when selecting issues. He suggests that when selecting issues, thought should be given to the potential usefulness for creating positive spinoffs. An issue which shares many common factors with other issues may provide a highly convertible model for the other issues. This means that action can be taken with a relatively high chance of success and a minimal use of resources.

e) the relative chance for success: Another fundamental consideration for selecting issues is how “winnable” the issue is (Black, 1985; Bobo, Kendall and Max, 1991). While the choice of such a criterion may appear obvious, the ability to properly assess this issue at this stage will likely prove more difficult. It is likely that an abbreviated form of the “issue action” stage will have to be used in order to undertake some form of preliminary assessment of the issue.

The term “winnable” is relative to the goals established by the advocacy team. It should be remembered that an issue may not be winnable because the advocates have established unrealistic or inappropriate goals. It should be remembered that, in general, the goal of the advocacy effort(s) should be to remove the barriers, and the potential for barriers that led to the issue itself. As well, the advocates should not forget that they may have a moral and/or formal obligation to take action on particular issues (refer to agency and/or program mandate, goals and objectives). This could mean that an issue must be selected for action, even when there is no hope of “winning”, because it is deemed important that the organization is viewed as taking a stand on the issue.

f) the cost of the case: While a particular issue may appear quite winnable, consideration must be given to the relative cost (not necessarily financial) of the

undertaking. If movement on the issue is going to result in a pyrrhic victory<sup>33</sup>, then it is questionable whether or not it is a victory at all. Black stresses the need for a balanced approach to the issue of cost:

I do not mean to suggest that...the least expensive should be given priority. The cost would have to be weighed against the anticipated benefits, and achievement of a major change in one large employment system might do more to achieve equality of opportunity than a dozen smaller and less costly investigations (p.174-175).

*g)the expertise of the agency:* While an issue may meet all the criteria mentioned to this point, this does not mean that the organization itself has the ability to achieve success, even in coalition with others. A mental health advocacy program for example, may have considerable expertise in dealing with issues related to institutional issues, but less expertise with regard to community issues. On the other hand, the organization may look towards smaller-scale issues in less familiar areas because it sees a need to cultivate knowledge in other areas.

*h)fairness to protected groups and respondents:* A final consideration for Black is the concern of representing the interests of all constituents. Failure to consider the interests of a particular sub-community within the constituent population may lead to resentment and the eventual loss of that group. In the event that an organization is unable to address a certain type or body of issues, Black suggests the need (as previously mentioned) for clear and articulated outlines and/or public explanation of the selection process. He adds however, that caution must be exercised in not having the process degenerate into a pointless political debate.

Bobo, Kendall and Max (1991) also propose a series of criteria that they believe must be met if an issue is to be successfully undertaken. The author's define these criteria as fundamental to any "good issue." While not designed for sorting issues per se., they raise concepts that the organization may want to consider in developing their own criteria. Many of these concepts are similar to, though expressed more simplistically than, Black's criteria. For this reason, only those criteria not addressed by Black will be covered.

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<sup>33</sup> Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, defeated Roman invaders in 279 B.C. but in doing so, so exhausted his own forces that he doomed his nation to takeover.

a) *[will undertaking and winning this issue] give people a sense of their own power:* The Bobo, Kendall and Max criteria place strong emphasis on consumer empowerment. These authors believe that any issue chosen must be able to be done in such a way that the people are the one's who can achieve the victory, not the experts [advocates] and lawyers. They believe that by doing so, consumers gain the confidence to take on more and/or larger issues and develop a greater sense of loyalty to the organization undertaking the change efforts.

b) *[The issue chosen must have the potential to] alter the relations of power:* Bobo, Kendall and Max argue that issues which do not alter the relations of power (defined as "the way other side makes decisions") are issues not worth considering because they do nothing to address the primary goal of empowerment. They also suggest that the mere presence of a successful change [advocacy] organization has the ability to affect the relations of power.

c) *[The issue in question must ] be easy to understand:* Because the authors' model is based on consumer empowerment and control, they stress the need for consumers to have complete understanding of the issue at hand. Any issue which is so complex or abstract that it cannot be quickly and easily understood is likely going to suffer from a lack of consumer support. People should not have to be "...convinced that there is a problem, that the solution is good and that they want to help solve it" (p.17).

d) *[The issue should ] be non-divisive:* Selecting issues which serve to divide people, especially the consumer community, not only work against the potential success of the issue in question, they threaten to undermine future efforts as well. These authors suggest that such issue be avoided.

e) *[The issue selected] must build leadership:* As consumers become empowered through the development of their own growth skills, it becomes imperative that they assume control for their own actions and initiatives as much as possible. In this way they develop their own leadership capabilities and become more self-reliant. Such an emphasis may present special concerns to organizations who themselves are attempting to take a leadership role in the community. This however, remains one of the challenges of

removing oppression.

The preceding criteria put forward by Black (1985), and Bobo, Kendall and Max (1991) represent a number of significant elements in determining which issues out of many should be selected. Whatever criteria are adopted from the ones already mentioned, as well as any additional criteria which might be developed by the organization however, will be dependent entirely on the organization undertaking the change and should be consistent with its direction and mandate. Before selecting criteria however, the author recommends that the organization once again give consideration to the following questions about the selection process itself.

A) How are issues selected? Why this way? While a strong argument has been put forward for the establishment of formal criteria in determining the selection of issues, the organization may opt for some other process. For example, the organization may decide to select issues on an ad hoc basis. Black argues for simply accepting all issues that meet a rigorous criteria. As such there is no selection process but instead, emphasis is placed on how issues are prioritized. Whatever method is chosen however, should be backed with a full explanation of the reason for the decision and accompanying rationale for not pursuing other options.

B) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how issues will be selected? Why? Will consumers have direct input into the process of determining how issues are selected? Will front-line staff have input into how issues are selected? Board members? If some or all of these groups are excluded (or included), what are the potential ramifications of this decision?

C) How will the selection criteria be weighted? Another consideration is how the selected criteria will be scored. The organization may decide that all criteria will be weighed equally, or it may decide that some criteria are more important than others. In such a case, "weights" or numerical values can be attached to each criterion. Higher values then can be attached to the prioritized criteria. A decision also should be made as to whether or not a selected issue must contain all of the listed criteria, or if it only has to meet most of the criteria, especially if it appears to have considerable strength in one or two of the criteria.

For example, an issue may not rank well against some of the criteria but failure to address the issue may result in the loss of a portion of the organization's funding. This could result in the loss of some advocacy services. It might be argued that this issue would score high under potential "magnitude of harm". How will situations such as these be dealt with?

**D) Who decides (or doesn't decide) how the criteria will be weighted? Why?**

Decisions around the weighting mechanism will have significant impact on which issues are chosen. If stakeholders are going to be meaningfully involved in the selection process, it is important that participants feel that the mechanism for making a decision fair. Again, no matter what decision is reached with regard to who gains input into choosing the weighting process, written rationale should be provided.

**E) What does being "selected" mean?** Other parties who may also have a stake in a particular issue will be anxious to know what the term "selected" means (Is there a need for a definition or explanation of this term?). More importantly, other parties will want to know what the implications and/or responsibilities are with regard to having an issue(s) selected. Will such parties be expected to openly collaborate with the advocate? Will there be an expectation of resources being contributed? These are questions which the advocate will have to consider or respond to when selecting issues. Of no less importance will be the implications and corresponding responsibilities for the advocate in accepting an issue. What obligations will the advocate have to the accepted organization? Will there be any negative implications for accepting a particular issue i.e. political fallout? These and other factors must be considered in developing the selection process.

Not to be forgotten, as so often happens, are the implications of not accepting an issue. Will others interpret this as a statement that the advocate doesn't believe that the issue is an important one? Will not accepting an issue jeopardize relations with another group? Factors such as these seem to reiterate the need for clear and in-depth guidelines on issue selection and acceptance/non-acceptance.

**F) What kinds of issues will (or will not) be accepted? Why?** Prior to selecting issues, it is important to consider this question. Are there issues which do not meet the criteria as currently established and yet the organization feels compelled to undertake it? If

so, why? Are critical criteria missing? Conversely, are there issues which meet all the established criteria yet the organization is reluctant/refuses to accept the issue for action? If so, why? Are there concerns about the submitting organization? Are critical criteria missing? Are there concerns about the validity of the criteria? It is imperative that the criteria be adjusted to reflect these considerations. Failure to do so will strongly compromise the integrity and validity of the selection process.

While analysis of issues is important in each individual selection process, it is equally important to analyze the type of issues which are being selected over a longer term. This will assist the organization in identifying trends and patterns in their selection process. For example, the organization may find itself not accepting large-scale issues, or perhaps it is not accepting issues which might be viewed as "systems changing". Such reviews help the organization maintain its perspective and a balanced approach to choosing issues.

G) How many issues will be accepted? Why this number? It stands to reason that the organization will undertake only those efforts which it has the resources, direct and indirect, to support. This will median that some form of resource inventory must be undertaken i.e. person-hours available, money, skills available, etc. This may be relatively easy to determine during the initial selection process, but it can become more convoluted as time passes. As an example, the organization accepts three issues for action during the initial selection process. After some time the organization concludes its campaign on one of the three original issues and now a new issue may be chosen. The organization must now consider whether or not it needs to go through another "issue gathering" session or whether it can simply take an issue from its issue "waiting list".<sup>34</sup> Will the new issue being selected be one which requires the same amount of resources as the one which was recently resolved, or will all issues now be reexamined? This could median new issues being accepted and old ones being abandoned. It also suggests the need for another resource inventory in order to determine exactly how many and what type of resources are available.

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<sup>34</sup> In doing so, the organization is urged to reassess issues being considered from the "waiting list". Changing circumstances may make an issue less appealing than it was at the time of the original assessment. Assuming the list is kept updated, consideration should be given to prioritizing all selected issues so that they can quickly be acted on.



These represent but some of the factors which the organization will have to consider in establishing its selection process. No matter what process is established, by documenting and providing rationale for decisions, the organization will place itself in a situation where the process can be assessed and evaluated more effectively, thereby making improvements relatively easy.

### **Issue Priorization**

Assuming that the organization has chosen more than one issue to do at a time, it will be faced with the need to prioritize accepted issues.<sup>35</sup> Priorizing (The ranking of selected systems issues on the basis of perceived importance) is necessary because the environment in which an organization operates is constantly changing. Given the current recessionary period, this is especially true of the financial environment. Failure to attract funding can result in the loss of resources set aside for advocacy. This can result in the downgrading or elimination of certain advocacy campaigns. In this case then, it is important to know (in advance) what issues will be compromised. Priorizing issues before such a crisis will greatly reduce organizational stress by providing the organization with an already-in-place mechanism for avoiding potential dispute. As such, priorization is a mechanism for ensuring that those issues which are dearest to the organization, remain so.

As was the case in the previous sections, consideration must be given to a number of factors which are crucial to determining how advocacy issues will be processed. Such factors include;

A) How will selected issues be prioritized (Formal vs. Informal)? Why? Black (1985) recommends that, like the stage of issue-selection, criteria be established to guide the organization's priorization of issues. Again, the organization may decide instead that formal criteria are not warranted and the decision will be left to the informal interpretation of one or more people. Such a situation is dangerous because it presents the opportunity for differing criteria to be at work. This type of situation not only causes confusion about the real priorities of the organization (as opposed to the priorities of dominant individuals),

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<sup>35</sup> In the case where only a single issue is being chosen, the selection criteria serve the dual role of being selection and priorization criteria. It is also possible that a sudden crisis may necessitate the use of priorization criteria even when only one issue has been chosen.

it creates an atmosphere for possible conflict as individuals try to have their criteria adopted. Assuming criteria were used during the stage of issue selection, doing so during the issue prioritization stage ensures consistency. This consistency facilitates an easier and more effective way for undertaking assessments of the entire systemic advocacy process. Whatever the advocacy organization decides to prioritize then, formal criteria seem to provide the best method for doing so.

**B) Criteria selection. What should be prioritized? Why?** Black recommends that the criteria should prioritize cases which are similar in nature. This he believes, should be done because acting on inter-related issues can provide positive spin-off effects for the individual issues. Another possibility is having the criteria based on value-related factors that reflect the advocacy organization's own philosophical priorities. In this situation, the issue selection process would focus on more "technical" factors, i.e., cost, winnability, etc., while the prioritization criteria would focus on "value" factors, i.e., who is being affected, how they are being affected, etc. A third possibility is that the select criteria from the issue selection process be reused for prioritization. In this scenario, the organization may choose to make factors such as "winnability" and "magnitude of harm" as the most important elements in determining how issues are prioritized. The prioritization criteria do not belong to any particular group (technical, value, etc.), they are simply those elements that the organization identifies as being the most important.

There are any number of possibilities in terms of what the organization may choose to emphasize. The important thing however, is to formally articulate what this emphasis will be. In doing so, all involved become clearer on the focus of their work. As well, the organization can readily assess whether or not the criteria truly reflect those areas they wish to prioritize.

**C) Who gets to develop (and who doesn't get to develop) the prioritization process? Why?** As was the case during earlier stages of the process, decisions must be made around who will (and who won't) have input into the development of the process for prioritizing issues. As mentioned earlier, retainment of identical factors (i.e. involvement of same

individuals throughout the change process) helps ensure a degree of consistency throughout the process. This consistency makes it easier for the organization to evaluate its progress and identify areas within the process which appear to be problematic.

One of the challenges facing the organization attempting to undertake advocacy efforts will be maintaining a significant degree of consumer input and control (assuming that they enjoy some input and control at this point). As the decision-making process becomes “narrower”, there will be a temptation to exclude others from the process in order to guarantee that the organization will retain control of the process that it is coordinating. While this is a legitimate concern with regard to ensuring that the process is maintained and stays viable, it is also important to remain committed to the concept of empowerment by ensuring that consumers are not simply relegated to the generation of issues (see “levels of consumer empowerment”).

For those who endeavour to maintain a significant consumer presence, they will be faced with the real difficulty of trying to decide how to facilitate a considerable grassroots involvement in such a narrow process as determining priorities. One such way might be to provide clear guidelines to potential participants about exactly what the organization needs to have incorporated within its priorities. This not only makes it clear what the issues are for the organization, but it also clarifies to what degree the organization wishes to retain “ownership” over the process. It is potentially fatal, no matter how honourable the intentions, to give the impression that this is an egalitarian coalition when in fact it is a process that is owned and operated by the organization. Another consideration is to give participants time to consult with their membership. Such a process helps groups feel “heard” even if they have a lone representative in the process. There will always be time when quick decisions have to be made in order to ensure action and success, but empowerment cannot occur without meaningful input from all involved, and meaningful input often takes time.

D) What happens when a crisis issue develops? One of the most important reasons for prioritizing is to prepare for the unexpected. Inevitably, the organization will be faced with a situation where they are unexpectedly confronted by an issue that requires immediate

attention. The existence of a process for prioritizing issues allows the organization to make quick and clean decisions about what changes will have to be made in order to address the new issue. Because this is one of the fundamental purposes of prioritization then, it is important that the prioritization process be able to do what is intended. The organization may wish to dry-run the process by confronting it with a number of potential crisis situations i.e. withdrawal of significant portion of organization's funding, introduction of draconian legislation, etc. Such dry-runs will help ensure that the process will function during a real crisis.

E) Conflict between criteria. Another issue worthy of individual consideration has been raised by Black (1985). This is the concern about conflict between criteria. While the conflict between individual criteria will vary from case to case, Black believes that certain conflict "themes" can be anticipated.

1) Cases with the greatest potential benefit will often be the most costly: As was earlier alluded to, the organization may have to strike some compromise between dramatic results and cost. This means that more modest, incremental changes will likely have to be made, or else a fewer number of issues addressed at any given time so that resources can be concentrated on the larger cases.

2) Fairness to protected groups vs. the likelihood of success: For a number of reasons, some issues will be easier to win than others. For example, it might be easier to win cases involving "right to treatment" than issues of abuse of mental health patients. Right to treatment does not necessarily challenge the role of the medical system. In fact, depending on the issue, it may actually have the support of the medical system because it might mediate an increase in service provision by the system. Conversely, abuse (sexual, physical, emotional) of individuals within mental health institutions by institutional personnel and/or other individuals with mental illnesses, may prove more difficult to win. In such a case the institutional system is likely to put up more resistance. As well, the testimony of abused individuals often will be dismissed or discredited because of their illness. The organization must be aware that such situations can place them in situations where critical issues remain unaddressed because they are issues which are more difficult to

win.

3) ***Fairness to consumers:*** Another issue worthy of consideration which is not directly addressed by Black is that of individual rights vs. group rights. Many, if not all, systems issues will have their genesis in problems encountered by individual consumers. Individual cases may provide the catalyst and foundation for certain systems cases. It is important however, to remember that the individual problems and cases are “owned” by those who were at the center of them, the consumer. Organizations do not own the “copyright “ of a case because they have undertaken it. The confidentiality and rights of the individual must be respected over the rights of the organization to act on systems issues (C.A.S.W. Code of Ethics, p.366). It is imperative then that consultation occur with those individuals who “own” cases upon which the organization hopes to found its campaign so as to gain their permission. As was the case with external groups during the gathering and selection process, consumers must be advised of the possible intentions and implications of their involvement. Failure to do so can result in significant professional and moral breaches which can destroy a campaign.

In summary, we can see that the issue of case prioritization is no less important (or complex) than the previous stages of the process. The organization attempting such a process may wish to employ the sequence suggested, or explore other alternatives. For example, the prioritization stage could conceivably be combined with the selection process by simply attaching weighted percentages to the criteria and giving a higher weighted percentage to those criteria which serve “double-duty” as selection and prioritization criteria. Whatever method is chosen, the development of formal criteria and rational remains critical to the success of the framework.

### **Issue Action**

Issue action is the stage which many individuals and groups mistakenly jump to before addressing the issues raised in the previous pages. Issue action refers to the process of developing and implementing a plan for the successful undertaking of previously selected and/or prioritized systems issues. Such a plan is imperative to gaining, and acting on, the wide array of elements which need to be considered when taking on such

initiatives.

**A) Preliminary Considerations:** The first stage of Cox's framework is divided into three sub-sections; *Summary of assignment*, *The Agency*, and *The Practitioner*. *Summary of assignment* refers primarily to the need to provide relevant parties with an orientation of the issue. This sub-section of the framework is included primarily for the purposes of formal education. While such a section may provide a useful starting off point for advocates, such a step should have less importance for the users of the systems advocacy framework because considerable effort should already have been fronted on the issue(s) through the previous steps. The Cox model, like virtually all the community organization material, starts from a perspective of the change agent already having selected an issue(s). This step then, should be used at the discretion of the organization.

*The Agency* sub-section deals with the dynamics and structures related to the organization undertaking the change efforts. Cox states that "Its primary significance is in the possibilities it opens and the constraints it places on practice" (p.154). This explanation, in the estimates of Cox, understates the importance of completing a proper analysis of the change/advocacy organization.<sup>36</sup> As was discussed earlier, an understanding of organizational dynamics and structures is vital to the success of systems advocacy for a number of reasons. First, undertaking such an assessment, as mentioned by Cox, provides the organization with an opportunity to assess its own strengths and weaknesses. These strengths and weaknesses are important considerations when determining what issue(s) will be undertaken and/or what strategies and tactics will be employed in a given campaign. This knowledge is useful not only for determining what will work best against the focus of the advocacy efforts, it is also critical for anticipating where the organization may be vulnerable to counter-efforts. Second, organizational self-analysis provides the organization's advocacy "team" with an opportunity to develop their analytical skills, which can later be used to their advantage when analyzing other organizations, groups or institutions. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, such a process can reveal internal inconsistencies between organizational "intent" and

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<sup>36</sup> It should be acknowledged that Cox's stages, while underdeveloped, provides more information and emphasis than more detailed models, such as Kettner, Daley & Nichols (1985).

organizational practice. In doing so, the organization is presented with an opportunity to ensure that its external undertakings (systems advocacy/empowerment) are consistent with its internal structures and practice (empowerment within the organization).

Cox breaks *The Agency* sub-section into five components. These are: *Type, Constitution, Constituency, Internal Structure and Programs and Functions of agency and their relation to worker's assignment*. Each of these components deals with a certain aspect of the organizational self-analysis. Unfortunately, Cox fails to provide definitions for these component headings. Point form examples are used by this author to illustrate the types of factors which should be examined under each heading. Again, elaboration is limited to general commentary, with no specific details on the points mentioned. While retaining the value of Cox's identification of the need for the organization to self-examine, this author proposes, for the purposes of this report, a restructuring of how the organization can examine itself. Instead of using the Cox model, this author will employ a simpler process of looking at the organization. This will be done by looking at the organization on two levels, *The Internal* and *The External* (Hasenfeld, 1983).<sup>37</sup> Both sections will encompass a series of statements and/or questions for the organization to consider. It is hoped that in doing so, the organization will gain a better understanding of itself. These statements will include many of those points raised by Cox, but will include other points as well. Organizations employing this framework should feel free to add to these points as they see fit.

### The Internal

The internal component of the organization refers to those elements which can be viewed as being "inside" the organization i.e. authority structure, personnel, services provided, etc.

1) Authority: Is the organization structured in a collegial or hierarchical manner?

The adoption of a relatively collegial (empowering) framework will prove more difficult to organizations working in a hierarchical structure.

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<sup>37</sup> It is acknowledged that there may be a certain degree of overlap between these two components. In fact, it should be noted that the distinction between "external" and "internal" is being made for ease of understanding, and that the two are closely inter-related.

2) Accountability to Consumers: To what degree do those the organization serves have input and control of the organization's day-to-day operations? Are services provided with little input from consumers? Again, a more empowering model of advocacy will likely prove more challenging for organizations which operate without consumer input and control.

3) Rules: Are organizational rules predetermined and imposed on staff or are staff part of the rule-forming process? Rule predetermination runs contrary to the functioning of a more empowering model for change.

4) Decision-Making: Does the organization employ formal processes in making decisions or are decisions typically made on an ad hoc basis? If the latter is identified, then the adoption of a formal systems framework may prove cumbersome for the organization. Will the effectiveness of the framework be jeopardized because of this? What steps can be taken to counteract this from happening?

5) Personnel (Paid and Voluntary):<sup>38</sup> Who makes up the staff of the organization? Analyze the staff on the basis of social class, gender, ethnicity, education, age, organizational position, etc. Are any trends noted with regard to these characteristics? What implications might this have for the organization?

6) Division of Labour: Are agency staff "specialists/experts" or do they have generalist functions? What are the potential implications for employing this model in either specialist or generalist atmospheres?

7) Interpersonal Relations: Are relations between staff and staff and consumers impersonal in nature, or can they be categorized as being personal in nature? The systems framework is based on participation and cooperation. What challenges will this present to an organization where people are not used to functioning in such a personal manner?

8) Job Duties: Are tasks assigned/individuals hired on the basis of merit or on other criteria (formal or otherwise) that are irrelevant to the duties? If the latter, how might this impact efforts to develop and implement aspects of the action plan?

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<sup>38</sup> "Paid and Voluntary" is not limited to front-line and management staff. It includes board members, consultants, etc.



9) Constitution and Goal Orientation: Are organizational/program philosophies, mandates, goals and objectives, etc., formally articulated? If so, to what degree are they adhered to? Does the organization produce progressive statements but deliver (in terms of process and outcome) services in a way which are inconsistent with the stated constitution? How will this effect the organization's desire to implement real and empowering change?

10) Nature of Services: Are services currently provided change oriented? Will the establishment of the advocacy framework represent a departure from current service delivery? If so, what are some of the implications of such a move?

11) Depth and Breadth of Mandate: What is the extent (geographical and otherwise) of the organization's domain? Is it narrowly defined and specific or broad and general? What limitation will this place on the organization's ability to undertake the type of changes it desires?

### The External

The external component of the organizational self-analysis refers to those structures and dynamics which Hasenfeld (1983) identifies as the "Organization-Environment Relationship". This relationship is viewed as existing on two levels, The General and The Task. Hasenfeld defines the general environment as "...those conditions in the environment (economic, socio-demographic, cultural, technological, and political-legal) that affect all organizations and must be assumed as given" (p.51). The task environment is "...a specific set of organizations and groups with which the organization exchanges resources and services and with whom it establishes specific modes of interaction" (p.51). The task environment is further defined as being made up of six distinct parts. These are *Providers of Fiscal Resources [Funders]*, *Providers of Legitimation and Authority*, *Providers of Clients*, *Providers of Complementary Services*, *Competing Organizations*, and finally, *Consumers and Recipients of the Organization's Products*. Discussion on those elements categorized as belonging to the general environment will not be discussed in great detail here, although this author strongly encourages the organization to consider factors in the larger environment which may impact on how their systems advocacy process will be designed. For example, in considering the *economic* category, what are the

implications of the current national recession for the advocacy organization? Using the mental health field example, the *political-legal* category reveals information worthy of consideration. The last few years has seen the Provincial Government of Manitoba (Dept. of Health) making a formal proposal to deinstitutionalize mental health services (as stated in the White Papers of...). Conversely, the last provincial budget saw a direct targeting of advocacy organizations. What do events such as these median for the establishment of a mental health systems advocacy program in the Province of Manitoba? Staying with the mental health example, another consideration is that of *culture*. More specifically, the culture of mainstream Canadian society, the culture of people with mental illnesses, and the relationship between the two. It can generally be said that people with mental illnesses are among the most stigmatized members of the population (Horwitz, 1982). This relationship will, on the most general level, become a constant factor for the organization when considering how issues will be undertaken. Public perception and understanding will, rightfully or wrongly, always be a factor. These examples only serve to touch on a wide array of possible factors and concerns that the organization may uncover when dealing with this issue. They do however, provide some insight into the type of issues that the organization should be examining.

Having touched upon the general environment, the author turns his attention to providing a more detailed look at that part of the environment which can be viewed as being more specific to the organization, The Task environment.

1) Providers of Fiscal Resources: This category pertains to the various sources of financial resources for the organization. The value of understanding who provides money to the organization (and how much) will likely have a significant bearing on how the advocacy organization goes about its business. Such information allows the organization to identify areas of potential conflict of interest and determine which issues and campaigns may present problems for them. It is also important to remember that during a campaign, advocacy efforts will inevitably cause a defensive response from those who are the focus of the campaign. One of those potential responses, depending on the situation, is to sidestep the advocacy organization and bring pressure to bear on the funders. This can result in the

cessation of money to the campaign, and possibly the organization.

2) Providers of Legitimation and Authority: This component pertains to those groups and/or individuals who sanction the organization and its actions. This component is not limited to, although it includes, parties who provide funding to the organization. It also includes those who validate the organization's usefulness by employing its services (consumers), those who choose to be associated with the organization (staff and board members), those who support the organization by providing referrals to it (other professionals and organizations), etc. Being conscious of who or what legitimizes the organization helps the organization understand who "butters its bread" and who doesn't. This can be an important process because the organization may have over-estimated the importance of some stakeholders and under-estimated others. Again, such awareness is critical when selecting issues and strategies when such factors as supporters and vulnerability become issues.

3) Providers of Clients: This component refers to those individuals and/or organizations who are responsible for providing the organization with consumers of services. These "providers" will vary from organization to organization, but may include individual consumers, other advocacy or professional organizations, individuals, families, etc. Not to be overlooked as primary suppliers of clients are those individuals and organizations who are the focus of the advocacy efforts. Using the example of the standard mental health advocacy program, it is likely that the single largest provider of clients are mental health institutions! Provision of clients then, should be analyzed on both a direct and indirect level. In doing so the organization will gain a greater appreciation for where clients [consumers] originate and conversely, what areas or organizations are not consumer "suppliers." For example, the organization may determine that few of their clients have been referred by other agencies. Does this median that other organizations are unaware of the advocate's services, or are there more sinister reasons for others not utilizing the advocate's services?

4) Perception: One area that is not directly dealt with by Hasenfeld but is worthy of mention is how the organization is perceived by the community at large. Reputation can

play a very significant role in the outcome of actions. While it is generally fair to say that the perception (and corresponding reputation) of the organization will vary from place to place, questions such as these should be considered. How many others even have an opinion of the organization? Is the organization well-reputed but within a very limited circle? What are the implications of this in attempting broader actions? How many of the organization's "legitimizers" are doing so because the organization has a monopoly on service? If a similar advocacy program were started by somebody else, how many of the legitimizers would switch organizations? What are the potential impacts of frail loyalties?

5) Providers of Complementary Services: Providers of complementary services concerns those parties who enjoy what can best be described as a mutually beneficial relationship with the advocacy organization. This could include any number of other organizations, such as other advocacy organizations, consumer groups, etc. Such organizations are often supporters of the advocacy organization as they benefit directly from the program's identity and/or services. Such groups represent potential allies when undertaking actions, although their support may not always be in direct and material terms.

6) Competing Organizations: Competing organizations can be generally categorized as other groups and/or organizations which compete with the organization on any number of levels. This could include community and/or institutional organizations who compete with the advocacy organization for research, grant or project money. It can also refer to other advocacy/non-advocacy organizations which compete for the same pool of consumers i.e. advocates, lawyers, therapists, social workers, etc. The term "competing" does not necessarily denote hostility. In fact, the advocate may even work with some of the competing organizations on particular issues. Generally however, many of the same organization likely will maintain a consistently competitive status around certain areas. An analysis of the competition will give the organization a quick reference to those competing organizations. This will prove handy when considering funding applications, new projects, etc.

7) Consumers and recipients of organization's products: The most obvious benefactors of an advocacy initiative are those individuals on whose behalf the action is

being taken. But many other individuals indirectly benefit from the organization's actions. If we continue to use the example of mental health advocacy, we can see that advocacy actions produce a number of indirect benefactors (recipients) to the organization's services. If we look at a situation where the organization has advocated successfully for the establishment of increased employment opportunities for people with mental health issues, we can see that such a program will benefit a number of consumers, some of whom may have had no contact with agency. As a result of this new found employment, the families of these individuals may realize a great reduction in stress as their family member(s) is now engaged in work outside of the home. Mental health institutions may see that these individuals, having gained employment and a corresponding increase in self-esteem, may be subject to fewer bouts of illness as environmental strain is relieved. Let us not forget that individuals will have to be hired to develop and implement the employment program. The recipients then, extend far beyond those individuals who were the direct focus of the advocacy efforts.

Identification of consumers should also extend well beyond the simple recognition of various parties. Every attempt must be made to analyse and identify the various "cultural attributes" of participating parties. For example, the advocacy organization, in undertaking a mental health issue, will need to gain an understanding of those elements which together "make up" the particular consumer group. This is necessary not only for engaging in culturally sensitive practice, but also for understanding the particular strengths and weaknesses of a particular group. This helps to avoid the choosing of strategies and/or actions which are inconsistent with the groups cultural attributes.

As mentioned earlier, Cox identifies other factors relating to the organization which have a significant bearing on the agency's ability to successfully undertake systems advocacy actions.

Cox (1987), as will be shown later, recognizes the importance of examining the history of a particular problem and previous attempts to address it. Unfortunately, this point is not applied to the organization. This author believes that an awareness of the organization and/or program's history is a vital component to understanding the present.

An analysis of the organization's evolution also provides enlightenment with regard to the organization's failures and successes and the reasons for both. This helps individuals gain some insight into why things are the way that they are.

The third and final part of Cox's organizational self-assessment is *The Practitioner*. Practitioner refers to the individual(s) responsible for developing and/or implementing the action at-large or one or more of the designated responsibilities of the action plan. Cox argues that a number of personal and organizational factors relevant to the practitioner(s) will impact the outcome of the action being undertaken.

The first consideration are those factors which are specific to the practitioner herself/himself. This includes the practitioner's personal motivations and capacities to undertake and accomplish the delegated task. Obviously, the prospect of having a responsibility turn out favourably are compromised considerably if the practitioner is unwilling and/or unable to fulfil her/his duties.

The second aspect for consideration relates more to the practitioner's ability to perform the designated task(s) adequately due to organizational issues. These include such things as work overload, role ambiguity, conflict, discontinuity, strain. etc. Issues such as these speak to the need for internal changes so that the organization can "fit" with the systems advocacy framework being adopted. This will be dealt with in greater detail in the section on "Organizational Change".

**B) Problems:** As mentioned earlier, Cox identifies the need to elaborate on the problem being confronted by the change agent. Cox proposes that the problem be dealt with by examining it on three levels; *Problem Analysis*, *Past Change Efforts*, and *Perceptions of the Problem by Significant Others*.

1) **Problem Analysis:** Problem analysis refers to the process of defining the problem.<sup>39</sup> Cox identifies four factors for consideration by the organization. These are; *Nature* (What specific kind of problem are you concerned about?), *Location* (Where is the

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<sup>39</sup>Again, It is critical to understand the true nature of the terms "problem" and "issue". For example, consumers may identify the high cost of medication and their inability to afford it as "the problem". In fact, the issue may be government legislation which provides pharmaceutical companies with exclusive patents for extended periods of time which serve to inflate drug costs.

problem located?), *Scope* (Who is affected?), and *Degree* (How much are they affected?). These elements likely have been considered by the organization during the selection process so this may be redundant. If this is the case, then this step may simply be omitted at the discretion of the organization.

2) **Past Change Efforts:** Reference was made in the section on organizational self-assessment to the need for the organization to examine its historical evolution. Cox raises this same issue for consideration as part of the process for gaining insight into the problem confronting the advocate. Who were the parties involved in past change attempts? How effective were the change efforts? What were the reasons for the change effort's successes or failure? Such analysis becomes critical to avoiding mistakes which doomed past campaigns, even if the contexts may have changed over time.

3) **Perceptions of the problem by significant others:** Commentary was made earlier on the need to determine how the organization was perceived by others (reputation) because perception can have an impact on the campaign. Again, this same logic applies to the issue(s) being confronted. This step represents a sort of ideological "filtering" with regard to how others perceive the problem (and potential solutions). For instance, the contentious example of "the Origins of Mental Illness: Biological or Environmental" as a topic for discussion, will quickly find that other members of the consumer community, the profession, society at large, etc., share the view that many illnesses are environmental in nature. Conversely, others will see the discussion as being nonexistent, insignificant or fundamentally different (biological). In doing so, the advocate(s) quickly learn where everyone stands on the issue. The value of such an exercise to the advocate is that it helps determine the the range and numbers of opinions on a particular issue. These groups could represent future allies or agents of opposition to the advocate's efforts.

C) **Social Context of the Problem:** The topic of mental illness represents one of the most intriguing examples for the purposes of examining the social context of a problem. For this reason, it will be used, where appropriate, in exemplifying the three components that Cox suggests for analyzing this particular aspect of the problem.

1) **Origins of the Problem:** This component attempts to determine why and how the

problem being addressed became a problem. By understanding the historical evolution of the problem, the advocate is better able to appreciate those circumstances which worked to create the program. The level at which this should be done depends on the level at which change is being attempted i.e. world, national, cultural, etc.

2) **Theory of the Problem:** This aspect of the social context analysis endeavours to uncover the empirical and ideological justification for the existence of the problem (For example, the need for large-scale institutions to house those with mental illnesses). Such a process not only helps explain the “logical” rationale for the development of the problem, it can also discover errors that have resulted in long-held historical assumptions.

3) **Structural-Functional analysis of the Problem:** The structural-functional analysis is designed to facilitate the advocate gaining insight and knowledge about those social structures that maintain, increase or reduce the problem. The first piece of this component is similar to Hasenfeld’s (1983) examination of the social environment, but as it relates to the issue, not the organization. Cox’s examination provides far less detail than Hasenfeld’s model and so the organization is encouraged to use that model.

The second piece of Cox’s component however, relates to understanding who (and how) various parties gain and lose from the situation as it currently exists. Those who consider undertaking change efforts are encouraged to uncover power dynamics so that they can understand in which ways the problem is functional/dysfunctional for those with a stake in the issue.

D) **The Client [The People We are Trying to Help]:** In the earlier examination of the task environment, attention was paid to the need to identify those individuals/groups who can be viewed as consumers and/or recipients of the organization’s product. This same process retains its value on an issue to issue basis. Unlike the earlier section however, where consumers and recipients were simply identified, Cox stresses the need to gain a fuller understanding of “who” are these individuals and/or groups. To this end, Cox suggests a number of factors for achieving a clearer picture of who is the client. These factors include, but may not be limited to, *Physical Location* (boundaries, size, etc.); *Social, Economic, Political, and Demographic Characteristics*; *Formal Organization*



*of the Client; Divisions and Cleavages* (within the client); *Significant Relations* (with other parts of the social structure); and finally, *Significant Changes* (in the above, over time).

While Cox intends this analysis to focus on “the population segments or groups that are the primary beneficiary of the practitioner’s efforts,” (p.152) the author argues that such an analysis should be undertaken on all parties who stand to benefit significantly from the advocacy efforts. Those who benefit indirectly have the potential to become important allies in the change efforts and so a clear understanding of who they are should be achieved.

**E) Goals:** After having fully assessed all the relevant factors, the advocate is now ready to start establishing goals for the issue being considered for action. Goals represent those statements which specify the advocate’s desired outcome with regard to the issue. Goals are fundamental for a number of reasons. First, goals help the organization stay on track by ensuring that goal displacement i.e., the unintended replacement of goals by new, often unrecognized objectives, are avoided.<sup>40</sup> Written goals, as shall be discussed later, are also critical for undertaking proper evaluation of action efforts. Third, goals represent a form of criteria upon which advocacy efforts can be measured. They determine if actions have been successful or fallen short.

In those situations where the advocacy organization is involving other parties to a significant degree, Cox argues that it is important to have all parties designate and prioritize their goals. This process ensures that everyone is aware of areas for potential conflict and helps the advocacy organization be clear on what is required in order to ensure that the support of vital parties can be guaranteed.

Cox also suggests differentiating between “task goals” (outcome goals) and process goals. Task goals relate to those goals defined earlier in the section (see second sentence under “Goals”). Process goals “affect the maintenance and enhancement of the organization (resolving destructive factional rivalry or transforming member apathy into

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<sup>40</sup> The author is reminded of a situation at his last place of work where a particular goal had degenerated into a battle of personal values by program personnel. The dispute was resolved when a meeting was held to review the program’s goals. The goal clearly showed what direction the program staff should be moving in and there was no further discussion.

involvement and commitment)” (Cox, p.163). Both types of goals then, must be defined to ensure that all aspects of the change process are met.

**F) Strategy:** One of the problems with Cox’s section on “strategy” is that he provides no real definition for the term. This is unfortunate because no explanation is provided for the term “tactics” either. Strategies and tactics, like goals and objectives, are terms that often confuse people because the differences often appear to be subtle. Despite Cox’s claim that “strategy often shades imperceptibly into tactics” (p.164), this author argues that in fact, the difference between the two is quite distinct. “Strategy” refers to the type of action(s) the organization will employ in order to achieve their stated goals. “Tactics” refers the specific initiatives that the organization will undertake in order to implement the general strategy. For example, the organization may decide that a particular campaign will require a strong, forceful approach. This would median that the organization would choose an adversarial campaign (strategy). Having done so, the organization would then choose a number of actions that would bring the strategy to life (tactics). This could include a public demonstration campaign, aggressive media attacks, etc.

Another significant problem with Cox’s guide is that it starts on the premise that the reader has a clear understanding of what strategies the organization will be using. Cox focuses on a number of considerations which follow the selection of strategies. As shall be shown, the points raised by Cox are important ones. Unfortunately, they do little to assist advocates in gaining an understanding of some of the different types of strategies, and when their use might be appropriate. In response to this concern, the author has borrowed Poskanzer’s “Expansion of Bisno’s Methods” (1972) in an attempt to give the organization a starting point in determining what strategies they will employ when preparing to act on an issue. Poskanzer presents ten strategies, complete with definitions and indications for use.<sup>41</sup> These strategies are designed with regard to the practitioner-consumer relationship and as such, some changes were made to make the wording more appropriate to the advocate-environment context. Once again, the organization should feel free to redefine or

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<sup>41</sup> Originally designed for a direct worker-client relationship, and because certain strategies are not applicable to a consumer-driven model, only six of these strategies are appropriate for systems advocacy.

otherwise adapt this work as they see fit.<sup>42</sup>

### ADVERSARIAL

**Definition:** "The adversary role is used in situations in which the resolution of differences is attempted through efforts directed to foster the interests of one party over another."  
(Poskanzer, p.1)

**Indications for use:** "There is a conflict or contest over issues, resources and/or power which does not lend itself to solution through co-operative activity." (Poskanzer, p.1)

### CONCILIATORY

**Definition:** "The conciliatory role is used in situations in which resolution of difference is attempted through efforts directed at fostering cooperation and commonality of purpose between competing interests." (Poskanzer, p.2)

**Indications for use:** "Situations where there is a commonality of interest within differences, and resolution has been thwarted by faulty communication, and/or understanding."  
(Poskanzer, p.2)

### DEVELOPMENTAL

**Definition:** "The developmental role is used in attempts to maximize social functioning through development of capacities, and/or capacities and/or resources, and/or through prevention of conditions that are likely to impair those capacities and resources."  
(Poskanzer, p.3)

**Indications for use:** "a) A system indicates a desire to ameliorate its own functioning and/or prevent possible social breakdown.

b) Professional knowledge shows that living situations can be improved or social impairment lessened through the development of appropriate resources." (Poskanzer, p.3)

### FACILITATIVE-INSTRUCTIONAL

**Definition:** "The facilitative-instructional role is used where there is the giving of new knowledge with sufficient elaboration of underlying premises and general applicability so that this intellectual knowledge and emotional understanding can be used in a variety of situations." (Poskanzer, p.4)

**Indications for use:** "a) There is a need for knowledge in order to perform a particular task, or function which is currently impaired due to lack of understanding or experience.

b) There is a need to enhance collaboration by transmission of knowledge." (Poskanzer, p.4)

### KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

**Definition:** "Knowledge development and testing is used with the same aims of developing an understanding of social work practice, and social service systems by expanding the

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<sup>42</sup> Whatever strategy(ies) is chosen, the advocate is reminded to provide rationales for those choices made.

elements contained in actual practice, making them explicit, and by subjecting them to verification.” (Poskanzer, p.6)

**Indications for use:** “a) More knowledge is needed in order to lead more appropriate action.  
b) Action is being taken, but its basis has not been made explicit, and consequently it cannot be transmitted to other practitioners.  
c) Action has been taken but has not been evaluated.” (Poskanzer, p.6)

### RESTORATIVE

**Definition:** “Restoration is used where efforts are directed at returning the client system to its previous level of functioning. It is used to identify and control and/or eliminate those factors in the [environment] that have caused a breakdown or impairment of social functioning.” (Poskanzer, p.7)

**Indications for use:** “There is a need for sustenance and remediation in order to help the client system adapt to a trying circumstance of life experience and/or to prevent deterioration in functioning.” (Poskanzer, p.7)

The advocacy organization may, depending on the circumstances and parties involved, choose to employ more than one type of strategy at a given time. In doing so however, consideration should be given to those factors raised by Cox.

1) **The action system:** This step speaks to the need for the organization to take an inventory of all those groups who are seen as being in an allied role with regard to the issue, and the strategies deemed appropriate. What skills and resources do these parties provide to the organization?

2) **Resistance (opposition) and Interference (inertia, distraction) Forces:** Identify all opposing groups (resistance and interference). Attempt to assess potential skills and resources which can be mustered and employed against the advocate’s efforts. What strategies and actions might the opposing groups use against the advocate’s campaign? How will the strategies selected by the organization counter the actions of the opposition?

3) **Evaluation of practitioner’s ability to utilize strategy:** After having selected the strategy(ies) that appear the most effective, consideration must be given to the ability of staff to carry out the strategy(ies) selected. It should be remembered that any “inabilities” may be due to more than just lack of appropriate skills or awareness (refer to previous section on “The Practitioner”).

**G) Tactics:** As mentioned earlier, “Tactics” refers to the specific initiatives that the organization will undertake in order to implement the general strategy. As demonstrated by such authors as Behn (1980), Bowe and Williams (1979), Tefft (Date Unknown), Holley and Peltz (1986), Yuan (1991), Currie (1991) and The Social Action Commission, Archdiocese of Charlottetown (1987) to name a few, the types of tactics and techniques that can be developed for bringing strategies to life is virtually limitless. Because of this, it is impossible to list all the possible options which the organization can develop. Instead, the author will provide a brief list of example tactics for each of the identified strategies, (drawn primarily from Poskanzer) and then concentrate on providing some basic rules for action-taking that the change agents should consider when selecting tactics.<sup>43</sup>

**Tactics for Implementing Strategies**

a) **Adversarial**: civil disobedience, strikes, threats, demonstrations, picketing, lobbying, etc.

b) **Conciliatory**: mediation, provision of information, empathy, etc.

c) **Developmental**: conciliation, bargaining, task forces, etc.

d) **Facilitative-Instructional**: lectures, role playing, role modelling, logical discussion, etc.

e) **Knowledge Development and Testing**: research

f) **Restorative**: exploration, support, collaboration, etc.

A number of “do’s” and “don’ts” exist for the purposes of undertaking certain groups of action techniques i.e. legislative advocacy (Dear & Patti, 1984), negotiating (Fisher and Ury, 1981), etc. However, the most general “rules” for action in confrontational settings are outlined by Alinsky (1971). These “rules” are certainly not intended by this author to be exhaustive. They are certainly most applicable to the environment in which they are intended to apply (general community organizing). They do however, provide the advocacy organization with some quick and immediate guidelines for undertaking successful, community-based actions. Alinsky’s rules include:

1) ***Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.***

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<sup>43</sup> As specified at the beginning of the section, “tactics” refers to any and all actions developed to implement strategies. This includes actions taken on non-confrontational strategies. The rules of action on the other hand, refer primarily to confrontational situations.

As mentioned earlier, perception can be as important as reality.

**2. *Never go outside the experience of your people.***

Unknown territory can lead to confusion and divisiveness.

**3. *Whenever possible go outside the experience of The enemy.***

Always attempt to draw the opposition onto your ground. Use your strengths, exploit their weaknesses.

**4. *Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules.***

This binds the opposition to standards that they themselves have established i.e., codes of ethics, etc.

**5. *Ridicule is...the most important weapon.***

Difficult to counter, ridicule inevitably infuriates the opposition causing them to lose their composure. Opportunities present themselves when the opposition loses its composure.

**6. *A good tactic is one that your people enjoy.***

Whatever activities are being planned, especially where consumers are involved, people should be enjoying themselves.

**7. *A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag.***

Anyone familiar with world events will realize that news today is history tomorrow. Tactics employed over a long period of time quickly lose momentum.

**8. *Keep the pressure on.***

Even a brief respite can allow the opposition to regroup. Seize the momentum and do not lose it!

**9. *The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.***

Never play your cards unless you have to. The threat of an action can often be more powerful than the action itself.

**10. *The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure on the opposition.***

Pressure yields reactions and reactions can be exploited.

**11. *If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterside.***

Based on the principle that every negative has a positive. The best example is Gandhi's use of passive resistance.

**12. *The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.***

Do not be caught off guard. The advocates must have a response/solution to the issue ready in the event that the opposition is ready to deal.

**13. *Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.***

Picking “the target” becomes increasingly difficult in a world where everything is complex and inter-related. While needing to ensure that the best focus has been selected, it is important that the organizers are not thrown off by “its not our responsibility.” Do not let the target shift responsibility! (p.126-131).

### Using the Media

No matter what campaign is being undertaken, the media will inevitably play some role. No matter what the organization’s position on the role of the media in general, it is clear that to ignore the media is to do so at one’s peril! The media allows the organizer to take their campaign to the general public. If done properly, a media campaign can garner considerable support for the initiative being undertaken and put considerable pressure on the opposition. For this reason, this author believes it is important to pay some attention to the topic.

In the case of the mental health example, the use of the media goes beyond the simple objectives of a particular campaign. As was discussed earlier, individuals with mental health issues are arguably the most stigmatized group within society. As with all things, this stigma has developed primarily because of ignorance and misconceptions about mental illness. These misconceptions are often transported and entrenched by people’s ongoing exposure to faulty media coverage on the subject. This is especially true of the movie and television industry, which portrays people with mental health illnesses as psychotic killers or sexual deviants (Liebmann-Smith & Rosen, 1977). Use of the media then, has the potential to educate media representatives, thereby assisting in the proper dissemination of information.

The media source(s) used by the advocate will vary from campaign to campaign. Whether it be radio, television, print, etc., there are a number of possible avenues for media exposure. These include press conferences, features, newsletters, interviews/talk shows, letters to the editor, meetings with editorial boards, and announcements/bulletin boards.

The material which talks about accessing the media for social change is very limited, but that which exists is useful. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (date

unknown), Chapin and Stirling (1977), and Bobo, Kendall and Max (1991)<sup>44</sup> provide considerable information on how to effectively access the media. While impossible to list every point, the author has selected a few headings which is believed to be of the most interest

**Develop Relationships:** As with most things in life, who you know can be as important as what you know. It is important to develop a strong working relationship with the individuals responsible for getting your material to the people. Reporters and editors will remember people they respect.

**Develop a Media List:** Events can unfold quickly and dramatically. It is important to have quick and ready access to all the media sources and the appropriate contact people. The list should be constantly updated so that there is an “institutional memory for press work” (Bobo, Kendall and Max, 1991).

**Think Pictures:** Whether print or TV, opportunities for coverage are enhanced when media representatives know that “photo opportunities ” will be available. Consideration should be given to what people will see. This means paying attention to backdrops, etc. Remember, “a picture is worth a thousand words.”

**Mail Press (News) Releases:** Press releases are designed to catch the interest of the media so they will attend whatever event you have scheduled. As such, they should be brief presentations of the story, not the story. Releases should give reporters enough time to prepare for the event.

**Follow up Press Releases with Calls:** Press releases can get lost. Follow-ups help ensure that the information has been received. It can also be an opportunity for the reporter to ask the organization questions about the event.

**Recognize Who Controls the Media:** Major players within the media may be allies of individuals or groups who are the focus of the advocacy efforts. Attempts should be made to identify such relationships and alliances so that valuable time and resources are not wasted on trying to get certain media outlets to cover certain stories.

As earlier mentioned, Cox raises a number of vital points for consideration

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<sup>44</sup> Bobo, Kendall and Max include a “checklist for press (news) releases” which is invaluable (p.123).



following the selection of tactics. One such consideration rests with gaining initial support. Where does one start and with whom? These are basic considerations for the implementation of chosen tactics. "Contracts" need to be established which clarify the problem, goals, roles and responsibilities, etc. These steps represent the final preparations before the onset of tactical activities.

**Implementation of Action:** If done properly, the onset of advocacy activities should result in a response from the opposition (the fact that there has been no visible response doesn't mean that there has been no impact!). The organization should, as part of its preparations, attempt to anticipate how the opposition will respond<sup>45</sup> so that a second stage of activities can be ready and waiting. Once these actions have been initiated, evaluation of efforts become critical to following responses.

**H) Action Evaluation:** Kettner, Daley and Nichols (1985) define evaluation as "a social process of making judgments about the merit, worth, or value of a change. Evaluation makes judgments about those change episode inputs, throughputs, outputs and outcomes that have been monitored" (p.259). The ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses (evaluation) in a campaign is essential if the organization hopes to adapt to the rapidly changing circumstances of the advocacy campaign. Evaluation then, represents the first step in demonstrating the ability to learn from one's successes and mistakes.

Many different types of evaluations exist, each with a specific purpose. While noting the importance of evaluation, Cox's guide fails to provide the detail necessary for determining which type of evaluation should be used at any given time. Fortunately, such information is provided by Legge (1984) and Kettner, Moroney and Martin (1990). These evaluation types can roughly be categorized in the following way:

<u>Evaluation type</u>	<u>Focus of evaluation</u>
1. Effort	Examines quantity of activity
2. Outcome	Examines results of services as they affected clients.

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<sup>45</sup> Many groups or organizations have very traditional responses to attacks or certain types or attacks. Try to determine if any trends can be identified in terms of how the focus of the advocacy efforts might be expected to respond.

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|----|-------------------------|--|
| 3. | Adequacy of Performance | Examines extent to which the program has met community need. |
| 4. | Cost-Effectiveness      | Examines ratio of resources to outcome.                      |
| 5. | Cost-Efficiency         | Examines ratio of resources to services provided.            |

The different types of evaluations just mentioned can be divided into two different categories of evaluation methodologies, *formative* and *summative*. These two categories correspond with Cox's two types of goals, *process* and *task*. Formative evaluation relates to the monitoring of, in this case, the process of the advocacy efforts (during intervention), so that the intervention process can be improved. Summative focuses on the outcome of the intervention so that outcome can be confirmed and if need be, improved. Formative and summative evaluation then, serve a distinct but complementary function. It seems clear that both will have a place for the advocate in designing an evaluation mechanism.

It is impossible, for the purposes of this work, to examine every element of every type of evaluation. That would be a thesis topic in itself. As well, the evaluation types chosen will depend largely on the type of work being undertaken. Kettner, Daley and Nichols (1985) however, propose a model that is relatively simple and possesses good general applicability. This model, The Change Episode Evaluation Model, will be outlined for the consideration of the advocacy organization.

1) Identify Key Decisions: The first step in is to identify key decisions in the change episode (advocacy campaign). This includes decisions made before, during and after the change episode. Key decisions could include such factors as goals (task and process), selection of personnel, selection of strategies and tactics, timeframes, etc.<sup>46</sup>

2) Identify the Decision Makers: Whether individuals or groups, the organization needs to be aware of who is responsible for the decisions being made. This is important because it allows the organization to identify potential trends with regard to failures in the process that might be attributed to individual and/or group performances.

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<sup>46</sup> Ideally, all significant components of the Systems advocacy framework would be included for evaluation.

This can enable the organization to make such decisions as providing new or additional training for decision makers or adjust decision making roles. Attention must also be paid to who will be responsible for providing required information to the evaluation team.

3) Identify the Time Frame: This stage is the “deadline examination stage”. The organization is asked to ensure that deadlines have been established for key decisions. This allows the evaluation team to determine what time lines were established and which ones have been met. As well, time frames must be established for the evaluation team so that evaluation results can be given to the advocacy team as quickly as possible.

4) Identify the Kinds and Amounts of Information Needed: A decision must be made as to what type of information is needed by the advocacy team in order to make positive changes to their efforts. Kettner, Daley & Nichols suggest that the best way is to ask the advocacy team what they need. This author suggests that , done in conjunction with the evaluation team, this provides the best in determining the type of questions and answers that will be needed.

5) Design and Execute an Evaluation Plan: This stage sees the selection and construction of one of the aforementioned evaluation methodologies. In doing so, Kettner, Daley & Nichols suggest that the decision on the type of methodology should be guided by the following questions:

- What is the intended use of the information that is to be generated?
- What are the realities (limitations) of the change episode?

6) Communicate the Information: The final step of the evaluation process involves getting the results of the evaluation to the key decision makers by the agreed upon time frames and in a form that is the most useful to the advocates.

No matter what methodology is employed, the formal provision of written rationales throughout the process will make the job of the evaluators and the advocates much easier. Evaluators will have a clear and articulated point against which they will be able to measure. As well, Kettner, Daley and Nichol provide the following points to help guide the evaluation process (p.282).

- 1) “Recognize the limits of the evaluation process.”

- 2) "Specify the purpose and objectives of the evaluation process."
- 3) "Specify who will use the the evaluation findings, for which decision, at which time."
- 4) "Involve [advocacy team] collaboratively in the process."
- 5) "Stress positive as well as negative results."
- 6) "Ensure effective communication to decision makers."
- 7) "Tie the evaluation process to ongoing organizational or community structures and processes." (p. 282).

#### Organizational Change

The final point raised by Kettner, Daly & Nichol in the preceding section about tying the evaluation process to organizational structures and process is indeed a timely one. In developing the systems advocacy framework, it is important to realize that any new structure, especially one which is a marked departure from an organization's traditional type of work, cannot be developed in a vacuum. The adoption of such a mechanism will no doubt require some internal changes within the organization. The process of assessing, developing and implementing internal change is not dissimilar to the external process. There are however, a number of unique internal considerations that may not have been dealt with in the earlier process. These changes could be such things as revised job roles, policy or program changes, revamped information systems, etc. The process of meshing the new framework with the organizational structure is referred to by Harrison (1987) as "system fitting".

There are a number of specific reasons for attending to the need for organizational change. The first reason is that the process of change will likely produce a number of emotions such as staff-anxiety, trepidation, fear, resistance, etc. It is imperative that individuals have these feelings addressed if their participation in the new system is to be guaranteed. Another reason for undertaking organizational change is to ensure that the organization continues to provide a minimum of services while making the shift to a different system. The move to different system is unlikely if current services must be suspended. Finally, it is important to assess the cost to the agency in terms of resources. The system being developed may be an improvement, but if the costs of implementing it are

prohibitive, the changes may not be able to be made at this time.

Hale and Williams (1989) suggest that those considering organizational change must confront three fundamental issues (p.10);

- 1) "What does the organization change?"
- 2) "How does the organization effectively put the change into place?"
- 3) "Who will manage the change?"

A considerable range of material on organizational change exists with countless methodologies for undertaking organizational change. Some models, such as Greiner and Schein (1988) are quite power oriented and are designed more for organizational "guerrilla warfare" than for collective, co-operative change. Others, such as Harrison (1987) are unnecessarily elaborate, at least for the purposes of this paper. Models such as the one proposed by Christian, Hannah and Glahn (1984) are designed with a specific type of organization in mind (institutions). The nine-step process proposed by Hale and Williams (1989) however, is attractive for many of the same reasons that the author employed Kettner, Daly and Nichols (1985) model for evaluation. This model is easy to use, both in terms of volume and readability. It is basic in nature and focuses on key points. It is for these reasons that the author proposes using it as the basis for organizational change, although with some modification. Before doing so however, it is imperative that the organization have a clear understanding of its current internal and external structure and dynamics. It is for this reason that this author suggests consideration of the following point before entering the formal change process.

What Do We Want? Clear and accurate goals must be established with regard to the desired outcome. These goals will serve to define and guide the change effort.

Phase 1. Determine and create an awareness for change.

Every effort must be made to assess the organizational "mood" for change, not only for the issue in question but with change at large. The change team may find that while many people say they want change, they only may want it on a philosophical level. Others may be genuinely enthusiastic about the move but might be worried about their ability to handle new or unexpected tasks. Fear

of the unknown, unknown in terms of what the new system will median for workers, can be a very significant barrier. Not only must the organizational “mood” be assessed, but efforts must be made to demonstrate that the proposed change is a good one for agency personnel and the people they serve. Change then, must be based on cooperation and communication.

**Phase 2. Assess the work environment before designing the change**

No matter how good the proposed changes seem i.e. adoption of a new guiding framework, if they are undertaken without considering the internal environment then the initiative is likely doomed for failure. This is tragic because it not only sees the “death” of a good initiative, but it also may result in a lashback against change efforts at large. As was discussed in the introduction of this paper, a failed attempt at the implementation of a systems advocacy framework has additional implications. Failure to adequately address systems issues can lead to the development and/or solidification of the idea among workers that *real* change (a.k.a. systems) is impossible. As was addressed in the section on “burnout”, this can result in considerable problems for the organization. As well, failure to achieve such an accurate understanding of organizational structures and dynamics may cause the organization to make change decisions which are based on incorrect assumptions. Faulty interpretations can seriously undermine the potential effectiveness of the organizational changes. The assessment of the organizational structure and dynamics can be done by employing the earlier section on “Issue Action-The Agency”. To this end, Hale and Williams suggest that the initiative, no matter what shape or form it takes, must embody the following:

- 1) “The program must emphasize long-term results, not short-term fixes.”
- 2) “The people affected by the program [staff] must receive technical assistance and training.”
- 3) “Budget considerations cannot be a motivating factor.”
- 4) “The program [should expect to] operate with existing resources.”
- 5) “The [change] effort must be seen as an experiment, so that failures are viewed as providing insights for future projects.”
- 6) “Efforts of the program must be highly visible and promoted.”

7) "Program ideas must originate from employees [and consumers], not from top management." (p.13)

### Phase 3. Designing the [Change] Program

For the purpose of this paper, the goal of the organizational change is to facilitate the adoption of the systems advocacy framework with as little disruption to the organization as possible. In order to achieve this goal then, consideration must be given to a number of potential implications that the change effort might have.

a) Political implications: What type of impact will the program [framework] have on "office politics"? Will lines of formal and informal decision-making be changed? If so, how?

b) Social implications: The adoption of a systems framework, if it involves the entire organization, has the potential to change the established "social order" of the organization. New working relationships may have to be formed within the organization, the nature of the work, both collectively and individually will be altered. How will these changes be received by staff?

c) Technical implications: The introduction of the systems framework will almost surely result in the necessity for technical changes. Technical changes do not median that the organization will need to go out and buy computers. It could median however, change in how existing computers are used, or simply spending more (or less) time on the existing computers. Technical implications may have nothing to do with computers at all. It could median instead that new documentation must be developed, or old documentation will be processed in a different way. These and other factors will have to be considered.

d) Resource Implications: The adoption of a new program may result in restructuring resources that could come with any restructuring of priorities. Consideration should be given to the impact of restacking resources. As well, every effort should be made to make changes within the existing resource structure. Will resources be shifted from one program to another? Will resources remain the same but be used differently. These are the types of questions that will have to be confronted.

In addition to the potential implications listed, a number of other factors are relevant to the design of the organizational change process. For example, who will be responsible for the design of the organizational change process? Will, as Hale and Williams suggest, line-staff be included in the process? Who won't be included and why? Another consideration is how the change design will be communicated. "Closed-door" processes lead to stress and confusion within the organization as speculation on changes become rampant. The communication process, however it is designed, should be collaborative, honest, and frequent.

#### Phase 4. Organize for change.

Hale and Williams believe that one or more people must be responsible for implementing the change process. They suggest that a Change committee be established. This committee would be responsible for implementing the change process (as developed by the larger body). The size and composition of the committee would be dependent upon the organization in question, but Hale and Williams suggest that the committee be reflective of the the organization itself, i.e., line staff, board members, management, etc.

#### Phase 5. Maintain the momentum

Hale and Williams suggest that a "honeymoon" period often accompanies the onset of organizational change. This period will pass however, and the organization will be faced with the reality of trying to manage the change process. Hale and Williams suggest that this phase of the change process can be managed by responding to the following questions:

- a) "How will the change effort be monitored?"
- b) "How will communications be handled between the project group and other target populations?"
- c) "How will changes to the plan be decided [criteria development?] and communicated?"
- d) "How will status be reported, and to whom?"
- e) "How will the lessons be shared with others [retreats, newsletters, meetings, reports]?" (p.19)



**Phase 6. Celebrate the change.**

The identification of “celebration” as a stage may appear almost flippant but the author concurs with Hale and Williams that such an addition is worthy of “phase status”. This is particularly true when such changes occur within the social services field. Because the social service profession is one which deals with individual, group and social problems, the profession and its workers are beset with a world of problems. Victories, especially those with large-scale ramifications, are particularly sweet. These serve to inspire people and convince them that they can make a difference. There will be no shortage of barriers. Enjoy the victories!

**Phase 7. Evaluate the Change Process.**

The evaluation phase is identical to that described in the parallel section within the systems advocacy framework. Hale and Williams raise some very brief points with regard to evaluation, all of which and more are addressed within the evaluation section of the framework. For this reason, the organization is encouraged to use that information found within the evaluation section of the systems advocacy framework.

**Appendix C**  
**Intervention Proposal**

## INTERVENTION PROPOSAL

### Objectives

The purpose of this intervention is to realize the practicum goals originally established on page 2 of the practicum document, and which were then modified on January 13, 1995 in a meeting with representatives of The Canadian Mental Health Association-Winnipeg Region. These goals are as follows:

- a) To develop a knowledge-guiding, knowledge-creating framework for guiding the organization's systems advocacy efforts.
- b) To increase participant<sup>47</sup> awareness in the area of systems advocacy.
- c) To develop a process for framework implementation within the agency.
- d) To develop the author's knowledge in the areas of advocacy, program development, program evaluation, critical thinking, organizational change (relative to systems advocacy), facilitation and finally, consultation.

### Methodology

In preliminary discussions with agency personnel<sup>48</sup>, it was agreed that the intervention methodology would be determined in a meeting between agency personnel and the author. A meeting agenda (see attached) was drawn up by the author for the purpose of reviewing those factors that would influence the final determination of the intervention methodology. These factors included "Considerations for agency and student in determining involvement in, and form of, the intervention process", "review of organizational change outline", "review of the systems advocacy framework" and "individual roles and responsibilities". Each of these sections was dealt with individually.

Because the negotiation meeting was the primary determinant in selecting the intervention methodology, the author's emphasis was focused primarily on selecting an appropriate negotiation style and strategy. More specifically, the author felt that a negotiation style and strategy that emphasized collaboration and trust was most appropriate given the theoretical

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<sup>47</sup> "participant" refers to those individuals directly involved in working with the systems advocacy intervention ie. members of the systems advocacy committee, etc.

<sup>48</sup> "Agency personnel" refers to Carolyn Strutt and Ellen Kruger.

basis if the framework and concerns which had arisen through previous negotiations. To this end, the author selected Fisher and Ury's (1981) approach to principled negotiation. This particular approach can be summarized as follows:

- a) **PEOPLE:** Separate the people from the problem.
- b) **INTERESTS:** Focus on interests, not positions.
- c) **OPTIONS:** Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do.
- d) **CRITERIA:** Insist that the result be based on some objective standard.

The value of this particular approach was primarily that it removed the adversarial role between the two parties and instead formed them into a group of mutual problem solvers. This approach to problem solving was felt to have particular merit, not only because it was viewed as significantly removing the potential for disagreement, but also for the manner in which it removed that potential. More specifically, it engaged all members of the negotiation as equal members. This particular process then, was seen as a particularly valuable tool in mixed groups where one party might traditionally enjoy a power advantage, i.e., negotiations between varying levels of professionals (line staff and management) and consumers.

In reviewing the identified factors, the following points were raised that were relevant to the selection of the methodology:

- a) The methodology must be consistent with those typically employed within the agency.
- b) The methodology should be consistent with the theoretical foundation of the systems advocacy framework.
- c) That the methodology used be one which allowed for adequate assessment of the model on a theoretical level, but also that the model had practical application in assisting the agency in its systems advocacy efforts.

After identifying these points both the author and the agency representatives discussed what type of methodology would best fit this situation. The agency suggested that a systems advocacy working committee be established. It was felt by both parties that this particular type of methodology presented a number of advantages regarding the above

points. With regard to point (a), committees are a vehicle which the agency is most familiar with and as such, would be the most appropriate method of undertaking the intervention. The creation of a working committee is also consistent with Hale and Williams model for organizational change. Finally, it was felt that a committee would be able to provide the agency with internal momentum by providing the initiative with a higher profile within the agency, a tangible commitment of resources and finally, a body which would provide momentum after the author had completed his intervention. All of these points are consistent with Hale and Williams rationale for establishment for such a body.

After reaching agreement on the basic methodology, attention was turned to detailing the attributes and functions of the committee. This included the development of terms of reference for the committee, decisions around the composition of the committee the role of the author and finally, the scope of the intervention.

#### Committee Composition

In reviewing the previous intervention proposal, concerns were identified around the number of committee members (too many), and the makeup of the committee members (all agency staff). In response to these concerns, the number of committee members was reduced by 3-4 people. More importantly, the committee was given a broader composition by adding consumer representatives and a board member. Such a move was more consistent with the framework's position on consumer and board involvement. Committee composition can now be summarized as follows:

- a) Framework author
- b) Executive Director, CMHA-Wpg.
- c) Program Managers (3)
- d) Board member
- e) Consumer representative(s) (1-2)

#### Terms of Reference

Under the current terms of reference, the committee will act as a working group whose role will be to identify and develop recommendations around changes to the framework design, consultation with stakeholder groups, and an implementation schedule for the systems advocacy process. As well, the committee will act as an advisory group to staff in testing the model on a select issue and finally, to evaluate the process utilized.

### Role of the Author

In this intervention proposal the author role's has changed somewhat from the previous intervention proposal. Under terms of the intervention agreement the author will continue to act, at least initially, as a facilitator. However, this will now be done in a peer role as the author is now a full member of the committee. As the author of the framework, responsibility will be assumed for acting as a resource person to the committee and for coordinating work relating to the theoretical aspects of the process.

**Facilitation:** In determining a method of facilitation the author referred to Heron's work on facilitation. Heron introduced three primary modes of facilitation; hierarchical, co-operative and autonomous. Hierarchical refers to a facilitation style where the facilitator takes charge of all major decisions of the learning process. The co-operative approach stresses collaboration in devising the learning process. Finally, in the autonomous mode the facilitator creates an atmosphere for self-directed learning.

While each of these modes will be used in various points of the intervention, the terms of reference dictates that certain modes be employed overall. As a member of the committee, the facilitator will be employ an approach that is largely co-operative. As well, as the committee's work will continue after the intervention, combined with the committee's increased levels of knowledge and awareness, the facilitator will endeavour to shift to a more autonomous mode in order to give the committee at large more responsibility and control.

### Scope of the Intervention

The author's involvement will be limited to to Phase 1 of the committee's work. However, many of the details relating to phase 1 are the responsibility of the Systems Advocacy committee and as such have yet to be defined.

### Role of the Practicum Advisory Committee

- a) For individual committee members to act as a resource for the author.
- b) To evaluate the work of the author on an ongoing basis and to provide relevant feedback.

### Intervention Format

As was identified above, much of the intervention format remains undetermined in a detailed sense. At the time of this proposal however, some determinations have been made as to what is to be done and in what manner.

**PHASE 1(Objective #1): "To review the components of the systems advocacy framework, to provide recommendations on the system advocacy framework design".**

**Pre-meeting:** Committee members have been provided with terms of reference for the committee, a full copy of the systems advocacy framework and an abridged version of the framework (see attached).

**Time Frame:** The agency has set aside two hours for this meeting.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Time allotted</u>	<u>Facilitated by</u>
Introductions	10 min.	Carolyn Strutt
Review of framework	95 min.	Darrell Cole
Discussion of methodology for examining framework changes.	10 min.	Darrell Cole
Evaluation questionnaire (see attached)	5 min.	Darrell Cole

**Location:** Boardroom, CMHA-Wpg.

**Recording:** - Written notes.  
Tape-recording.

**Evaluation (Goals):** a) To complete a review of the systems advocacy framework.

b) To increase participant awareness in the area of systems advocacy.

**Evaluation (Methodology):** Evaluation questionnaire  
Self-analysis

**Evaluation (Criteria):** Personal judgment.  
Practicum Advisory committee feedback.  
Committee member feedback.

Phase 1-2 : Intervention and evaluation formats for following phases are as yet

undetermined.

**Detailed Breakdown for Meeting #1**

a) Introductory remarks-Carolyn Strutt.

- b) Framework review:
- 1] Review of meeting agenda
  - 2] Presentation of objectives for meeting #1.
  - 3] Review of "Guide for considering changes".
  - 4] Review of the framework's theoretical foundation.
  - 5] Review of "Issues for Consideration"
  - 6] Review of framework-Issue Gathering & Filtering.
    - Issue Selection.
    - Issue Priorization.
    - Issue Action & Evaluation
  - 7] Review of Organizational Change framework.
  - 8] Discussion with committee on preferred methods for examining and making changes to framework.
  - 9] Completion of Evaluation questionnaire.

While changes to the model will not be discussed at the first meeting the author has provided a document entitled "Guide for Considering Change" (see attached). The purpose of this document is to assist committee members in identifying areas of potential concern as they review the model. As well, the document will serve to record these concerns so that they can be easily retrieved for the relevant meeting.



**Workshop Evaluation (#1)**

- a) Were the goals of the workshop clearly outlined by the facilitator?
- b) Was all the day's material covered ?
- c) Was the time delegated to each topic adequate? If no, please elaborate.
- d) Was adequate time given for discussion?
- e) Would you say that by the end of today's workshop you had a greater understanding of systems advocacy? Are there aspects of the framework which you are having trouble understanding?
- f) Was the "Guide for Considering Changes" useful in assisting you to identify potential areas of concern and/or comment?
- g) What suggestions, if any, would you have in making the future workshops more effective?
- i) Overall, how would you rate the performance of the facilitator? What recommendations, if any, would you have in assisting the facilitator in being more effective in his performance?

### Guide for Considering Changes

#### Theoretical Foundation

1. Does the theoretical foundation of the framework match that of the agency?

If no, what aspects of the model are of concern and why are they a concern.

2. Are there problems with the working definitions provided by the author?

If so, what are the problems and how might the definitions be modified.

#### Issues for Consideration

1. Are any of the identified issues erroneous, irrelevant or not fully explored?

2. What other issues can be identified that would be worthy for inclusion?

#### The Systems Advocacy Framework: General Attributes.

1. Does the use of the various stages make sense. Are the stages sequentially correct?

2. Do the titles of the various stages adequately reflect their contents?

3. What elements could be added or deleted under the individual headings?

4. Are any of the elements confusing or improperly worded?

5. Could the sequence of the elements under the individual headings be changed into a more "natural" order?

#### Organizational Change (relative to systems advocacy)

1. What elements could be added or deleted under the individual headings?

2. Are any of the elements confusing or improperly worded?

3. Could the sequence of the elements under the individual headings be changed into a more "natural" order?

**Appendix D**

**Agreement on Participation in Practicum Intervention**

**AGREEMENT ON PARTICIPATION IN PRACTICUM INTERVENTION**

As a member of The Canadian Mental Health Association's systems advocacy advisory committee, I understand that part of my commitment involves assisting one of the committee members, a graduate student from the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba, in developing his practicum topic: "Creating a knowledge-guided, knowledge-creating framework for systems advocacy".

I understand that my involvement will consist primarily of the following:

1. Participation in a series of audio-taped committee meetings.
2. Completion of a written performance evaluation questionnaire at the end of each meeting; and
3. Participation in a audio-taped performance evaluation interview after the completion of the student's practicum intervention.

The performance evaluation questionnaires and performance evaluation interview will relate to the learning objectives of the student. The questionnaires will be completed anonymously by each committee member.

The audio-tapes of the meetings and the interview will be heard by the student and his advisor solely for the purposes of this project. Tapes will be erased upon completion of the project. The confidentiality of the information will be respected at all times.

Participation in the intervention process is voluntary. Individuals who choose not to sign will be free to participate as full members in the intervention process.

I agree that my participation on the committee may be used as described above. I also agree that I will not bring any claim or legal action against the student or the University of Manitoba or its servants or agents relating to my participation as described above.

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Committee member

Dated March , 1995

**Appendix E**  
**Performance Feedback**

Performance Appraisal

1. Were the objectives of the meeting clearly defined? Yes/No

2. To what extent did you find the "Guide for considering changes" useful?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 very useful    somewhat useful    unsure    not very useful    not at all useful

2a) What factors influenced your rating of the the guide?

3. How would you rate the performance of the facilitator in the following areas:

a) The facilitator was knowledgeable about the material being covered.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 Strongly agree    Agree somewhat    unsure    Disagree somewhat    Strongly Disagree

b) The facilitator presented the material in a clear and concise manner.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 Strongly agree    Agree somewhat    unsure    Disagree somewhat    Strongly Disagree

c) The facilitator made me feel part of the group.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 Strongly agree    Agree somewhat    unsure    Disagree somewhat    Strongly Disagree

d) The facilitator stayed true to the agenda.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 Strongly agree    Agree somewhat    unsure    Disagree somewhat    Strongly Disagree

e) Given the time allotted for today's meeting, the facilitator delegated his time appropriately for each section covered.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 Strongly agree    Agree somewhat    unsure    Disagree somewhat    Strongly Disagree

4. Overall, how would you rate the performance of the facilitator?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
 excellent                      good                      adequate                      mediocre                      poor

4a) What factors influenced your rating of the facilitator's performance?

5. How useful was this review in increasing your understanding of systems advocacy?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
very useful    somewhat useful    unsure    not very useful    not at all useful

5a) What factors led you to select this rating?

**Appendix F**  
**Meeting Minutes: January 13, 1995**



Meeting Minutes-Jan. 13, 1995

In Attendance: Darrell Cole, Ellen Kruger and Carolyn Strutt

Agenda

1. Goals of agency and student.
2. Considerations for agency and student in determining involvement in and form of the intervention process.
3. Review of "Organizational Change" outline.
4. Review of "Systems Advocacy" framework.
5. Roles and responsibilities-Darrell, Carolyn, Ellen & Committee (?).
6. Process-future meetings.

GOALS (AGENCY):

1. That the intervention process provide concrete benefits for the agency's current work on systems advocacy.
2. That the intervention deal not only with a review of the process itself, but also with the mechanics of implementing the process.
3. That the intervention focus on those aspects of the process which are current to the agency's work ie. issue gathering, issue selection, issue prioritization, etc.

GOALS (PRACTITIONER):

1. To develop a knowledge-guided, knowledge creating framework for guiding the organization's efforts in the area of systems advocacy.
2. To increase participant awareness in the area of systems advocacy.
3. To develop a model for organizational change which will facilitate the organization's adoption of the systems advocacy framework.
4. To develop the facilitator's knowledge in the areas of empowerment, advocacy, program development, program evaluation, organizational change and facilitation.

\*It was agreed that these goals would be accepted with the caveat that discussion in the following areas may result in modifications to the goals.

### CONSIDERATIONS (AGENCY)

1. **TIME-** Agreed that time could be examined on two levels, calendar time and actual intervention time (time spent in workshops, etc.). With regard to calendar time, it was felt by the agency that the time needed to explore the framework in its entirety, especially if this was done in some depth, would take a considerable amount of time. More specifically, that the amount of calendar time needed by the agency to adequately address the advocacy process may take longer than was available to the practitioner. As for the amount of time that the agency was prepared to invest in the intervention per se, it was deemed that the amount of person-hours set aside by the agency in the initial intervention (approximately 4000 hours in staff time) was simply prohibitive. It was hoped that a format that was less costly in person-hours could be found.
2. Given the above-mentioned concerns around time, the agency felt that the original intervention which was proposed was now inappropriate. This was because the original intervention was designed to examine all aspects of the framework on a theoretical level. In accordance with the agency's stated goals, it was decided that it would be far more beneficial to the agency to actually start a more intensive examination of the process by narrowing the focus of the work to some aspects of the model but examining it in more detail. As well, the original intervention proposal's almost exclusive emphasis on collaboration with agency staff would now be broadened in order to provide a wider range of input from other stakeholders ie. consumers, the agency's board of directors, etc.
3. A third consideration for the agency in determining the intervention design was the style of the intervention. Upon reflection, agency staff felt that a series of theoretical workshops was not conducive to the agencies traditional style of examining issues. It was determined that a method for examining the systems advocacy process must be found that was more pragmatic and more more inclusive.
4. Finally, the agency felt that the intervention should be reflective of the agency's style of governance. More specifically, that emphasis be placed on involvement of management

staff where direct work on the framework was involved as it was felt that line staff, given their current work responsibilities, would more appropriately be involved in an indirect manner.

#### CONSIDERATIONS (AUTHOR):

1. The only consideration brought forward by the author was that of time (calendar) and the wish to complete the intervention as soon as possible. While acknowledging this, the author also stated that the intervention should be planned on the assumption that he was fully available and that possible employment conflicts would be worked around the intervention.

#### REVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION CHANGE FRAMEWORK

1. The first change made with regard to this aspect of the process was to restate the author's third goal. This was done after agreement that the wording of the goal left the wrongful impression that the model was one with application beyond the systems advocacy process. As a result, the goal was reworded to read "To develop a process for framework implementation within the agency". As well, all references to "organizational change" would be modified to read "organizational change in relation to systems advocacy".

2. It was also felt that the amount of organizational change would be minimal as it was the agency's intent to continue to have line staff continue to provide direct services and that the adoption of the model would have little if any impact on line staff. It was agreed however, that the process may result in minor changes to job roles of management staff and potentially significant changes to the job duties of staff in the advocacy program.

3. Agency representatives expressed the opinion that the model suggested by the author as a framework for organizational change was perhaps more appropriate for a setting which was more bureaucratic in nature or had less of a history of "change in general". In particular, it was felt that the first two steps of the model ("determine and create an awareness for change" and "assess the work environment before designing the change")

were somewhat redundant given the nature of the organization ie. strong emphasis on change and advocacy.

**REVIEW OF THE SYSTEMS ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED INTERVENTION.**

1. The first aspect of the process which was reviewed related more specifically to the third concern about the relevance of the organizational change model. A review of the previously proposed pre-workshop questionnaire was deemed expendable as it covered areas considered irrelevant (information already known). As well, the final two questions of the questionnaire were, in the view of the agency\*, potentially provocative and inflammatory and so it was agreed that it would be dropped from the intervention. It was acknowledged by all however that such a format might be used and even expanded in soliciting staff input and opinion throughout the intervention process about specific aspects of the model. This however would be determined on an "as-needed" basis throughout the intervention process.
2. The previous point gave rise to discussion as to who would make decisions on, among other things, inclusion of a questionnaire. It was decided that an agency "systems advocacy working committee" would be struck. In general, the role of the committee would be work through the advocacy process with the author, who would be a member of the committee. It was agreed that the committee would be made up of a smaller number of representatives than had been proposed under the previous intervention proposal. As well that these individuals, in accordance with the agency's structure, would likely be members of the management team. **IT WAS AGREED THAT THE AGENCY WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE, AS WELL AS ITS "TERMS OF REFERENCE"**. The establishment of such a committee was consistent with Hale and Williams model for organizational change. It provided a mechanism for agency decision-making and internal momentum for the agency's move towards systems advocacy.
3. While agreeing that specific aspects of the intervention process would be negotiated within the working committee, it was decided that the intervention process would focus on

consulting with various stakeholder groups (consumers, staff, board members, etc.) as to the validity of the proposed framework. In particular, the intervention would focus on the stages of "Issue Gathering and Filtering", "Issue Selection" and "Issue Priorization". Should time allow consideration would be given to dry-running the stage of "Issue Action" with the committee.

#### **FUTURE PROCESS.**

In an effort improve communication between the author and the agency, as well as to provide impetus for the systems advocacy process, it was agreed that regular meetings would be held.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES.**

1. Darrell to record and distribute meeting minutes. Minutes to go to Ellen Kruger, Carolyn Strutt, Paul Newman and Sid Frankel.
2. Carolyn and Ellen to form systems advocacy working committee and develop terms of reference for the committee for discussion next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, January 19, 1995 at 9:15 a.m. at CMHA.

\*"agency" refers to agency representatives Carolyn Strutt and Ellen Kruger.

**Appendix F1**

**Analysis: Meeting of January 13, 1995**

ANALYSIS: January 13, 1995

In considering how to approach this meeting, the primary consideration was whether or not to table a discussion on what had gone wrong in previous negotiations. In the end I decided that such a move would likely only serve to increase tension around "who was to blame" and thus, would be counter-productive. I therefore proposed that we "take one step backward and then one step forward" as a way of starting with a clean slate. I also felt that if all went well, the issue of miscommunication would eventually be brought up but in a much friendlier atmosphere.

At the onset of the meeting agency representatives were quite guarded and agreed to the proposed outline without much comment. Our initial coverage of goals was relatively straightforward and gave us some momentum going into the "limitations" section. Based on the meeting of the advisory committee of January 6, 1995, I was confident that a revised intervention could be negotiated from a logistical point of view. I was concerned however, that other factors were threatening to undermine the process. As a result, I felt it best to try and remove some of the escalated feelings which seemed to exist. To this end, I decided that the offer of some kind of olive branch on my part might help to establish an atmosphere of trust. I started with my "limitation" of time (see minutes) and suggested that my position of needing to finish asap was brought on by panic and had placed the agency in a difficult situation around time frames. I made it clear that my wish was to complete a practicum in collaboration with CMHA and that I would demonstrate more flexibility in the area of time. More specifically, that we should proceed with the assumption that I would be available and that any problems could be negotiated to our mutual satisfaction. This position seemed to have the desired effect. I believe it signalled to the agency that I was prepared to accept some responsibility for the existing situation. As well, I believe that it helped establish a conciliatory atmosphere.

As the meeting progressed and we discussed points two, three and four of the agenda, some of the agency's apprehensions became more apparent. For example, comments around the involvement of line staff and organizational change suggested that there was some apprehension that the process would be too "radical". Radical in the sense that it might cause unnecessary problems for the agency with line staff and consumers. This was most evident when discussion focused on the pre-workshop questionnaire (see point #1 of "Review of the systems advocacy framework and previously proposed intervention"). Such discussions provided the author with an opportunity to reassure the agency that the intent of the framework and the intervention was not to cause the agency distress and that the point of the intervention was to modify the framework to meet their needs. This also served to allay agency apprehensions.

While a number of details have yet to be finalized especially my specific role vis-a-vis the committee have yet to be finalized, it is my belief that the negotiations have resulted in an intervention which will meet the needs of everyone. Perhaps the most significant indicator was after the meeting when I was able to meet informally with the Executive Director. We discussed the previous events and agreed that there was some miscommunication on both sides. More importantly, she indicated that she had not felt comfortable with the process previously but now felt comfortable proceeding.

Summary: From my perspective this meeting was a success. While closure was not obtained regarding the intervention contract, the application of an Acceptance

intervention style was very useful in dealing with the primary issue, reducing the consultee's tension. This was done by accepting responsibility for my inappropriate actions, allowing the consultees to take control over aspects of the intervention process (determining the most appropriate vehicle for the intervention [committee]), as well as the terms of reference and composition of the Committee. While consideration was given to applying a Confrontation intervention regarding the makeup of the Committee, it was decided that such a move only would have been counter - productive, and would be dealt with over the longer term, if in fact it became an issue. A similar decision was made by regarding the inclusion of the piece of the Framework on "Organizational Change". There seemed to be a real concern on the part of the agency that they had no control over the process (not unexpected) and that the proposed intervention process might be viewed as being too "radical".



**Appendix G**  
**Meeting Minutes: January 19, 1995**

Meeting Minutes-January 19, 1995

In attendance: Darrell Cole, Carolyn Strutt, Ellen Kruger

Agenda

1. Review and acceptance of past meeting minutes.
2. Review and acceptance of Terms of Reference for Systems Advocacy Working Comm.
3. Composition of Committee.
4. Role of the author.
5. Status of the model for "Organizational Change".
6. "To Do" list
7. Next meeting.

**1. Review and acceptance of past meeting minutes:**

A) RE. Review of the Organization Change Framework, #2.

Should be modified to read "...potentially significant changes to the job duties of staff in the advocacy program. **AS WELL, THE CHANGES MAY RESULT IN MODIFICATIONS TO THE DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**".

B) RE. Review of the Systems Advocacy Framework and Previously Proposed Intervention, #1.

The section reading "potentially provocative and inflammatory" should be replaced by "**POTENTIALLY ANXIETY RAISING AND COULD CAUSE UNDUE AND UNWARRANTED STRESS ABOUT CHANGES IN JOB DUTIES**".

C) RE. Review of the Systems Advocacy Framework and Previously Proposed Intervention, #2.

The section reading "As well, that these individuals, in accordance with the agency's structure, would likely be members of the agency's management team" should be replaced by "**AS WELL, THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO BE REFLECTIVE OF THE VARIOUS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS WHICH MIGHT INVOLVED AND/OR EFFECTED BY SYSTEMS ADVOCACY EFFORTS**".

## **2. Review and Acceptance of Terms of Reference for Systems Advocacy Working Committee (see attached "Terms of Reference").**

### **A) RE. OBJECTIVES, Phase I, #2**

Should be modified to read "... re. modification of the systems advocacy framework".

### **B) Re. OBJECTIVES, Phase II, #1**

Should specify "This would include the stages of Issue Gathering and Filtering", "Issue Selection", "Issue Priorization" and "Issue Action".

## **3. Committee Composition.**

It was reiterated that the agency would be responsible for selection of committee members. While the only members determined at this point in time are Darrell Cole, Ellen Kruger and Carolyn Strutt, discussion suggested that an additional 4-5 individuals would be added to the committee for the next meeting. As was previously stated, that these individuals would represent such groups as agency personnel, the agency board of directors and consumer groups.

## **4. Role of the Author.**

Discussion was held as to how the author's role in the intervention process might have changed from that described in the previous intervention. Agreement was reached on the following points:

- a) That the author would be a full member of the committee, with all the rights and responsibilities attached to that position.
- b) That the author would act as a committee resource person.
- c) That the author would maintain his role as facilitator with regard to presentation and analysis of the theoretical model.

Additional and/or more specific duties may be identified throughout the process.

## **5. Status of the model for "Organizational Change".**

During the previous meeting there had been some discussion as to the validity of the proposed model for assessing and undertaking organizational change related to the agency's systems advocacy efforts. The author proposed, despite the apparent need for modifications, that the model continue to be used as it still represented a useful starting point. In this sense, it was no different than using the systems advocacy framework as a starting point and then modifying it. Agreed that we would continue to use this model.

## **6. "To Do"**

### **Author**

1. To develop an abridged version of the author's work to this point in time and to make this document available to the organization by Tuesday, January 24, 1995 so that it can be distributed to committee members prior to the next meeting.
2. To attempt to gain access to a conversion program that would allow the author's work to become compatible with the agency's operating system (WP 5.1 with Windows).
3. To provide the agency with the most recent version of the author's work so that it can be duplicated and distributed to committee members for the next meeting.
4. To develop a detailed intervention format for the next meeting which will facilitate the fulfillment of Phase I of the committee's work.

### **Agency**

1. To determine the membership of the Systems Advocacy Working Committee.
2. To ensure that the abridged framework document is in the hands of committee members five days prior to the next meeting.
3. To photocopy copies of the full document for distribution.

## **7. Next Meeting**

Thursday, February 2, 1995  
Noon-2 p.m.  
Boardroom-CMHA-Wpg. Region

**Appendix G1**  
**Analysis: January 19, 1995**

ANALYSIS: January 19, 1995

The meeting started with Executive Director stating that she thought that it would be beneficial to "clear the air" before starting into the formal agenda. She stated that there apparently was some concern on my part about the agency not meeting its time frames with regard to reviewing my work. The Executive Director stated that she wasn't sure if she was clear in understanding my position, but wanted to say that she found it surprising that I would be concerned given how long the agency had waited for me. It seemed clear that this was an issue of some concern to the Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager. They seemed to be left with the distinct impression that the agency had been responsible for "my lack of progress". I made it clear that I never had any problem with the agency in this regard. I acknowledged and thanked them for their patience and made it clear that I would not criticize them for "taking too long". I clarified that my concern related only to the fact the agency had agreed to a number of recent deadlines and responsibilities (this was acknowledged by both the Executive Director and the Advocacy program Manager) and that when these were not met and contact with me had ceased, that I was concerned that the agency had decided to reconsider their involvement in the process. My feelings were especially acute given the fact that the agency had been given me so much time previously and I was worried that they had become frustrated with me. I also reiterated my contribution to the situation by having established panic-stricken deadlines which likely prompted the agency's earlier decision to have me consider doing a thesis. Finally, I apologized to the Advocacy Program Manager for any feelings of "blame" which may have encountered at the advisory committee meeting and reassured her that this was not my intention.

My explanations seemed to greatly reduce tension and both individuals stated that they now felt that the issue could be buried. The Executive Director stated that the delays could be attributed solely to workload on their part and that in the future I should feel comfortable talking to her about any concerns or issues I might have. This was viewed as a positive comment regarding her comfort level and willingness to proceed with the relationship. It should also be mentioned that there appeared to be some communication problems existing between the two agency employees and that the adoption of formal minutes should help in this regard.

There seemed to be a feeling that the agency had been "waiting for me" the last two years and that during this time I had not done anything. This position is understandable given that they have seen no tangible differences at the agency. However, it should be noted that considerable research and writing has occurred and in any event, it seems unlikely that the agency would have been ready to move even if the work was done. Raising this as a personal issue however, would have been counter-productive to achieving the goals of the intervention.

The actual meeting progressed quickly and co-operatively. The only point worthy of mention being my personal note to the Executive Director with regard to the committee's terms of reference. I have asked Executive Director to clarify the wording of the Phase I objectives with regard to "...to recommend..." I have asked the Executive Director who the committee is recommending to, given that she is on the committee.

Summary: While initiated by the consultee, the application of an Acceptance strategy was successful in gaining the confidence of the consultee by reassuring them of my true intent.

Once the personal issues were eliminated, closure was obtained relatively quickly regarding the intervention contract. By the end of the meeting closure had been obtained regained stage one and two of the Entry phase. As well partial closure was realized regarding "Physical entry to the system". The only issue being that I would now have to gain the confidence of an expanded "consultee", the members of the Systems Advocacy Advisory Committee. I was also left with the impression, in reference to Dougherty's "internal" and "external" consultant status that the organization very much wished this to be an in - house process, based on how my role was being defined.

**Appendix H**  
**Terms of Reference**  
**Systems Advocacy Advisory Committee**



**Canadian Mental Health Association, Winnipeg Region**

**Systems Advocacy Committee**

**Terms of Reference**

**Purpose: To assist the Agency in the development of an implementation plan for system advocacy.**

**Objectives:**

**Phase I**

- 1. To review the components of the systems advocacy framework, to provide recommendations on the system advocacy framework design.**
- 2. To recommend a consultation plan with relevant stakeholders re. systems advocacy.**
- 3. To recommend an implementation schedule for the system advocacy framework.**

**PhaseII**

- 1. To act as an advisory group to staff in the testing of the model components utilizing a selected advocacy issue**
- 2. To evaluate the process utilized.**

⋮

**Appendix I**  
**Abridged version**  
**Systems Advocacy Framework**

*MOVING TOWARDS A KNOWLEDGE-GUIDED ,  
KNOWLEDGE-CREATING FRAMEWORK FOR  
SYSTEMS ADVOCACY:  
AN ABRIDGED VERSION*

### KEY TERMINOLOGY

During the course of the practicum report, reference is made to a number of terms which are critical to understanding the practicum report. The author provides the reader with the following list of definitions for quick reference.

1. **Burnout**: “A process that begins with excessive and prolonged levels of job stress. This stress produces strain in the worker (feelings of tension, irritability and fatigue). The process is completed when workers defensively cope with job stress by psychologically detaching themselves from the job and becoming apathetic, cynical and rigid”. (Cheriss, 1980).

2. **Advocacy**: “The act of representing the interests of an individual or group of individuals on social justice issues in such a way that the process becomes as empowering as the outcome of the advocacy action itself. Ideally, that such a process be undertaken while remaining free from any conflict of interest”.

3. **“Systemic” Advocacy**: The process by which systems advocacy is undertaken.

4. **“Systems” Advocacy**: Refers to the focus of the advocacy efforts.

5. **Empowerment**: “An interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live” (Whitmore & Kerans, 1988).

6. **Critical Thinking**: “A way of understanding why things are the way that they are” (Brookfield, 1987).

7. **Issue Gathering and Filtering**: The process of compiling “eligible” systems advocacy issues.

8. **Issue Selection**: The process of determining which issues from among a number of qualifying issues will be selected for action.

9. **Issue Prioritization**: The process of ranking the selected issues on the basis of perceived importance.

10. **Issue Action**: The process of developing and implementing a plan for the successful undertaking of previously selected and/or prioritized systems issues.

11. Issue Evaluation: "A social process of making judgments about the merit, worth, or value of a change. Evaluation makes judgments about those change episode inputs, throughputs, outputs, and outcomes that have been monitored" (Kettner, Daley and Moroney, 1985).

### DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

- a) In reviewing relevant literature "advocacy" is seen as a mechanism for empowering members of society who can be identified as being "disadvantaged".
- b) In reviewing relevant literature "empowerment" is identified as having a number of common elements. These include "Participation (collective action)", "Learning (knowledge)" and "Productivity (tangible results)". If advocacy is about empowerment then it stands to reason that it would be desirable to incorporate the above elements into any framework for systems advocacy.
- c) The first step in the learning process is awareness. Awareness is achieved through critical thinking.
- d) On the basis of the above research the author proposes that the following components are vital to the establishment to the theoretical foundation of the systems advocacy framework:
  - 1) Systems advocacy is about empowerment.
  - 2) Empowerment occurs when people take successful action.
  - 3) Successful action cannot occur without awareness.
  - 4) Awareness without action is preservation of the status quo.
  - 5) Awareness occurs through critical thinking.
- e) Finally, that there are a number of philosophical questions related to advocacy and that the organization's position on these issues will act as fundamental determinants in how systems advocacy is undertaken.

**ISSUE GATHERING AND FILTERING**

- a) What is the organization's definition of a "systems" issue?
- b) Who decides (and doesn't decide) on the definition of "systems" issues? Why?
- c) Does the issue fall within the philosophy, mandate, goals and objectives of the organization and/or programs?
- d) How are issues gathered? Why?
- e) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how issues will be gathered. Why?
- f) Based on the process being used and who is being approached, what types of issues likely won't be gathered? Why?
- g) When are issues gathered? Why?
- h) What happens to gathered issues? Why?
- i) What additional criteria, if any, will the organization develop to screen issues?
- j) Who decides (and doesn't decide) on the qualification criteria, or whether or not there will be any? Why?
- k) How will the qualification criteria be weighted? Why?
- l) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how issues are weighted?

### ISSUE SELECTION

- a) The gravity of the harm: The depth and breadth of harm that an issue presents.
  - b) The benefits from modifying the system: Potential long-term benefits of the issue.
  - c) The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy: The viability of ensuring that a solution can be put into effect.
  - d) The usefulness of the [issue] as a model: Does the issue share common factors with other issues.
  - e) The relative chance for success: How "winnable" the issue is.
  - f) The cost of the case: How much will it cost (financial and otherwise) to win the case.
  - g) The expertise of the agency: Does the agency possess the necessary expertise to undertake the issue.
  - h) Fairness to protected groups and respondents: Will selection of a particular issue isolate sub-groups within the consumer community.
- 
- i) [Will undertaking and winning this issue] give people a sense of their own power.
  - j) [The issue chosen must have the potential to] alter the relations of power.
  - k) [The issue in question must] be easy to understand.
  - l) [The issue should] be non-divisive.
  - m) [The issue selected] must build leadership.
- 
- n) How are issues selected? Why this way?
  - o) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how issues will be selected? Why?
  - p) What does being "selected" mean?
  - q) How will the selection criteria be weighted?
  - r) Who decides (and doesn't decide) how the criteria will be weighted? Why?
  - s) What kinds of issues will (or will not) be accepted? Why?
  - t) How many issues will be accepted? Why his number?

**ISSUE PRIORIZATION**

- a) How will selected issues be prioritized (Formal vs. Informal)? Why?
- b) Criteria selection. What should be prioritized? Why?
- c) Who gets to develop (and who doesn't get to develop) the prioritization process? Why?
- d) What happens when a crisis issue develops?
- e) Common conflict between criteria:
  - 1) Cases with the greatest potential benefit will often be the most costly.
  - 2) Fairness to protected groups vs. the likelihood of success.
  - 3) Fairness to consumers.



**ISSUE ACTION****a) THE AGENCY****Internal Factors**

- 1) Authority
- 2) Accountability to consumers
- 3) Rules
- 4) Decision-making
- 5) Personnel (Paid and Voluntary)
- 6) Division of labour
- 7) Interpersonal relations
- 8) Job duties
- 9) Constitution and goal orientation
- 10) Nature of services
- 11) Depth and breadth of mandate

**External Factors**

- 1) Providers of fiscal resources
- 2) Providers of legitimation and authority
- 3) Providers of clients
- 4) Perception
- 5) Providers of complementary services
- 6) Competing organizations
- 7) Consumers and recipients of organization's products

- History of the organization
- The practitioner

**b) PROBLEMS**

- 1) Problem analysis
- 2) Past change efforts
- 3) Perceptions of the problem by significant others

**c) SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM**

- 1) Origins of the problem
- 2) Theory of the problem
- 3) Structural-Functional analysis of the problem

**d) THE CLIENT (The people we are trying to help)**

- 1) Physical location
- 2) Social characteristics
- 3) Economic characteristics
- 4) Political characteristics
- 5) Demographic characteristics
- 6) Formal organization
- 7) Divisions and cleavages

- 8) Significant relations
- 9) Significant changes

#### e) GOALS

- 1) Task (process) goals
- 2) Outcome goals

#### f) STRATEGIES

- 1) Adversary
- 2) Conciliatory
- 3) Developmental
- 4) Facilitative-Instructional
- 5) Knowledge development and testing
- 6) Restorative

-The action system

-Resistance (opposition) and interference (inertia, distraction) forces

-Evaluation of practitioner's ability to utilize strategy

#### g) TACTICS

- 1) Adversarial: civil disobedience, strikes, threats, demonstrations, picketing, lobbying, etc.
- 2) Conciliatory: mediation, provision of information, empathy, etc.
- 3) Developmental: conciliation, bargaining, task forces, etc.
- 4) Facilitative-Instructional: lectures, role playing, role modelling, logical discussion, etc.
- 5) Knowledge Development and Testing: research
- 6) Restorative: exploration, support, collaboration, etc.

#### Guidelines for confrontational tactics

- 1) Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.
- 2) Never go outside the experience of your own people.
- 3) Whenever possible go outside the experience of the enemy.
- 4) Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules.
- 5) Ridicule is...the most important weapon.
- 6) A good tactic is one that your people enjoy.
- 7) A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag.
- 8) Keep the pressure on.
- 9) The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.
- 10) The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure on the opposition.
- 11) If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through to its counterside.
- 12) The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.
- 13) Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.

- Using the media
- Implementation of action

#### **h) ACTION EVALUATION**

- 1) Identify key decisions**
- 2) Identify key decision makers**
- 3) Identify the time frame**
- 4) Identify the kinds and amounts of information needed**
- 5) Design and execute an evaluation plan**
- 6) Communicate the information**

### ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

- What does the organization change?
- How does the organization effectively put the change into place?
- Who will manage the change?
- What do we want (the establishment of goals)?

- 1) Determine and create an awareness for change.
- 2) Assess the work environment before designing the change.
- 3) Designing the [change] program.
- 4) Organize for change.
- 5) Maintain the momentum.
- 6) Celebrate the change.
- 7) Evaluate the change process.

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**Appendix J**  
**Guide for Considering Changes.**

### Guide for Considering Changes

#### Theoretical Foundation

1. Does the theoretical foundation of the framework match that of the agency?

If no, what aspects of the model are of concern and why are they a concern.

2. Are there problems with the working definitions provided by the author?

If so, what are the problems and how might the definitions be modified.

#### Issues for Consideration

1. Are any of the identified issues erroneous, irrelevant or not fully explored?

2. What other issues can be identified that would be worthy for inclusion?

#### The Systems Advocacy Framework: General Attributes.

1. Does the use of the various stages make sense. Are the stages sequentially correct?

2. Do the titles of the various stages adequately reflect their contents?

3. What elements could be added or deleted under the individual headings?

4. Are any of the elements confusing or improperly worded?

5. Could the sequence of the elements under the individual headings be changed into a more "natural" order?

#### Organizational Change (relative to systems advocacy)

1. What elements could be added or deleted under the individual headings?

2. Are any of the elements confusing or improperly worded?

3. Could the sequence of the elements under the individual headings be changed into a more "natural" order?

**Appendix K**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**February 2, 1995**



Meeting Agenda-Thursday, February 2, 1995

1. Introductions
2. Housekeeping and clarifications
3. Examining the theoretical foundations of the framework
4. The Systems Advocacy Framework: An overview
5. Examining the components: Issue Gathering and Filtering
  - Issue Selection
  - Issue Priorization
  - Issue Action
  - Issue Evaluation
  - Organizational Change
6. Where do we go from here?
7. Completion of Practicum feedback form.

**Appendix K1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**February 2, 1995**

Systems Advocacy Committee: Meeting Minutes-February 2, 1995

In Attendance: Louise Maurakis, Carolyn Strutt, Jim Fisher, Ellen Kruger, Darrell Cole.

Regrets: Anita Rempel

1. Review of meeting agenda.

2. After some discussion on exactly how to proceed with a review and possible modification of the various framework stages it was agreed that the individual stages of the framework would be examined in the order proposed. Attention would be paid to each individual component of the respective stage for possible modification.

3. Issue Gathering and Filtering: It was agreed by the committee that within all stages of the model, the component questions should all be reviewed and rewritten in future tense ie. "How will issues..." instead of "How are issues..." to correctly reflect the organization's current position in considering these issues.

Pt. a<sup>49</sup>) It was identified that the organization does not currently have a formal working definition for "systems", although one does exist for advocacy. In developing a definition, it was considered important that it was broad enough to encompass varying levels of systems ie. systems and sub-systems. It was agreed that Darrell would present some various definitions of "systems" for the committee's consideration at the next meeting.

Pt. b) There was agreement on the wording and rationale for including the critical rationalization questions ie. "Who decides (and doesn't decide)...", throughout the all stages of the framework. Because this represented a standardized question within the framework, it was further agreed that there was no need to continually review this component.

Pt. c) It was agreed that this component was valid, but with some slight modification. There was some discussion as to the relevance of including "mandate" within the terms specified. After considering geographical considerations however, the need to clarify this point vis-a-vis Manitoba Division was identified as many of the likely concerns will involve their office. In addition, it was considered relevant to include the agency's mission statement when filtering issues, as well as the boards "ends" statements which relate to systems advocacy.

Pt. d) Discussion focused on a variety of possible methods and combinations of methods, such as consumer complaints, media stories, networking with other agencies, etc. It was agreed that the response to this component warranted careful consideration. The committee requested that Darrell to compile information on different formats and report this to the committee at the next meeting. In addition, discussion occurred around the point of certain methods of information gathering being more "proactive" than others. There was concern stated that clear definitions of "proactive" and "reactive" needed to be developed. The committee requested that Darrell come back to the next meeting with some possible definitions.

Pt. f) This component was seen as a valid one, although it was agreed that it may not be entirely possible to determine trends until involved in the actual process or until some

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<sup>49</sup> The "points" noted each correspond directly with the appropriate stage component.

systems advocacy work has occurred over a period of time.

Pt. g) Agreed that this issue component was important both internally (when is good for CMHA) and externally (What is good for others). It was further agreed that the response to this component may be largely dictated by "how" issues are gathered and as a result, should be left until that component is clarified.

Pt. h) Agreed that this issue was a relevant one, but again, was a function of knowing exactly how issues would initially be gathered.

Pt. i) It was decided that with regard to "filtering" issues, no other possible criteria could be seen as relevant. However, in recognition of the possibility of this happening in the future it was decided that Point c should be modified to read "that further criteria may be added to the process".

Pt. j) With regard to the modification of point c, that it should identify who is making the decision and on what basis.

Pt k & l) Both points "k" and "l" were considered irrelevant by virtue of the fact that "filtering was regarded as a "yes" or "no" process. As such, there would be no need to weight the criteria.

#### "To Do"

1. Committee members should endeavour to read as much of the framework as possible. In particular, that the sections on theory and "Issue Filtering and Gathering" be read.

2. Darrell to provide the following:

- definition(s) and/or components for the term "systems".
- methods of information gathering.
- definition(s) and/or components for the terms "proactive" and "reactive" as they relate to differentiating between issues.
- meeting agenda.

#### Next Meeting

Wednesday, February 15, 1995  
12:15 p.m. - 2 p.m.  
Boardroom, CMHA-Winnipeg

**Appendix K2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**February 2, 1995**

Analysis-Systems Advocacy Committee meeting: Feb.3,1995

1. Originally two hours was allotted for the meeting (noon - 2 p.m.). However, by the time the student started his presentation 1/2 an hour had already elapsed. This could be attributed two three factors; first, the Executive Director had to make some introductory comments for the initial meeting. They turned out to be slightly longer than planned. This factor should not be an issue in following meetings. Second, one of the committee members is not able to meet until 12:15 due to work commitments. While following meetings have been adjusted to take this into account, the finishing time for meetings has not been extended ie.12:15-2:00. This will result in a decrease in meeting time of 15 minutes. The student will monitor the progress of meetings and should time become a factor, propose a 15 minute extension. Finally, committee members who are also staff members needed a few extra minutes to "wrap up their work". Again, this situation will be monitored by the student and should it be noted as an on-going problem, it might be suggested that the "official" meeting time be pushed forward so that staff can be on time for the actual meeting.

2. Committee composition: In the previous intervention proposal, the proposed committee was, at the request of the agency, made up exclusively of staff members. This proposal was rejected because the makeup of the committee was not representative enough of the agency's stakeholder groups ie. consumers, board members, etc. As a result, the systems advocacy committee which was struck was to be of a more representative nature. To this end, the agency included an consumer representative and a board member (who is an advocate by profession) on the committee. However, when the student arrived for the meeting, he found that the board member/advocate had declined the agency's invitation to sit on the committee. As well, one of the management team was unable to attend due to a program crisis. The rejection by the board member/advocate to sit on the committee meant that in its current form, the committee was almost identical to the one that had been earlier proposed, and had been rejected as being too narrow in scope. The committee discussed the need for a possible replacement. Names which were submitted were those of advocates from other organizations (see meeting minutes). This caused some confusion for the student who assumed that replacement names would be those of Board members. This question was posed to the executive director, who replied that the Board member had been approached primarily for his expertise, not for his association with the Board. In fact, a review of past minutes shows no discussion of the need to select an individual who has professional expertise.

The above noted situation has two potential implications. First, it had earlier been agreed that having a board member involved might have some benefits to the organization. However, it would appear that the Executive Director has some concerns about not having enough "expertise" present within the committee while reviewing and modifying the process. This concern about "lack of knowledge" within the Committee may or may not include herself. The second potential concern focuses around the need to bring in an outside advocate when the agency already has their advocate sitting on the Committee. This may serve as an affront to the Advocacy Program Manager. This feeling may be exacerbated or produced by the Executive Director's suggestion to approach the Executive Director of The Community Unemployed Help Centre as the services provided by this agency are exclusively based on individual advocacy, not systems advocacy.

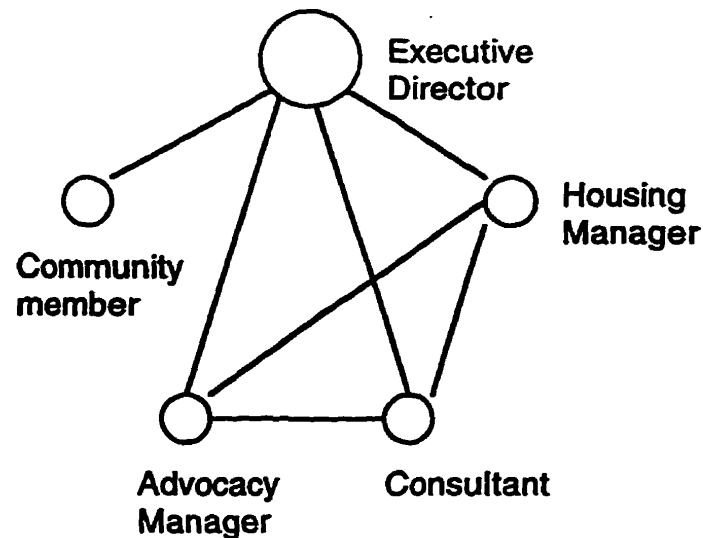
While there seems to be at least tacit recognition of the need to broaden the horizons of the committee it seems unclear what will be done if the external advocate is unable/unwilling to

sit on the committee. The student will continue, as previously agreed, to remind the Executive Director of her earlier decision around broader involvement and where necessary, to point out the benefits of this broader involvement.

The need to involve a "professional" instead of a board member may be deemed by the Executive Director to be a necessary one. This point will be clarified privately between the student and the Executive Director, although not necessarily in a direct manner. Instead, the student may approach the Executive Director and ask her if she sees any potential shortcomings in the committee. Her response may help guide her selection of the committee member. If there is still an identified need for a "professional", the student will ask the executive director if she thinks that the advocacy program manager may wrongly interpret this. While it is unlikely that a negative response would be given to the student, it may cause the Executive Director to reconsider the issue or minimally, be conscious of supporting the Advocacy Program Manager through the process in such a way that demonstrates a recognition of the Advocacy Program Manager's skills and contributions. This approach will certainly be one used by the student. Conscious attempts will be made to solicit the Advocacy Program Manager's opinion and support her commentary.

3. Committee structure and decision-making: Under the committee's terms of reference, the Committee is an advisory one which, among other things, is "to provide recommendations on the systems advocacy framework design (Terms of Reference)". After the last meeting, the student requested elaboration from the Executive Director on who the committee was recommending to. The Executive Director clarified this by stating that final decisions would be made by herself and the Advocacy Program Manager. This would suggest a need on the Executive Director's part for a strong degree of control, given that she and the Advocacy Program Manager are on the committee that will recommend to themselves. Because the Committee was initially seen as being relatively egalitarian on paper, special attention was paid to identifying communication networks within the Committee in light of the aforementioned issue. By the end of the meeting two important developments seem to have been observed; the existence of power relationships within the Committee and the lack of participation by the one non-agency committee member.

Ellis and Fisher (pg. 67) describe a number of potential small group networks (see attached), as well as basic network components (size, reachability, density and centrality), which can be found in any of the networks. On a formal level, the group most closely resembles the "all-channel". Committee members are considered equal with open-dialogue occurring between members. However, the attached diagram represents a more accurate picture of the groups informal relationships.



During the course of the meeting, the consumer representative was almost totally silent. As shown in the diagram, the sole connection to the community member was the Executive Director, who on a couple of occasions vocalized the important role the community member would play in the process. The community member's silence could be attributed to one or more factors. While the member is at least acquainted with all of the agency personnel, he is the lone non-agency committee member<sup>50</sup>. It could be that the member sees himself as a "token" consumer and/or outsider. Another factor may have simply been the nature of the discussion, much of which focused on agency mandates, missions, philosophy, etc. It is also possible that the member's own personal level of wellness was a determinant. Given that this information was not at hand, the member may simply have been excluded by the nature of the topic. Perhaps provision of the aforementioned to committee members would have been helpful. Heron (pg.32) also identifies gender as a possible factor. Other than the student, all committee members are females who are employees of the agency.

In the above diagram, the icon representing the Executive Director is larger than the others. This was done to represent the relative degrees of power which appear to be operating. While discussion was free and open, the Executive Director (consciously or unconsciously) exerted considerable control over the discussion. While control can manifest itself in many ways (Ellis and Fisher, pg. 106-108) the Executive Director's "control" occurred almost exclusively through verbal cues about what would and wouldn't be acceptable to the agency. For example, during a casual discussion on issue selection, the Executive Director mentioned that they (the Committee) may not want to pick issues which focused on the government for fear of losing funding. This statement registered a very strong, negative, non-verbal reaction from one of the Program Managers. Yet, the statement served as an informal "rule" for making decisions in this area. While the communication is equal in the Committee, it is clear that the Executive Director has the power to inform the committee what is possible and not possible. While this is part of what she brings to the Committee as the Executive Director, her asides and informal commentary serve influence the Committee. In this sense, the Executive Director possesses an informal veto power within the committee. While it may become necessary to use a confrontational approach at some point, the consultant believes that the best approach currently is to use an Acceptance intervention style. This situation may diminish over time as the Executive Director becomes

<sup>50</sup> Other than the consultant, although the community member may have regarded me as such.



more comfortable with the process.

With regard to the community member, Ellis and Fisher provide guidelines for successful committee member involvement (pg. 26-34). Their suggestions for creating a group "personality" seem well founded. In the original intervention proposal, one of the first actions of the Committee was to participate in an exercise which was designed to promote egalitarianism and a sense of the collective self. This exercise was rejected by the agency as being of marginal value. With hindsight, it may have been prudent to include the exercise. One possible solution is to validate the community member's unique role by quickly soliciting for the consumer perspective at the next meeting. As well, attention will be paid on an on-going basis to the issue of gender and will be dealt with as deemed appropriate.

It is currently unclear whether this current decision-making structure is by design or not. One solution submitted by Heron (pg. 32) is the institution of democratic controls ie. one person, one vote. In the event that one party's dominance threatens to adversely affect the process, votes can be used to determine whether or not the issue is carried. This will add integrity to the process without undermining the authority of the agency as the committee's report is not binding. As well, every attempt will be made to provide viable alternatives to ultimatums. In the previously cited example around government funding and issue selection, one alternative to avoiding government-related issues might be developing a strategy for securing independent funding for the advocacy program.

4. The review process. The only significant miscommunication during the meeting arose early in the review process. Unfortunately, both the student and the Executive Director had assumed the review would be carried out in the same way. The student assumed that a review of the entire model would occur first and then the committee would start to consider changes. The Executive Director on the other hand, wished to start by examining the first component of the first stage and then immediately consider changes to this point. She felt this would be more time-efficient and effective. While not anticipating such a move, this change was not a problem for the student once the process was clarified as detailed information was at hand for each component. There was (and still is) a concern on the part of the student about making decisions on individual points when committee members have no understanding of what is to come. While not problematic, there were numerous instances of committee members making commentary that was intended for issues yet to be covered ie. discussing the merits of legal advocacy, etc. The student will have to be vigilant to ensure that important decisions are not made that might later be contradicted or changed by following information.

5. Critical Thinking. Early in the process the student explained to the Committee the inclusion of certain questions which were used continually throughout the framework ie. "who decides", "who doesn't decide", "why"?, etc., In an effort to speed up the process and to win quick approval for this concept, the student suggested that it be examined initially and should all agree to its value, that there would be no need to continually rationalize these components. The committee unanimously agreed. However, the student will have to guard against this important component being ignored in future stages.

6. Feedback. A review of the "Performance Appraisals" from the first meeting indicated that the strong support generally for the student's performance. One observation made was that none of the committee members were able to use the "Guide for considering changes" for the first meeting as was intended by the student. It should be noted that no one that the tool was inappropriate, simply that they did not have time to use it. With hindsight this

would have been most effective had it been mailed to committee members with the abridged version of the framework<sup>51</sup>. Unfortunately, the concept of using the guide was only developed two days prior to the committee's first meeting.

A second observation made by one committee member was "...to ask people if they need more clarification before explaining something a second time". In reviewing the tapes there were indeed numerous instances of the student echoing a committee members comments, although the student found these to be more of an elaboration than a clarification. Such statements may have also occurred as the student attempted to establish some expertise in the eyes of the committee by demonstrating knowledge in a variety of areas. The student will be conscious of not over-elaborating in the future.

Another observation was the positive commentary which came from agency staff following the meeting. There clearly was a sense of relief now that the systems advocacy process had formally started. As well, two committee members from the agency felt a sense of empowerment simply starting on the process!

A final point related to the student's performance arose during his review of the taping from the meeting. This point was the student's habit of saying "you know" a few times too often. The student will be conscious of this in future meetings.

7. Organizational change: During discussions with the Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager prior, concerns had been expressed over the validity of the need for/components of the framework for organizational change. At one point during a brief digression, the Executive Director specifically cited the value of the organizational change framework and the particular value of one of the components. This would suggest that the value of such a framework may be starting to emerge.

8. Systemic versus Systems: A final point occurred when the Advocacy Program Manager was commenting during discussion on the distinction between "systemic advocacy" and "systems advocacy". The Program Manager stated that "language was not important as long as we are clear on what it means". She felt that documented definitions were only relevant for the purposes of the student's paper. This comment may indicate that the value of formalizing many things which traditionally have been informal may not yet be appreciated by the committee member. Conversely, the Program Manager may feel that too much formalization is occurring and that this is an undesired affect of the systems advocacy process. It is also possible that the Program Manager does not understand the distinction between the terms and believes the terms should be used interchangeably.

In response to these comments, the student during the meeting discussed the importance of formal documentation with the committee. Points raised included elimination of miscommunications, accountability, etc. Special emphasis was placed on the value of formal systems when undertaking evaluation of the program and specific systems advocacy undertakings. With regard to the potential that these comments are being made out of fear of potential job-duty and responsibility changes, the student will endeavour to support the Program Manager and ensure that all her concerns are adequately addressed when the time comes.

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<sup>51</sup> One committee member said that she thought the abridged version was excellent and really helped her understand it.

**Appendix L**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**February 16, 1995**

### Agenda-February 16, '96

1. Approval of meeting minutes for February 2, 1995.
2. Commentary on theoretical foundation of model.
3. Review and revision of definition of "systems".
4. Review and revision of methods for gathering issues.
5. Review and revision of definitions for "proactive" and "reactive" advocacy.
6. Modifications to point g of Issue Gathering and Filtering: When to gather issues.
7. Modifications to point h of Issue Gathering and Filtering: What happens to gathered issues.
8. Issue Selection.

#### Definitions of "systems"

a) Oxford reference dictionary (1991): "a set of connected things or parts that form a whole or work together".

b) Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office: "... legislative, policy and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric patients" (Church, 1991).

c) National Association of Protection and Advocacy Services: "...concerted action to reform the policies or mode of operations of a system of services such as the school system or the disabilities service system... The purpose of systemic advocacy is i) to reform the underlying structure of public and private institutions and systems which serve individuals with disabilities, in order to make them more accessible, fair, and effective; and ii) to expand the rights and entitlements of individuals with developmental disabilities or people with mental illnesses" (Human Services Research Institute-1991).

d) Canadian Bar Association, Continuing Legal Education materials: "The systemic approach is to identify the structural features of society which exclude certain groups, dismantle them and provide a substitute structure, or else to neutralize them in some other way" (Jurianz, 1983).

#### Information Gathering

The process: static, ongoing or both.

**Key informant**<sup>52</sup>: Securing information from knowledgeable individuals ie. mental health worker, leader in the consumer community, government official, psychiatrist, agency personnel, professors, etc. Information can be both formal and informal.

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<sup>52</sup> from Warheit, Bell & Schwab "Selecting the needs assessment approach".

advantages- simple, easy to access, inexpensive, can help build individual alliances, can obtain broad range of views.

disadvantages- opinions are subjective, views may be inaccurate.

**Community Forum:** Accessing information from general population or sub-groups.

advantages- relatively inexpensive, not too difficult to organize, can provide increased profile for agency, may increase levels of consumer participation.

disadvantages- may heighten expectations, information not necessarily accurate, information will likely be "reactive", meetings may not turn out the way they were intended (gripe session).

**Rates-under-treatment:** Formal examination of data related to field.

advantages- relatively inexpensive, can produce data which can be used by agency and others, easily evaluated

disadvantages- data may not reveal all issues.

Stock data:

- a) formal complaints recorded through mental health advocacy program.
- b) similar information from internal (other programs) and external (human rights commission, other advocacy offices, legal aid, hospitals, etc.) sources.

Flow data:

- a) design of information system which tracks consumers in various systems in order to track movement (or lack thereof) in systems.

Audits:

- a) information collection system for monitoring certain systems (hospitals, social assistance, etc.) on an on-going basis.

**Social indicators:** inferences drawn from descriptive statistics found in public records or reports ie. unemployment levels, poverty levels, etc.

advantages: large pool of information to draw from, relatively cheap, easily compared to other data.

disadvantages: statistics may be biased and/or not available, largely theory based, information may be too general.

**Field Survey:** combination of open-ended interviews and observation efforts.

advantages: thorough, can help build alliances, can be relatively inexpensive, can provide firsthand knowledge of issues

disadvantages: labour intensive, can solicit reactive answers.

Definitions of "proactive" and "reactive"

a) "Proactive": identifying and confronting an issue which has yet to become a problem for consumers of mental health services ie. impending legislation, proposed institutional policies, etc., or has not yet maximized the its negative effects on consumers of mental health services ie. a new negative practice is adopted in response to an individual case but is not yet widespread.

b) "Reactive": where advocacy efforts respond to an identified problem which has become entrenched, accepted as general policy or practice, or has achieved maximum negative impact.

**Appendix L1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**February 16, 1995**

February 16, 1995-Meeting minutes

In attendance: Carolyn Strutt, Jim Fisher, Louise Maurakis, Anita Rempel, Darrell Cole

Agenda

1. Approval of meeting minutes for February 2, 1995.
2. Commentary on theoretical foundation of model.
3. Review and revision of definition of "systems".
4. Review and revision of methods for gathering issues.
5. Review and revision of definitions for "proactive" and "reactive" advocacy.
6. Modifications to point g of Issue Gathering and Filtering: When to gather issues.
7. Modifications to point H of Issue Gathering and Filtering: What happens to gathered issues.
8. Issue Selection.

Review of past meeting minutes

No concerns noted with regard to minutes from February 3, 1995 meeting. Carolyn stated that she had been unable to connect with Neil Cohen of The Community Unemployed Help Centre as of Feb. 16, 1995 but would continue to try and reach him. Added that she had talked to Rod Lauder about sitting on the systems advocacy committee but he was unable to participate.

Theoretical foundation of the framework

Not everyone had an opportunity to read this aspect of the framework but for those that did, no concerns were identified.

Definition of "Systems"

After some discussion it was decided that the definition used by the Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office in Ontario, with a slight modification, was the most appropriate. This definition now reads "Legislative, policy, *service*, and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric *consumer/survivors*. It was also felt that a preamble should be added that defines the parameters of recognized systems (what is the "mental health system"), As well, it should include a statement identifying the concept of affecting "The System" by creating changes in its sub-systems.

Issue Gathering

It was unanimously agreed that all of the identified methods for information gathering had merit and as such, all would be adopted for on-going consideration. As well, that the process of gathering issues would be both static and on-going, and would occur both



formally and informally. It was also felt that the five gathering methods cited are useful not only for gathering issues but also for information gathering related to acting on chosen issues. In addition, comments were made regarding the individual points.

**Key informant:** Primary method currently used by agency, although in an informal manner. Agreed that this section can be broken into two types; general and issue-specific. "General" represents individuals who are consulted on a wide variety of issues while "issue-specific" refers to those who are consulted only for a specific issue.

**Social Indicators & Field Survey** were seen as methods likely to be used the least.

Finally, it was decided that the committee would accept all of the vehicles for issue gathering and make specific decisions around which to use and in what manner after the committee had finished its review and modification of the model.

#### **Definitions of "proactive" and "reactive"**

The committee agreed on the following definitions;

**"Proactive":** Identifying and confronting an issue which has yet to become a problem for consumers of mental health services e.g. impending legislation, proposed institutional policies, etc., or has not yet maximised its negative effects on consumers of mental health services e.g. a new negative practice is adopted in response to an individual case but is not yet widespread, or has serious effects on consumers but has not yet become a public issue e.g. board and care homes.

**"Reactive":** Where advocacy efforts respond to an identified problem which has become entrenched, accepted as general policy or practice, or has achieved maximum negative impact.

#### **When to gather issues**

The committee agreed that it would be prudent to first identify factors which would be relevant in determining when issues should be gathered. Factors that were identified were;

Fits with Board's annual plan, environmental factors (sociopolitical), agency's fiscal year, government's fiscal year, schedules of other key organizations and finally, schedule of provincial and National office.

Suggested by Carolyn that it may be difficult to make decisions around every aspect of "when" at this time but that formalization of some of "when" will act as a "skeleton" upon which the agency can build.

#### **What happens to gathered issues**

Agreed the agency needs some mechanism that documents issue gathering and selection for, among other reasons, to provide individuals and groups with feedback. For example, if issues had been solicited at a community forum, efforts should be made to provide participants with some feedback on the agency's decisions and its rationale for these decisions. Felt that it was important to utilize information collected and not simply collect for the sake of collecting.

"To do" list

1. Committee members to read section on Issue Selection.
2. Carolyn to contact Neil Cohen regarding his possible involvement with committee.
3. Darrell to contact Anita and cover past meeting material.

**Appendix L2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**February 16, 1995**

Analysis-Systems Advocacy Committee mtg: Feb. 16, 1995

1. The Executive Director stated that she had contacted an employee of the LL.R.C. about sitting on the committee but he had refused. She had contacted the Executive Director of the Community Unemployed Help Centre but had been unable to talk to him prior to this meeting. This means that two meetings into the process the only non-agency member is our consumer representative. This situation raises a number of possibilities/concerns. First, if a new member is not found soon, it raises the question as to whether or not it is worth bringing a new person in. It is unclear at this point what effect this might have on the Executive Director. Her desire to have another expert present may be mollified by the fact that the committee seems to be doing an adequate job in its present form. This may relieve some of the self-imposed pressure on the Executive Director to find another advocate. The second possibility is that a new committee member will be found. It is yet unclear what sort of impact this might have on the committee in terms of time frames and relationships.

2. During the student's analysis of the previous meeting, a concern was raised about the potential weakness of the method by which the framework was being reviewed. ie. examination and changing of points on an individual basis. The concern was that decisions made without an understanding of the entire model might be erroneous ones. This concern had been brought to the attention of the executive director but after consideration it was felt that the current method of review was the most effective.

As the Committee entered discussion on the topic of issue gathering, the student stated that he would endeavour to make the committee aware of any factors that were relevant to the topic at hand but that had not yet been reviewed. This was done not only to make Committee members aware of this possibility but also to inform them that the student would act as a resource in this manner.

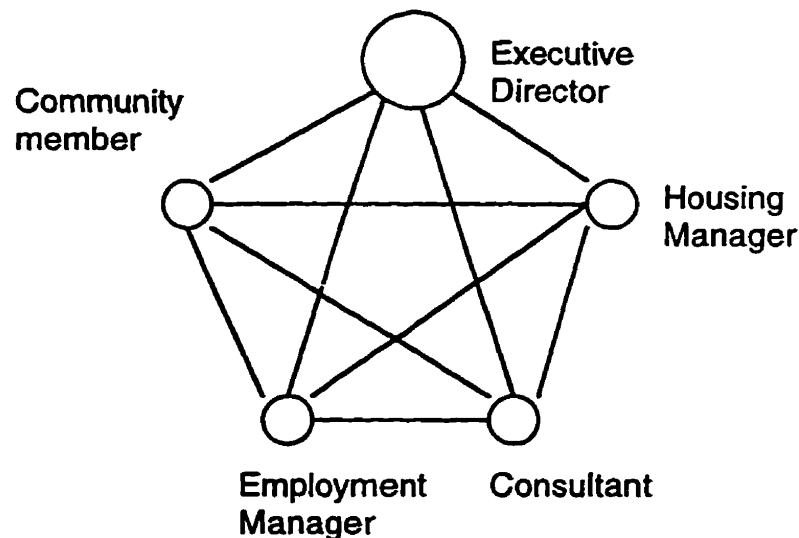
Near the end of the discussion on this topic one of the Committee members asked aloud when they would make decisions on the specifics of issue gathering. This was done because with all previous reviews decisions were made on the spot yet there appeared to be some hesitation around the topic of issue gathering. The Executive Director responded that she felt it would be prudent to make such decisions after the entire model had been reviewed. This clearly suggested a need on her part to have a better understanding of the whole before making a critical decision on a part.

3. During the course of the intervention process it has become clear that the Executive Director has seen a need for a considerable degree of control. This has been identified through the committee's composition, its terms of reference, as well as specific commentary. One interesting event occurred during the finishing conversation on definitions of "systems". The Executive Director made pointed commentary about a definition that was used by the Canadian Bar Association. In this commentary, negative remarks were made about such inflammatory terms as "dismantle", "neutralize", etc. This comment was in and of itself not totally surprising given occurrences related to the intervention. What was surprising was the student's concern about how he was being perceived by members of the committee who were management staff. For whatever reason, the student has felt that one of the points of (possible) distrust between himself and the agency has been that he is perceived as being too "radical". As a result of this, the student felt compelled to make some form of derogatory remark ("I'm surprised that they didn't say terrorist activities") about the Canadian Bar Association's definition even when

he had no concerns with it. This was done for fear (paranoia?) that another type of reaction may have reduced his trust level with the committee.

4. Another incident that falls within the previous discussion around control occurred when the consultant had asked the Committee for its position on a point and the student then found himself turning to the Executive Director for a response. While it is unclear if other committee members were affected so dramatically, similar observations were made in the previous meeting. In an effort to combat this, the student made a point of looking at other committee members when soliciting feedback and looked at the Executive Director only when she was speaking. In an attempt to broaden input and discussion, the student will make a point of asking individual committee members for their input on every point so that all get equal air time. As well, the student will also make a point of playing "devil's advocate" with the hope that this will create an atmosphere of true dialogue.

5. In general there was greater input from committee members. Committee members seemed to feel more comfortable. As well, the student made a point of soliciting information from all members to enhance involvement. This is demonstrated through the attached diagram. Compared to the network from the previous meeting, this shows a greater equality of discussion, although the Executive Director continues to play a prominent role. A final point was the inclusion of a plate of muffins at this meeting. Left over from a morning meeting the muffins seemed to bring an informal piece to the proceedings as people casually talked and ate. To further test this hypothesis the student will purchase a plate of pastries for the upcoming meeting to see if a similar result is achieved.



6. Another point of concern with regard to the Committee is the fact that the agency's Advocacy Program Manager was not in attendance due to previous holiday commitments. Given that this person will likely be responsible for coordinating systems advocacy efforts within the organization, her absence is harmful both to herself and the overall development of the Framework.

7. A final point related to the proceedings occurred after the meeting was over. One of the committee members made a joke (?) about the student's note taking on a small piece of

paper during the meeting. While perhaps made in jest, the comment may also have been made to ask the student why this was occurring. Upon reflection, the sight of the student scribbling small words on small pieces of paper may have appeared somewhat clandestine to the committee member(s). In an effort to address this possible concern, the student considered approaching the committee member privately but this approach may be somewhat overstated. Instead the student will mention the comment at the beginning of the next meeting and simply explain to all committee members the purpose of the note taking.

8. In general the student found his performance to be improved. He virtually eliminated his habit of saying "you know". As well, he seemed more confident and assertive. At the same time, he was able to take more of a secondary role and focus on the experiences of the other committee members and not use his position to project his experiences onto others. This seemed to be reflected in an improvement in the overall feedback ratings.

9. The final point relates to the students commentary on the overall intervention. It should be noted that the student's initial intervention proposal was rejected by the agency, in part, for the following stated reasons and finally, that there was no need to focus on the initial stages of the framework e.g. issue gathering and filtering & issue selection as they were redundant. Upon review it appears that virtually all the points that were previously rejected are now being employed. With the exception of one committee member (who has an extensive history with the agency) the committee is made up entirely of agency staff. Finally, all aspects of the model are being reviewed at length despite the agency's insistence that some stages were not relevant.

**Appendix M**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 8, 1995**

Systems Advocacy Committee Meeting-March 8, 1995

Agenda

1. Review of past meeting minutes.
2. Legal waiver.
3. Issue Selection.
4. Issue Priorization.
5. Feedback sheets.



**Appendix M1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 8, 1995**

March 8, 1995-Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Carolyn Strutt, Jim Fisher, Ellen Kruger, Anita Rempel, Darrell Cole

Agenda

1. Review of February 16 meeting minutes.
2. Comments on note-taking and legal waiver.
3. Issue selection.
4. Issue Priorization.
5. Next meeting.
6. Completion of feedback sheets.

Review of past meeting minutes

In reviewing the past meeting minutes two points were identified for expansion and/or change. The first point related to the section dealing with the definition of "systems". The committee requested that Darrell provide a preamble that defined "mental health system" and noted that system change could be accomplished not only by focusing on primary systems, but also their sub-systems.

The second point was a matter of clarity. Carolyn requested that brackets be placed around the examples cited in the definition of "proactive". Agreed.

Note-taking

Darrell clarified his need for taking notes during the committee meetings (back-up in case of tape failure and need to remember relevant points for later in the meeting).

Legal Waiver

Darrell requested that all committee members sign a legal waiver with regard to the practicum intervention. Darrell elaborated on and attempted to clarify aspects of the waiver for committee members. Carolyn requested that she be able to return the signed waivers next meeting after photocopying them for the agencies records. Agreed to by Darrell.

Darrell mentioned that he had earlier been informed that the agency also had some form of waiver for individuals to sign with regard to non-agency personnel carrying out research at the agency. Carolyn stated that she would review this document and approach Darrell for signature if it was warranted.

Issue selection

Prior to examining the first point, Darrell sought agreement about where the committee was at. More specifically, that the section on Issue Gathering and Filtering was completed save the points on "How will issues be gathered" and "When will issues be gathered", which will be revisited after the entire model has been reviewed. Agreed by all committee members.

a) The gravity of the harm: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. However, the committee raised a number of points relevant to the issue. First, the terms "depth" and "breadth" were clarified. Depth was defined as "severity of harm" while breadth was defined as "the number of people affected". This led to discussion as to what the term "severity" meant. This led to identification of different areas where harm could occur (e.g. physical, financial, etc.). Was one type of harm inherently worse than another. It was agreed that a definition of severity should be provided by the committee and that this would be done at the next meeting after members had taken time to contemplate the issue. As well, it was decided that some form of scale (1-5) would be useful in assessing the relative degree of severity and numbers.

b) Benefits from modifying the system: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. However, it was agreed that both short and long term benefits should be identified. As well, attention should also be paid to who benefits and in what way.

c) The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. It was mentioned that this had been issue in Manitoba regarding changes to the social assistance system. Ellen also mentioned that that in her opinion, this was of particular concern with using a straight legal advocacy approach to issues (changes on paper but no change in practice).

d) The usefulness of the [issue] as a model: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. However, it was felt that the title of the category could be modified to make it more explicit and accurate. The committee felt that the title should read "The usefulness of the issue/*process* as a model for further action".

e) The relative chance for success: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping, although a point of concern was raised. It was felt that "winnability" needed to be defined. Is winnability relative to the goals set? What happens when an issue is not won but unexpected positive outcomes occur? To this end, the committee asked Darrell to return to the next meeting with a definition for review.

f) The cost of the case: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. The committee did identify two changes however. The first related to changing the title to more accurately reflect the meaning of the category. The proposed title was "The cost of *undertaking* the issue". Discussion of the topic identified two types of cost, direct and indirect. Direct referred to resources that would need to be spent on the issue in order to undertake it. Indirect referred to costs that the agency may incur as a result of taking on a particular issue, such as political fallout, potential loss of future funding, etc.

g) The expertise of the agency: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. Again, the committee suggested that the title be reworked to more accurately reflect its meaning. To this end, the committee requested that Darrell develop a definition for the term "expertise" and present this for the next meeting. As well, the committee felt that the term "resources" should be added to the title to as part of inventory consideration.

h) Fairness to protected groups and respondents: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. However, after some discussion it was felt that in fact two significant issues were housed under this title. The committee agreed that efforts should be made to ensure that all groups are represented so as not to eliminate the needs of certain sub-groups. More specifically, the more inclusive an issue was the more appeal it

presented. The other issue identified was the level of divisiveness the issue presented. Was the issue one that threatened to turn different groups against each other? In this sense it was felt that an issue could be picked which did not isolate sub-communities but yet could be extremely divisive. The committee directed Darrell to break this point into two separate headings, Fairness and Divisiveness. It was also suggested that a scale similar to that under heading "a" be used.

i) [will undertaking and winning this issue] give people a sense of their own power?: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. However, there were concerns about whether or not this was an issue that was relevant to issue selection simply how any issue should be undertaken. This topic also raised discussion on how many criterion seemed relevant but not as relevant as others. It was agreed that the committee would examine the validity of each individual issue and after having done so, would examine the issue of issue weighting. It was decided that this topic should be moved into the section on issue action and replaced by a statement which outlines the agency's commitment to consumer empowerment.

j) [The issue chosen must have the potential to] alter the relations of power: Again, while the committee felt this was an important criterion, it also felt that this criterion was more at home in the stage of issue action and as such, should be moved into that stage. As well, it was felt that the title should be modified to make it more accurate. The suggested title was "*To what extent does the issue alter the relations of power*". Finally, the committee felt that the term "power" was one with different meanings for different committee members and as such, requested that Darrell provide the committee with a definition of the term.

k) [The issue in question must be easy] to understand: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping, but within the stage of issue action. It was felt that the criterion was not relevant for issue selection but was something that should be integrated into any campaign. As well, the committee felt that the title was not clear and reworked it to more accurately reflect its intent ("The issue in question should be easy for consumers/survivors to understand").

l) [The issue should] be non-divisive: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. However, this criterion was previously dealt with under point "h" and appeared more appropriate at that point.

m) [The issue selected] must build leadership: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping but within issue action. The committee felt that any issue undertaken should actively attempt to develop leadership so in this sense, was not a factor in determining issue selection.

n) How are issues selected? Why this way?: This point was considered redundant at this point in time, although the aspect of written rationalization for adopting formal criteria was endorsed by the committee.

o) Who decides [and doesn't decide] how issues will be selected? Why?: It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. There was agreement that the committee's term would not, at this point, extend beyond the current terms of reference. There was a question as to how the agency would deal with this in the future. A permanent committee made up of representatives from various groups? The Executive Director?

Agreed that this must be dealt with but at a later point.

p) What does being "selected" mean? It was agreed that this criterion was one worth keeping. It was felt by the committee that this was an important issue not only internally but also for outside organizations. There was consensus that acceptance did not necessarily mean action but might mean a commitment to develop a strategic plan. In addition, committee members felt that there was a need to create some form of feedback loop so that the agency was held accountable for its selection process.

#### To-do

1. Carolyn to contact Laurie Beechall regarding committee involvement.
2. Carolyn to decide whether or not Darrell to sign agency research waiver.
3. Committee members to consider definition of and attributes of the term "severity of harm".
4. Darrell to provide the following definitions for the following terms: winnability, expertise and power.
5. Darrell to develop preamble for the section that defines "Systems".

**Appendix M2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 8, 1995**

### Analysis-March 8, 1995

#### Points related to February 16, 1995 meeting:

1. At the last meeting one of the committee members mentioned (jokingly?) the fact that the student was taking notes. Concerned that this might be causing committee members some anxiety, the student opted to discuss the issue as a matter of housecleaning before starting discussion on the framework. The student thanked the committee member for mentioning the point and then explained his rationale for note-taking. Committee members were also provided with an example (malfunctioning micro-cassette recorder) from the last meeting as to why the student needed to take notes. The committee member seemed pleased that the point had been mentioned and otherwise it did not appear to be a point of concern.

2. Committee members were asked to sign a legal waiver, which was reviewed by both the practicum advisor and the agency's Executive Director prior to being given to committee members. During the period that the document was being read by the committee members the Executive Director joked that she should make me sign something, apparently forgetting that the agency does in fact have a policy for individuals doing research at the agency. The student reminded the Executive Director of this fact as it was felt by the student that such a move would be responsible and also provide a setting that was fair to everyone i.e. committee members might feel more comfortable signing if they knew that the student was also signing a similar document. There were no apparent problems as all the members signed.

3. During the analysis from the previous meeting the student mentioned the impact that the presence of food appeared to have at the meeting. To further test this hypothesis, the student brought some fruit to the meeting which he passed around during the meeting. It seemed that the presence of food, when offered in such a manner i.e. personal property shared with others, provided a far more informal and collaborative atmosphere. To this end, the student intends to continue to bring such foodstuffs to committee meetings in hopes that the gesture will continue to have the said effect.

#### Reviewing the Framework:

1. During the discussion on "The gravity of harm", the issue of defining severity of harm arose. As the issue was discussed a comment was made as to "where would one find that kind of information" in regard to statistics showing numbers affected and to what degree. The student used this opportunity to reintroduce to the committee the value of developing their own information system and more specifically, to the benefits of those forms of information gathering which the agency felt were of secondary importance i.e. rates-under approach and field surveys. Not wishing to digress, the student suggested that this might be examined more closely during the stage of organizational change.

The discussion on this topic also became quite confused during the committee's discussion on "degrees of severity" and "numbers of people affected". Members were unclear as to how this should be assessed and what the benefits of a scale might be. At this point it appeared to the student that members needed to try some kind of more concrete test to determine whether or not a scale was the appropriate route to go. The student then had committee members use the wall board and undertake a rating of three select issues to determine whether or not the scale system had merit. The student selected three issues which he knew were relevant to the organization and then had committee members rate the

issues. This exercise was quite satisfactory in determining that the scale approach was indeed useful in resolving this problem.

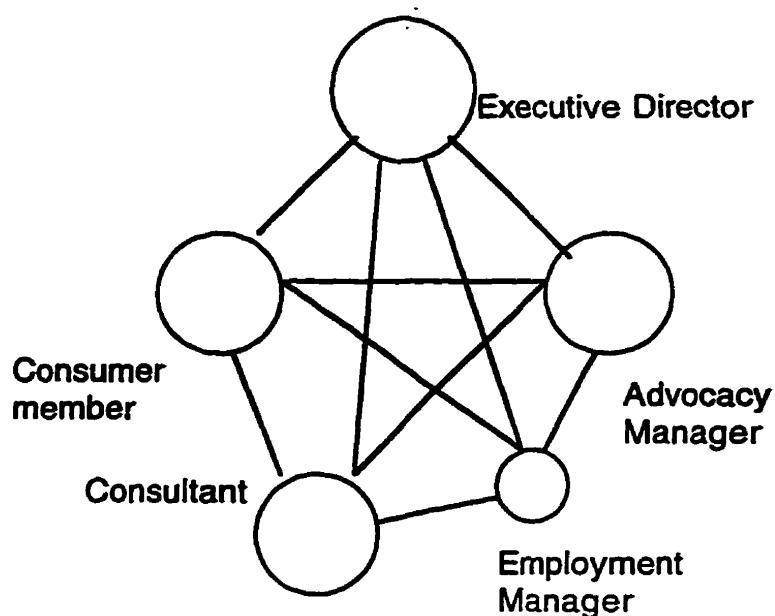
2. During the examination of point "o" (Who decides [and doesn't decide] how issues will be selected? Why?) One committee member stated that she felt this was a particularly relevant because it ensured that the agency philosophy (direct mention was made of consumer involvement and empowerment) was consistent with the advocacy efforts. Considering the student's earlier experiences with the Executive Director over the "radical" nature of aspects of the framework, he was interested in hearing the reaction of the Committee to this statement. In fact, none spoke in support or against the statement. Perhaps this was the worst case scenario. As it was unlikely that anyone would take public issue with this point, one might have expected some words of support if there was agreement.

3. The above situation provided a unique contrast to the commentary that occurred during discussion on point "p" (What does being selected mean?). While covering aspects of timing that were related to coordinating with outside agencies, the Executive Director cited an example of how the organization's national office had undertaken a major campaign against manic-depression without her awareness. She implied that some type of collaboration would be useful when considering the campaign's being undertaken. She then went on to state that this campaign was being funded by some of the major pharmaceutical companies in North America. It seemed clear that this collaboration did not please her. These two previous points seemed to most clearly illustrate the position of the agency; that there is a high degree of professional "purity" when the agency is involved on behalf of consumers versus other organizations and social institutions. However, like many in power, seem uncomfortable working "with" or "for" (in a servant sense) consumers against the same institutions.

#### Group dynamics:

a) The third meeting of the committee marked another change in group dynamics (see diagram). While the flow of discussion between group members was relatively equitable there appeared to be some power imbalance within the group. The Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager, as a result of their personalities and positions in the organization, enjoy considerable power. The community representative enjoys the status of being the sole consumer. The student, as the author of the Framework and the only "working" member of the committee, appears to have established certain status within the group. The Employment Manager on the other hand, while involved in the conversation and a member of the management team, does not appear to enjoy a special role with regard to the advocacy process and as such, does not appear to carry as much power with her comments. As well, while greater efforts were made in the last meeting by the Executive Director to be inclusive (inviting others to add their input during the meeting), there remain examples of the Executive Director's prominence. For example, her invitations for opinion seemed to occur only when she had trouble making a decision.





As was earlier stated, the participation between members was good. Both the Advocacy Program Manager and the Executive Director were actively involved, with the Advocacy Program Manager seeming particularly interested. The Community member was not as vocally involved as in the previous meeting but was still involved, if not always verbally. Overall, the mood of the group was casual and interested. Feedback sheets were positive with special mention being made by members of feeling included.

#### Self-Analysis:

1. In reviewing the tapes the student felt that this meeting demonstrated an advancement of certain skills. The student appears to have improved communication by paraphrasing, restating concepts and reviewing discussion, all of which were noted by committee members on their feedback sheets. As well, the inclusiveness felt by group members may be attributed in part to the student's attempts to obtain approval from all committee members before proceeding to the next point. When closure was being made, the student would look to the Community member and the Employment Manager for some sign of approval (often a simple nod) before proceeding. There was a concern however, that the student could have achieved the said affect without becoming so dominant. Two meetings ago the student expressed concern about needing to take a "back seat" so as to let other members come to the fore. While improvements were made in the last meeting, the student felt that perhaps he was once again needing to take a step back. Special attention will be paid to this point next meeting.

1. The Employment Manager mentioned she had done reading but was not provided with support by student.
2. Mentioned community member's name when talking about note-taking. May have made him uncomfortable.
3. Want to have members elaborate on points but unsure about doing so when the point is one opposed to the Executive Director.

**4. Need for the Committee to start taking responsibility for tasks. Need to start considering transition but complicated by the Executive Director's desire to have the process run by the Consultant.**

**5. Having trouble concentrating on role sometimes as a result of being a consultant/committee member.**

**Appendix N**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 20, 1995**

Agenda-March 20, 1995

1. Review of past meeting minutes.
2. Review of preamble for definition of "systems" advocacy.
3. Review of definitions of "winnability", "expertise" and "power".
4. Committee review: attributes of "severity of harm".
5. Continuation of Issue selection.

2. System advocacy: Preamble

Mental Health system: "Those laws, policies, institutions, personnel, services and products whose primary purpose is to meet the needs of mental health consumers/survivors.

That positive change can be created through successful action against the mental health system, its sub-components and allied systems and their sub-components.

3. a) Winnability: "The relative chance of attaining the identified goal."<sup>48</sup>
- b) Expertise: "The knowledge and skills required to successfully undertake an identified issue."
- c) Power: "The degree of control and autonomy which consumers/survivors exercise over their own lives vis-a-vis the mental health system and/or its allied systems."
4. Severity of Harm: Definition: "The degree to which a particular problem adversely affects consumers/survivors."

Severity of Harm: Attributes: Physical, sexual, emotional, financial

Agency Ends

The agency recognizes the intrinsic value of every human person, and believes that people who are affected by mental health problems have the same rights to choices and access to services as all other persons and in accordance with these beliefs, the objectives of the Association shall be:

- a) To advocate the interests of individuals with mental health problems.
- b) To eliminate societal conditions adversely affecting people with mental health problems.
- c) To manage the Association in such a way as to promote fiscal responsibility

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<sup>48</sup> Based on the assumption that the organization determines what course of action is needed to eliminate/mollify the identified problem.

**Sub-ends**

The mission of the Canadian Mental Health Association is the promotion of the mental health of all people. In pursuit of this mission, CMHA Winnipeg Region endeavours to eliminate societal conditions adversely affecting people with mental health problems. There are three distinct contributions of CMHA, Winnipeg Region:

- a) Defending the rights and advocating the interests of individuals with mental health problems.
- b) Ensuring successful community participation and integration of people with mental health problems.
- c) Ensuring public understanding of mental health issues.

**Appendix N1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 20, 1995**

## Meeting Minutes-March 20, 1995

In attendance: Carolyn Strutt, Ellen Kruger, Darrell Cole, Anita Rempel, Louise Maurakis.

### Agenda

1. Review of past meeting minutes.
2. Review of definition of "mental health system"
3. Review of preamble for section on definition of "system".
4. Review of definitions for the terms "winnability", "expertise" and "power".
5. Committee review: definition and attributes of "severity of harm".
6. Continuing of analysis of "Issue Selection".

1. Review of past meeting minutes.

The meeting minutes of March 8, 1995 were accepted as presented.

2. Review of definition of "mental health system"

The proposed definition of "mental health system" was accepted with clarification of the term "products"<sup>49</sup> The definition reads "those laws, policies, institutions, personnel, services and products whose primary purpose is to serve the needs of mental health consumers/survivors.

3. Review of preamble for section on definition of "system"

The preamble was accepted as presented with the exception of one wording change. The revised definition now reads "That positive change can be created through successful action ~~against~~ involving the mental health system, its sub-components and allied systems (Social Assistance, Legal system, etc.) and their sub-components."

4. Review of definitions for the terms "winnability", "expertise" and "power"

a) Winnability: "The relative chance of attaining the identified goal."<sup>50</sup>

b) Expertise: This definition was accepted but with an addition. The accepted definition now reads "The knowledge, skills and attitudes required to successfully undertake an identified issue."

c) Power: This definition was accepted as presented. The definition reads "The degree of control and autonomy which consumers/survivors exercise over their own

<sup>49</sup> Product refers to those items which have been manufactured or created and whose primary purpose is to meet the needs of mental health consumers/survivors e.g. medication, machines, etc.

<sup>50</sup> This definition is based on the decision that the organization determines what course of action is needed to eliminate/mollify the identified problem.

lives vis-a-vis the mental health system and/or its allied systems.

**5. Committee review: Definition and attributes of "severity of harm".**

a) **Definition:** The definition was accepted as presented. The definition reads "The degree to which a particular problem adversely affects consumers/survivors. It was also felt that a definition should also be provided for "breadth of harm".

b) **Attributes:** After some discussion it was agreed that the attributes of harm could be identified in three areas, those being, **PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL** and **FINANCIAL**. It was agreed that the proposed category of sexual harm could be adequately addressed through the "Physical" and "Emotional/Psychological" categories. It was further agreed that these three attributes should be equally weighted when considering this criterion.

**6. Continuing of analysis of "Issue Selection".**

**Point Q: "How will the selection criteria be weighted?":** After considerable discussion on how issues would be weighted, agreement was reached on two basic points. With regard to the assessment of the Issue Selection criteria, it was agreed that the most efficient and objective method for assessment was to develop a standardized scale for rating each of the individual criterion. To this end, it was further agreed that the committee would attach a basic scale of 1-5 (1-low, 5-high)<sup>51</sup>. All issues being considered would be given a numerical weighting running anywhere from 10 to 50 points (number of criteria with a weight of 1-5 each).

With regard to the criteria themselves, it was felt that some criterion were of greater significance to the organization than others. It was suggested and agreed upon that a multiplier would be applied to the criteria that was appropriate to their individual importance. The multiplier would be based on a High-medium-low priority rating with "High" having a multiplier of 3, "medium" having a multiplier of 2 and "low" having a multiplier of 1. After agreeing on this format the committee went through an exercise designed to assess the degree to which the individual committee members agreed upon which criteria should be a high priority, medium priority and low priority. The meeting ended with the committee beginning to evaluate the results of the test.

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<sup>51</sup> The single exception is for Point A "The gravity of the harm". As it had earlier been agreed that this criterion would be divided into two parts, "Severity of harm" and "Number of people affected". As it was further agreed that these two parts should be equally regarded the rating scale for each component will be (.5-2.5) thereby achieving an overall criterion score of 1-5.



**Appendix N2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 20, 1995**

Analysis-March 20, 1995

Carryover from previous meeting: In the previous analysis concern was noted about the apparent decrease in involvement by the committee's lone community member. Unfortunately, plans to actively increase the member's involvement were stalled when the member was unable to attend.

Another point of concern is related to the practicum intervention contract. It was originally agreed that the student would attempt to involve himself with as many of the committee's "Terms of Reference" as possible, with the understanding that this would be time-limited to the end of May, 1995. At this time, the committee will be hard-pressed to complete the first of its five responsibilities (Review and modification of the systems advocacy framework). When this was brought to the attention of the Executive Director, she did not see any timetable problems. She felt that the committee was "moving right along" and on schedule. This situation is a disconcerting one. The Executive Director's position suggests that she either can not see that the timelines she has established are unrealistic, or she has some reason for denying that the need to examine the need for a transition phase is a useful one. While the student has been unable to determine which is the primary factor, the student's observations leave him to believe in the latter. The Executive Director has alluded to the student "staying on until June". This position may be a result of caseload at the agency. To this point in time, all committee work completed has been done by the student. There may be a concern on the part of the Executive Director about asking her over-burdened staff to handle additional work if the student is available to do so. The agency has been able to advance its systems advocacy efforts simply by attending meetings. As long as the practicum continues, the agency can continue to advance in this area without any significant increase in its workload. While the student has made clear his intent and desire to remain working with the committee as an equal member after the practicum is completed, the Executive Director may feel that this is a tenuous and less beneficial arrangement for the agency. This viewpoint is understandable. Given the student's delays in starting the practicum the agency may also feel they have a right to impose extensions on the student in terms of time commitment.

While this situation is somewhat understandable when viewed in the light of the agency's workload, it does raise concern a concern. If the agency plans on doing systems advocacy work, as the staff have been directed to do by their Board of Directors, it seems clear that they must start to get directly involved in the process. Such involvement will help to develop experience with systems advocacy and the framework itself. As well, it should promote a greater committee identity with the task at hand as members become more directly involved.

Ultimately, the agency must decide whether or not it will continue the process in a meaningful way. If it is not, then continuing involvement by the student would be fruitless and suggest that he should terminate his involvement at the agreed upon time without concern for transition. If the agency wishes to continue their work, then the student must assist them in making this transition. To do so, it appears that the student must take steps to alleviate concerns about additional workload.

Any decisions with regard to a transition plan will ultimately rest with the Executive Director and the Mental Health Advocacy Program Manager. As has been previously demonstrated, the Executive Director will ultimately make any final decisions. The Advocacy Program Manager is not only responsible for this area of the agency's work, she

also seems to be a natural choice given that the agency has already designated that 25% of her time should be spent on systems advocacy.

The primary concern in approaching this topic is how to do so without causing a defensive reaction. On the Advocacy Program Manager's part, there may be a reluctance if this work appears to be on top of her already significant workload. There is also the possibility, as will be expanded on later, that there is some reluctance caused by concern over the validity of a formalized systems advocacy process. The student considered consulting with the Advocacy Program Manager first so that she had an opportunity to discuss this topic prior to having it addressed with the Executive Director. In this way it was hoped that an arrangement could be made that satisfied her thereby giving the student extra support when talking to the Executive Director. The student believes that it simply may be best to talk to whichever of the two he can talk to first and try and arrange a meeting with both of the above parties. In doing so, the student plans on using a collaborative (mutual problem solving) approach to reduce the potential for defensiveness.

**Framework Review:** The framework review was divided into four components, with the first three being development of definitions requested by the committee. Review of the definitions went quickly, with only minor wording changes being made to two of the definitions (see "Meeting minutes-March 20,1995). However, the discussion on "Attributes of harm" led into a prolonged and intricate discussion on how such attributes should be weighted. After some time it was agreed that the proposed attributes (physical, emotional, sexual and financial) should be ranked equally, although emotional was expanded to include psychological harm. As well, the attribute "sexual" was deleted as it was felt that this could be adequately integrated into the other attributes. Discussion then turned to how the attributes should be weighted, if at all. At first, members felt that each attribute should be ranked individually. As well, it was agreed that a sliding scale (1-5) should be used in ranking the attributes. The committee then started a prolonged examination of what the points of the scale should be. This examination took a considerable period of time as committee members struggled to develop benchmarks for the scale. With the use of examples, the committee was eventually able to come up with a scale of progressive terms (discomfort-harmful-traumatic-dangerous-life-threatening), although no definitions of these terms were developed. This prolonged process gave rise to three points by the committee. First, that it would be more expedient to rank the attributes of the scale as one attribute (physical-emotional/psychological-financial). Second, that the use of scales on only some of the criterion would make the issue selection process difficult. As such, it was felt that standardized scales should be adopted for all ten of the approved criterion. It was felt that this would result in a simple numerical value for each issue being considered and thus make selection much simpler (choose issues with highest point value). Finally, it was agreed that the use of such scales would be subjective unless definitions were adopted for the different scale points eg. what is "discomfort", what is "harmful", etc.

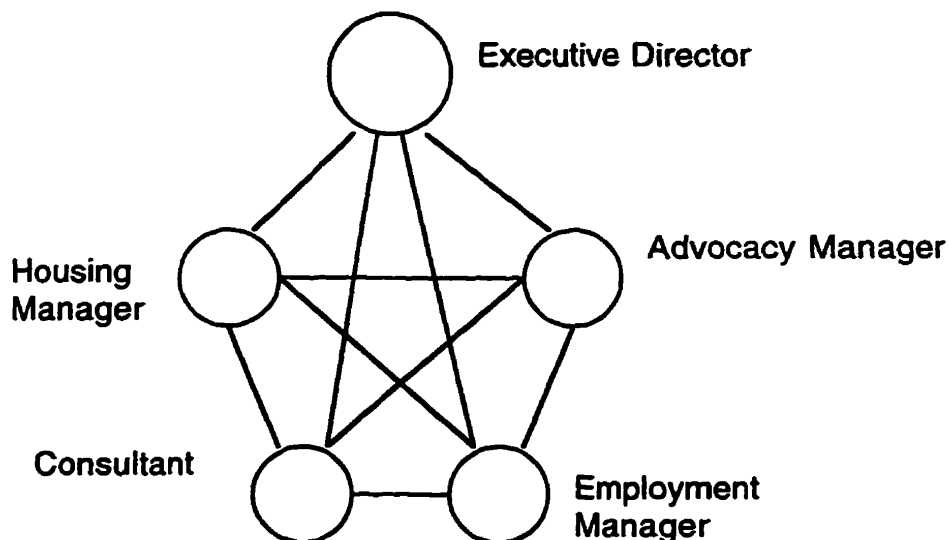
After having reached agreement on these points, the committee then turned its attention to the next step in dealing with issue selection, that of issue weighting. It was quickly determined that committee members were in agreement that some criterion were indeed more important than others in determining which issues should be selected for action. What was not so clear was which individual criterion were seen as most important by individual committee members, how this fact would be determined and how the priorities would be identified. In discussing the latter, committee members felt that a simple but clear breakdown of the criterion was most desirable and agreed that a high-

medium-low priority would be used. It was also quickly decided that a numerical multiplier would be applied to each criterion to give the identified criterion a modified numerical value. It was agreed that a multiplier of three would be used for high priority criterion, a multiplier of two for medium criterion and a multiplier of one for low priority criterion.

Having completed the priority breakdown, committee members then took part in an exercise to determine which criterion that felt to be of high/medium/low ranking. Committee members were given a list of the criteria and asked to privately rank the individual criterion on a high-medium-low priority basis. The results of the ranking showed wide variation of score on only one attribute ("The efficacy and enforceability of the issue"), total agreement on two of the issues ("Gravity of harm" and "Divisiveness of issue among protected groups and respondents"). The other rankings showed only moderate disagreement (high-medium or medium-low).

While the committee was able to finish its ranking, no mention had been made as to what criteria/method the committee will use in resolving differences of opinion in criterion ranking. This question will be posed to committee members prior to this task.

Group dynamics: In general the group dynamics of the meeting were good, although the community member's absence may have resulted in a false sense of accomplishment. While the Executive Director continued to exercise considerable power in the group, there appeared to be an open exchange within the group.



For example, this originally occurred during a discussion on the definition of "Power" when the Advocacy Program Manager raised some question about the definition. The Executive Director supported the student's proposed definition. Following this, during the discussion on the "attributes of harm", when the student asked the committee if it might make more sense to rank all attributes equally, the Executive Director spoke in favour of this notion when the Advocacy Program Manager initially expressed some

concern. Finally, when frustration appeared to be setting in during the difficult and slow discussions on ranking attributes and criterion ("This is a numbers game. Go with your gut anyway"), the Advocacy Program Manager expressed some concern about trying to formalize too much. When the student encouraged committee members not to get discouraged (cut corners) the Executive Director again spoke in support of the student. As is often the case in such situations, the benefits in the short-term can be strong when the person in question is being supportive.

As was just mentioned, the committee meeting of March 20th was a difficult one. Discussion was the most intense of any of the committee's meetings. The apparent slow progress appeared discouraging to committee members, although some members seemed more discouraged than others. This discouragement seemed to manifest itself primarily through what can be identified as a typical response by workers whose work is primarily crisis in nature. When the Framework review became tedious, comments and non-verbal communication seemed to indicate that committee members were wondering if this was not an exercise in theoretical futility and that the traditional informal system might be better. This situation will likely be one that rears its head on more than one occasion. Fortunately, the committee was able to take a step back, acknowledge its exhaustion, and identify that suffering was occurring now so that the process could move easier and more effectively in the future. On this occasion this appeared to be sufficient, especially with the Executive Director's support.

Self-Analysis: As was the case for other committee members, the March 20 meeting also proved to be the most challenging for the student. Once the discussion on definitions and rankings started in earnest it quickly appeared to the student that the work would be slow, tedious and present ample opportunity for discouragement. As a result, the student made a number of early decisions regarding his role. First, the student's traditional difficulty in being a committee member/facilitator/student were put aside as all energy was needed to operate successfully in the facilitator role. As well, the student was aware that he would have to engage committee members in ways which would interrupt the tedium and allow members to stay focused when dealing with points of subtle difference e.g. is "harmful" worse or better than discomfort". Additionally the tiring work of developing definitions and scales presented a special challenge for committee members used to working in a more informal manner. Finally, the student was aware of the need to have the committee become less reliant in him and start to develop opportunities for the committee to assume some independence/responsibility for committee work.

With regard to the latter concern, the student on more than one occasion resisted the temptation to directly solve issue related problems. This was done in two ways. First, the student concentrated on asking the committee members thought-provoking questions which were designed to break the committee's often reliance on the student for answers. For example, when members were stuck on developing benchmarks for a scale, the student asked "Are there any examples we can think of that might help us differentiate between these points"? This led to the production of examples by the committee which allowed them to proceed. Second, the student would simply give the appearance of being at a loss for answer so that committee members were forced to deal with the issue themselves. Ironically, it appears that this tactic led to a slight decrease in the students "knowledge" rating on the performance feedback sheets because he appeared less knowledgeable about the subject matter than in previous meetings. It did however, appear to have the desired effect on the committee.

With regard to variety as a method of combating tedium, the student was able to employ a number of methods of making issues easier for members to deal with. For example, the student used visual aids on more than one occasion to assist members in seeing the problem. As well, examples were constantly used to make issues more concrete. This often included mini "dry-runs" of individual criterion with 3-4 issues as a method of assessing individual points. Finally, when prioritizing the individual criterion within "Issue Selection" members were given a worksheet (previously developed in anticipation of the event) that allowed members to make an easier assessment. These all appeared to be successful in moving the committee along.

The student's previously identified concern about committee members becoming discouraged did in fact manifest itself but fortunately, not to the degree that the student had anticipated. When the situation did appear to be struggling somewhat, the student stopped the proceedings to comment on the need for perseverance. More specifically, if members gave up and did not develop criteria that truly reflected their concerns and views then the model would quickly fall out of favour. This point was supported by the Executive Director. Follow-ups with members immediately following the meeting suggested that the level of discouragement could be attributed to exhaustion and that members supported the formal process. Unfortunately, the Advocacy Program Manager appeared more skeptical stating that she was "willing to try" before passing judgment. As the process continues, the student will endeavour to seize moments that may help the member get more "on board".

Finally, significant efforts were made to validate and encourage commentary by all committee members and this appeared to contribute to the atmosphere of open discussion.

One potential concern noted by the student was the committee's snap decision to attach a 3-2-1 multiplier to the high-medium-low scale which was developed to prioritize the Issue Selection criteria. This concern became heightened when the committee agreed that the "Divisiveness" criterion was a "low" priority. The author's own experience with the agency suggested that in fact the agency was quite sensitive/concerned to any agency which might place the agency in one particular consumer camp. In an attempt to have members take a second look at both the criterion rating and the numerical attachment to the multiplier, the student asked the committee to take a second look at an example issue, in this case, the agency's involvement with a safe house project (potentially very divisive). The committee did not change its rating of the criterion and did not seem to clearly understand the student's concern that the 3-2-1 multiplier may be too big. This could likely be attributed to timing (end of the meeting) and will be reintroduced at the beginning of the next meeting.

**Appendix N3**  
**Issue Selection Criteria**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**March 20, 1995**

Issue selection criterion-revised

1. The gravity of the harm:   a) Severity of the harm  
                                      b) Number of people affected.
2. The benefits (short and long-term) from modifying the system.
3. The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy.
4. The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action.
5. The relative chance for success.
6. The cost (direct and indirect) of the issue.
7. The expertise and resources of the agency.
8. Fairness to protected groups and respondents
9. Divisiveness of issue among protected groups and respondents.
10. To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power.

For consideration

How will issues be weighted?

- a) Does an issue have to meet all of the above to be selected or only some?
- b) Will the criteria be weighted equally or will numerical weights be added to reflect primary criteria?



**Appendix N4**

**Issue Selection Criteria Rating  
Systems Advocacy Working Committee  
March 20, 1995**

Issue Selection Criteria Rating

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
GRAVITY OF HARM: a) Severity of harm	5		
b) Number of people affected			
BENEFITS FROM MODIFYING THE SYSTEM	2	3	
EFFICACY AND ENFORCEABILITY OF A REMEDY	2	1	2
USEFULNESS OF THE ISSUE/PROCESS AS A MODEL FOR FURTHER ACTION	1	1	3
THE RELATIVE CHANCE FOR SUCCESS	3	2	
THE COST (DIRECT AND INDIRECT) OF THE ISSUE	2	3	
THE EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES OF THE AGENCY	3	2	
FAIRNESS TO PROTECTED GROUPS AND RESPONDENTS	1	1	3
DIVISIVENESS OF ISSUE AMONG PROTECTED GROUPS AND RESPONDENTS		5	
DEGREE OF POTENTIAL FOR ALTERING THE RELATIONS OF POWER	3	2	

**Appendix O**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 10, 1995**

Agenda-April 10, 1995

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. Definition of "Number of people affected".
3. Completion of Issue Weighting.
4. Completion of Issue Selection.

2. "The gravity of the harm":
  - a) Severity of the harm
  - b) Number of people affected

Definition of "Number of people affected": Refers to the number of consumer/survivors adversely affected by a particular issue.

3. Issue Weighting

Part A: Completion of prioritization of Issue Selection criteria.

Considerations: a) What mechanism will be used to determine how varied opinions on ratings can be agreed upon e.g. referral to agency mission statement, etc.

b) Does the numerical value attached to the multiplier (high priority x3, medium priority x2, low priority x1) accurately reflect the committee's wishes.

Part B: Development of scales and definitions for Issue Selection criteria.

Consideration: a) Should the scales attached to "The gravity of harm" be of half value (low .5 - high 2.5) in order to produce an overall value consistent with the other criteria(low 1 - high 5)?

**Appendix O1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 10, 1995**

Meeting Minutes-April 10, 1995

**In attendance:** Carolyn Strutt, Louise Maurakis, Jim Fisher, Anita Rempel, Ellen Kruger and Darrell Cole

Agenda

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. Definition of "Number of people affected"
3. Completion of Issue Weighting:
  - a) Completion of prioritization of Issue Selection criteria.
  - b) Development of scales and definitions for Issue Selection criteria.

1. Review of meeting minutes from March 20, 1995: Because the student's recorder had missed a portion of the discussion from the March 20, 1995 meeting, the student asked committee members to take a moment and review the meeting minutes to ensure that no information was missing. Clarification was requested by the committee members as to the meaning of a half-value (.5-2.5) scale for the criterion "Gravity of harm". It was explained that this criterion was the only one which had two components and by providing each component with a half value, this would provide an overall value (1-5) equal to the other criterion. Understood by committee members and agreed that this was an appropriate modification.

2. Definition of "Number of people affected": Definition accepted with slight modification "The number of consumer(s)/survivors adversely affected by a particular issue."

3. Issue Weighting: Completion of prioritization of Issue Selection criteria.

After discussion on and clarification of the revised (included community member's ratings) prioritization of the Issue Selection criteria (high-medium-low) it was decided that the criteria would be prioritized on the basis of where the most votes fell. For example, "The cost of the issue" received two "high" ratings and three "medium" ratings. This meant that "medium" received the most votes and the criterion would therefore be ranked as of "medium" importance.

With regard to the value of the multiplier, the committee examined the possibility of using a different system (high-x5, medium-x3, low-x1) but found this to be of negligible difference and chose the original multiplier.

4. Development of scales and definitions for Issue selection criteria.

Review of the individual criterion led to four changes to the titles of the individual criterion;

a) The benefits (short and long term) from modifying the Mental Health system:

The committee agreed that the ranking of a particular issue could change substantially depending on the specific system that was being targeted. For example, welfare funding of therapy would score differently if the system chosen was the welfare system instead of the mental health system. It was agreed that the agency would use the mental health system as a standard but would endeavour to select the most appropriate system when scoring an issue.

b) The cost (direct and indirect) of the issue to the agency: It was noted that, unlike the scales for the other criterion that a "high" rating in this area was a liability. As such, the scale was reversed to represent low cost as a positive rating.

c) The expertise and resources of the agency: After discussion it was felt that "resources" were considered under cost and thus should be eliminated in this criterion.

d) Divisiveness of the issue among protected groups and respondents: Committee members felt that "divisiveness" was a negative term and also somewhat confusing. It was agreed that "divisiveness" would be replaced by "level of agreement". There was also some concern about the appropriateness of "protected" and this was changed to "targeted". Finally, the term respondents was considered inappropriate as well as redundant. Significant others were to be included within the definition of targeted groups.

With regard to the development of scales, the committee felt that standardized benchmarks (e.g. 1=very low, 2=low, 3=moderate, 4=high, 5=very high) would make the process easier to understand and reduce time spent on debate. It was agreed however, that this would only be effective when coupled with clear definitions of what constituted "low", "high", etc.

Another issue raised was whether or not a criterion may be missing. More specifically, does the agency give consideration to formal requests for action. In discussing this item, it was felt by committee members that it would be best to consider this point and carry it over to the next meeting. The Consultant volunteered to identify a number of points that people may want to think about when considering the issue.

The final point raised at the meeting related to scoring and final issue selection. While agreeing that the highest scores indicated those issues that would be selected, two qualifiers were identified. First, that some kind of minimum score be established before an issue be undertaken (score to be decided). Second, when facing two or more issues with similar scores ("similar" yet to be defined), special attention would be paid to how the issue(s) scored in the priority criteria.

**Appendix O2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 10, 1995**



### Analysis-April 10, 1995

**Carryover from previous meetings:** In the student's analysis from the March 20, 1995 meeting, two issues were identified as needing the student's possible attention at the April 10, 1995 meeting. The first of these two issues was in regard to the Advocacy Program Manager's apparent reduced role in the group and her apparent reticence about an advocacy model. As such, the student hoped to provide the manager with both support and examples that would assist her in getting "on board" with the project.

During the course of the meeting examples of the Advocacy Program Manager's reticence continued to appear. For example, during the exercise to score two issues under Issue Selection, the two issues had a very close score (57.5 to 58). When a committee member asked in a somewhat exasperated fashion "Now what do we do?", the Advocacy Program Manager stated "You just pick the one you want" (in apparent reference to the agency's current process). In an effort to address these comments, the student commented that these were but two issues and that such a dilemma was less likely when assessing multiple issues and choosing more than one issue for action. As well, it was pointed out that the scores will be as accurate as the committee's views and decisions and if there is reluctance to accept the validity of the scores, it might be attributed to a lack of faith in the committee's weighting system, etc. The student stated that this in and of itself wasn't bad, but suggested that the individuals, now and in the future, must be candid with their concerns or the model will not be used. Fortunately, this view was reiterated by one of the other Program Managers. In addition, one of the other Program Managers took the next step by suggesting a mechanism for dealing with such situations by prioritizing that issue which ranked highest among the prioritized criterion (When this was attempted with the two example issues, one of the two issues then scored significantly higher). Shortly after concluding this part of the committee's work, the student asked the committee how they were feeling and if everyone had a clear understanding of what had been discussed. All committee members stated that they felt good about what was happening except the Advocacy Program Manager. She admitted to being "reticent" about the process and said that she felt it was "a lot of work just to pick issues". At this point, both the Housing Program Manager and the Executive Director interjected to agree but also to point out the benefits of taking the time to do work now. The Advocacy Program Manager then went on to state that she was most concerned about dealing with aspects of undertaking a campaign. The student then discussed the stage of Issue Action, its attributes, and discussed the sequence for reviewing the model.

With regard to being supportive, the student did attempt to back up the Advocacy Program Manager's views, especially when she introduced the notion of adding another criterion to the stage of Issue Selection. In general however, the student appeared to miss opportunities to be more supportive. During the aforementioned discussion on the stage of Issue Selection being "a lot of work", the student should have supported the Advocacy program Manager's comments by saying something to the affect that the process was indeed a lot of work.

The second issue of concern going into the meeting was about the value of the multiplier chosen by the committee to prioritize certain issue selection criteria. This issue was addressed twice in the meeting (see "Framework review"). Despite some discussion on the topic and extensive use of examples, there still appeared to be some misunderstanding of the student's concern. Some members still seem to think the numerical value of the multiplier is irrelevant. Despite demonstrating how different values

can produce different results, some people were still unable (unwilling?) to grasp this concept. While this may yet become more apparent over time, it is equally likely to skew the issue selection process to the degree that individuals may lose faith in its effectiveness. The student will try to demonstrate this fact once again, perhaps when the organization undertakes a dry-run of the entire process.

**Framework Review:** The student had originally intended to review the meeting minutes with the committee given the absence of the community representative at the last meeting. Fortunately, the student was able to meet with the committee member privately before the committee meeting. During this time the student explained the more significant points of the last meeting to the member, as well as getting him to add his input to the prioritization of the issue selection criteria. It was at this time that the student found out that the member had only just received the meeting minutes from the previous meeting.

Feeling that the important points had been covered, the student originally decided to forego the time-consuming process of reviewing the minutes in detail. However, when it became clear that all committee members had received their minutes that day, and when a point was raised that none of the members seemed to understand, a decision was made to give time to all members to peruse the minutes. The raised issue was then satisfactorily dealt with and there were no further issues raised.

After concluding the review of the previous meeting minutes, the student started into the working part of the agenda. A spontaneous decision was made by the student to start with the second point related to the first section of the agenda. This was a mistake. Thinking that this would be a simple and quick task, the student felt that successfully dealing with the issue (value of the multiplier) would provide confidence and momentum to the committee. Unfortunately, both the absent committee member, as well as other members who had been in attendance, were very confused about the topic and it became clear that the decision to start "out of sequence" was very much the wrong one. After wasting vital time trying to explain the issue to members through presentation and examples, the student suggested that the issue be dealt with later at a more appropriate point. Agreed to by committee members.

Attention was then turned to discussing the prioritization of Issue Selection criteria. Again, this was a mistake. Because the student chose to deal with this topic instead of the preceding stage on scales, members continued to remain confused. While this section was completed eventually, it was done at considerable cost to time and energy.

While quickly agreeing that some objective mechanism or criteria was needed to sort out the varied rankings of how Issue Selection criterion should be prioritized, it was not immediately clear how this would be done. The Executive Director suggested looking at the issues one by one and seeing if further discussion alone may help settle the issue. Sensing that some of the differences might be attributable to varied definitions or interpretations of the various criterion, the student suggested that he briefly explain the definition for each criterion being discussed. This suggestion was rejected by some committee members (Executive Director, Advocacy Program Manager) who felt that all understood the definitions. Unfortunately, discussion in the committee quickly revealed the opposite. Discussion on the first topic between the community member, the Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager revealed each had a different interpretation of the criterion. Further, it soon became apparent that the community committee member had misunderstood many of the definitions, as well as how to prioritize the criteria. This

situation soon began to exasperate people. The Advocacy Program Manager, in seeking a compromise, suggested giving all criterion a "medium" ranking. It was then pointed out to her that such a suggestion would effectively defeat the entire purpose of the identifying some criterion as being more important than others. The Executive Director then suggested that the issue be resolved by prioritizing the criteria on the basis of which section (high-medium-low) had received the most votes. Members seemed satisfied with this method for resolving the issue (The Advocacy Program manager commented that it would "move us along"). It should be noted that when discussion occurred on people's positions, almost everyone had forgotten how they had voted on particular criterion. This may indicate that the gap between criterion is not significant, or it may indicate that committee members lost their true feelings when the issue was started and then not finished until after three weeks had passed. If the latter is true, it could lead to a set of priorities which do not truly reflect the real feelings of the agency. This could undermine the effectiveness of the model.

Having completed this section, the committee then moved on to the task of developing a system for attaching numerical weights to individual criterion. It was decided that the easiest and most effective method would be through the use of a Liechert scale that would be standardized to fit all the criteria (very low, low, moderate, high, very high). It was further agreed that each point would need to be individualized and defined so as to provide some kind of objective measure. At this point however, the community committee member indicated that he was unable to appreciate why there was a need to score issues twice (issue ranking and criterion prioritization). It was agreed that definitions would be dealt with later but for now the best thing to do would be to take an issue and walk through the issue selection process (This had been suggested by the student minutes earlier but had been rejected by the Executive Director as unnecessary). At the request of a committee member it was decided that it would be most effective to score two issues against each other.

The process of scoring issues greatly assisted members in understanding the process. It also assisted in refining criterion definitions and scales (see "Meeting minutes-April 10, 1995). The process was quite time-consuming however, given the lack of definitions for scales and the desire on the part of some committee members to focus more on assessing the issues than the model. While trying to acknowledge the importance of the issues, the student tried to remind committee members that the real goal was primarily to demonstrate how the process moved. It must be noted that many of the criterion definitions may not be able to be assessed by the organization because it lacks necessary information e.g. when considering "numbers adversely affected", the agency will still need some kind of information collection to determine numbers. If this is not apparent yet or does not become apparent during the discussion on "Organizational Change", it should certainly become clearer when the agency attempts to use the model.

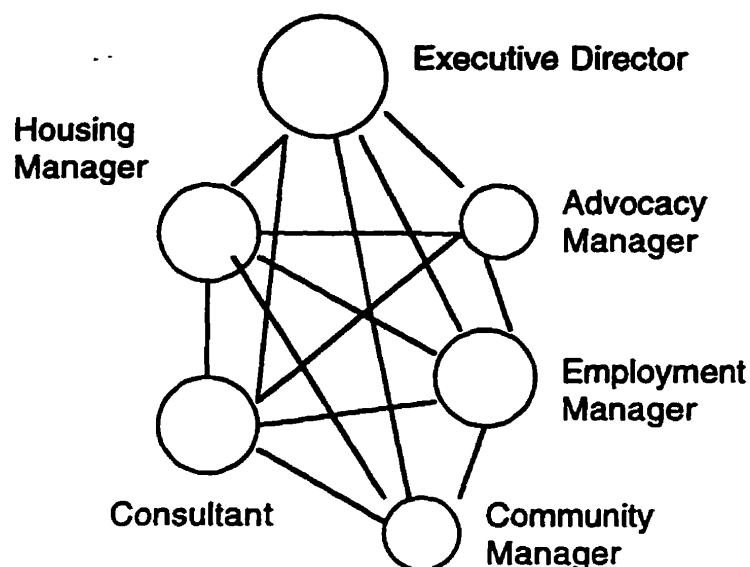
After scoring the issues there was some exasperation as to how close the scores were. There was some concern initially as to whether or not the model was effective, although this view passed most members quickly. The scores did lead to renewed discussion about the value of the multiplier however, although after examining the scores after the use of different values the committee decided to stay with the status quo.

The discussion on the scoring system did lead to other important observations however. It was agreed that there was a need to determine some kind of minimum score before an issue would be selected. As well, it was suggested that one way of differentiating between closely scored issues (closely scored yet to be defined) was to

accept the issue which scored highest in the criterion ranked as being the most important. This was agreed to by the committee.

The final point raised (Advocacy Program Manager) was as to whether or not the number of requests for action should be an Issue Selection criterion. While many members expressed some concern over this as a criterion, it did warrant consideration. It was agreed that members would contemplate this issue for discussion at the next meeting, with the student providing a list of possible "pros" and "cons".

### Group Dynamics



With regard to group dynamics, the meeting was important for a number of reasons. First, it was the first meeting where all committee members were present, although the corresponding dynamic appeared unchanged from previous meetings. Second, an individual other than the student (the Executive Director) acted as the group leader for the first time (suggested she lead the scoring of the first issue). Unfortunately, the committee member's motivation for doing so was unclear. While the student generally views this as positive, this move is not as significant if done simply to relieve boredom. It would be more disconcerting if it occurred because there were concerns about the performance of the student. Finally, the last two meetings were particularly exhausting and difficult and the committee appeared to have made it through the process relatively intact. Having said this however, the student's goal of including the two disenfranchised members did not appear to be overly successful. The Advocacy Program Manager continues to openly exhibit concerns about the entire process although on a positive note, the Executive Director and other Program Managers have become increasingly supportive. This appears to have created a bit of an ideological rift within the group however. The community member still appears somewhat isolated. This situation was heightened by his being unable to attend the March 20, 1995 meeting. While attempts were made to solicit input and support commentary (concerns over lack of definitions for scales) the real issue appeared to be a lack of understanding about the material being discussed.

Although the Manager of the Housing Program struggled with regard to recall, she demonstrated herself to be very supportive of the process, defending it on more than one occasion. In fact, when the Executive Director stated "*if* we use the model", she corrected the Executive Director and said "*when* we use the model".

The Manager of the Employment Dimensions Program continues to play an increasingly important role, primarily because of her contributions to the group. In this meeting she was responsible for the concepts of a minimum score for issue selection, using priority criteria as a method for breaking ties between equally ranked issues and others. She appears to be a firm believer in the process.

**Self-Analysis:** In general, the meeting marked the poorest performance of the student since the first meeting. This was reflected in the feedback sheets in the area of "organization", although overall scores were not significantly lower.

In assessing the student's performance, virtually all problems can be traced to the poor layout of the agenda. The vast majority of the confusion was caused by the student's failure to continue the committee's work in its natural sequence. More specifically, had the component of criteria scale development been undertaken before the component on criteria prioritization.

There appeared to be considerable variation between committee members on definitions of individual criterion. This was disconcerting considering the committee had already approved definitions. What is most likely is that the complexity of recent discussions has left members confused and without a ready reference. In order to combat this, the student will develop a list of definitions developed by the committee to act as that reference.

The student was unable to attain his goal of involving the community member in a more meaningful way. Despite attempts to solicit feedback and support commentary, the real problem was the member being absent at the last meeting. Given the member's status in the committee and absence from the last meeting the student should have met with the committee member prior to the meeting to provide a more intensive explanation of proceedings from the previous meeting. This was discussed with the member in question and it was agreed that such a process would be useful in the future, not only for himself but for all committee members.

Attempts at supporting the Advocacy Program Manager have been constant although the student has noted missed opportunities. On examination however, the member's continued apparent misgivings with the process led the student to believe that only the actual successful application of the model will have the desired effect. Every attempt will be made however, to support the individual in question.

Aside from the student's organizational gaffe, other aspects of the student's performance appear to be progressing. The student's ability to analyze and paraphrase have been noted by committee members. The student identifies the need to be supportive of individuals who are in disagreement with the process as an area for improvement and will continue to monitor this.

**Appendix O3**

**Issue Selection: Scales and Definition Worksheet  
Systems Advocacy Working Committee  
April 10, 1995**

### Issue selection criteria-Scales and definitions

1. The gravity of the harm:

a) Severity of the harm

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

b) Number of people affected.

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

2. The benefits (short and long-term) from modifying the system:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

3. The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

4. The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

5. The relative chance for success:

|-----|-----|-----| \*-----|

6. The cost (direct and indirect) of the issue:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

7. The expertise and resources of the agency:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|



8. Fairness to protected groups and respondents:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

9. Divisiveness of issue among protected groups and respondents:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

10. To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|

**Appendix O4**

**Issue Selection: Criterion Priorization  
Systems Advocacy Working Committee  
April 10, 1995**

Issue Selection: Criteria Priorization

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
GRAVITY OF HARM: a) Severity of harm	√		
b) Number of people affected			
BENEFITS FROM MODIFYING THE SYSTEM	√		
EFFICACY AND ENFORCEABILITY OF A REMEDY	√		
USEFULNESS OF THE ISSUE/PROCESS AS A MODEL FOR FURTHER ACTION			√
THE RELATIVE CHANCE FOR SUCCESS	√		
THE COST (DIRECT AND INDIRECT) OF THE ISSUE	√		
THE EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES OF THE AGENCY		√	
FAIRNESS TO PROTECTED GROUPS AND RESPONDENTS	√		
DIVISIVENESS OF ISSUE AMONG PROTECTED GROUPS AND RESPONDENTS			√
DEGREE OF POTENTIAL FOR ALTERING THE RELATIONS OF POWER	√		
REQUESTS FOR ACTION	√		

**Appendix P**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 24, 1995**

Agenda-April 24, 1995

1. Review of meeting minutes/process.
2. Glossary of definitions (see attached).
3. Future meetings.
4. "The number of requests for action on a particular issue": An Issue Selection Criterion?
5. Scoring issues- what is the minimum score.  
- At what point is the tie-breaking mechanism used.
5. Definitions of scales (see attached).
6. Issue Selection.
7. Issue Priorization (if time allows).
8. Feedback forms.

**Appendix P1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 24, 1995**

MEETING MINUTES-APRIL 24, 1995

In attendance: Louise Maurakis, Ellen Kruger, Darrell Cole and Anita Rempel

Agenda

1. Review of meeting minutes/process.
2. Glossary of definitions.
3. Future meetings.
4. The number of "requests for action": An Issue Selection criterion?
5. Scoring issues: a) What is the minimum score.  
b) At what point is the tie-breaking mechanism used.
6. Definitions of scales.
7. Completion of the Issue Selection stage.

1. Review of meeting minutes/process

Meeting minutes were approved as written.

2. Glossary of Definitions

The Glossary of Definitions was reviewed. It was agreed that members were having trouble on occasion remembering previously agreed to definitions of key terminology and that such a glossary would be useful.

3. Future meetings

In order to avoid future conflicts around scheduling it was agreed that the committee would book the next four meeting times. These are...

- a) Monday, May 8, 1995 at 12:15 pm-2pm
- b) Monday, May 15, 1995 at 12:15 pm-2pm
- c) Monday, May 29, 1995 at 1pm-4:30pm
- d) Monday, June 5, 1995 at 12:15pm-2pm

4. The number of "requests for action": An Issue Selection criterion?

Considerable discussion occurred as to whether or not this topic would qualify as an additional criterion. In the end it was decided that the number of requests for action

would indeed form a new Issue Selection criterion.<sup>52</sup>

It was agreed that the term "request" had yet to be defined and that this should be done during the meeting that determined how the agency would actually gather issues. As well, the committee identified a probable need for a process which facilitated requests both internally and externally. It was agreed that staff education would need to occur about the process and that this would be discussed at the meeting on how the agency would undertake such a process. Further, that past initiatives in the organization had suffered from a lack of feedback and ongoing education and that this must be ongoing.

Concerns were also noted regarding this topic. For example, it was important that such a process be well advertised so that it was inclusive and not dominated by specific groups and/or agencies ie. the squeaky wheel gets the grease."

## 5. Scoring issues

### a) What is the minimum score?

At the previous committee meeting it had been suggested that when tallying up scores for issues that no issue be considered for action unless it reached a minimum cumulative score. After some debate a suggestion was put forward that the amount of 66% of the maximum cumulative score be used (app. 70 out of 105). This is the figure currently used by the Housing program in undertaking environmental compatibility assessments. While this number was originally supported, it was noted that the application of this percentage on last meeting's example issues (welfare funding of therapy and long waits in emergency wards) would both have failed. This led to commentary about possible flaws in the model and the value of the multiplier used. In the end it was agreed that the committee's expectations about how certain issues might score may be erroneous and that the best thing to do was take a benchmark (66%?) and test it and then make any needed changes.

### b) At what point is the tie-breaking mechanism used?

It was also mentioned at the previous committee meeting that an acceptable method of choosing between issues whose scores were closely matched was to select the issue which rated highest on the prioritized criteria. However, it was not clear at what point (score) this would be used. It was decided that such a mechanism would be used when issues were within five points of each other.

## 6. Definitions of scales

It was agreed at the last committee meeting that there was a need to develop a standardized scale for scoring issues being considered for action. Further, that such a scale needed to have specific definitions as to give the scales common meaning. In reviewing the scales prepared by the student, the committee expressed a number of comments and concerns.

### a) While standardized, the explanations of the scales were not meaningful. More

<sup>52</sup> Following this discussion, the student noted that the committee had forgotten to determine what priority (high, medium, low) it would attach to the criterion.



specifically, that the terminology was relevant only when viewed within the context of the issue at hand eg. "fairness to targeted groups" could be scored only if all groups were known. **IT WAS AGREED THAT THE EACH ISSUE MUST BE LOOKED AT INDIVIDUALLY, ITS BEST AND WORST CASE SCENARIOS IDENTIFIED, AND THEN SCORED RELATIVE TO THESE BENCHMARKS.**

b) Definitions can be used (see points #1 and #6) when points of the scale can be quantified. Also, that certain scales that are not currently quantifiable can become so after sufficient information has been gathered eg. "Fairness to targeted groups" can be assessed after a demographic study is done and all groups are identified.

c) It was agreed that there was a need to involve consumers in the systems advocacy process in a meaningful way and that this issue should be dealt with when the committee was discussing who would be involved in the process.

d) It was pointed out that the student had failed to update the title of one of the criterion on the "Definition of scales". "Fairness to protected groups and respondents" should have read "Fairness to targeted groups."

#### 7. Issue Selection

a) Point R: It was agreed that this would be discussed at the decision-making meeting on May 29, 1995.

b) Point S: After some discussion it was felt that this point was dealt with satisfactorily given the criteria developed in the first two stages.

c) Point T: It was agreed that this would be discussed at the decision-making meeting on May 29, 19 195.

**Appendix P2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 24, 1995**

### Analysis-April 24, 1995

#### Carryover

During the analysis of the April 10, 1995 committee meeting a number of concerns were identified. The first concern related to the committee members apparent confusion over definitions that had been established by the committee. More specifically, that there still seemed to be differences of opinion over definitions where consensus had earlier been (apparently) reached. While not discounting the possibility that individuals had only superficially agreed to definitions, the student summarized that a more likely reason for this confusion was the prolonged time frames between meetings and the sheer number of definitions. In an effort to combat this confusion the student compiled a "Glossary of definitions" that contained all the definitions that had been developed by the committee. The document will be monitored for effectiveness. Informal reaction of the committee was that the glossary was much needed and appreciated.

In previous meetings little time has been spent at the beginning of committee meetings refreshing committee members on the process. As the process has gone on however, such a need has become more apparent. The April 10, 1995 meeting was adversely affected when members had considerable trouble recalling past events. In an effort to address this concern, the student spent more time covering past events. This appeared to assist members in operating more effectively at the meeting, although such a process, when combined with a review of meeting minutes, consumes valuable committee time.

As was just mentioned, time is also being spent on review of meeting minutes. This is being done as it has become apparent that members are not reading the minutes until the meeting, with the exception of the community member. While this situation appears unavoidable, it does mean that the possibility of mistakes in the minutes increases as members now review them in a cursory manner.

Another concern noted was the Executive Director's need to focus more on process and "hearing" other members of the committee. This was especially true with regard to the Advocacy Program Manager. However, efforts to address this issue were curtailed by the Executive Director's absence from the meeting, although her decision to allow the meeting without her was a strong vote of confidence and trust for all the members. Concerns have also been noted around the Executive Director perhaps rushing the process. The student feels that a major contributor may be the members knowledge that the student is pressing for completion and she is hoping to cover as much ground as possible before the student leaves.

The primary concern noted during the previous analysis were the roles of the community member and the Advocacy Program Manager. As the sole consumer representative, the individual brings a vital perspective to the process. To this point in time this individual's contribution has been mixed. Unable to attend two meetings, including the April 24, 1995 meeting, this individual has, in the student's opinion, struggled to contribute as a result of unfamiliarity with the material. This has been compounded by the student's only somewhat successful efforts at getting this individual more involved.

In reviewing his absence at the March 28, 1995 committee meeting, the student and the consumer representative agreed that should he miss any of the following meetings, the

student would contact him to "bring him up to speed" before the next meeting. This was done on May 1, 1995 as a result of the consumers absence at the April 24, 1995 meeting. During this phone conversation, agreement was reached on a number of points that the student and the committee member felt the committee member might consider prior to the next meeting. However, the conversation was more important for allowing the committee representative and the student their first opportunity to talk. During the course of the conversation the committee member cited some of his concerns with the process. The student attempted to validate the member's feelings and discussed with the member the need to make the committee aware of his feelings and the impact that the process was having. It was noted by the student that the May 29, 1995 meeting was dedicated to deciding, among other things, what role consumers might play in the process and that this might be an excellent place to address this issue. It was agreed that the student would meet with the member to discuss how they might introduce the topic in a way that might be heard by other committee members. It seemed by the end of the conversation that the member felt much more comfortable with the student, both ideologically and personally. It is the student's position that the member will contribute more significantly in the future.

The other area of concern was that of the Advocacy Program Manager. This concern was twofold. First, the commentary of the member, while active, did not appear to be fully supported by all other members, in particular the Executive Director. This challenged the student to find methods of supporting the Advocacy Program Manager. Unfortunately, this situation was compounded by the fact that the member was often being marginalized as a result of what appeared to be her somewhat ambivalent attitude towards the formal systems advocacy process. Again, this meeting saw a continuation of the Advocacy Program Manager's position. For example, during the discussion on scoring issues, the member mentioned "knowing" what issue should be done. As well, during the discussion on "definition of scales" the member joked about the scores of the issues being the same ie. "what is the point of having a process if they all score the same". Finally, during the discussion on "definition of scales" the member asked if we (the committee) could include a criterion on "how we feel". Another moment of note occurred when the member was speaking of the systems advocacy process as a possessive and was politely reminded by another member that the model involved all the agencies programs.

The contribution by the Advocacy Program Manager also had many positive elements. On occasion the member spoke forcefully about current shortcomings in the program/agency that had the potential to undermine the systems advocacy process. She mentioned the need for educating all agency staff about the systems advocacy process on an on-going basis<sup>53</sup>. She also spoke to the agencies current failing in providing staff with feedback on a variety of efforts, including her current systems work.

During the discussion on the scoring of issues another member felt that the model might be fatally flawed because it might not distinguish important issues from unimportant issue properly. The Advocacy Program Manager defended the process saying that it may only be in need of "fine-tuning." As well, she actively commended other members when they made points and/or observations.

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<sup>53</sup> This was seen as positive by the student considering the member was not sure of the value of staff education during the intervention negotiation.

### Framework review

The first item of business was to consider the Advocacy Program Manager's suggestion that the number of requests for action might be a criterion for Issue Selection. This point had been raised at the end of the last meeting, the tenor of which suggested that many members had reservations about this as a criterion. Concerns were expressed that issues that did not have "backers" would lose out to popular issues ("the squeaky wheel" syndrome) or that certain groups might have an "edge" in having their issues accepted. The Executive Director also had some reservation about this suggestion. It was agreed however that the issue would be addressed at this meeting. While the concerns were expressed once again, there seemed to be a much greater willingness to consider the issue, if only because the Advocacy Program Manager's felt strongly about the topic. It appeared that certain concerns still existed however. These were mollified when the committee agreed that a definition of "request" must be developed. It was decided that this definition would be developed at the time the committee made its decisions about what process the agency would use to gather issues.

The discussion on the aforementioned "request" led to agreement that there must be both an internal and external process for collecting issues and information. Originally proposed by the Advocacy Program Manager, it was intended as an internal process only until another member reminded the committee of the potential benefits of also fielding external requests. Again, it was agreed that this would be looked at in more detail at the May 29, 1995 meeting.

Considerable debate occurred around the suggestion from the April 10, 1995 committee meeting that a minimum score be established with regard to issues being considered for selection. The group was asked to decide what number they wished to serve as the cutoff point. The only number that could be produced that rested in any degree of logic was the suggestion of 66% recommended by the Housing Program Manager. This was the number used by the program in their environmental compatibility assessments. This would have been accepted without much debate until the student mentioned that the two example issues from the previous week both would have failed to meet the cutoff point. This led to considerable concern about the validity of the model if two such important issues were rejected because they could not meet a 66% minimum.<sup>54</sup> However, after cooler heads prevailed, the committee was able to consider that few issues are rated poorly because they are unimportant. Instead, both issues had many aspects to them which made them unattractive for action. As well, the scores were also determined in part by how they were prioritized. This discussion also led the committee to identify the need to keep issues focused in order to assess them as being more winnable.

Discussion was also held as to whether or not the multiplier represented the actual weighting the committee wanted. As in previous meetings, there still appears to be some lingering confusion over how the multiplier works, although it is hoped that this can be put to rest when the entire process is given a dry-run. The student asked the committee to consider a different multiplier value (2 - 1.5 - 1) but this was rejected because it would only bunch scores. Instead the committee thought of increasing the multiplier in order to "blow

<sup>54</sup> One member was unmoved over the concern about issues not meeting the minimum. She stated that "you make something fit you want to do it". Comments like these are not rare and often surface when there appears to be even the slightest hint of a setback. There appears to be a very real culture of crisis within the agency. It seems that the agency will have to police itself in order to ensure that it does not lapse into its more traditional method of working.

the scores wide open". Unfortunately, increasing the scores does not change the relative level of the minimum score. As well, "spreading the scores out" by skewing the value of the multiplier is no accomplishment.

It was suggested by one member that the criteria be ranked from one to ten but this suggestion seemed to have fallen on deaf ears. The thought of rescaling the criteria appeared to be an unpleasant thought for the other committee members at this stage and it fell by the wayside without much comment. In the end the committee decided that the debate over a cutoff point was pointless and could not really be determined until a large-scale dry-run was attempted. The 66% was adopted as a temporary benchmark.

Following discussion of the scales, attention was focused on the issue of developing a mechanism for resolving selection between closely scored issues. At the April 10, 1995 committee meeting it was decided that ties would be broken by selecting those issues which scored highest among those criterion assessed by the committee as being of the highest priority. What had yet to be determined was what constitutes a tie. After a brief discussion agreement was reached that the mechanism would be used when issues were within five points of each other and where there was a need to differentiate between issues. There also was an understanding that the figure could be altered if during the dry-run the figure (5 points) proved inappropriate.

During the aforementioned and following discussion there seemed to be a certain openness about the process. More specifically, that there was a recognition that this process was not the final step and was but a theoretical review and that other types of reviews would be done. As a result, decisions being made now were still open for change. This appeared to lend itself to a more relaxed atmosphere about the process.

Perhaps the most interesting development that occurred at this stage was an aside made by a member who caught herself making a comment that she considered unfair to consumers/survivors. This led to her comment, and agreement by other committee members, that there was a need for consumers to be involved in the process. Failure to do so meant the possibility that the process would be flawed and unable to serve the needs of those people it was designed to help. This presented an excellent opportunity to assess the feelings of the committee as to their opinion on the degree to which consumers should be involved in the process. There was agreement with the comments made by one member that consumers must be involved in selecting and prioritizing issues. The student reminded the members that the process, when completed, would leave many things largely predetermined and would not necessarily deal with potential problems in the model itself. This statement challenged members to respond to the concept of actually involving consumers in the construction of the model. This caused visible discomfort in the members. One member finally spoke to concerns that consumers may not be sensitive to certain agency needs. This statement was followed by a visible look to fellow agency members for support, which was soon forthcoming. Despite comments of support to each other on this position, there was certainly looks of uneasiness and perhaps shame. The student can only speculate as to how this might have unfolded had the community member been present. Sensing their uneasiness and having determined their position, the student attempted to assuage the members feelings by stating that the agency would select that position which best represented its interests, and then mentioned that one of the committee's terms of reference was to undertake a community consultation (of an undetermined type). The student then moved quickly to the next issue, much to the apparent relief of the committee members. As per his agreement with the member, this

topic will be addressed at the May 29, 1995 meeting. A strategy will be developed after consultation with the community member.

The committee then turned its attention to the final (sizable) piece of housekeeping, that of standardizing and defining the scales developed for selecting issues. It must be noted that during the preparation of standardized scales and scale definitions (see attached) the student came to realize that one apparent problem was that, in order to be relevant, definitions needed to be tied to the issue at hand, something that was not possible with standardized definitions. However, the purpose of the scales was to act as a starting point for the committee so the student decided to introduce the scales and allow the committee to review them. It was hoped that the committee would identify the flaw and come up with a solution on its own. In this way the student hoped to provide the committee with an opportunity to demonstrate some expertise and independence.

The analysis of the scales started by looking at the terms the student had developed for a standardized scale (Very low, modest, some, significant and enormous). While there was some question about the terminology selected, there was agreement that this was a relatively minor issue of semantics. Attention quickly turned to the definitions of the scales the student provided. The committee agreed to examine the definitions on a point-by-point basis. By the time the committee had reached the third criterion there were already comments that the scales did little, if anything, to help make the decision-making process more logical. At this point committee members were asked to strategize about possible solutions to this situation. The ensuing discussion came to agreement around the notion that, in order to be valid, scales ratings had to be relative to a specific issue eg. when scoring an issue as to its "fairness to targeted groups", one must know what all the targeted groups are. Once the high and low benchmarks of a scale have been created, then issues can be scored with relative confidence. The "definition of scales" then, while given to the committee while knowingly flawed, served its purpose of acting as a catalyst for the committee to take responsibility for creating the framework.

In assessing the validity of the student's submission, the committee identified that those scales which could be quantified eg. "numbers of people affected" and "cost of undertaking the issue" were valid in their current form. However, the committee had reservations that some of the criterion, such as "fairness to targeted groups", could be quantified. The student posed the question that if the agency had demographic data and could identify the various groups then could they not make a proper assessment. This brought concession of agreement from the committee but they felt that no one had this type of information. The student used this as an opportunity to again ask members to reflect on the value of developing an information system so that information that might not be quantifiable now might be in the future. Again this brought nods of agreement, but it also brought disparaging remarks about the agency's past efforts to collect and disseminate data of any worth. There seemed to almost be a sense of apathy and/or futility on this topic. The student closed with a remark about viewing this process as a starting point for a new system that could be made to work.

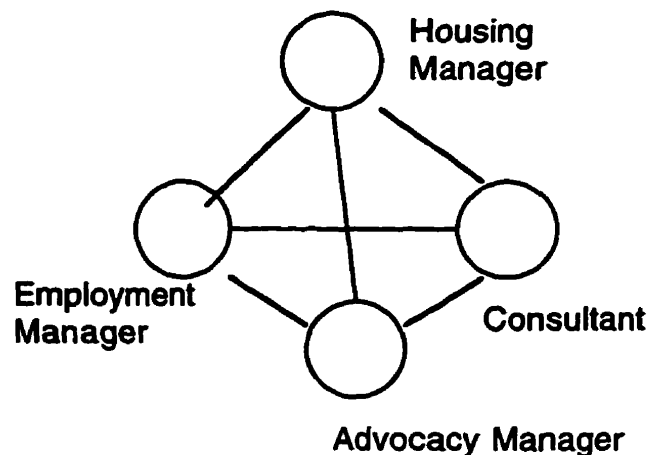
Point R: Who decides (and doesn't decide) how the criteria will be weighted? It was agreed that this topic would be carried over to the meeting where final decisions will be made on , among other things, who will be responsible for selecting issues

Point S: What kinds of issues will (or will not) be accepted for selection? This topic enjoyed some lively although not particularly productive topic. In the end this point

was seen as redundant given the earlier discussion on Issue Gathering and Filtering. However, the student, upon reflection, notices that certain issues, not currently included in the initial stage, were not raised e.g. Would the agency undertake a highly rated issue if it would jeopardize the agency's funding? This might lead to the establishment of guidelines which would state under what conditions such an issue might be undertaken. The student will reintroduce this topic for reexamination at the next meeting.

Point T: How many issues will be accepted? Who decides (and doesn't decide) how the criteria will be weighted? It was agreed that this topic would be carried over to the meeting where final decisions will be made on, among other things, who will be responsible for selecting issues

### Group dynamics



The dynamics of the meeting were unique as a result of the absence of the Executive Director and the community representative. In general, the tone of the meeting could be considered active and the structure equal. All members were active in the participation. Contribution was lively and all members played unique roles. The Employment Program Manager has played an increasing vital role as the process has evolved and this meeting represented her largest role yet. She was the first member to clearly identify the need for on-going feedback for staff around systems advocacy work. When the committee was discussing whether or not to allow external groups to submit "requests" for action, one committee member initially spoke against it, it was the Employment Manager who pointed out the benefits of allowing other groups to demonstrate their commitment to certain issues. She was also the person who mentioned informally about being "overwhelmed by the paper" when given the "Glossary of definitions". While she was one of the individuals who wondered about the validity of the model if issues couldn't score at least 66%, she did so in a way that spoke for a need to review and revise. She also assisted in summarizing and paraphrasing points when other members struggled with concepts. The Supportive Housing Program Manager also played an active role, although she seemed to often vacillate between positions. For example, she spoke to the need for consumer involvement yet seemed defensive when the issue of extensive community involvement was discussed. She spoke often of the need to have a formal process in place but was quick to wonder about the validity of the model if it scored issues close together. When the committee was discussing the how to resolve issues that were bunched together she stated that "you make something fit if you want to do it". She has appeared slightly overwhelmed by the process



at times and this may effect her views from a point of consistency. This speaks for the need to the student to continue to check, paraphrase and summarize events. On a clearer note, she did speak to the the need to make scales issue specific and the need for an effective agency education program and information system.

### Self-analysis

The student attempted to focus more on “asking” instead of “telling” in this meeting. Efforts were made to become less involved and act in a more facilitative mode. An example of this was the use of the “definition of scales” document and allowing the committee to develop its own solution. One of the difficulties facing the student is that a more facilitative approach appears to result in less favourable ratings in the area of “demonstrated knowledge” on the participant feedback sheets. While the students attempts to have the committee take more responsibility for its work it seems that some on the committee continue to view the student as an “expert” and are disappointed if he does not always provide the answers. It is unclear whether or not this is due to a misunderstanding over the student’s and/or committee members’ roles.

Greater effort was put into the processing by the student in this meeting. Minutes were reviewed and last meetings events were recapped. Attempts were made to not move on unless unanimous consent had been given to the student. The student attempted to make constant use of summary statements and paraphrasing.

Though efforts were made to keep the group focused and on track, the student could have done a better job keeping the group on task, especially at the beginning of the meeting where the committee engaged in meaningless dialogue to the point that the meeting was twenty minutes late starting. Efforts will be made to be much firmer in the next meeting with such occurrences.

While the student did attempt to provide positive feedback to the Advocacy Program Manager and reframe down times in a more positive light, there appeared to be, upon reflection, some missed opportunities to be more supportive. This continues to be an area of difficulty with the student, who appears to struggle with the Advocacy Manager’s questions. However, the decision to meet following the meeting appeared useful. As well, the student intends to meet privately with the Program Manager to discuss her concerns in order to ensure that they are addressed at the committee level.

**Appendix P3**  
**Glossary of Definitions**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 24, 1995**

## GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS

**“System”**: Legislative, policy, service and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric consumers/survivors.

**“Proactive”**: Identifying and confronting an issue which has yet to become a problem for consumers/survivors of mental health services (e.g. impending legislation, proposed institutional policies, etc.) or has not yet maximized its negative effects on consumers/survivors of mental health services (e.g. a new negative practice is adopted in response to an individual case but is not yet widespread, or has serious effects on consumers/survivors but has not yet become a public issue [board and care homes]).

**“Reactive”**: Where advocacy efforts respond to an identified problem which has become entrenched, accepted as general policy or practice, or has achieved negative impact.

**“The Gravity of Harm”**: The depth and breadth of harm that an issue presents.

a) **“Severity of harm”**: The degree to which an issue adversely affects mental health consumers/survivors.

b) **“Breadth of harm”**: The number of consumers/survivors adversely affected by a particular issue.

**“The benefits from modifying the mental health system”**: Potential short and long term benefits of the issue.

a) **“Mental health system”**: Those laws, policies, institutions, personnel, services and products whose primary purpose is to serve the needs of mental health consumers/survivors.

**“The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy”**: The viability of ensuring that a solution can be put into effect.

**“The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action”**: Does the issue share common factors with other issues.

**“The relative chance for success”**: How “winnable” the issue is.

a) **“Winnability”**: The relative chance of attaining the identified goal.

**“The cost to the agency of undertaking the issue”**: How much will it cost (direct and indirect) to undertake the issue.

**“The expertise of the agency”**: Does the agency possess the necessary expertise to undertake the issue.

b) **“Expertise”**: The knowledge, skills and attitudes required to successfully undertake an identified issue.

**“Fairness to protected groups and respondents”**: Will selection of a particular isolate sub-groups with the consumer/survivor community.

**“Level of agreement on issue among targetted groups”**: To what degree do consumers/survivours agree that this is issue is a problematic one.

**“To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power”**:

a) **“Power”**: The degree of control and autonomy which consumers/survivors exercise over their own lives vis-a-vis the mental health system and/or its allied systems.

**Appendix P4**  
**Issue Selection Scales**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**April 24, 1995**

## ISSUE SELECTION CRITERIA SCALES

### 1. The gravity of harm:

#### a) Severity of harm:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** Issue (potentially) causes discomfort and inconvenience to consumers/survivors.

**low:** Issue (potentially) is harmful enough to consumers/survivors to cause injury.<sup>56</sup>

**moderate:** Issue (potentially) causes significant trauma in consumers/survivors.

**high:** Issue (potentially) causes severe trauma to consumers/survivors.

**very high:** Issue (potentially) is life-threatening to consumers/survivors.

#### b) Breadth of Harm <sup>57</sup> :

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** 600 or less (1%)

**low:** 601 - 6000 (10%)

**moderate:** 6,001 - 24,000 (40%)

**high:** 21,001 - 48,000 (80%)

**very high:** 48,001 + (100%)

<sup>56</sup> "injury" considers physical, financial and emotional/psychological injury equally.

<sup>57</sup> Numbers based on the understanding that 1 in 10 people within the agency's mandated population base of 600,000 people are mental health consumers/survivors.

2. The benefits from modifying the mental health system:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)      high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** The issue provides little or no benefits for modifying the mental health system.

**low:** The issue provides modest potential for modifying the mental health system.

**moderate:** The issue provides some potential for modifying the mental health system.

**high:** The issue provides significant potential for modifying the mental health system.

**very high:** The issue provides enormous potential for modifying the mental health system.

3. The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)      high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** Little or no chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**low:** Modest chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**moderate:** Some chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**high:** Significant chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**very high:** Enormous chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

4. The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** Issue/process presents little or no potential as a model for further action.

**low:** Issue/process presents modest potential as a model for further action.

**moderate:** Issue/process presents some potential as a model for further action.

**high:** Issue/process presents significant potential as a model for further action.

**very high:** Issue/process presents enormous potential as a model for further action.

5. The relative chance for success:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** There is little or no chance of attaining the identified solution.

**low:** There is a modest chance of attaining the identified solution.

**moderate:** There is some chance of attaining the identified solution.

**high:** There is a significant chance of attaining the identified solution.

**very high:** There is an enormous chance of attaining the identified solution.

6. The cost to the agency of undertaking the issue:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very high (1)      high (2)              moderate (3)              low (4)      very low (5)

**very high:** \$25,000+ and/or very high non-monetary cost.

**high:** \$20,000+ and/or high non-monetary costs.

**moderate:** \$15,000+ and/or moderate non-monetary costs.

**low:** \$10,000+ and/or low non-monetary costs.

**very low:** \$5,000+ and/or very low non-monetary costs.



**7. The expertise of the agency:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** The agency possesses little or none of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**low:** The agency possesses a modest amount of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**moderate:** The agency possesses some of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**high:** The agency possesses a much of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**very high:** The agency possesses almost all/all of the expertise required to undertake the issue.

**8. Fairness to protected groups and respondents:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** The issue is one pertinent to a very small segment (1% or less) of the consumer/survivor community.

**low:** The issue is one pertinent to only a modest segment (2% - 10%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**moderate:** The issue is one pertinent to some (11% - 40%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**high:** The issue is one pertinent to a significant segment (41% - 80%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**very high:** The issue is one pertinent to an enormous segment (81% or more) of the consumer/survivor community.

**9. Level of agreement on issue among targeted groups:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)      high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** Little or no agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**low:** Modest agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**moderate:** Some level of agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**high:** Significant agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is problematic.

**very high:** Unanimous/near unanimous agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is problematic.

**10. To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)      high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** The issue has little or no potential to alter the relations of power.

**low:** The issue has modest potential for altering the relations of power.

**moderate:** The issue has some potential for altering the relations of power.

**high:** The issue has significant potential for altering the relations of power.

**very high:** The issue has enormous potential for altering the relations of power.

**Appendix Q**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**May 8, 1995**

Agenda-May 8, 1995

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. "Requests for action": High, medium or low priority.
3. Issue prioritization.

**Appendix Q1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**May 8, 1995**

Meeting Minutes-May 8, 1995

In attendance: Carolyn Strutt, Ellen Kruger, Jim Fisher, Anita Rempel, Louise Maurakis, Darrell Cole

AGENDA

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. "Requests for action": High, medium or low priority.
3. Issue Priorization.

1. Review of meeting minutes:

Review of minutes from the April 24, 1995 meeting revealed, upon reflection, concern regarding the earlier decision on how to proceed with the "definition of scales". At the previous meeting it had been decided that

While standardized, the explanations of the scales were not meaningful. More specifically, that the terminology was relevant only when viewed within the context of the issue at hand, eg. "fairness to targeted groups" could be scored only if all groups were known. **IT WAS AGREED THAT THE EACH ISSUE MUST BE LOOKED AT INDIVIDUALLY, ITS BEST AND WORST CASE SCENARIOS IDENTIFIED, AND THEN SCORED RELATIVE TO THESE BENCHMARKS.**

After some discussion as to this decision the committee decided that the scales did in fact provide some measure of objectivity and guidance to scoring issues. It was agreed that when scoring issues, the relevant individuals will come to a consensus score after group identification of the benchmarks (high and low ends of the scale). As well, it was noted that there was some confusion as to some of the scale terminology used e.g. very low, modest, some, high, enormous. Some committee members felt that "modest" indicated a similar or larger amount than "some". It was decided that the scale terminology would be revised to read very low, somewhat, moderate, high and enormous.

It was also noted that the consensus process, in being consistent with the model, should be based wherever possible on data and hard facts. While this may not always be available on all issues at all times, that the collection of relevant data was necessary to making the consensus process workable and objective.

2. "Requests for action": High, medium or low priority.

During the committee meeting of April 24, 1995 the committee decided that "requests for action" should be added as an additional criterion when selecting issues. However, the committee neglected to determine what priority (high, medium or low) this criterion should be given when considering the scoring of issues. After a brief discussion, there was agreement that such requests, whether internal or external, explicit or implicit, should be strongly considered. As a result the committee agreed to rate this criterion as

"high". It was also agreed that a minimum score should be established before the criterion allows an issue to "score points". Agreement was reached on twenty requests as a minimum, with the understanding that this number was arbitrary and could easily be changed.

Very low	somewhat	moderate	high	enormous
20-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-up

### 3. Issue Priorization.

a) How will selected issues be prioritized? It was agreed that formal criteria should be established for the prioritizing of issues. There was further agreement that these criteria should be structured in a manner consistent with that used in the Issue Selection stage (five-point scales) in order to facilitate ease of use.

b) Criteria Selection. What should be prioritized? In discussing the criteria it was felt by the committee that a commitment should be made to those criteria that reflect the values and philosophy of the agency. To this end the committee agreed that one scale should be developed that represents those criterion in the Issue selection stage which the committee identified as being of a "high" priority ie. "gravity of harm", "the relative chance for success", "the expertise and resources of the agency", "degree of potential for altering the relations of power" and "requests for action". Each of these criterion would be scored from 1 to 5 and the total score would then be divided by 6 (the number of criteria) in order to give a single score. It was also agreed that the issue(s) in question should be rated according to how well the issue "fits" with the agency designated advocacy "ends".

In the ensuing discussion about other relevant criterion it was suggested that the committee give consideration to the prioritizing factors currently used in the Supportive Housing program (see attached). The criteria include "urgency", "motivation", "ease of achievement" and "level of encouragement/support". These criteria were considered appropriate by the committee, although there was some question as to redundancy and definition. Upon review it was felt that "ease of achievement" related strongly with "winnability" and as such, was removed for redundancy. While adopted in principle, there was an identified need to modify the definitions of the remaining three criteria so that they fit more specifically with the systems advocacy process. It was agreed that Darrell would develop draft definitions for the criteria and present them to the committee at the May 15, 1995 meeting.

c) Who gets to develop (and doesn't get to develop) the prioritization process? It was agreed that this question would be dealt with at the May 29, 1995 meeting. However, discussion indicated that many of the committee members felt that there was a need for some kind of body, such as the current committee, to handle such decisions.

d) What happens when a crisis issue develops? In discussing this issue the committee felt that there were two ways issues became prioritized, through the issue prioritization process and when an issue unexpectedly arises outside of the process. It was felt that in such a "crisis" situation the same criteria would be used in considering whether or not an issue might be selected for action. In addition to the previously identified criteria it was felt that notice must be made, both in the short-term and the long-term, of the impact that selecting the issue might have on the existing issues.

To do

1. Darrell to develop definition of "urgency" for issue prioritization criteria.
2. Anita and Louise to complete "Performance feedback" sheets from May 8, 1995 committee meeting.
3. Darrell to collect signed practicum waiver forms.
4. Carolyn to provide Darrell with copy of agency "ends" with regard to systems advocacy.



**Appendix Q2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**May 8, 1995**

Analysis-May 8, 1995

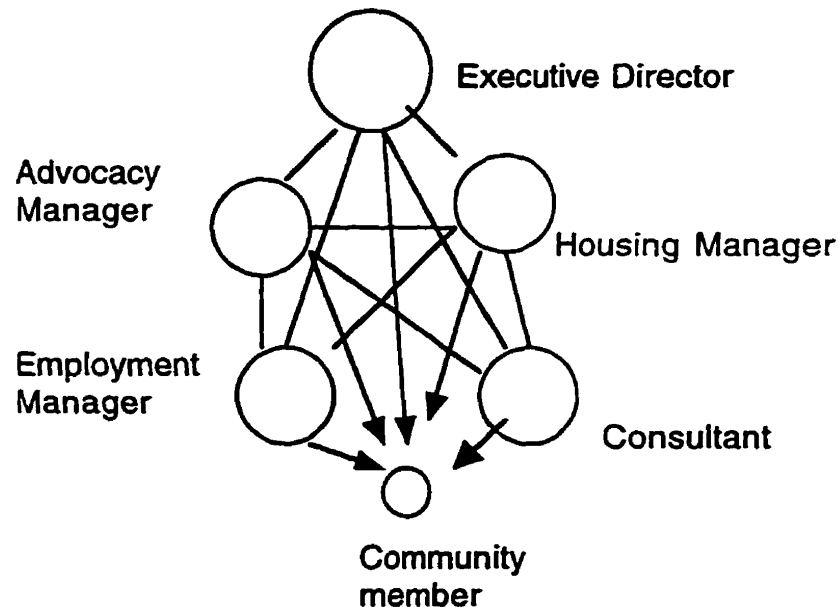
Carryover: Despite attempts to meet prior to the May 15, 1995 meeting the student was unable to talk to the Advocacy Program Manager until after the meeting. At the meeting the student related to the Program Manager his past observations and discussions with the Program Manager around her concerns regarding systems advocacy and the framework e.g. time demands, the usefulness of formal models. As well, he advised her that he was aware of the recent organizational changes that resulted in the manager's role being largely devoted to systems advocacy. Given the aforementioned points and the fact that the next committee meetings would be focusing on actual decision-making around how the agency will implement the framework, the student asked if there were any concerns that the Manager wished to have addressed within the meeting. This was done in a way that validated the Manager's concerns, reinforced the vital role she had both within the committee and with regard to the systems advocacy work that the agency would be undertaking. The student clearly identified his wish to support the manager and address her concerns. Failure to do so would ultimately compromise the effectiveness of the process and the agency's efforts in the area of systems advocacy.

The Manager stated that she felt that her concerns were unrelated to the systems advocacy process but would relate any concerns that she felt were relevant to the student. This position seems somewhat odd given that some of the issues appear to relate directly to the process. However, her position may suggest that her concerns are private (between her and her supervisor) or that she doesn't feel entirely comfortable expressing them within the committee process. In any event, efforts were made to address the issue prior to the meeting and the results of the student's efforts will be noted at the May 29, 1995 meeting.

Framework review: Prior to the meeting the student approached the Executive Director as to any concerns or questions she might have regarding the minutes from the April 24, 1995 meeting (she had been unable to attend the meeting). At this time the Executive Director replied that she had skimmed the minutes and didn't feel that there was any need to talk. However, once the review of the meeting minutes started, the Executive Director stated that she "didn't understand" the section on "definition of scales." This led to a reopening of the topic for discussion, a discussion that lasted almost an hour. The Executive Director felt strongly that some standard definition should be developed for the scales. When it was pointed out that committee members would probably have no problem informally scoring on a scale without definitions, the Executive Director responded that "we (the committee) might understand but others (future participants and/or committee members) may not." While there was agreement on the value of having meaningful standardized definitions, there was considerable question as to what value of standardized definitions would be without viewing them in the context of the issue. The committee agreed that this could be achieved by having the committee discuss the issue and then developing a consensus score on a standardized scale. This arrangement led the student to have concerns that the consensus decision would be made on the basis of a "collective gut feeling" and not on hard data. This point was raised by the student who received a deafening silence in response. The concept of developing a meaningful information system has been raised within the committee before with mixed results. While acknowledging the need for such a system, there appears to be pessimism and skepticism about the agency's ability to develop such a mechanism. This component of the process will remain a challenge to the agency. To this end, the student will examine possible information system prototypes that might be developed and/or implemented by the agency.

Two other interesting points emerged during the discussion on the section regarding “definition of scales”. When discussion focused on the example of board and care homes, the Options in Support and Housing Manager stated that she was secretly hoping that this would be a/the issue chosen for systems advocacy. This immediately led to commentary by the Employment Dimensions Manager as to what her choice would be. At this point the Executive Director made it clear that the purpose of the framework, among others, was to move away from individual choices and towards the selection of the issue(s) that were most meaningful overall. This brought an embarrassed retraction from the Employment Dimensions Manager, as well as a somewhat dejected comment from the Options in Support and Housing Manager who stated that the process was very fair and objective. This aspect of the meeting was important to the student because it appeared to be the first tangible example of the agency placing the system above individual program politics. It is the student’s belief that should this situation be maintained, it bodes well not only for the systems advocacy process but also has the potential to act as a precedent for establishing other systems within the organization. This scenario also provided the student with more insight into how important this process has become to people in the agency, in particular the Housing and Employment Programs whose work has an individual focus to it. This mechanism has the potential to take on critical issues impacting on their program from the larger environment which they otherwise could not deal with.

Group dynamics:



With the attendance of all the committee members, the committee reverted to its more traditional dynamics. The Executive Director continued to play a prominent role in committee proceedings. With regard to the discussion on “definitions of scale”, she was clearly able to force the discussion much longer than any other committee member would have.

The Employment Manager continued to play a strong role. For example, when it

appeared that closure had occurred around the "definitions of scale", she challenged the group to deal with the need to pay greater attention to the context in which issues were scored.

The Advocacy Program Manager continued to speak strongly in the process, although not always consistently. She originally took issue with the position of the Executive Director during the discussion on "definition of scales". However, later in the discussion she was defending the scale's inclusion.

During the discussion on when the Issue prioritization process should be used to assess unexpected crisis issues, the Advocacy Program Manager stated that she felt this would occur quite often. This position was largely dismissed by the others. In fact, the student is of the opinion that the Advocacy Program Manager was correct in her projections. This may ultimately lead to a tightening of the agreed upon definition to ensure that the responsible body is now perpetually assessing crisis issues.

Of greatest concern was the Community member's role. During the first half of the meeting he offered but one comment. He played a more vocal role later in the meeting but provided commentary only when prompted by the student or other committee members. Following the meeting the student met with the Executive Director to express his concerns. This was done for a number of reasons. First, it was hoped that by raising the issue the student might make the Community member's diminished role more apparent to the Executive Director. Second, it was hoped that by going to the Executive Director for help that this act might help establish an enhanced sense of trust between the Consultant and Executive Director. She was of the opinion that the Community member's performance could be attributed to other factors. She felt that the Consultant had done everything reasonable to involve the member. While agreeing with the Executive Director, the Consultant is also aware of the feelings of the member with regard to tokenism. As agreed with the Community member earlier, the Consultant will attempt to meet with him prior to the May 29, 1995 meeting to discuss and strategize around his concerns.

In summary, the group demonstrated increased autonomy and dealt well with complex and frustrating issues.

**Self-analysis:** As was already stated, the student has expressed concern over the limited role played by the consumer committee member. Initial efforts to focus on involving the member to a greater degree were sidetracked by the unexpected and intense discussion around the "definition of scales". Efforts were made in the latter half of the meeting to get the opinions of the member although increasingly it appears that the best solution to the situation would be the addition of a second community member. This issue will be raised by the student during the May 29, 1995 meeting.

As was alluded to in the analysis of the April 24 meeting, there appears to be a need to focus on refreshing committee members as to what is being worked on at the beginning of each meeting. This issue was brought into the open when the Housing Program Manager said she seems to forget the committee's past work, often even after reviewing the minutes. This suggests the need for not only more emphasis on process but perhaps upon reflection, the need for the student to play a more directive role at the beginning of the meeting and then generally backing off as the group becomes more comfortable.

In general the student tried to make a greater attempt at being more supportive of the

**Advocacy Program Manager.** When she correctly identified the dilemma of how much analysis should be done on a particular issue at a particular time (chicken and egg) the student attempted to validate her comments. However, upon reviewing the tapes the student noted a point where the individual raised the point of who defines the issue and the need for consumer input. This raised little supportive reaction from the committee and should have been supported by the Consultant but was not.

It was also noted by the author that he often interpreted a prominent role by committee members other than the Executive Director as positive but almost always interpreted her prominence as negative. This caused some reflection as to whether or not he was being even-handed in his assessments.

**Appendix R**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**May 15, 1995**

Agenda-May 15, 1995

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. Review of definitions:    a) "urgency"  
                                  b) "motivation"  
                                  c) "level of encouragement/support"
3. When should issues be prioritized?: More specifically, what constitutes a "crisis".
4. Issue Action.
5. Organizational Change.
6. Performance feedback.

1. Review of definitions.

**"Urgency"**: Need for action is immediate. The issue presenting is extreme, either through its the time limitations and/or the potential damage/good that could be generated by not acting/acting on the issue.

**"Motivation"**: The degree of commitment that the agency is willing to demonstrate towards the successful achievement of the identified goal.

**"Level of encouragement/support"**: The amount of tangible support that can be amassed to support the achievement of the identified goal.

**Appendix R1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**May 15, 1995**



Meeting Minutes-May 15, 1995

In attendance: Louise Maurakis, Ellen Kruger, Anita Rempel, Carolyn Strutt, Darrell Cole

Agenda

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. Review of definitions:
  - a) "urgency"
  - b) "motivation"
  - c) "level of encouragement/support"
3. When should issues be prioritized?: More specifically, what constitutes a "crisis".
4. Issue Action.
5. Organizational Change.
6. Performance feedback.

1. Review of meeting minutes.

a) In reviewing the numbers attached to the "Request for action" scale it was felt that the range of for number of requests was inadequate and should be increased to 75+. The new scale should read...

Very low	somewhat	moderate	high	enormous
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
20-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76 and up

b) In reviewing the work on Issue prioritization criteria it was noted that "Urgency" and "Impact on current issues" should have been identified as primary determinants among the prioritization criteria. When discussing how this primacy might be demonstrated it was decided that no scales would be used in this section, although individuals responsible for assessing the issue could refer back to scores under Issue Selection. It was decided that a more effective method would be to develop a list of guiding questions that would assist individuals in analyzing the issue. The committee requested that Darrell provide such a list for the next meeting.

2. Review of definitions.

- a) "Urgency": definition accepted as proposed.
- b) "Motivation": amended to now read "The degree of *interest and* commitment that the agency is willing to demonstrate towards the successful achievement of the identified goal."
- c) "Level of encouragement/support": amended to now read "the amount of

tangible support that can be amassed to ~~support the achievement of~~ achieve the identified goal.

3. When should issues be prioritized?: More specifically, what constitutes a crisis? Further to point 1b, discussion occurred as to when one might use the aforementioned process. It was decided that each program would be given a copy of the Issue prioritization criteria. If the program personnel felt that an issue developed that met this criteria then they could submit a written outline to the responsible body for consideration.

#### 4. Issue Action.

a) Sections "B", "C" and "D" should be placed together in one section entitled "Problem Analysis" with these sections as sub-headings. As well it should be noted that investigation of these sub-sections should occur simultaneously and not in a linear fashion as appears to be suggested in the abridged version of the Issue Action stage.

b) In the section on goals the order of the goals should be reversed so that the outcome goals precede the process goals.

c) Material should be added which gives greater information as to under what circumstances certain strategies might be selected.

d) The section on "guidelines for confrontation" should be denoted as the example that it is. Additional examples for other sections should be identified.

e) The section on "Using the media" should be identified as such.

f) Under "action evaluation" it should be made clear that point #5 "Design and execute an evaluation plan" relates to both process and outcome evaluation.

#### To do

1. Carolyn to provide Darrell with agency "end" statements relating to systems advocacy.
2. Louise to sign practicum waiver form.
3. Louise and Anita to complete performance feedback forms from past meetings.
4. Darrell to provide guiding questions for Issue Priorization analysis.

**Appendix R2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**May 15, 1995**

Analysis-May 15, 1995

**Carryover:** Going into the meeting the primary concern of the Consultant was the involvement of the Advocacy Program Manager and the community representative on the committee. With the consumer representative unable to attend, attention was focused on the Advocacy Program Manager.

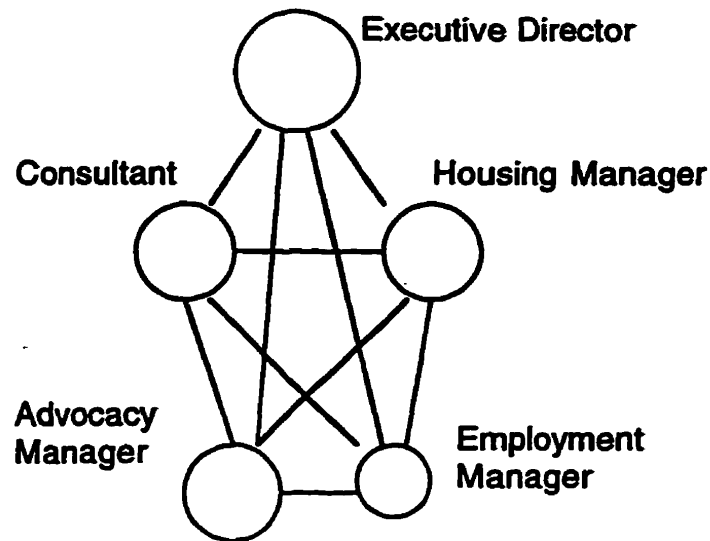
In reviewing the tapes of the meeting the Consultant was able to identify two points where he supported the individual. The first time occurred when she spoke of the need to restructure the component on "problem analysis" within the Issue Action stage. The second time occurred when the manager was involved in a difference of opinion with the Executive Director over process evaluation within the Issue action component. The student ensured that the Manager's perspective was heard and supported her position by pointing out to the committee (and the Manager) that the Framework already incorporated process evaluation. However, when discussing the Manager's observation about a potential bias in the definition of "urgency" she was challenged by other committee members. At this point she stated that she "didn't care one way or the other" and retreated. While the committee was technically correct in regard to the Manager's observation, the Consultant should have supported the comment and/or allowed the discussion to occur in a manner more appreciative of her insight.

**Framework design:** With regard to the day's events, three moments stood out. The first occurred when the Advocacy Program Manager made the surprising observation that she did not think that the selection of a crisis issue could nullify the work on an on-going issue. This position was surprising given that the Advocacy program/agency is currently involved in taking on five systems issues, none of which has resulted in substantial progress to this point in time. The Consultant would have expected a contrary position from the Manager given this and her level of professional experience. While this notion was dispelled by other committee members, it may be that it will take an actual crisis before this is truly accepted.

The second issue is one of concern on the part of the Consultant. When discussing the "Organizational self-analysis" section of the Issue Action stage the Consultant was left with the impression that this section might be one that would be overlooked over time, despite a fairly lengthy explanation as to its importance. The concern relates to the fact that this component can serve not only as a measure of an organization's accountability to its mission statement (maybe that is why it is avoided), but also because it can reveal weak spots in the organizational "defense" in the event of carrying out campaigns.

The final concern noted was with regard to the visual presentation of the abridged version of the framework. It was correctly noted by committee members that while sub-sections of a section may be undertaken simultaneously, the visual presentation leaves the impression that they are to be completed in a linear order. Some form of notation will have to be made in order to rectify this.

Group dynamics:



The Executive Director once again played a leading role in group discussion. Her actions seemed to determine how long and what position the committee took on positions.

The Advocacy Program Manager continued to play an active and vocal role but unlike past meetings, her commentary was more supportive of the process and more accurate. It is clear however that she continues to appear somewhat marginalized in the process and hopefully will voice her concerns at the next meeting when appropriate.

The Employment Manager played a much more reduced role in this meeting. This was in large part due to the fact that she was only able to attend the first half of the meeting, but was not especially active during the initial part. The student does not view this with any concern however given that it takes most members awhile to refresh themselves with the process and become reinvolved.

Self-Analysis: In reviewing the tapes two points were identified by the Consultant above and beyond those identified as on-going concerns. The first point related to the student's lack of knowledge about aspects of the Issue Action stage. This sloppiness can be attributed to the lack of time spent by the student in preparing for the meeting. This lack of preparation can be attributed to the reduced time between meetings and a decrease in the amount of available time the student had as a result of employment commitments. This situation, had it occurred at a more critical junction in the review process, could have been extremely problematic. The Consultant will delegate more time to preparing for the next meeting.

The second point related to the Consultant often agreeing overtly with committee members during discussions when he either is not clear on their point or does not agree with the point. This seems to be, upon reflection, what can only be described as a knee-jerk response to being seen as supportive. The Consultant will endeavour to address this trend by either stating he does not understand or in the case of disagreement, presenting alternative views.

**Appendix S**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 5, 1995**

Agenda-June 5, 1995

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. Review of guiding questions for prioritization analysis.
3. Should "urgency" be an Issue Selection criterion.
4. Decision-making.
5. Transition.

2. Guiding questions for prioritization analysis

- a) What is so important about the presenting issue that the agency would consider curtailing, postponing or eliminating a current issue?
- b) If this issue is selected for action, what will the cost (direct and indirect) be to current or future issues?
- c) What will the cost (direct and indirect) be of not acting on this issue?

3. Should "Urgency" be an issue Selection criteria?

In reviewing the committee's decision to adopt "urgency" as a criterion for prioritizing issues. It appears that this factor may be one of importance in determining whether or not the agency will consider an issue for selection. The adoption of this criterion would not necessarily effect the importance that the committee has attached to it as an Issue Priorization criterion.

4. Decision-making.

- a) Systemic advocacy: An introduction.
- b) The current state of affairs in systems advocacy: A C.M.H.A. update
- c) Primary questions:
  - i) What body/bodies will be responsible for tasks related to the process?
  - ii) How will information and/or issues be gathered and processed?
  - iii) What changes will need to be made within the organization if systems advocacy is to be successfully undertaken? eg. job roles, education, administration, etc.
- d) Decision-making: Issue gathering and Filtering
  - i) Who will process issues and information?

- ii) How will the processing be done (see attached)?
  - iii) When will the processing be done?
  - iv) What happens to gathered issues?
- e) Decision-making: Issue Selection.
- i) Who will process the eligible issues?
  - ii) How will it be done?
  - iii) When will it be done (Board's annual plan, environmental factors [socio-political], agency's fiscal year, government fiscal year, schedules of key organizations, provincial and national offices of C.M.H.A.)?
  - iv) How many issues will be selected?
  - v) What happens to selected issues?
- f) Decision-making: Issue Priorization.
- i) Who will prioritize the issues?
  - ii) When will issues be prioritized (regular process and crisis)?
  - iii) What happens to prioritized issues?
  - iv) What happens to issues which become "unprioritized"?
- g) Decision-making: Issue Action.
- i) Who will develop the action plan?
  - ii) Who decides whether or not to implement the action plan?
  - iii) Who will implement and evaluate the action plan?
- h) Decision-making: Organizational Change.
- i) Who establishes the change goals?
  - ii) Who will implement and evaluate the change goals?



**Appendix S1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 5, 1995**

Meeting Minutes: June 5, 1995

In attendance: Louise Maurakis, Carolyn Strutt, Ellen Kruger, Jim Fisher, Anita Rempel and Darrell Cole.

Agenda

1. Review of meeting minutes.
2. Review of guiding questions for prioritization analysis.
3. Should "Urgency" be an Issue Selection criterion?
4. Decision-making:
  - a) An introduction to systemic advocacy.
  - b) Update on the CMHA advocacy program.
  - c) primary questions to answer:
    - i) What body/bodies will be responsible for the tasks related to the process?
    - ii) How will the information and/or issues be gathered and processed?
    - iii) What changes will need to be made within the organization if systems advocacy is to be successfully undertaken? eg. job roles, education, administration, etc.

1. Review of past meeting minutes.

The minutes from the May 15, 1995 meeting were approved as presented. It is noted that the values attached to the "Number of requests for action" scale are arbitrary and represent only an agreed upon starting point which the agency can alter as necessary.

2. Review of guiding questions for prioritization analysis.

The questions were accepted by the committee but with the request that question "B" be divided into two separate questions. More specifically, that one question reflect the concerns about immediate cost and the other to question the long-term impact of the issue's selection.

i) If this issue is selected for action, what will the cost be (direct and indirect) to current issues?

ii) If this issue is selected for action, what will the cost be (direct and indirect) to future undertakings? eg. loss of coalitions, lack of consistency, etc.

### 3. Should "urgency" be an issue selection criterion?

After some discussion it was decided by the committee that urgency should not be a consideration in selecting issues. The two primary factors in reaching this decision were that the framework process was to eliminate reactive selections through long-term planning and to adopt urgency as a criterion would defeat the purpose of having the framework. Secondly, it was felt that consideration was already accorded to this topic through the criterion on "Winnability".

### 4. Decision-making.

i) Systemic advocacy: An introduction. Darrell Cole provided an overview of the committee's work to this point in time and explained the tasks that were to be undertaken in the remaining time.

ii) Update on the CMHA advocacy program. Carolyn Strutt addressed the changes that had recently occurred in the Advocacy program. It was noted that the program's manager (Ellen Kruger) would spend far less time on individual advocacy (no more than five active cases at any one time and only cases of a unique and/or difficult nature). Instead, time on systems advocacy would increase from 25% to 40-45%. The other member of the program team who had traditionally provided resource referral and phone counselling through the program's phone service, would now greatly reduce her time on this task by reducing time spent per call and through the agency reducing their promotion of this service. Her responsibilities would now be primarily individual advocacy. It was felt that this organizational change was required in order to successfully undertake systems advocacy.

iii) Primary questions. After reviewing the primary questions it was agreed that these would best be answered by going through the model stage by stage and responding to previously unanswered questions in each section (see Agenda-June 5, 1995).

What body/bodies will be responsible for the tasks related to the process? It was quickly agreed that a permanent systems advocacy committee would be struck by the agency. After some discussion it was agreed that the committee would be comprised of a maximum of nine members. These nine members were broken down in the following manner:

- a) Executive Director-C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg
- b) Advocacy program manager-C.M.H.A.-Winnipeg
- c) One Consumer participant from each of the agency's three primary programs. These individuals should have an interest in systems advocacy.
- d) One-two consumer leaders/activists from the general consumer community. These individuals should have some interest in systems advocacy.
- e) One-two professional advocates. These individuals should have some knowledge of mental health issues and demonstrated expertise in the field of advocacy.

As well, all members must have a value base consistent with that of the organization.

In addition to determining the composition of the committee, the following terms of reference were developed:

- a) That the committee is a program advisory committee. As such, its purpose is to assist the appropriate agency staff by advising them throughout the advocacy planning process. Final decisions rest with the agency.
- b) The committee will meet on a regular basis (to be determined) and when the need arises.
- c) Final authority with regard to decisions rests with the agency's Executive Director.

**How will the information and/or issues be gathered and processed?**

It had originally been thought that questions specific to each stage could be answered within the remaining committee time. However, it became clear that this would not be possible due to the complexity of the remaining questions and the limited time available. Instead, agreement was reached on a general process with regard to the relationship of the systems advocacy committee and the agency staff. It was agreed that the committee would assist in the collection, scoring, prioritizing and action of issues. Work would be done by the Advocacy Program Manager and brought to the committee for their advice.

It was also agreed that the start of the systems advocacy process would be somewhat unique as work would have to be done before the establishment of the committee. As such, it was agreed that decisions would be made with regard to the development of an interim process. A number of tasks were identified that would need to be completed by the Advocacy Program Manager. These tasks were;

- a) Selection, recruitment and orientation of committee members.
- b) Development and implementation of key informant survey (staff, agency participants, board members) with regard to collection of issues.
- c) Development of a permanent internal coordinating mechanism that would allow for the flow of information between programs. This would address such issues as:
  - i) brief, easy to use
  - ii) problem definition
  - iii) # of requests
  - iv) action taken
- d) Collection of potential systems advocacy issues.
- e) Development of an agency systems advocacy manual.
- f) Orientation of staff to systems advocacy.

What changes will need to be made within the organization if systems advocacy is to be successfully undertaken? eg. job roles, education, administration, etc.

See aforementioned section on "Update on the CMHA advocacy program".

**Appendix S2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 5, 1995**

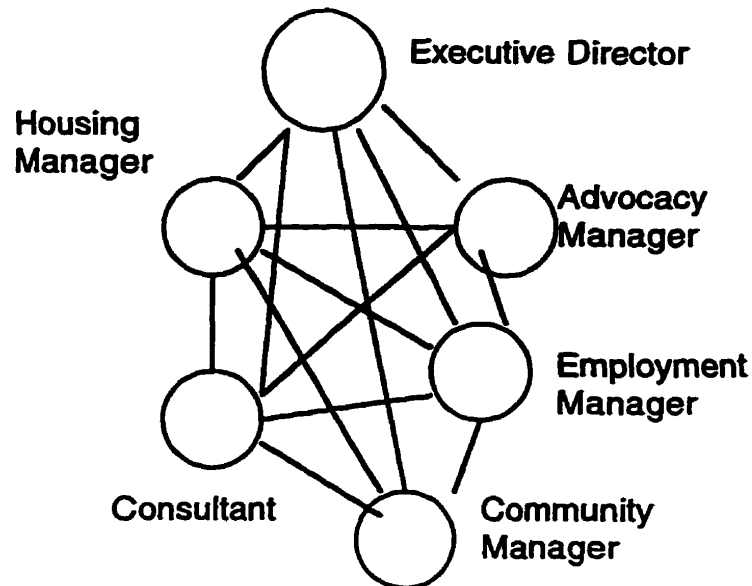
Analysis: June 5, 1995

Carryover: Two issues of concern were identified during the previous meeting with regard to the Consultant's performance. The first and most serious of the concerns related to the poor preparation by the Consultant. While much of this situation could be attributed to the shortened preparation time (one week instead of two), attempts were made by the student to become generally more prepared. Preparation included spending more time going over relevant material in a detailed manner and development of aids that would assist the committee members in undertaking their task (see revised "definitions", abridged version of the Issue Action stage and development of a worksheet for processing issues).

The second issue related to the student's apparent habit of often agreeing with committee comments by stating "okay" or "yes" even when unclear or not in agreement with the comment. This appears to be an overreaction to the student's desire to be viewed as supportive within the process. The student made attempts to be conscious of this during the process by asking members to explain comments when they were not understood or else raise concerns to the committee in a non-threatening manner when in disagreement with a view.

Framework design: With regard to the framework design, two issues arose of particular note. The first point related to the objectives of the committee meeting. The original intent was to answer those questions which had previously been referred back until the entire framework was reviewed. These questions were compiled and sorted according to the appropriate stage of the model by the Consultant. However, once the committee started entering into the work of answering the questions, it became clear that there was a need for additional time and research to answer many of the outstanding questions. As a result, a new objective was developed. In addition to the original meeting objective of determining who would be involved in systems advocacy efforts and in what way, efforts focused on determining what jobs needed to be completed for a projected September start time. The changes went smoothly and did themselves not result in problems or compromises. All meeting objectives were met (see "Meeting minutes-June 5, 1995).

The second point was a discussion related to the first meeting objective. There was within the committee some discussion on the role of the new Systems Advocacy Advisory committee with regard to their status within the systems advocacy process. More specifically, as a program advisory committee within the Carver model of board governance, the committee had advisory status only. Some committee members questioned the use of such a committee if it was only of advisory status. Others wondered if the committee was not a working one, what benefit it might be to those staff charged with doing the work within the agency. The discussion proved a healthy one and assisted committee members in gaining a clearer understanding of how the committee would work vis-a-vis agency staff.

Group dynamics:

In general the meeting started in a very upbeat mood, albeit behind schedule. Some committee members had mistaken the time and as a result the meeting start time was delayed. As well, one of the committee members came in approximately half an hour later than the revised time. The tenor of the meeting changed however as the air system in the small boardroom malfunctioned. This resulted in the air in the room becoming hot and stale. Many members of the committee started to fall asleep.

The only contentious point was the previously mentioned discussion over the role and powers of the new systems advocacy program advisory committee that was created. The Executive Director, in her attempts to underline the advisory status of the committee, raised concerns among other members about the validity and credibility of the new committee, especially in regard to the consumer community (tokenism). This led to a prolonged discussion among group members which served to outline the role and powers of the committee. For example, in keeping with the spirit of the framework, the agency would only go against the wishes of the committee where sound, documented rationale could be provided to the committee members. In the end, it was the backing and clarification of the Executive Director's position by the community representative that closed the discussion. Commentary by all members was quite equal and active.

Self-Analysis: In reviewing the tapes, the student identified a number of positive aspects to his performance. When the committee was involved in a discussion about the role of external "experts" on the new committee, the Consultant helped break the deadlock by asking the committee to articulate what it was that they wanted these individuals to bring to the group. As well, the Consultant actively solicited and facilitated the involvement of all members of the committee. For example, when the committee was actively discussing the advisory status of the committee and the implication of the role on community relations, the Consultant simply asked the Community member for his opinion as a way of resolving



the dispute.

One committee member, noting the lack of energy in the latter stages of the meeting, remarked on the feedback form that that Consultant might have done more to stimulate the energy of the committee. It should be noted that in addition to taking an extra water break, the Consultant actually fanned the room by rapidly opening and closing the door to the Boardroom while facilitating! While perhaps additional steps might have been taken, it is the Consultant's opinion that little could be realistically done to help people, short of personally repairing the cooling system.

**Appendix S3**  
**Information Gathering**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 5, 1995**

## Information Gathering

**Key informant**<sup>58</sup>: Securing information from knowledgeable individuals ie. mental health worker, leader in the consumer community, government official, psychiatrist, agency personnel, professors, etc. Information can be both formal and informal.

advantages- simple, easy to access, inexpensive, can help build individual alliances, can obtain broad range of views.

disadvantages- opinions are subjective, views may be inaccurate.

**Community Forum**: Accessing information from general population or sub-groups.

advantages- relatively inexpensive, not too difficult to organize, can provide increased profile for agency, may increase levels of consumer participation.

disadvantages- may heighten expectations, information not necessarily accurate, information will likely be "reactive", meetings may not turn out the way they were intended (gripe session).

**Rates-under-treatment**: Formal examination of data related to field.

advantages- relatively inexpensive, can produce data which can be used by agency and others, easily evaluated

disadvantages- data may not reveal all issues.

Stock data: a) formal complaints recorded through mental health advocacy program.  
b) similar information from internal (other programs) and external (human rights commission, other advocacy offices, legal aid, hospitals, etc.) sources.

Flow data: a) design of information system which tracks consumers in various systems in order to track movement (or lack thereof) in systems.

Audits: a) information collection system for monitoring certain systems (hospitals, social assistance, etc.) on an on-going basis.

**Social indicators**: inferences drawn from descriptive statistics found in public records or reports ie. unemployment levels, poverty levels, etc.

advantages: large pool of information to draw from, relatively cheap, easily compared to other data.

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<sup>58</sup> from Warheit, Bell & Schwab "Selecting the needs assessment approach".

disadvantages: statistics may be biased and/or not available, largely theory based, information may be too general.

**Field Survey**: combination of open-ended interviews and observation efforts.

advantages: thorough, can help build alliances, can be relatively inexpensive, can provide firsthand knowledge of issues

disadvantages: labour intensive, can solicit reactive answers.

**Appendix T**  
**Agenda**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 12, 1995**

Agenda-June 12, 1995

1. Introduction of aids.
2. Process review.
3. Transition.

**Appendix T1**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 12, 1995**

Meeting Minutes: June 12, 1995

In attendance: Darrell Cole, Carolyn Strutt, Ellen Kruger, Louise Maurakis, Jim Fisher, Anita Rempel.

Agenda

1. Introduction of aids

2. Dry-run of process.

3. Transition.

1. Introduction of aids.

The Consultant introduced the worksheet package and the abridged version of the Issue Action stage. The packages were approved by the committee after limited use during the meeting. It was noted that both could be revised at any later date as the agency saw fit.

2. Process dry-run.

During the course of processing the example issues, the need was recognized for further refining and/or clarifying a number of points related to the Issue Gathering and Filtering and Issue Selection criteria.

a) During the mock process of Issue Gathering it became clear that considerable attention must be paid to how problems are defined and that the appropriate issue is identified. Failure to do so could lead to action failure.

b) The issue was raised as to how issues are scored by the group. That is to say, should committee members do their scoring of issues collectively or individually. It was decided by the committee that where hard data was not available for scoring issues that the scoring of an issue would be done by the committee collectively.

c) With regard to the criterion "Number of people affected", the question was asked if the number should be viewed in the context of a specific aspect of the consumer community or the entire consumer community. For example, in considering the number of people/consumers living in substandard congregate housing, should the number of people affected be expressed as a percentage of those in congregate housing or as a percentage of all consumers? It was agreed that it should be relative to only those affected, those in congregate living.

d) The point was made during a discussion of "Winnability" of the need to document advocacy efforts not just for immediate use by the agency but also for other organizations in the present and future who may undertake such efforts.

e) With regard to "Cost of undertaking the Issue", four points were identified as being relevant;

i) When calculating the monetary cost of undertaking an issue, items such as salary which are included in the agency's core budget should not be considered a cost in



undertaking an issue. However, The Advocate's time spent on the issue should be noted.

ii) The amounts attached to the criterion scale are not accurate and will be revised by the agency.

iii) When considering cost, both direct (monetary) and indirect (non-monetary) costs should be considered.

iv) The committee decided that the benefits of undertaking an issue should be considered when determining whether or not an issue will be selected for action. Accordingly, the title of the criterion will now read "*Cost/Benefit(s)* of undertaking the issue".

### **3. Transition.**

Because of time restrictions, the committee was unable to dry-run the Issue Action phase of the framework. It was agreed that, time allowing, the Consultant would meet with the Executive Director and the Advocacy Program Manager to work through this piece.

**Appendix T2**  
**Analysis**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 12, 1995**

### Analysis-June 12, 1995

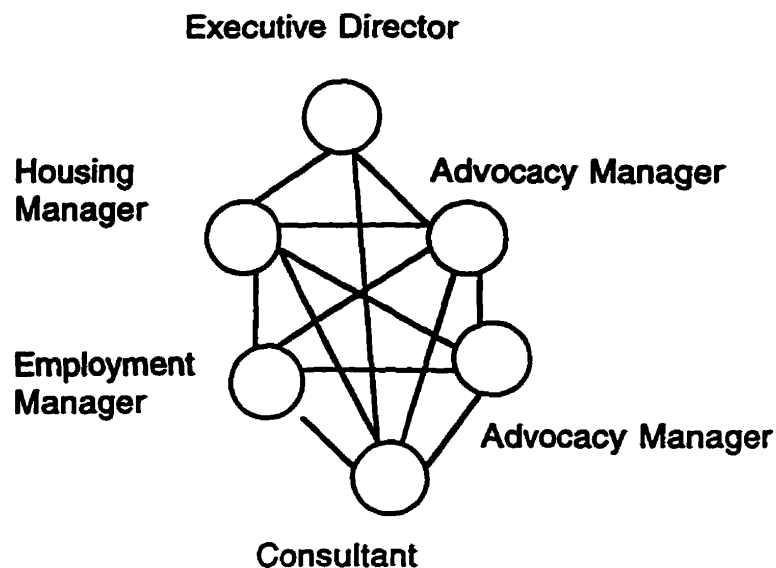
**Carryover:** One area that became an issue upon reflection was the setting of unrealistic meeting objectives. In this meeting, like the other most previous meetings, the student agreed to agendas that he was aware could not be completed. This was done because previous attempts to point out unrealistic agendas had fallen on deaf ears, primarily due to the Executive Director's zeal to have as much work completed within the allotted time as possible. Instead of risking disagreement, the student simply allowed the committee/ Executive Director to proceed at their own speed and allow them to come to their own conclusions about their deadlines. Such was the case in the final meeting. Given the allotted time it seemed clear that there was no way that the committee would get to dry-run the Issue Action phase of the framework. However, by allowing the committee to come to that conclusion, the committee developed a greater sense of how intensive and long it will actually take to work through the process.

**Framework design:** Considerable time was spent by the committee discussing "problems". In examining the problems submitted by committee members, it became clear that many of the submissions were ill-defined and/or often framed as needs. This recognition forced the committee to take a strong look at how important wording is and pushed them to discuss and debate the true cause(s) of the problems.

The scoring process also forced to engage in analysis. This not only helped them focus on their work but was by their own admission exciting and invigorating. The committee members stated informally that doing the work made them feel knowledgeable, confident and eager to undertake a real issue.

The scoring process also resulted in additional fine-tuning to a number of the criterion (see meeting minutes), further enhancing the effectiveness of the framework.

The only disturbing note in the committee's work occurred during the discussion on how the issue scoring would be done. The committee agreed that a "consensual" approach would be best. There still has not been, in the student's mind, a clear understanding or recognition among the committee at large that as much as possible decisions should be based on data and that where data is unavailable, every attempt should be made to garner it, both in the short-term and the long-term. The goal then, is to use informal information as little as possible and use hard data, hence the term "knowledge-guided".

Group dynamics:

This meeting was, in the student's opinion, the most egalitarian of all those meetings where the Executive Director was present. This can be attributed at least in part to the fact that the "negotiations" on how the model would be constructed were over. The dry-run was viewed as a more collegial exercise and as a result, there appeared to be a smoothing effect among committee members. All members of the group were actively involved, although the more outgoing members continued to take up a majority of the discussion. The only real moment of authority occurred when the Executive Director informed a surprised committee/agency member that potential loss of funding would be a very important consideration when deciding on issues. She was immediately challenged by the community representative who pointed out to all members that funders are conservative institutions which reward the status quo and that some issues will never be dealt with if the agency is unprepared to challenge funders. This was acknowledged by the Executive Director.

In the Framework design analysis the student mentioned the committee's focus on consensual scoring. When the two example issues were finished and had comparable scores there was some disappointment on the part of committee members. The Executive Director made the mistake of trying to allay people's concerns by stating that "this was only a guideline". This unfortunate comment immediately provoked an equally unfortunate but appropriate response of "what's the point" from the Advocacy Program Manager. Given the positive tone of the meeting, the Consultant was disappointed to hear such a comment from the advocate again. However, given the comments made by the Executive Director, such a response was not surprising.

It was also interesting to see how some committee members had trouble focusing on the process and became more involved with the issue at hand. It appears that emotional investment in issues could have a role in issue selection, especially if consensual choices become the norm. This speaks to the need for the agency to be vigilant in order to guard against nepotism. The decision to not involve Program Managers in the new systems advocacy advisory committee appears to be a prudent one.

**Self-Analysis:** The nature of the meeting made facilitation easier for the student. Development in such skill areas as focusing the group, summarizing and clarification of ideas also made the day easier.

The only note of concern was the Consultant's confusion over the scoring system for the "cost of undertaking the issue" criterion, although this can be attributed to a temporary mental lapse.

**Appendix T3**  
**Worksheet**  
**Systems Advocacy Working Committee**  
**June 12, 1995**

**Worksheet**

The problem is \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

The Issue is \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**a) Issue Filtering**

Does the issue fall within the organization's end statements: y\_\_\_ n\_\_\_

Does the issue fall within the organization's mandated area: y\_\_\_ n\_\_\_

The presenting problem was identified by (specify if internal program,  
 consumers, external agency, etc.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**b) Issue Selection**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Raw score</u>	<u>Multiplier</u>	<u>Modified score</u>
The severity of harm (.5)		3	
Number of people affected (.5)		3	
Benefits from modifying the...		2	
Efficacy and enforceability		2	
Usefulness as a model for		1	
Chance for success		3	
Cost of undertaking the issue		2	
Expertise of the agency		3	
Fairness to groups		1	
Level of agreement		1	
Potential to alter power relations		3	
Requests for action		3	_____
Total			_____
			120

Overall Ranking: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Issue Priorization

Urgency: \_\_\_\_\_

Motivation: \_\_\_\_\_

Encouragement/support: \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative Criteria Score: \_\_\_\_\_/90                      Overall ranking: \_\_\_\_\_

d) Issue Action

**Problem Analysis:**

a) Nature: \_\_\_\_\_

b) Location: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Scope: \_\_\_\_\_

d) Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Past change efforts: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Perceptions of the problem by significant others:

<u>Significant other</u>	<u>Position</u>
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____



**Origins of the problem:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Theory of the problem:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Structural-functional analysis of the problem:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The people we are trying to help:**

a) **Physical location:** \_\_\_\_\_

b) **Social characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_

c) **Economic characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_

d) **Physical characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_

e) **Demographic characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_

f) **Formal organizations:** \_\_\_\_\_

g) Divisions and cleavages: \_\_\_\_\_

h) Significant relations: \_\_\_\_\_

i) Significant changes: \_\_\_\_\_

**Goals**

- Outcome goals: 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_

- Process goals: 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5) \_\_\_\_\_  
 6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategies**

1. Strategy selected: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale for choice: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Strategy selected: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale for choice: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Strategy selected: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale for choice: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**The Action system:**

**Resistance forces**

**Practitioner evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Tactics:**

1. Tactic chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Tactic chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Tactic chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Tactic chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

**Action evaluation:**

a) Key decisions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b) Decision-makers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c) Time frames: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d) Information needed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix T4**

**Issue Selection Scales (revised)  
Systems Advocacy Working Committee  
June 12, 1995**

## ISSUE SELECTION CRITERIA SCALES

### 1. The gravity of harm:

#### a) Severity of harm:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)              very high (5)

**very low:** Issue (potentially) causes discomfort and inconvenience to consumers/survivors.

**low:** Issue (potentially) is harmful enough to consumers/survivors to cause injury<sup>59</sup>.

**moderate:** Issue (potentially) causes significant trauma in consumers/survivors.

**high:** Issue (potentially) causes severe trauma to consumers/survivors.

**very high:** Issue (potentially) is life-threatening to consumers/survivors.

#### b) Breadth of Harm<sup>60</sup>:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low x(1)              low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)              very high (5)

**very low:** 600 or less (1%)

**low:** 601 - 6000 (10%)

**moderate:** 6,001 - 24,000 (40%)

**high:** 21,001 - 48,000 (80%)

**very high:** 48,001 + (100%)

<sup>59</sup> "injury" considers physical, financial and emotional/psychological injury equally

<sup>60</sup> Numbers based on the understanding that 1 in 10 people within the agency's mandated population base of 600,000 people are mental health consumers/survivors

2. The benefits (short and long term) from modifying the mental health system:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)              very high (5)

**very low:** The issue provides little or no benefits for modifying the mental health system.

**low:** The issue provides modest potential for modifying the mental health system.

**moderate:** The issue provides some potential for modifying the mental health system.

**high:** The issue provides significant potential for modifying the mental health system.

**very high:** The issue provides enormous potential for modifying the mental health system.

3. The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)              very high (5)

**very low:** Little or no chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**low:** Modest chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**moderate:** Some chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**high:** Significant chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**very high:** Enormous chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

4. The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)      moderate (3)      high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** Issue/process presents little or no potential as a model for further action.

**low:** Issue/process presents modest potential as a model for further action.

**moderate:** Issue/process presents some potential as a model for further action.

**high:** Issue/process presents significant potential as a model for further action.

**very high:** Issue/process presents enormous potential as a model for further action.

5. The relative chance for success:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)      moderate (3)      high (4)      very high (5)

**very low:** There is little or no chance of attaining the identified solution.

**low:** There is a modest chance of attaining the identified solution.

**moderate:** There is some chance of attaining the identified solution.

**high:** There is a significant chance of attaining the identified solution.

**very high:** There is an enormous chance of attaining the identified solution.

6. The cost (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue to the agency:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very high (1)      high (2)      moderate (3)      low (4)      very low (5)

**very high:** \$25,000+ and/or very high non-monetary cost.

**high:** \$20,000+ and/or high non-monetary costs.

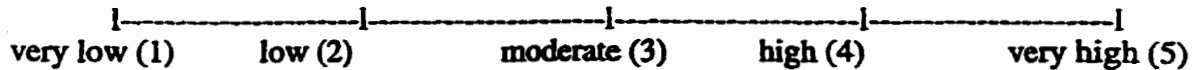
**moderate:** \$15,000+ and/or moderate non-monetary costs.

**low:** \$10,000+ and/or low non-monetary costs.

**very low:** \$5,000+ and/or very low non-monetary costs.



7. The expertise of the agency:



**very low:** The agency possesses little or none of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

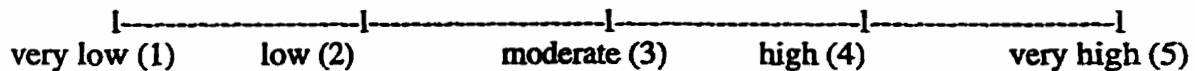
**low:** The agency possesses a modest amount of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**moderate:** The agency possesses some of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**high:** The agency possesses a much of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**very high:** The agency possesses almost all/all of the expertise required to undertake the issue.

8. Fairness to protected groups and respondents:



**very low:** The issue is one pertinent to a very small segment (1% or less) of the consumer/survivor community.

**low:** The issue is one pertinent to only a modest segment (2% - 10%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**moderate:** The issue is one pertinent to some (11% - 40%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**high:** The issue is one pertinent to a significant segment (41% - 80%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**very high:** The issue is one pertinent to an enormous segment (81% or more) of the consumer/survivor community.

9. Level of agreement on issue among targeted groups:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)              very high (5)

**very low:** Little or no agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**low:** Modest agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**moderate:** Some level of agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**high:** Significant agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is problematic.

**very high:** Unanimous/near unanimous agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is problematic.

10. To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)      low (2)              moderate (3)              high (4)              very high (5)

**very low:** The issue has little or no potential to alter the relations of power.

**low:** The issue has modest potential for altering the relations of power.

**moderate:** The issue has some potential for altering the relations of power.

**high:** The issue has significant potential for altering the relations of power.

**very high:** The issue has enormous potential for altering the relations of power.

11. Requests for action:

Very low	somewhat	moderate	high	enormous
----- ----- ----- -----				
20-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76 and up

**Appendix T5**

**Issue Action (Abridged version)  
Systems Advocacy Working Committee  
June 12, 1995**

### Issue Action

1) **The Agency:** "The primary significance of undertaking such an analysis is in the possibilities it opens and the constraints it places on practice."

#### Internal Factors

- a) **Authority:** Structure of the organization (collegial, hierarchical, etc).
- b) **Accountability to consumers:** To what degree does those the organization serves have input and control over the day-to-day operations of the organization.
- c) **Rules:** Are organizational rules pre-determined and imposed on staff or are the staff part of the rule-forming process?
- d) **Decision-making:** Decision-making process is formal, ad hoc, or both.
- e) **Personnel (Paid and voluntary):** Who are the staff? What trends can be noted when considering such factors as age, gender, ethno-cultural background, education, consumers, etc.
- f) **Division of Labour:** Work responsibilities are expert/specialist or generalist in nature.
- g) **Interpersonal Relations:** Relations between staff and/or between staff and consumers are formal and impersonal or informal.
- h) **Job duties:** Are tasks assigned/ individuals hired on the basis of merit or on some other criteria.
- i) **Constitution and Goal Orientation:** Are philosophies, mandates, values, goals and objectives formally articulated and adhered to.
- j) **Nature of services:** Are the current services offered change oriented?
- k) **Depth and breadth of mandate:** Is the organization's mandate narrow and specific or broad and general?

#### External Factors

- a) **Providers of fiscal resources:** Who finances the organization.
- b) **Providers of legitimation and authority:** Who sanctions the organization and its actions.
- c) **Providers of clients:** Who are the organization and/or individuals responsible for providing the organization with consumers of services.
- d) **Perception:** What reputation does the organization have in what circles.

- e) **Providers of complementary services:** Who are the organization/individuals who provide similar and/or mutually beneficial services.
- f) **Competing organizations:** Who are the organizations which compete for finances, clients, etc.
- g) **Consumers and recipients of organization's products:** Who benefits from the organization services (directly and indirectly).

### **Additional factors**

- a) **History of the organization:** An analysis of an organization's evolution can provide insight into past success and failures and reasons for both.
- b) **The practitioner:** What are the personal motivations and capacities of the practitioner(s). As well, what organizational elements (work overload, role ambiguity, etc.) might effect personal motivations and capacity.

2) **The Problem:** The corresponding sections, when undertaken together, provide a detailed understanding of the problem.

- a) **Problem analysis:** What is the problem and its causes.
- b) **Past change efforts:** What work, if any, has been undertaken in the past to address this problem.
- c) **Perceptions of the organization by significant others:** Who sees the problem as different, non-existent or insignificant.

### **Social context of the problem**

- a) **Origins of the problem:** How did the problem become a problem.
- b) **Theory of the problem:** What is the empirical and ideological justification for the problem.
- c) **Structural-functional analysis of the problem:** What are the social structures that maintain, increase or reduce the problem.

### **The people being served**

- a) **Physical location:** Where are they located.
- b) **Social characteristics:** Culture, religion, gender.
- c) **Economic characteristics:** Economic class.

- d) Political characteristics: Degree of power and autonomy, etc.
  - e) Demographic characteristics: Number of people.
  - f) Formal organization: Nature and degree of organization.
  - g) Divisions and cleavages: Sub-communities within the client group.
  - h) Significant relations: With other parts of the social structure.
  - i) Significant changes: Changes in the above over time.
- 3) Goals: Those statements which specify the desired outcome(s) with regard to the issue.
- a) Outcome goals: See "Goals" statement.
  - b) Process goals: How the outcome goals will be achieved.
- 4) Strategies: The types of actions that will be taken to in order to achieve the stated goals.

#### ADVERSARIAL

Definition: "The adversary role is used in situations in which the resolution of differences is attempted through efforts directed to foster the interests of one party over another."  
(Poskanzer, p.1)

Indications for use: "There is a conflict or contest over issues, resources and/or power which does not lend itself to solution through co-operative activity." (Poskanzer, p.1)

#### CONCILIATORY

Definition: "The conciliatory role is used in situations in which resolution of difference is attempted through efforts directed at fostering cooperation and commonality of purpose between competing interests." (Poskanzer, p.2)

Indications for use: "Situations where there is a commonality of interest within differences, and resolution has been thwarted by faulty communication, and/or understanding."  
(Poskanzer, p.2)

#### DEVELOPMENTAL

Definition: "The developmental role is used in attempts to maximize social functioning through development of capacities, and/or capacities and/or resources, and/or through prevention of conditions that are likely to impair those capacities and resources."  
(Poskanzer, p.3)

Indications for use: "a) A system indicates a desire to ameliorate its own functioning and/or

prevent possible social breakdown.

b) Professional knowledge shows that living situations can be improved or social impairment lessened through the development of appropriate resources." (Poskanzer, p.3)

### FACILITATIVE-INSTRUCTIONAL

Definition: "The facilitative-instructional role is used where there is the giving of new knowledge with sufficient elaboration of underlying premises and general applicability so that this intellectual knowledge and emotional understanding can be used in a variety of situations." (Poskanzer, p.4)

Indications for use: "a) There is a need for knowledge in order to perform a particular task, or function which is currently impaired due to lack of understanding or experience.

b) There is a need to enhance collaboration by transmission of knowledge." (Poskanzer, p.4)

### KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

Definition: "Knowledge development and testing is used with the same aims of developing an understanding of social work practice, and social service systems by expanding the elements contained in actual practice, making them explicit, and by subjecting them to verification." (Poskanzer, p.6)

Indications for use: a) More knowledge is needed in order to lead more appropriate action.

b) Action is being taken, but its basis has not been made explicit, and consequently it cannot be transmitted to other practitioners.

c) Action has been taken but has not been evaluated." (Poskanzer, p.6)

The Action System: An inventory of those groups and resources which are seen as being allied.

Resistance (opposition) and interference (inertia, distraction) Forces: As above, but an inventory of those resources and skills which can be brought to bear against the organization with regard to the issue.

Evaluation of practitioner's ability to utilize the strategy: Does the organization/coalition have the ability to successfully implement the appropriate strategies.

5) Tactics: The specific initiatives that the organization will undertake in order to implement the general strategy(ies).

a) Adversarial: civil disobedience, strikes, threats, demonstrations, picketing, lobbying, etc.

- b) Conciliatory: mediation, provision of information, empathy, etc.
- c) Developmental: conciliation, bargaining, task forces, etc.
- d) Facilitative-Instructional: lectures, role playing, role modelling, logical discussion, etc.
- e) Knowledge Development and Testing: research

6) Using the media: No matter what strategies are undertaken the media will likely play a role in action campaigns. Issues for consideration are:

- a) Develop relationships:
- b) Develop a media list:
- c) Think pictures:
- d) Mail press (News) releases:
- e) Follow up press releases with calls:
- f) Recognize who controls the media:

7) Action evaluation: A social process of making judgements about the merit, worth or value of a change.

<u>Evaluation type</u>	<u>Focus of evaluation</u>
1. Effort	Examines quantity of activity
2. Outcome	Examines results of services as they affected clients.
3. Adequacy of Performance	Examines extent to which the program has met community need.
4. Cost-Effectiveness	Examines ratio of resources to outcome.
5. Cost-Efficiency	Examines ratio of resources to services provided.

- a) Identify key decisions: e.g. goals, selection of personnel, strategies and tactics, timeframes, etc.
- b) Identify the decision makers: Who is responsible for what decisions.
- c) Identify the time frame: Have deadlines been properly set and reached,
- d) Identify the kinds and amounts of information needed: What information is



needed to for this action.

e) Communicate the information:

- 1) "Recognize the limits of the evaluation process."
- 2) "Specify the purpose and objectives of the evaluation process."
- 3) "Specify who will use the the evaluation findings, for which decision, at which time."
- 4) "Involve [advocacy team] collaboratively in the process."
- 5) "Stress positive as well as negative results."
- 6) "Ensure effective communication to decision makers."
- 7) "Tie the evaluation process to ongoing organizational or community structures and processes." (p. 282).

**Appendix U**  
**Systems Advocacy: A Working Manual**

**A WORKING MANUAL  
FOR SYSTEMS  
ADVOCACY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Since its inception, The Canadian Mental Health Association - Winnipeg Region has recognized the value of Systems Advocacy to the agency and the people it serves. This recognition was formalized in the agency's *1984 Goals and Priorities* statement where "it was clear that it (C.M.H.A.-Wpg. Region) was intended to advocate for individuals as well as for systemic change."<sup>61</sup> This intent was further enshrined in the goals of the Mental Health Advocacy Program (see Mental Health Advocacy Program Goals). It is also explicit in the Agency's mission statement - People with mental health problems live as citizens within a responsive society.

Since its inception in 1988, The Mental Health Advocacy Program has provided its services to thousands of consumers/survivors. These services have largely been of an individualized nature. This was in response to the crushing demand for such services from consumers/survivors. Some systems advocacy work was undertaken by the Mental Health Advocacy Program in such areas as zoning issues. This work however, was done on a largely short-term and sporadic basis.

During 1990 discussions between the Board of Directors and agency personnel reaffirmed the organization's commitment to undertake systems advocacy, but in a more planned and consistent manner. This process culminated with the completion of a systemic advocacy overview paper by the Program manager. As well, During the year of 1992, a preliminary agreement was also reached between the Program and a graduate student in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba, who was conducting research in the area of Systems Advocacy, to develop a formal framework for undertaking Systems advocacy. Work on this practicum was delayed until the autumn of 1994.

During the year of 1993, efforts were made to initiate work on Systems Advocacy issues on an interim basis, until the completion of the Systems Advocacy Framework. This work was undertaken by the Program manager. In 1994, a Systems Advocacy Working Committee was struck. This committee, made up of the agency's Executive Director, Program Managers, a consumer representative and the aforementioned graduate student developed the agency's Systems Advocacy Framework.

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<sup>61</sup> Newman, Paul. (1990). Evaluation Report of The Mental Health Advocate Program. CMHA-Wpg. pp. 10-11.

**Section 1.****FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW****WHAT IS SYSTEMS ADVOCACY?**

Most advocacy services provided to consumers come in the form of individual advocacy. This means that services deal specifically with the complaints/concerns of specific individuals. Such advocacy is undertaken when an individual feels that they have encountered some type of barrier and/or discrimination that will require the efforts of someone other than themselves to rectify. The purpose of the advocacy efforts is to seek a solution to that specific person's problem, not to deal with collective issues.

Systems advocacy is unlike individual advocacy in two ways. First, it focuses its efforts on group concerns. Secondly, instead of dealing with symptomatic concerns, systems advocacy attempts to deal with the cause of the problem. For example, let us say that the advocate encounters five individuals who have concerns about being treated unprofessionally by their psychiatrist. In individual advocacy, each case would be dealt with individually, with the goal of having the psychiatrist changing his/her professional approach with regard to the complainant. If successfully resolved, this does not necessarily alter how the psychiatrist deals with other patients or how other psychiatrists deal with their patients. In systems advocacy, attempts would instead be made to deal with the collective issue by perhaps pressuring the Medical Association to enact changes that would curtail such inappropriate behaviour. In essence, eliminating the problem.

**WHAT IS SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY?**

The terms "Systems Advocacy" and "Systemic Advocacy" are often used interchangeably. This is unfortunate. While the wording itself may seem confusing, the meaning of the terms are quite distinct. "Systemic advocacy" refers to the process of moving from a series of individual complaints to developing and implementing a plan of action that will result in positive causal change (means). "Systems advocacy" on the other hand, refers to the focus of the advocacy efforts i.e "systems" (ends). In the aforementioned example, efforts would focus on the medical system, as opposed to individuals within the system.

**WHAT IS THE SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK?**

The process outlined on the following pages represents the agency's efforts to undertake systems advocacy in a planned and logical manner. The purpose of having a formal framework is fourfold. Firstly, and most importantly, a formal framework allows the agency to move from a situation where it is facing literally dozens of important and problematic issues to a point where it can narrow down the number of issues and seek to undertake positive resolution of a select few. This is done through the establishment of a formal information gathering process, establishment of clear criteria and unifying the resources of the agency and the community. Secondly, the existence of such a formal framework allows the agency to more easily train agency personnel, consumer/survivors, etc. in all aspects of systems advocacy. Thirdly, the use of a formal system greatly enhances the agency's ability to evaluate its efforts. This ensures greater success in advocacy endeavours and better use of existing resources. Finally, the use of such a formal

system ensures the delivery of advocacy services occur in a consistent manner, especially during times of personnel change.

### WHY IS C.M.H.A. - WPG. REGION UNDERTAKING SYSTEMS ADVOCACY EFFORTS?

An examination of the agency's advocacy work to this point in time has revealed three primary reasons for undertaking systems advocacy while continuing to undertake individual advocacy. While the advocacy services provided by the agency have helped hundreds of individuals in resolving their individual issues, more needs to be done to stem the tide of recurring problems. It is hoped that by focusing some of our efforts on systems advocacy, the generators of these problems can be eliminated, thus producing more fundamental and widespread change for the benefit of the consumer/survivor community.

Another concern with lies with advocacy efforts that rely exclusively on consumer complaints as a means of service provision. Because the vast majority of such complaints are in reaction to an existing problem, advocacy efforts become quite "reactive" in nature.<sup>62</sup> While Systems Advocacy efforts can also become reactive if not monitored, it does provide for a proactive component if properly undertaken.<sup>63</sup> This helps ensure that potential problems never become actual problems.

A review of existing literature has also shown that workers, when faced with sets of recurring problems, tend to become overwhelmed by a sense of fatalism about their work because they start to wonder if real change is possible. Systems advocacy, when successfully undertaken, provides a means for maintaining a stable morale base among workers. This allows them to better meet the needs of the people they serve.

### WHAT IS THE SYSTEMS ADVOCACY MANUAL AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

The Systems Advocacy manual represents a "how to" guide with regard to the agency's systemic advocacy process. It is designed to provide those individuals who will be involved in the agency's systems advocacy efforts with an informative and educational guide for processing issues from the initial collection of data to the successful resolution of advocacy actions.

The manual has been divided into four sections (excluding the "Introduction" and "Section I"). Each of these sections deals with a specific aspect of the framework. **ISSUE FILTERING & GATHERING** refers to how issues will be collected and

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<sup>62</sup> "Reactive advocacy" is defined as "Where advocacy efforts respond to an identified problem which has become entrenched, accepted as general policy or practice, or has achieved maximum negative impact."

<sup>63</sup> "Proactive advocacy" is defined as "Identifying and confronting an issue which has yet to become a problem for consumers of mental health services (e.g. impending legislation, proposed institutional policies, etc.), or has not yet maximized its negative effects on consumers of mental health services (e.g. a new negative practice is adopted in response to an individual case but is not yet widespread, or has serious effects on consumers but has not yet become a public issue (e.g. board and care homes))."

whether or not they meet the agency's basic requirements for further consideration. **ISSUE SELECTION** refers to the process of rating the various issues and determining which ones will be tentatively selected for action. **ISSUE PRIORIZATION** refers to the process for determining both the priority of the selected issues, and how the agency will deal with unexpected situations. Finally, **ISSUE ACTION** refers to how an "action plan" is developed for each specific issue being undertaken. Each section contains, where appropriate, definitions of key terminology. Also, appendices are attached to each section which contain the relevant worksheets for for completing tasks related to the specific section of the framework.



## **Section 2. ISSUE GATHERING AND FILTERING**

**\*DEFINITION:** The process of compiling "eligible" systems advocacy issues.

**Introduction:** One of the most daunting tasks facing the organization is determining how issues should be compiled and which of these issues should be considered for action. How issues are gathered may have a significant impact on both the types of issues collected and the nature of relationships with other aspects of the community. As well, while many issues appear relevant and/or important, not all of these issues can be undertaken by our organization. Some issues may fall outside of the agency's mandate. Others may not qualify as being of a "systems<sup>64</sup>" nature. This stage in the framework will filter out such ineligible issues.

**ISSUE GATHERING:** In determining how issues are to be gathered a number of factors have been identified by the organization as being important considerations.

a) **How issues should be gathered.** The agency has identified five basic forms for collecting issues<sup>65</sup> (and information related to undertaking the issues). All of these formats have merit in the eyes of the agency although certain formats may prove more useful than others.

i) **Key Informant:** securing information from knowledgeable individuals (mental health workers, consumers, government officials, psychiatrists, agency personnel, etc.) Information can be obtained both formally and informally.

- Advantages: simple, easy to obtain, inexpensive (usually), can help build individual alliances, can obtain a broad range of views.

- Disadvantages: opinions can be subjective, views may be inaccurate.

ii) **Community Forum:** Accessing information from the general population or sub-groups.

- Advantages: relatively inexpensive, not too difficult to organize, can provide increased profile for the agency, may increase levels of consumer participation.

- Disadvantages: may heighten expectations, information not necessarily accurate, information will likely be reactive, if not properly run, forums can turn into a public relations fiasco.

iii) **Data Analysis:** Formal examination of data related to field.

-Stock data: Formal complaints recorded through Mental Health Advocacy program. Similar information from internal (other programs) and

<sup>64</sup> A "system" is defined as "Legislative, policy, service and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social entitlements of psychiatric consumers/survivors."

<sup>65</sup> From Warheit, Bell and Schwab "Selecting the Needs Assessment Approach."

external (Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid, other Advocacy offices, etc.) sources.

- **Flow data:** Design of information system which tracks consumers in various systems in order to track movement (or lack thereof).

- **Audits:** Information collection system for monitoring certain systems (hospitals, social assistance, etc.) on an on-going basis.

- **Advantages:** Relatively inexpensive, can produce data which can be used by agency and others, easily evaluated.

- **Disadvantages:** data may not reveal all issues.

iv) **Social Indicators:** Inferences drawn from descriptive statistics found in public records or reports (unemployment levels, poverty levels, etc.).

- **Advantages:** Large pool of information to draw from, relatively cheap, easily compared to other data.

- **Disadvantages:** Statistics may be biased or not available. Largely theory based, information may be too general.

v) **Field Survey:** Combination of open-ended interviews and observation efforts.

- **Advantages:** Thorough, can help build alliances, can be relatively inexpensive, can provide firsthand knowledge of issues.

- **Disadvantages:** Labour intensive, can solicit reactive answers.

b) **When should issues be gathered.** Another important consideration in determining how issues will be gathered will be timing. Factors such as the Board of Directors annual plan, environmental factors (sociopolitical climate), the agency's fiscal year, the provincial governments' fiscal year, schedules of other key organizations, and the schedules of CMHA's national and Provincial offices will all have a bearing on how and when issues are gathered.

c) **What happens to gathered issues.** Another important consideration is feedback, both internally and externally. For example, if issues have been solicited at a community forum, efforts should be made to provide participants with some feedback on the agency's decisions and its rationale for these decisions. Failure to do so can lead to a lack of faith in the process.

**ISSUE FILTERING:** Having collected a pool of issues, attention must be paid to eliminating those issues that, while perhaps important, do not meet the agency's most basic minimum requirements for consideration.

**Instructions:** Each individual issue gathered should respond positively to the following three questions in order to be considered for Issue Selection

a) **Does the issue meet the agency's definition of a "systems" issue?** As previously mentioned, the agency has defined "systems" as "legislative, policy, service, and other systems levels relating to legal rights and therapeutic and social

entitlements of psychiatric consumer/survivors.” Only issues which can be identified as falling within this definition can be accepted for further consideration.

**b) Does the issue fall with the agency’s Mandate, Mission, and Ends statements?**

i) **Mandate:** Is this an issue that is contained within the agency’s geographically mandated area of the City of Winnipeg?

ii) **Mission:** “The mission of the Canadian Mental Health Association is the promotion of the mental health of all people. In pursuit of this mission, CMHA-Winnipeg Region endeavours to eliminate all societal conditions adversely affecting people with mental health problems. There are three distinct contributions of CMHA-Winnipeg Region.”

- “Defending the rights and advocating the interests of individuals with mental health problems.”

- “Ensuring successful community participation and integration of people with mental health problems.”

- “Ensuring public understanding of mental health issues.”

iii) **Ends Statements:** “the agency recognizes the intrinsic value of every human person, and believes that people who are affected by mental health problems have the same rights to choices and access to services as all other persons and in accordance with these beliefs, the objectives of the Association shall be:”

- To advocate the interests of individuals with mental health problems,

- To eliminate societal conditions adversely affecting people with mental health problems.

- To manage the Association in such a way as to promote fiscal responsibility.

c) **Is the issue being presented the real issue?** Issues gathered by the agency, no matter what process is used to gather them, may not necessarily be received in a form that reveals the true issue. For example, a complaint about the high cost of medication may identify a problem but not the issue. The issue may in fact be generous patent protection laws to pharmaceutical companies. In short, we seek clarity around the problem and its causes. Failure to identify the true issue can result in the omission of important issues and the acceptance of flawed ones, as well as leading to misguided choices for types of actions and the focus of those actions.

**Section 3.****ISSUE SELECTION**

**\*DEFINITION:** "The process of determining which issue(s) from among the many eligible issues will be selected at a given point in time for action."

**Introduction:** While the stage of Issue Filtering will assist in reducing the number of issues for consideration, it is clear that the organization will face the prospect of only being able to act on a small percentage of the total number of qualifying issues. To this end, a set of criteria has been developed to assist in determining which issue(s) would be best suited for further consideration.

**Instructions:** Each issue that has made it through the filtering stage is rated using the following criteria (see "Issue Selection Worksheet").

**Issue Selection Criteria (Definitions)**

- a) **The gravity of harm:** The breadth and depth of the harm incurred by consumers/survivors.
  - i) **The severity of harm:** "The degree to which a particular issue adversely affects consumers/survivors."
  - ii) **Number of people affected:** "The number of consumers/survivors adversely affected by a particular issue."
- b) **The benefits (short and long-term) from modifying the Mental Health system<sup>66</sup>:** The potential short and long-term benefits to the mental health system if the issue is successfully undertaken.
- c) **The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy:** The viability of ensuring that a solution can be put into effect.
- d) **The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for future action:** Does the knowledge and experiences gained from undertaking the issue give direction for future issues.
- e) **The relative chance for success:** How winnable<sup>67</sup> the issue is.
- f) **The cost/benefits (direct and indirect<sup>68</sup>) of the issue to the agency:** Each issue will bring with it its own unique set of costs and benefits to the agency.
  - i) **The cost of the issue to the agency**

<sup>66</sup> "Mental Health system" is defined as "Those laws, policies, institutions, personnel, services, and products whose primary purpose is to serve the needs of mental health consumers/survivors."

<sup>67</sup> "Winnable" is defined as "The relative chance of attaining the identified goal(s)."

<sup>68</sup> "Direct costs" refers to resources that would need to be spent on the issue to undertake it. "In direct costs" refers to costs that the agency may occur as a result of undertaking a particular issue, such as political fallout, loss of future funding, etc.

ii] The benefits of undertaking the issue to the agency.

g) The expertise of the agency: Does the agency possess the necessary expertise<sup>69</sup> to undertake the issue.

h) Fairness to protected groups and respondents: Will selection of a particular issue discriminate and/or omit the needs of particular sub-groups within the consumer/survivor community.

i) Level of agreement on issue among targeted groups: To what degree do consumers/survivors agree that a particular issue is a problematic one

j) To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power<sup>70</sup>:

k) Requests for action: The number of requests, formal and informal, direct and indirect, for action from internal and external sources on a particular issue.

a) How many issues will be selected for action? There is not set number of issues to be chosen. An assessment must be done on the available and projected agency resources and this should be weighed against the resources needed to undertake the issue. In general, it is safe practice to not stretch the resources of the agency to the limit as unexpected needs will arise and not all aspects of the assessment may be totally accurate.

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<sup>69</sup> "Expertise" is defined as "The knowledge, skills and attitudes required to successfully undertake an identified issue.

<sup>70</sup> "Power" is defined as "The degree of control and autonomy which consumers/survivors exercise over their own lives vis-a-vis the mental health system and/or its allied systems."

**Section 2**

**Appendix**

**ISSUE SELECTION CRITERIA SCALES****1. The gravity of harm:****a) Severity of harm:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (.5)    low (1)    moderate (1.5)    high (2)    very high (2.5)

**very low:** Issue (potentially) causes discomfort and inconvenience to consumers/survivors.

**low:** Issue (potentially) is harmful enough to consumers/survivors to cause injury<sup>71</sup>.

**moderate:** Issue (potentially) causes significant trauma in consumers/survivors.

**high:** Issue (potentially) causes severe trauma to consumers/survivors.

**very high:** Issue (potentially) is life-threatening to consumers/survivors.

**b) Number of people affected<sup>72</sup>:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (.5)    low (1)    moderate (1.5)    high (2)    very high (2.5)

**very low:** 600 or less (1%)

**low:** 601 - 6000 (10%)

**moderate:** 6,001 - 24,000 (40%)

**high:** 21,001 - 48,000 (80%)

**very high:** 48,001 + (100%)

**2. The benefits (short and long term) from modifying the mental health system:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** The issue provides little or no benefits for modifying the mental health system.

**low:** The issue provides modest potential for modifying the mental health system.

**moderate:** The issue provides some potential for modifying the mental health system.

**high:** The issue provides significant potential for modifying the mental health system.

**very high:** The issue provides enormous potential for modifying the mental health system.

<sup>71</sup> "injury" considers physical, financial and emotional/psychological injury equally.

<sup>72</sup> Numbers based on the understanding that 1 in 10 people within the agency's mandated population base of 600,000 people are mental health consumers/survivors.

**3. The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** Little or no chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**low:** Modest chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**moderate:** Some chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**high:** Significant chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**very high:** Enormous chance that the solution can be implemented and/or maintained.

**4. The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** Issue/process presents little or no potential as a model for further action.

**low:** Issue/process presents modest potential as a model for further action.

**moderate:** Issue/process presents some potential as a model for further action.

**high:** Issue/process presents significant potential as a model for further action.

**very high:** Issue/process presents enormous potential as a model for further action.

**5. The relative chance for success:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** There is little or no chance of attaining the identified solution.

**low:** There is a modest chance of attaining the identified solution.

**moderate:** There is some chance of attaining the identified solution.

**high:** There is a significant chance of attaining the identified solution.

**very high:** There is an enormous chance of attaining the identified solution.



6. The cost/benefit (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue:

a) The cost (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very high (.5)    high (1)    moderate (1.5)    low (2)    very low (2.5)

**very high:** \$25,000+ and/or very high non-monetary cost.

**high:** \$20,000+ and/or high non-monetary costs.

**moderate:** \$15,000+ and/or moderate non-monetary costs.

**low:** \$10,000+ and/or low non-monetary costs.

**very low:** \$5,000+ and/or very low non-monetary costs.

b) The benefit (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (.5)    low (1)    moderate (1.5)    high (2)    very high (2.5)

**very high:** enormous benefit

**high:** significant benefit

**moderate:** some benefit

**low:** modest benefit

**very low:** little benefit

7. The expertise of the agency:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** The agency possesses little or none of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**low:** The agency possesses a modest amount of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**moderate:** The agency possesses some of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**high:** The agency possesses a much of the expertise required to successfully undertake the issue.

**very high:** The agency possesses almost all/all of the expertise required to undertake the issue.

**8. Fairness to protected groups and respondents:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** The issue is one pertinent to a very small segment (1% or less) of the consumer/survivor community.

**low:** The issue is one pertinent to only a modest segment (2% - 10%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**moderate:** The issue is one pertinent to some (11% - 40%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**high:** The issue is one pertinent to a significant segment (41% - 80%) of the consumer/survivor community.

**very high:** The issue is one pertinent to an enormous segment (81% or more) of the consumer/survivor community.

**9. Level of agreement on issue among targeted groups:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** Little or no agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**low:** Modest agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**moderate:** Some level of agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is a problematic one.

**high:** Significant agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is problematic.

**very high:** Unanimous/near unanimous agreement among consumers/survivors that the issue is problematic.

**10. To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power:**

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

**very low:** The issue has little or no potential to alter the relations of power.

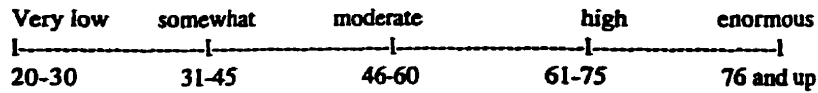
**low:** The issue has modest potential for altering the relations of power.

**moderate:** The issue has some potential for altering the relations of power.

**high:** The issue has significant potential for altering the relations of power.

**very high:** The issue has enormous potential for altering the relations of power.

11. Requests for action:



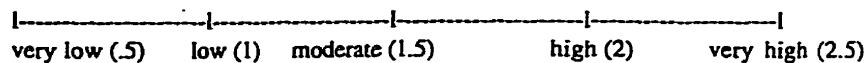
**Worksheet Instructions**

On the following pages you will find two worksheets which together will allow you to process issues related to Issue Selection. The first sheet to be used is the "Issue Selection Criterion Scales (see attached sheet)." On this sheet are eleven different criterion for determining which issues the agency may select for action.<sup>73</sup> Each individual criterion contains a scale and definitions for each point on the scale. Each individual issue is scored on the scales collectively by the appropriate agency personnel, receiving a value from one to five.<sup>74</sup>

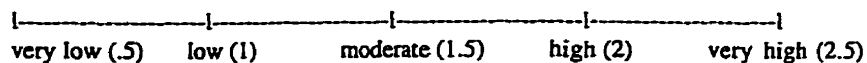
Ex. Let us say that the agency was scoring the following issue, "That the organizational structure of hospitals do not meet the needs of mental health consumers/survivors." Using the attached scales and their definitions, the issue might be scored like this;

1. The gravity of harm:

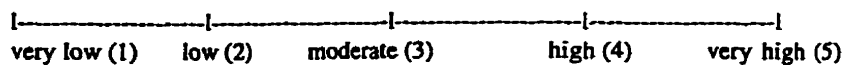
a) Severity of harm:



b) Number of people affected<sup>75</sup>:



2. The benefits (short and long term) from modifying the mental health system:



<sup>73</sup>Criterion "a" and "f" are both subdivided for a total of thirteen individual scales. This subdivision occurred because the organization felt that the criterion was comprised of two vital elements. However, these subdivided scales are half the numerical value of the other scales (.5 to 2.5). When added together they combine to make a value (1-5) equal to the other scales.

<sup>74</sup> It should be noted that only some of the scales use hard data at the time this manual was produced. Concensus will be needed to achieve a rating for some criterion until enough data has been compiled to replace this process.

<sup>75</sup> Numbers based on the understanding that 1 in 10 people within the agency's mandated population base of 600,000 people are mental health consumers/survivors.

3. The efficacy and enforceability of a remedy:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

4. The usefulness of the issue/process as a model for further action:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

5. The relative chance for success:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

6. The cost/benefit (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue:

a) The cost (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very high (.5)    high (1)    moderate (1.5)    low (2)    very low (2.5)

b) The benefit (direct and indirect) to the agency of undertaking the issue

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (.5)    low (1)    moderate (1.5)    high (2)    very high (2.5)

7. The expertise of the agency:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

8. Fairness to protected groups and respondents:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

9. Level of agreement on issue among targeted groups:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

10. To what extent does the issue have the potential to alter the relations of power:

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 very low (1)    low (2)    moderate (3)    high (4)    very high (5)

11. Requests for action<sup>76</sup>:

Very low	somewhat	moderate	high	enormous
----- ----- ----- -----				
20-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+

<sup>76</sup> "Requests for action" is always considered but an issue will score zero unless at least there have been twenty "requests for action" (as defined by the agency).

Once the group has rated the issue on each of the individual scales the scores are transferred to the Issue Selection Worksheet (see attached). The individual scores are then placed beside the appropriate criterion under the heading "Raw Score".

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Raw score</u>	<u>Multiplier</u>	<u>Modified score</u>
The severity of harm (.5)	2	3	6/7.5
Number of people affected (.5)	1.5	3	4.5/7.5
Benefits from modifying the...	4	2	8/10
Efficacy and enforceability	5	2	10/10
Usefulness as a model for	4	1	4/5
Chance for success	4	3	12/15
Cost of undertaking the issue (.5)	2	2	4/7.5
Benefits of undertaking the issue (.5)	2	2	4/7.5
Expertise of the agency	4	3	12/15
Fairness to groups	4	1	4/5
Level of agreement	5	1	5/5
Potential to alter power relations	3	3	9/15
Requests for action <sup>77</sup>	1	3	3/15
			<hr/>
Total			85.5
			120

Once the raw scores have been posted, they are then applied against the number directly to their right, the "multipliers". The "multipliers" are numbers of 1, 2 or 3 which the agency uses to demonstrate varying levels of importance between the criteria, with three denoting the most important criteria and a multiplier of 1 denoting the least important. This means that two criterion with the same raw score (2) would score differently if they have different multipliers (2x1, 2x2, 2x3). After the raw scores have been applied against the multiplier, a new modified score is obtained (see far right hand column). These numbers, when totalled, provide a given issues total score. This process occurs for each individual issue until all have been scored. The top scoring issues are then considered for action.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> In this example, a "1" was assessed because there had been 20-30 requests for action on this issue.

<sup>78</sup> Three points should be noted with regard to issue scoring. First, all issues, no matter what their relative ranking, must achieve a minimum score in order to be considered worthy of further consideration. This score must be at least 66% of the possible total. With the current maximum total being at 120, an issue must then score at least a "79." The second point of note is that there may be a number of issues which score relatively close together (5 points). In the event that this should happen and the number of issues exceeds the number of issues that can be acted on, then the issues should be rescored using only those criterion that have a multiplier of three. Finally, the selection of issues at this stage does not automatically mean they will be undertaken. what it does mean is that these issues will be assessed further to determine the validity for action.

Worksheet

The problem is \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

The Issue is \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

a) Issue Filtering

Does the issue fall within the organization's end statements: y\_\_\_ n\_\_\_

Does the issue fall within the organization's mandated area: y\_\_\_ n\_\_\_

The presenting problem was identified by (specify if internal program, consumers, external agency, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

b) Issue Selection

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Raw score</u>	<u>Multiplier</u>	<u>Modified score</u>
The severity of harm (.5)		3	
Number of people affected (.5)		3	
Benefits from modifying the...		2	
Efficacy and enforceability		2	
Usefulness as a model for		1	
Chance for success		3	
Cost of undertaking the issue (.5)		2	
Benefits of undertaking the issue (.5)		2	
Expertise of the agency		3	
Fairness to groups		1	
Level of agreement		1	
Potential to alter power relations		3	
Requests for action		3	
			_____
Total			_____
			120

Overall Ranking: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 3. Issue Priorization

**\*DEFINITION:** "The ranking of issues on the basis of perceived importance."

**Introduction:** After the selection of issues is complete, another issue must be considered by the agency before proceeding with actual action. This consideration relates to the prioritization of issues. C.M.H.A. operates in an ever changing environment. As such, there is always the possibility that changing circumstances will cause the organization to review any ongoing actions to see if it is prudent to continue them, scale back operations or perhaps, actually increase the agency's commitment to a particular action. To undertake such a change in the face of adversity can be dangerous however. Decisions made are not as likely to be objective and/or well thought out. The establishment of criteria for prioritizing already selected issues then allows the agency to make quick and logical changes in a shifting world.

The organization has adopted a number of criterion that are to be used in prioritizing issues if more than one has been selected for action. In the event that a review is called for the agency will already have a clear idea of how it should respond. It should be noted that the criteria are not scored but simply act as guidelines for carrying out a prioritization process, although the first five will have numerical values attached to them from the Issue Selection process.

#### Issue Priorization Criteria

- a) Gravity of Harm.
- b) The relative chance for success.
- c) The expertise of the agency.
- d) The degree of potential for altering the relations of power.
- e) Request for action.
- f) Urgency.<sup>79</sup>
- g) Motivation.<sup>80</sup>
- h) Level of encouragement/support.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Urgency is defined as "Need for action is immediate. The issue presenting is extreme, either through its time limitations and/or the potential damage/good that could be generated by not acting/acting on the issue."

<sup>80</sup> Motivation is defined as "The degree of interest and commitment that the agency is willing to demonstrate towards the successful achievement of the identified goal."

<sup>81</sup> Level of encouragement/support is defined as "The amount of tangible support that can be amassed to achieve the identified goal."

a) **When should issues be prioritized?** Assuming that more than one issue has been selected for action, these issues should be prioritized immediately. Otherwise, this process should be utilized whenever a crisis develops.

b) **What constitutes a crisis?** While a crisis per se has yet to be defined, it has been decided that each program will be issued a copy of the Issue Priorization criteria. Program personnel (individually or collectively) can then submit a written outline to the responsible body for consideration. Should such an assessment then be warranted, the new issue would then be rated and rated against the ongoing issues. A decision would then be made as to whether or not the new issue would be undertaken and at what expense.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> In making this consideration however, members of the relevant body should consider the following questions;

a) Why is the presenting issue so important that the agency would consider curtailing, postponing or eliminating a current issue?

b) If the presenting issue is selected for action, what will the cost (direct and indirect) be to current issues?

c) If the presenting issue is selected for action, what will the cost (direct and indirect) be to future issues?

d) What will the cost be (direct and indirect) of not acting on the presenting issue?



**Section 4.****ISSUE ACTION**

**\*DEFINITION:** “The process of developing and implementing a plan for the successful undertaking of previously selected and prioritized issues.”

**Introduction:** If issues are to be successfully undertaken actions must be well thought out and documented. This does not mean that a solution to a problem need be complex. It simply means that the odds of being successful in an undertaking improve when an intelligent plan is devised, a rationale for action is provided and as much as possible, the use of objective data is employed. In those cases which are unsuccessful, the existence of such a plan makes for ease of reflection and evaluation and helps to ensure that mistakes made are not repeated.

Every issue that is being considered for action (ie. post-Issue Priorization) should be assessed through the final stage of the framework. This is done for two reasons. First, a detailed analysis of an issue may show that an issue that looked appealing initially may not be so attractive after more intense scrutiny. This will help avoid taking on actions which might not be winnable, or at too great a cost. The final, and most obvious reason, is that this stage represents the agency’s strategic document with regard to how the action will be developed, implemented and evaluated.

The final section is divided into three major components; “Self-Analysis”, “Problem Analysis”, and “Using the Media.” A worksheet for completing the action assessment can be found in the “Section 4 Appendix.”

**Self-Analysis**

1) **The Agency:** “The primary significance of undertaking such an analysis is in the possibilities it opens and the constraints it places on practice.” One mistake that is often made by organization’s is their exclusive focus outside the organization. Knowledge of the agency’s unique makeup, its strengths and weaknesses and its values and functions, will greatly assist in choosing strategies, establishing alliances and ultimately, successfully resolving problems.

**INTERNAL FACTORS**

- a) **Authority:** Structure of the organization (collegial, hierarchical, etc).
- b) **Accountability to consumers:** To what degree does those the organization serves have input and control over the day-to-day operations of the organization.
- c) **Rules:** Are organizational rules predetermined and imposed on staff or are the staff part of the rule-forming process?
- d) **Decision-making:** Decision-making process is formal, ad hoc, or both.
- e) **Personnel (Paid and voluntary):** Who are the staff? What trends can be noted when considering such factors as age, gender, ethno-cultural background, education, consumers, etc.

- f) Division of Labour: Work responsibilities are expert/specialist or generalist in nature.
- g) Interpersonal Relations: Relations between staff and/or between staff and consumers are formal and impersonal or informal.
- h) Job duties: Are tasks assigned/ individuals hired on the basis of merit or on some other criteria.
- i) Constitution and Goal Orientation: Are philosophies, mandates, values, goals and objectives formally articulated and adhered to.
- j) Nature of services: Are the current services offered change oriented?
- k) Depth and breadth of mandate: Is the organization's mandate narrow and specific or broad and general?

### EXTERNAL FACTORS

- a) Providers of fiscal resources: Who finances the organization.
- b) Providers of legitimation and authority: Who sanctions the organization and its actions.
- c) Providers of clients: Who are the organization and/or individuals responsible for providing the organization with consumers of services.
- d) Perception: What reputation does the organization have in what circles.
- e) Providers of complementary services: Who are the organization/individuals who provide similar and/or mutually beneficial services.
- f) Competing organizations: Who are the organizations which compete for finances, clients, etc.
- g) Consumers and recipients of organization's products: Who benefits from the organization's services (directly and indirectly).

### Additional factors

- a) History of the organization: An analysis of an organization's evolution can provide insight into past success and failures and reasons for both.
- b) The practitioner: What are the personal motivations and capacities of the practitioner(s). As well, what organizational elements (work overload, role ambiguity, etc.) might effect personal motivations and capacity.

### **Problem Analysis**<sup>83</sup>

**A) The Problem:** The corresponding sections, when undertaken together, provide a detailed understanding of the problem.

- a) **Problem analysis:** What is the problem and its causes.
- b) **Past change efforts:** What work, if any, has been undertaken in the past to address this problem.
- c) **Perceptions of the by significant others:** Who sees the problem as different, non-existent or insignificant.

### **Social context of the problem**

- a) **Origins of the problem:** How did the problem become a problem.
- b) **Theory of the problem:** What is the empirical and ideological justification for the problem.
- c) **Structural-functional analysis of the problem:** What are the social structures that maintain, increase or reduce the problem.

### **The people being served**

- a) **Physical location:** Where are they located.
- b) **Social characteristics:** culture, religion, gender.
- c) **Economic characteristics:** Economic class.
- d) **Political characteristics:** Degree of power and autonomy, etc.
- e) **Demographic characteristics:** Number of people.
- f) **Formal organization:** nature and degree of organization.
- g) **Divisions and cleavages:** sub-communities within the client group.
- h) **Significant relations:** With other parts of the social structure.
- i) **Significant changes:** changes in the above over time.

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<sup>83</sup> It should be noted that each section should not necessarily occur in a linear fashion, but can be researched concurrently.

**B) Goals:** Those statements which specify the desired outcome(s) with regard to the issue.

a) Outcome goals: See "Goals" statement.

b) Process goals: How the outcome goals will be achieved.

**C) Strategies:** The types of general actions/approaches that will be taken to in order to achieve the stated goals.

### ADVERSARIAL

Definition: "The adversary role is used in situations in which the resolution of differences is attempted through efforts directed to foster the interests of one party over another." (Poskanzer, p.1)

Indications for use: "There is a conflict or contest over issues, resources and/or power which does not lend itself to solution through co-operative activity." (Poskanzer, p.1)

### CONCILIATORY

Definition: "The conciliatory role is used in situations in which resolution of difference is attempted through efforts directed at fostering cooperation and commonality of purpose between competing interests." (Poskanzer, p.2)

Indications for use: "Situations where there is a commonality of interest within differences, and resolution has been thwarted by faulty communication, and/or understanding." (Poskanzer, p.2)

### DEVELOPMENTAL

Definition: "The developmental role is used in attempts to maximize social functioning through development of capacities, and/or capacities and/or resources, and/or through prevention of conditions that are likely to impair those capacities and resources." (Poskanzer, p.3)

Indications for use: a) A system indicates a desire to ameliorate its own functioning and/or prevent possible social breakdown.

b) Professional knowledge shows that living situations can be improved or social impairment lessened through the development of appropriate resources." (Poskanzer, p.3)

### FACILITATIVE-INSTRUCTIONAL

Definition: "The facilitative-instructional role is used where there is the giving of new knowledge with sufficient elaboration of underlying premises and general applicability so that this intellectual knowledge and emotional understanding can be used in a variety of situations." (Poskanzer, p.4)

Indications for use: "a) There is a need for knowledge in order to perform a particular task, or function which is currently impaired due to lack of understanding or experience.

b) There is a need to enhance collaboration by transmission of knowledge." (Poskanzer, p.4)

### KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

**Definition:** "Knowledge development and testing is used with the same aims of developing an understanding of social work practice, and social service systems by expanding the elements contained in actual practice, making them explicit, and by subjecting them to verification." (Poskanzer, p.6)

**Indications for use:** a) More knowledge is needed in order to lead more appropriate action.

b) Action is being taken, but its basis has not been made explicit, and consequently it cannot be transmitted to other practitioners.

c) Action has been taken but has not been evaluated." (Poskanzer, p.6)

**The Action System:** An inventory of those groups and resources which are seen as being allied.

**Resistance (opposition) and interference (inertia, distraction) Forces:** As above, but an inventory of those resources and skills which can be brought to bear against the organization with regard to the issue.

**Evaluation of practitioner's ability to utilize the strategy:** Does the organization/coalition have the ability to successfully implement the appropriate strategies.

**D) Tactics<sup>84</sup> :** The specific initiatives that the organization will undertake in order to implement the general strategy(ies).

a) **Adversarial:** civil disobedience, strikes, threats, demonstrations, picketing, lobbying, etc.

b) **Conciliatory:** mediation, provision of information, empathy, etc.

c) **Developmental:** conciliation, bargaining, task forces, etc.

d) **Facilitative-Instructional:** lectures, role playing, role modelling, logical discussion, etc.

e) **Knowledge Development and Testing:** research

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<sup>84</sup> For example, If a coalition decided that opposition to government policy changes was best undertaken by educating the general public through a series of press conferences and a regular bulletin, then the strategy chosen is an education one. The press conferences and bulletin are the tactics chosen to implement the strategy.

### Using the Media

**Using the media:** No matter what strategies are undertaken the media will likely play a significant role in action campaigns. Issues for consideration are:

- a) **Develop relationships:** It is important to develop relationships with those media personalities considered vital to the agency and its work. This could include social affairs reporters, editor-in-chiefs, local community reporters etc.
- b) **Develop a media list:** Contact with the media often happens on relatively short notice and often at the media's call. Having an up to date list of all media outlets and relevant contact people helps ensure fast and accurate responses.
- c) **Think pictures:** The term "A picture is worth a thousand words" was not coined for nothing. Media exposure is often very limited and what people see can be more important than what they hear.
- d) **Mail press (News) releases:** Prepared news releases ensure fast and accurate means of getting out a message.
- e) **Follow up press releases with calls:** As with everything in life, a personal conversation greatly increases the likelihood of getting what one wants.
- f) **Recognize who controls the media:** While the media has its more progressive elements, the people who control the media are often those who stand to gain the most from the status quo.
- g) **Be prepared:** Always be clear one who will converse with the media and what that person will say. Ill-advised comments can ruin an entire campaign!

**Section 4**

**Appendix**

**Issue Action**

**Problem Analysis:**

a) Nature: \_\_\_\_\_

b) Location: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Scope: \_\_\_\_\_

d) Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

**Past change efforts:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Perceptions of the problem by significant others:**

**Significant other**

**Position**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Origins of the problem:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Theory of the problem:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Structural-functional analysis of the problem:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The people we are trying to help:**

- a) **Physical location:** \_\_\_\_\_
- b) **Social characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_
- c) **Economic characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_
- d) **Physical characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_
- e) **Demographic characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_
- f) **Formal organizations:** \_\_\_\_\_
- g) **Divisions and cleavages:** \_\_\_\_\_
- h) **Significant relations:** \_\_\_\_\_
- i) **Significant changes:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Goals**

- Outcome goals:** 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_

- Process goals:** 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategies**

1. Strategy selected: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale for choice:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Strategy selected: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale for choice:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Strategy selected: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale for choice:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The Action system:**

**Resistance forces**

**Practitioner evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Tactics:**

1. Tactic chosen:

\_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Tactic chosen:

\_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Tactic chosen:

\_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Tactic chosen:

\_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix V**  
**Interview Questions**

Interview Questions

1a) To what extent were the objectives of the committee met?

b) Would you say that the originally established objectives were an accurate portrayal of the committee's work? If no, how would you modify the objectives to be representative of the work done?

2a) During the committee's work, the student provided a number of aids to assist the committee in understanding the process of undertaking systems advocacy. How useful were the following to you:

- i) The practicum report.
- ii) The practicum report: an abridged version.
- iii) "Guide for considering changes"

b) How, if at all, might you have modified them to make them more effective?

3a) Considering your personal level of knowledge about systems advocacy prior to your involvement with the committee, how much would you say your level of understanding has increased to this point in time?

b) What aspects of the process did you find particularly enlightening?

c) What steps, if any, could have been taken to increase your learning even further?

4a) Did you feel as if you were a valued member of the group?

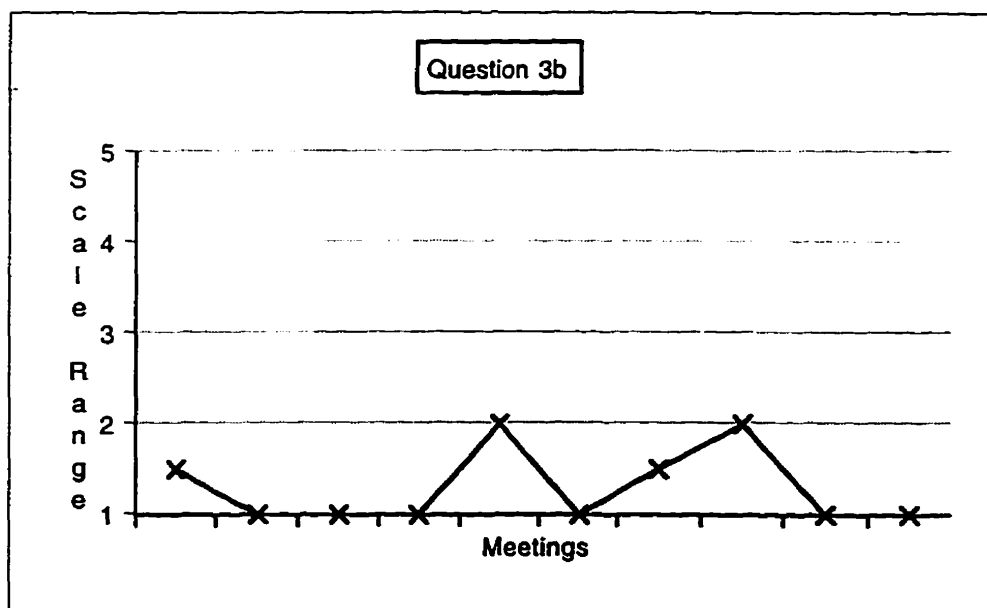
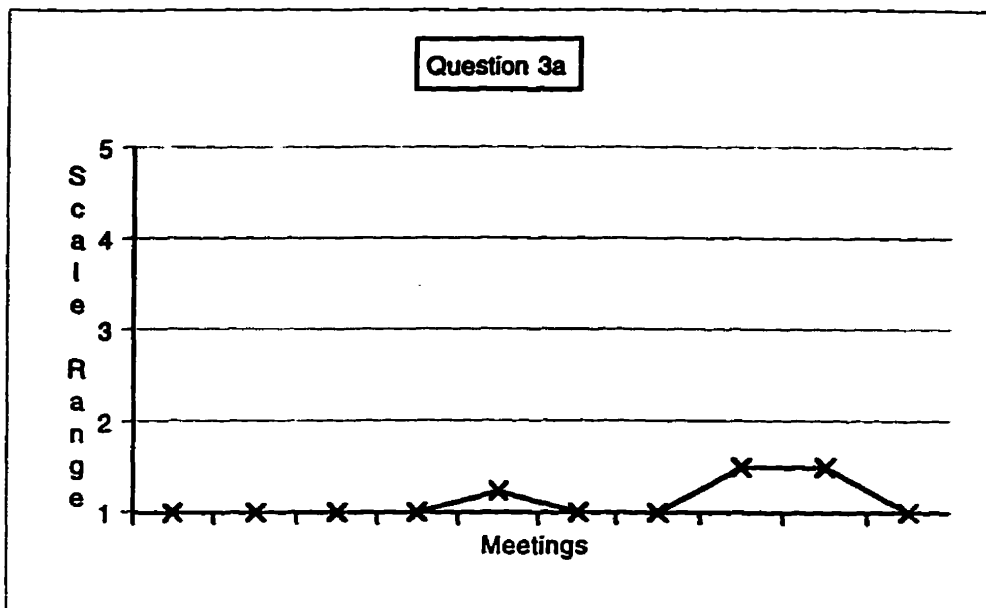
b) Does anything in particular stand out that made you feel the way that you do?

5a) With regard to the student's overall performance, what comments would you have on the following points:

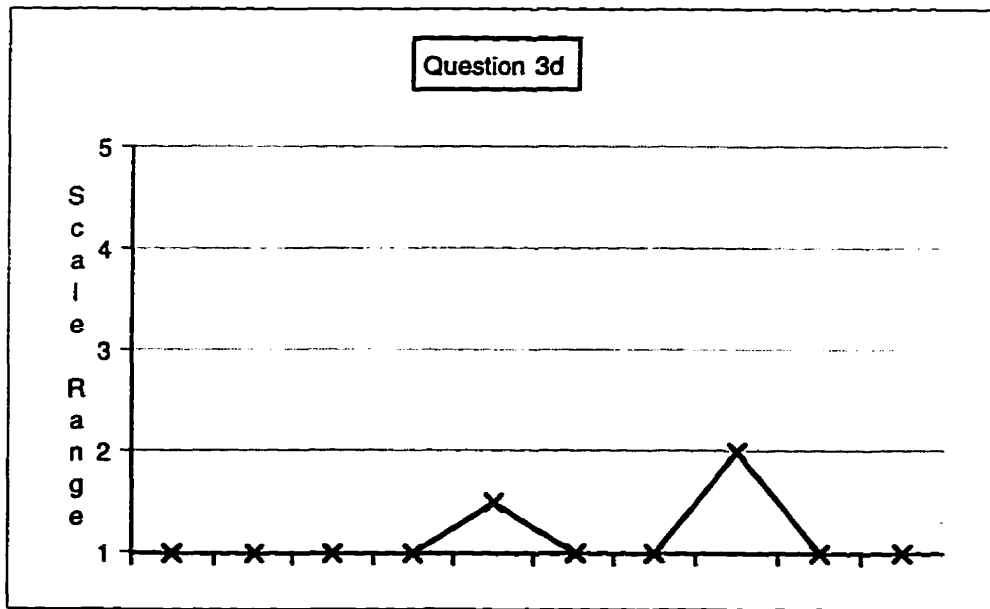
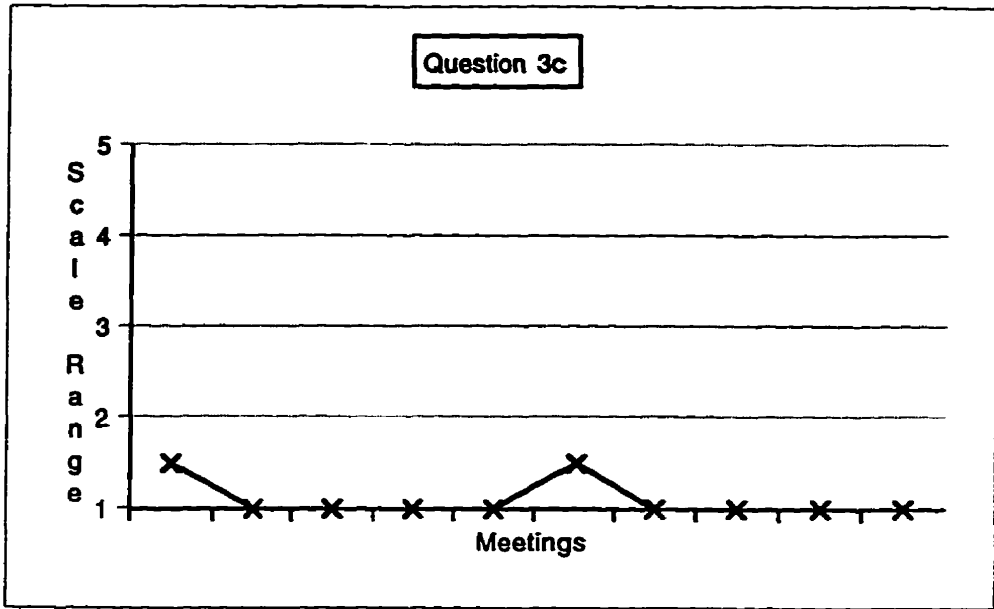
- i) Knowledge of material.
- ii) Presentation style.
- iii) Level of organization.

**Appendix W**  
**Performance Feedback Graphs**

Performance Feedback Ratings

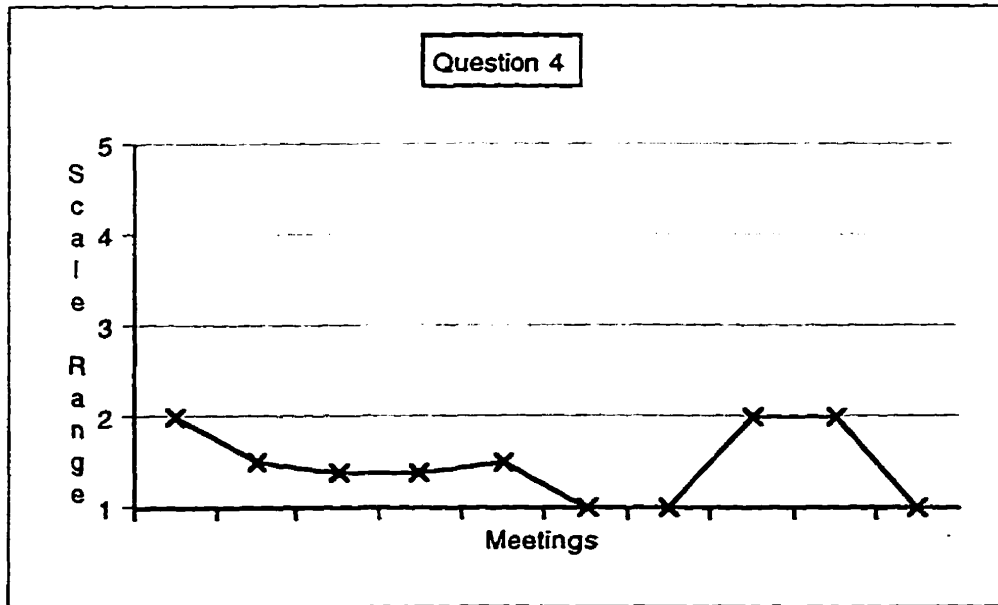
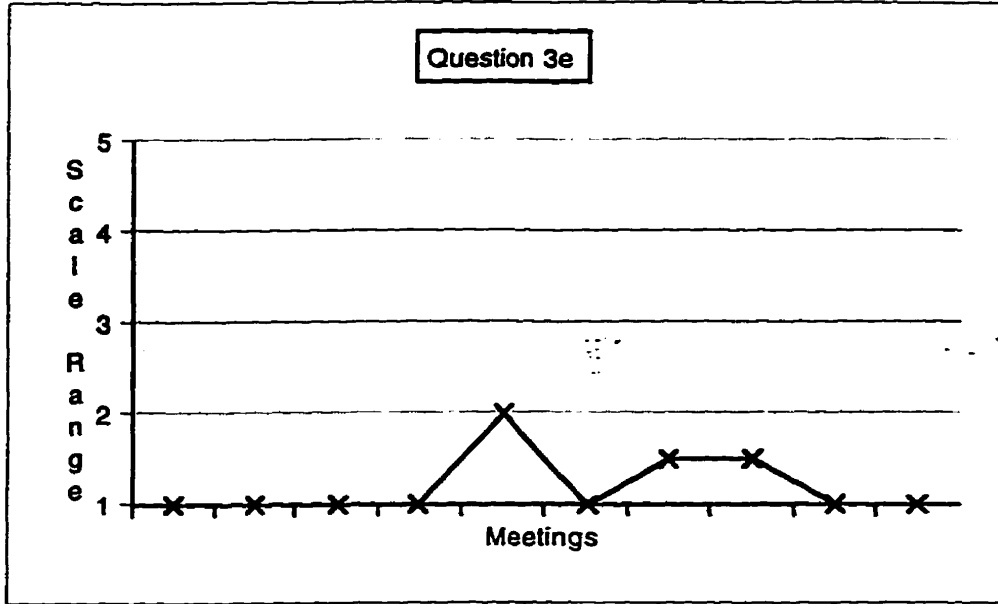


Performance Feedback Ratings

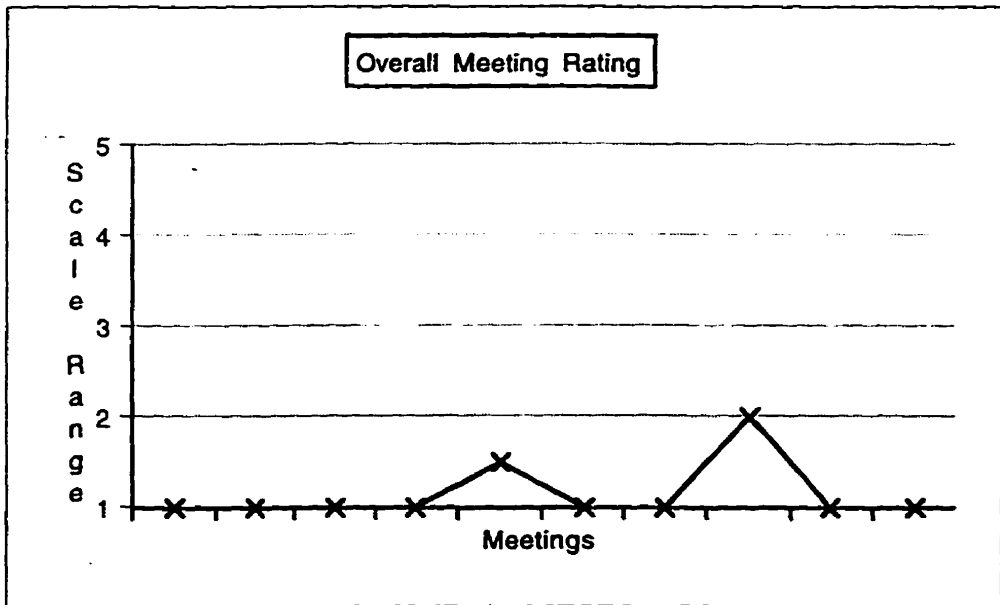
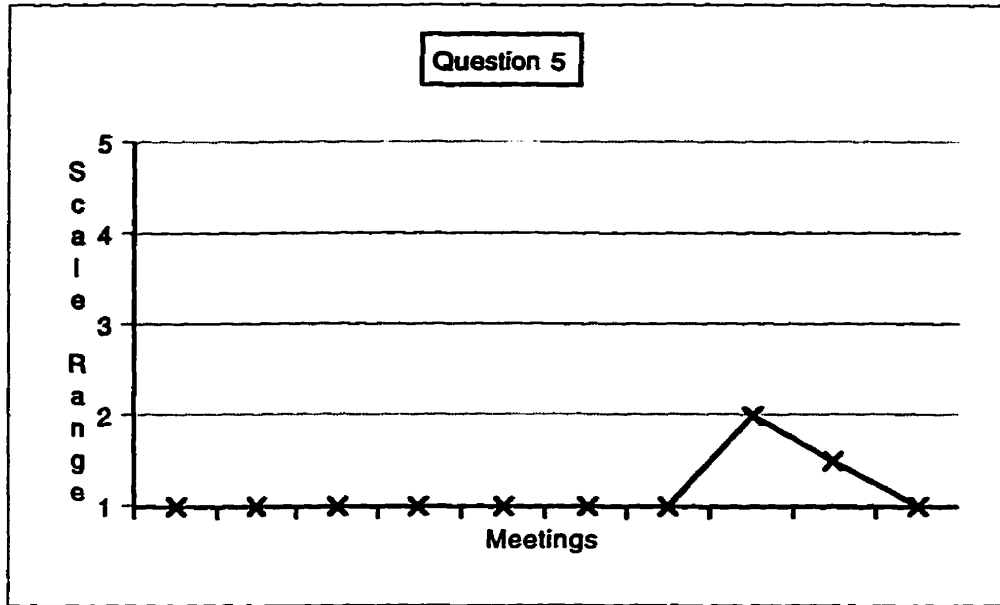




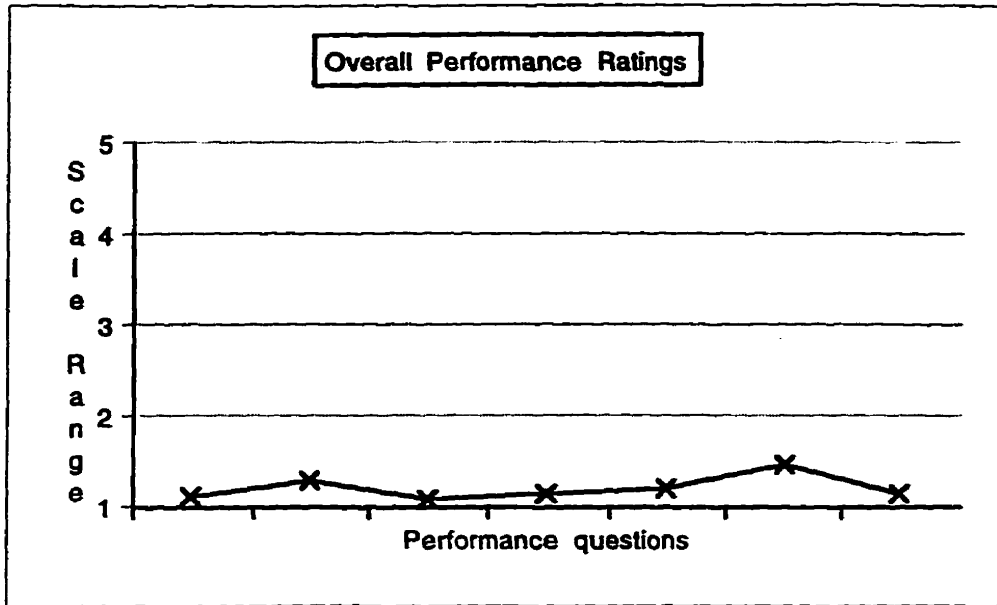
Performance Feedback Ratings



Performance Feedback Ratings



Performance Feedback Ratings



**Appendix X**  
**Median Scores**  
**Performance Feedback**

**Median Scores**

	Qu. 3a	Qu. 3b	Qu. 3c	Qu. 3d	Qu. 3e	Overall per	Overall perf
Meeting 1	1.5	1.5	1	1	2	1	1
Meeting 2	1	1	1	1	1.5	1	1
Meeting 3	1	1	1	1	1.37	1	1
Meeting 4	1	1	1	1	1.37	1	1
Meeting 5	2	1	1.5	2	1.5	1	1.5
Meeting 6	1	1.5	1	1	1	1	1
Meeting 7	1.5	1	1	1.5	1	1	1
Meeting 8	2	1	2	1.5	2	2	2
Meeting 9	1	1	1	1	2	1.5	1
Meeting 10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Totals	1.3	1.1	1.15	1.2	1.474	1.15	

**Appendix Y**  
**Spearman's Rank Correlation Matrix**  
**Question #5**

**Spearman's Rank Correlation Matrix**

Questions	3a	3b	3c	3d	3e	4	5
3a	1	0.64889	0.45644	-0.25	0.35355	1	0.35355
3b	0.64889	1	0.29617	0.40555	0.22942	0.64889	-0.22942
3c	0.45644	0.29617	1	0.30429	0.6455	0.45644	0.32275
3d	-0.25	0.40555	0.30429	1	0.4714	-0.25	-0.17678
3e	0.35355	0.22942	0.6455	0.4714	1	0.35355	0.75
4)	1	0.64889	0.45644	-0.25	0.35355	1	0.35355
5)	0.35355	-0.22942	0.32275	-0.17678	0.75	0.35355	1
Questions	3a	3b	3c	3d	3e	4	5
Sum	0.79057	0.66689	0.86603	0.26352	0.67082	0.79057	0.33541