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**Measuring Outcomes in Applied Settings:
A Managed Care Perspective**

**Mark Attridge, MA PhD
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American Society of Aging 45th Annual Meeting. Orlando, Florida. March 1999

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Outline

1. Managed Care Context
2. Applied Research Process
3. Examples of Measurement Levels
4. Outcomes in the Big Picture

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Part 1

Managed Care Context

Medicare and Managed Care

NATIONAL

- 6 million lives
- 400+ plans
- 25% annual growth in enrollment in each of last three years in managed care plans

Optum Division of United HealthCare

- 330,000+ Medicare covered lives
- 8 Health plans
- NurseLine product
- Care24 product

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Managed Care Vs. Managed Costs

- *Newsweek*, December 14, 1998
- Commentary from the Washington Business Group on Health - "There are still lots of savings to be squeezed out of our hugely inefficient health-care system .. To tap them and keep costs from spiraling upward, we need to make managed care live up to its name; to manage *care*, and not just *cost*. That means HMOs (increasingly in partnership with their corporate customers) will have to shift their focus to improving the overall health of their members, rather than merely the expense of their illness If we initially pay somewhat more for that brand of more enlightened care, so be it. Larger savings will come down the road".

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Optum[®]

- Market leader in specialized care services
- *NurseLine - Assistance - Care24*
- 15+ million covered lives
- 45+ health plans & 35,000+ employers
- 300+ professional nurses and counselors
- Five service centers in USA
- Served over 1,000,000 callers in 1998

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Part 2
Applied Research Process

Optum Research Department

- Goal of measuring our “Value Story”
- Quantitative and qualitative methods
- Clinical, survey, and claims data
- Ongoing tools and benchmark projects
- CQI: Continuous Quality Improvement
- ROI: Return on Investment Consulting

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Comparison of Basic and
Applied Methods of Research

- | BASIC | APPLIED |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Internal validity | • External validity |
| • Cause | • Effect |
| • Single level analysis | • Multiple level analysis |
| • Single method | • Multiple methods |
| • Experimental design | • Quasi-experimental |
| • Direct observation | • Indirect observation |

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The Cyclical Role of
Measurement in Service Delivery

- Develop services to match the needs of target groups (conduct marketing research)
- Identify profiles of users of service (conduct statistical analysis of clinical database)
- Assess impact of services and resources used by clients (conduct outcomes surveys)
- Use outcomes research to guide quality improvement processes that enhance service

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Part 3
Examples of
Measurement Process

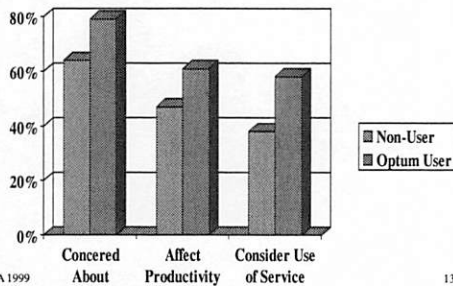
Levels of Outcome Measurement

- Establish the Need for Service
- Profile Experiences of Users of Service
- Identify Outcomes from Use of Service

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At Least 1 of 15 Health Topics at High Level in Optum 1998 Nationwide Random Sample Survey (N = 1028, All Age 50+)



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Levels of Outcome Measurement

- Establish the Need for Service
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Clinical Caller Profiles: Age 50+

NURSE

- Chest Pain
- Medications
- Back Pain
- Abdominal Pain
- Cough
- Infections
- Diarrhea

COUNSELOR

- Marital Relationships
- Family Relationships
- Mental Health
- Work
- Financial
- Legal
- Alcohol / Substances

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Information & Resource Profile (nationwide database of 60,000)

- Adult care
- Alternative living facilities
- Respite care
- Home-delivered meals
- Retirement areas
- AA groups
- Legal aid
- Employment
- Transportation
- Friendly visiting
- Telephone reassurance
- Chore services
- Crisis Lines
- Agencies on aging
- Financial counseling

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EXAMPLE: Caller needs first aid for a bruise received during a fall in the home.

- Poor nutrition causing bruises? May need nutrition counseling or home-delivered meals.
- Unsafe conditions in the home causing bruises? May need alternative or assisted living or home care.
- Violence causing bruises? May need services for domestic abuse/vulnerable adult

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EXAMPLE: Caller is upset because his wife was diagnosed with dementia. He needs information about what to expect.

- Resources to Alzheimer's and related disorders national and local organizations
- Caregiver support group
- Possible home care needs
- Respite care for caller
- Legal consult Power of Attorney for wife

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Levels of Outcome Measurement

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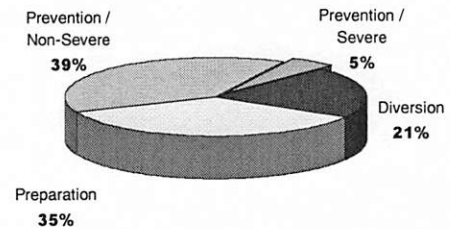
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Appropriate Use of Health Care Services Optum CarePath

Nurse Medicare Aggregate 1998

n = 1,378 clinical cases with longitudinal follow-up



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Self-Report Outcomes After Call Optum Services: Age 50+

- 95% Got health information needed
- 89% Better informed about health issue
- 87% Stress level reduced
- 75% Physical well-being better
- 75% Personal relationships better

98% Consider Optum a valuable benefit

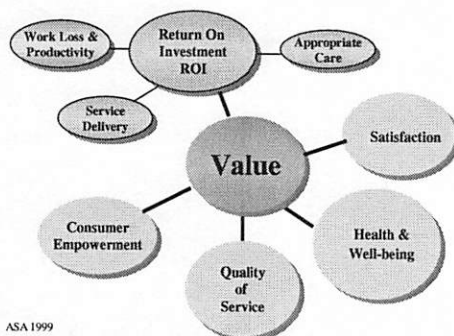
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Part 3

Outcomes in the Big Picture

Outcomes in the Big Picture



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R&D = Optum "Golden Web" Digital Virtual Community

- Computer staff search of internet/intranet for callers to Optum counselors or nurses
- Up-to-date facts and information
SOCIAL - HEALTH - HOUSING - FINANCIAL - LEGAL
- Identification of specific local resources
- Offered at no cost as part of benefits
- On-demand information empowers clients

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SUMMARY

- Applied context provides both challenges and opportunities for measuring outcomes
- Multiple levels of measurement (need, clinical experiences, outcomes)
- Multiple outcome areas
- Outcomes one part of *Big Picture* of value
- Can use clinical experiences and outcomes to improve quality of service delivery

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Appendix of Research Resources

- Article in *Managed Care and Aging* on Outcomes Research Address at ASA 1998 Conference
- Reference List on Outcomes Research Resources: Journal Articles and Books

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