Program Evolution

Situational Analysis and Initial Insights Review

Contents

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Summary

In the last 10 years, batyr has established a strong rapport as one of the leading organisations in youth mental health, creating and working with one of the largest pools of young people with lived experience. With a drive for innovation and ensuring that we maintain momentum in this upward trajectory, it has been established that there is an opportunity for batyr to expand its offerings and diversify its approach to mental health education in communities. With that in mind, in the preceding months batyr has looked to update our existing program suite offering for the schools, universities & broad communities we engage with to ensure our programs are as purposeful, impactful and progressive as possible to reflect the ever-evolving mental health needs of young people. This process has been a thoroughly planned initiative within the organisation as a whole, and has embedded consultative design into its development. This approach has included a diverse range of engagement with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure that batyr has a clear & informed direction moving forward. This process has been purposeful in its rollout, with each consultation a reflection of clearly identified parameters pertaining to explicit elements of program reflection, design and development.

As a result, batyr has been able to establish a framework that aligns directly to our theory of change as developed with CSI. This iterative approach ensures both clear alignment to our overarching vision as an organisation, but also provides flexibility in applying a needs-based approach to consistently evolve alongside emerging population needs. With all of this in mind, you will find in the report below an overview of the processes engaged with to reach this point of development.

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Internal Evaluation

One of the key considerations to redeveloping batyr's program suite was to establish internal staff perceptions of current offerings. These reflections were vital in understanding internal perceptions of program content and delivery, and enabled staff to explore their extensive content exposure and expert observations of program content. This type of internal evaluation also enabled batyr as an organisation to compare internal observations and reported experiences from external stakeholders later in the evaluation process, to identify any overarching trends. We obtained these insights through staff surveys (full time and part time employee status), half-day brainstorming sessions, and focus groups with our casual staffing pool of facilitators and lived experience speakers. Below is a summary of the purpose, process and outcomes of each of these consultations.

Internal Staff Survey

The purpose of this survey was to:
- Establish a baseline for review/comparison between internal and external opinions
- Establish what is 'sacred'/what are the non-negotiables within batyr programs
- Develop a hierarchy of priority for program development processes, approaches and content

The Program Development and Delivery (PDD) Team in consultation with batyr's Head of Research reviewed existing program outcomes and content to coordinate an internally circulated survey asking questions pertaining to perceived program engagement, relevancy, alignment with young people's needs, quality of delivery, and acceptance and accessibility of program content and structure. This survey contained 23 reflective questions, both qualitative and quantitative, relating to the aforementioned program themes and elements, with 26 staff completing the survey in its entirety.

These surveys gave some quality insights into staff perceptions of batyr's current offerings by identifying the potential opportunities for speaker responsibility growth within program delivery, ensuring takeaway strategies align with current student needs, identifying ways to offer deeper exploration of support processes available to stakeholders, and how to develop greater agency in students that engage with batyr programs.
These insights were used to form an overarching baseline for internal staff perceptions of batyr programs.

Internal Staff Brainstorm

The purpose of this session was to:
- Give staff the opportunity to ideate around the opportunities for batyrs growth; particularly how this might be achieved in each stakeholder relationship we engage with
- Establish a clear foundation for our role in each of these areas in relation to the prevention landscape
- Identify strengths and limitations of the current program suite, and explore opportunities for growth

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With quantitative insights distilled, the PDD utilised the internal survey insights to direct the structure of an organisation wide brainstorm and ideation session at the annual retreat. With a focus on qualitative and thematic insight gathering, the session explored the non-negotiables of batyr program structures, content and delivery processes. Broken down, this process examined the perceived strengths and limitations of the current program suite & identified core, non-negotiable structures and themes of program content and delivery through collaborative discussion. A large portion of time was spent brainstorming and ideating on the opportunities for development for each offering batyr provides (batyr@school, batyr@uni, batyr@work, community, advocacy and regional offerings).

As a result, we were able to identify the non-negotiable elements of batyr program offerings that enable us to successfully work within and towards our Theory of Change. Some of these included:

- Ensuring programs are educational and provide vicarious learning opportunities
- Maintaining integration with a peer-to-peer model
- Maintaining relevance and relatability to the people we engage with
- Ensuring programs develop purposeful rapport
- Ensuring programs are first and foremost, needs-led
- Safety considerations are embedded and implemented throughout all development and delivery processes

This consultative opportunity also enabled batyr to ideate on areas for opportunity in program development, reflective of the identified needs all staff have been informed of through their communication with various stakeholders.

Some suggestions included:

- For batyr@school: exploring ways to promote holistic, more embedded whole-of-school approaches to delivery; developing a modular approach to program development and delivery & integrating resource hub offerings into development and delivery to extend young people's learning beyond the program setting
- For batyr@uni: further development of online resource opportunities for universities and their communities to utilise, to promote greater competency and confidence in mental health communication
- For batyr@work: aiding in the social-emotional development of populations within organisations including managers and staff, to create safe & supportive work spaces; and leaning into advocacy and leadership training for organisations and business leaders
- For Regional & Remote offerings: focusing on building community resilience with a focus on long-term impact by amplifying the voices of young people in these areas and building local informal support networks.
- For Community & Advocacy offerings: increasing mental health literacy and help-seeking more broadly to incite reduction in social and personal stigma.

These ideations provided a vital foundation for exploring the opportunities of batyrs offerings. These suggestions have since been echoed on the proceeding consultations with external stakeholders and have informed the current modular and thematic direction batyr is exploring for program development and delivery.

Lived Experience Focus Groups

The purpose of this session was to:
- Gain insights provided by participants centred around how the role of Lived Experience could expand within a batyr program and include greater interaction with the audience.
- Provide space for staff to comment on how our program content or delivery styles impact our stakeholders.
- Provide opportunities for staff closest to program delivery to give insight into their unique needs.

At the core of all batyr offerings is the value of lived-experience. With a model founded on research underpinning the value of exposure to those with lived experience (Corrigan, 2012), batyr felt it was imperative to better understand the needs of the people who so openly and generously share their experiences with young people in our programs. A member of the PDD worked closely alongside our Lived Experience (LE) Team to draw a pool of people together from within our lived experience speaker network for the purpose of participating in focus groups. These 3 focus groups were conducted online with a diverse collective of young people that reflected an even representation of gender diversity where possible, a spread of speakers from all the regions we deliver programs in & the inclusion of speakers from both regional and metro areas. These consultations utilised web-platforms for brainstorming, mapping experiences, and giving overall ratings and recommendations; intertwined with structured discussion.

Aligning with what was established as core components of a batyr offering, speakers highlighted that the most impactful and essential program elements were
- Ensuring programs were peer-to-peer
- Ensuring program content was relevant and relatable
- Ensuring program content considered safety elements for both staff and participants

"It has made me feel like batyr keeps my story alive, valued, heard and that my story is valuable to others"
— batyr speaker

Speakers spoke of the value in a differentiated voice between themselves and the program facilitator when exploring greatest opportunity for engagement and impact, and made insightful suggestions as to the way their voices can be utilised even more within the program context. As a result of this consultation, batyr's approach to modular offerings will be expanding its opportunity for speaker development and involvement within the delivery setting.

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External Evaluation

In conjunction with our internal evaluation, it was paramount that batyr engaged with a variety of key stakeholders including the likes of school students, school teachers, university students, university staff & people within youth-oriented communities. Combined with our internal evaluation, these insights are intended to explicitly inform the way batyr approaches program redevelopment.

A review of the Literature

The purpose of this process was to:
- Identify best practice for psychoeducation approaches
- Explore the presence and approach of existing successful like-programs
- Examine batyr's capacity to develop a working model that echoes best practice

To better understand the broader context of psychoeducation in younger populations, the PDD engaged in a thorough review of the literature underpinning best practice for mental health literacy. This primarily focused on broad approaches to mental health literacy, stigma reduction, and increasing help seeking. More explicitly, this literature search examined approaches to content delivery that ensured ecological validity upon application. Some key takeaways from the literature highlighted needs for:

Ecological Approaches
Effective programs seem to take an ecological approach whereby the manipulation of factors relating to the individual, public and structural setting work reciprocally with one another. More targeted, needs based approaches have been found to be more effective in improving education around mental health (Gutkin, 2012). This research suggests that teachers, peers and parents can impact young people's mental health education when interventions are both centred around environmental factors, and the capacity for structural change. This model may have implications for future processes towards stigma reduction models.

Needs-based Approaches
Findings suggest psychoeducation needs to be tailored specifically to target age, race or social status while increasing cultural competency (Haley, 2022).

Success of Like-Programs
The WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Framework for Mental Health suggested that for successful implementation of school based mental health interventions, high levels of stakeholder acceptability, with strong emphasis placed on cross-sectoral collaboration between teachers, psychologists and parents was imperative (Chiumento et al. 2022). Key findings include importance of inclusivity in program design and accessible referral when needed.

Program Content
A review on targeted school based mental health initiatives focused on relevant strategies to mitigate stigma-related concerns. Within the review, it was emphasised that there is an increased need for ecological relevance and accessible terminology that veers away from biomedical understandings of mental ill-health in psycho-education interventions. This highlighted a need for applicable and

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pragmatic interventions that utilised real world implications in the strategies delivered (Gronholm, Nye & Michelson, 2018). Alongside this, the use of non-stigmatised language is impactful for cohorts of high-school age individuals.

As is illustrated within this report, there are parallels between the vocalised & observed needs of young people gained from batyrs consultations, and the overarching literature in this field. These insights will inform the way batyr approaches program development structures as we move towards a more iterative, evolving and needs-based approach to delivery.

Student Data Insights

The purpose of this process was to:
- Gain quantitative feedback on the specific elements of each batyr@school program offering
- Identify students' perceptions of batyr programs including engagement, relatability, capacity to inform, and benefit.

Early in 2022, the PDD in collaboration with batyr's head of research developed a set of surveys to identify characteristics of the student population batyr is currently engaging with, to evaluate whether batyr's current program suite is meeting the needs of its secondary school students, and to identify a hierarchy of program elements. Each program within the batyr@school program suite was evaluated using a combination of qualitative and quantitative survey approaches. A 5-point Likert scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree was used for the quantitative element of the survey, with open ended response questions to allow students to offer up qualitative feedback on the program content. All surveys were completed by students using self-report measures.

The main aim of these surveys was to gain insight into the effectiveness of batyr's current program suite; i.e., are we meeting the needs of the students we engage with? This was decided on through identifying the pertinent elements of program design (engagement, relatability etc.) via internal and external consultation. We also evaluated trends across the reported lived experience (LE) of school students. We did not obtain any personal or identifiable information from those participating.
What we found was a reported increase in the percentage of students reporting a lived experience of mental ill-health between Year 9 (29%) & Year 10 (40%), and Year 11 (38%) & Year 12 (47%) (but not between years 10 & 11). We also found that the power of stories were the highest rated elements of batyr programs for all programs across all year groups. Further insights also revealed that students identifying as having a LE gave higher ratings for their capacity to support a friend or someone close to them experiencing mental ill-health.

Whilst data collection was analogous and only allowed for a comparison of mean scores, these insights enabled batyr to identify trends across current offerings, help establish a hierarchy of need for future program rollout, and gave insight into the mental health experiences of young people.

Teacher Advisory Group

The purpose of this process was to:
- Develop an ongoing opportunity for engagement with key stakeholders working with young people; high school teachers
- Engage in consultative design with teachers to identify observed trends

- Establish and maintain feedback loops to ensure content development undergoes relevant external examination for feedback and quality assurance

With teachers acting as key gatekeepers in young people's capacities and opportunities for help-seeking, it felt vital to establish a strong consultative voice within this area of youth mental health. After one-on-one interviews between members of the PDD team and teachers who showed an expression of interest to become a part of batyr's Teacher Advisory Group (TAG), batyr engaged in a follow-up focus group. Initially, within interviews, teachers identified needs of their students and echoed the importance of an agile, needs based approach; aiding to the information gathering process of program review. With needs identified, and both anecdotal and empirical backing, focus groups were established with the TAG to gain feedback on batyrs newly proposed modular program structure and inform the way the batyr team decides on a hierarchy of development. In summation, this working group assistant in identifying the overarching trends of needs within each year level, relating to our already suggested module content focus areas.

University Executives Focus Group

The purpose of this session was to:
- Gain feedback from university students regarding newly proposed modular program structure
- Examine the nuances of proposed core & elective module themes, specifically around suicide prevention.

After consulting university students regarding their mental health literacy needs through one-on-one interviews, developing a framework for outcome structure and fleshing out draft module concepts for the new iteration of the batyr program suite, the PDD aimed to gain feedback from university students on the proposed core & elective module themes, specifically around suicide prevention. Within an internally run training for batyrs university executive members, a member of the PDD engaged in directed discussion about the proposed new structure for the batyr program suite. Questions were open ended and pertained to module themes, and more explicitly the needs of young people in navigating suicide.

In regards to education around suicide, there was a resounding sentiment that it was greatly needed in the university space. Some themes that were suggested for batyr to explore within this content included:
- How to provide support to those experiencing suicidal ideation
- What continuity of support looks like in follow-up communication
- Navigating conversations with individuals that may refuse formal treatment
- Identifying early signs and having preventative conversations before intervention is needed
- Supporting someone who has been exposed to suicide
- Community members role as non-clinical supporters

With recent funding to engage with Living Works to develop program content that focuses specifically on increasing people's literacy surrounding suicide, this focus group played a key role in identifying influential areas of opportunity to engage in targeted suicide prevention.

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Moreland Council Youth Forum Workshop

The purpose of this process was to:
- Identify young people's needs within the community
- Identify areas most pertinent to developing community skillsets in response to mental health challenges
- Gain insights into opportunities for growth within batyr offerings

Batyr previously engaged with Moreland City Council to deliver an advocacy training for young people within their communities. Wanting to better understand the breadth and depth of that impact, batyr engaged in a focus group to encourage participants to go through a theme's identification process, introduce them to the three core outcomes of a batyr program and engage in a blue-sky brainstorm about how to approach these outcomes in a different way. Within the workshop, three key focus areas of need were identified:
- Learning of practical strategies to manage stress and pressure, and how to identify their sources to take on a preventative approach
- Understanding local services to better navigate what is available to them, as well as becoming advocates for theirs and their communities needs from these services
- Opportunities for developing personal agency through the exploration of identity

These insights will inform the way batyr engages in advocacy alongside communities both as a whole, and individually to ensure approaches are targeting the personal, public and structural barriers and facilitators to mental health literacy.

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Looking Forward

Future Investment in Consultation

The depth of this program review has been intentional at every stage. The insights gathered have been nothing short of invaluable and will shape the way batyr engages in youth mental health literacy for future iterations. With that in mind, batyr is also committed to ensuring these relationships are maintained every step of the way, with steps toward developing a student voice group and clinical reference group underway.

Current Position

With all of these insights in mind, batyr is moving forward with the development of a modular approach to program development and delivery. The Program Development and Delivery Team are currently in the process of finalising both the overarching primary suite outcomes, and the secondary content outcomes. When content development commences, this modular approach will include year specific "core" modules, with "elective" modules available for stakeholders to choose from that best reflect their student and broader community needs. This modular approach will approach stigma reduction through a multilevel approach that maps explicitly and implicitly to the organisation's overarching Theory of Change with a focus on improving mental health for all young people.

Appendix

Breakdown of Processes

For data collection, batyr utilised:
- Surveys (both qualitative and quantitative in their format)
- Collaborative discussion with thematic exploration
- Established reference groups
- Focus groups
- Impact Evaluation Frameworks

The analysis of all data was a collaborative process between the head of research and the program development and delivery team through manual data analysis

The process of insight distillation included:
- A summation of identified key themes
- A summation of identified key challenges
- Solution oriented approaches to reporting

The process of outcome development is an aggregation of the immediate and short-term outcomes identified in batyr's Theory of Change, mapped to the identified needs acquired through consultation. Approaches to stigma reduction in line with the Theory of Change underpins content developed for these modules.

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