

# REALISTIC AND APPRECIATIVE: Developing a dual model of evaluation of “Transforming Care After Treatment” in Scotland

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The Transforming Care after Treatment programme in Scotland (TCAT) is funded by the charity Macmillan Cancer Support to establish national and regional structures to support the implementation of 25 projects, each with different approaches, but with the overall objective to improve the after care for people living with and beyond cancer. TCAT aims to:



As evaluators we conceived the TCAT programme as a three levelled complex intervention- local, regional and national (Figure 1). Two theoretical approaches have been used in combination by the Edinburgh Napier Evaluation Team - a Realistic Evaluation framework with an appreciative inquiry approach. Fieldwork completed between May 2014 and October 2016 is an exemplar of this dual model. The mixed methods include quantitative data on demographics and reported concerns of over 2,000 people, in depth interviews with stakeholders (n=21); focus group discussions with local projects at the start and end of implementation (n=14) and an annual online survey of wider stakeholders (n=195 in 2015 and n=220 in 2016).

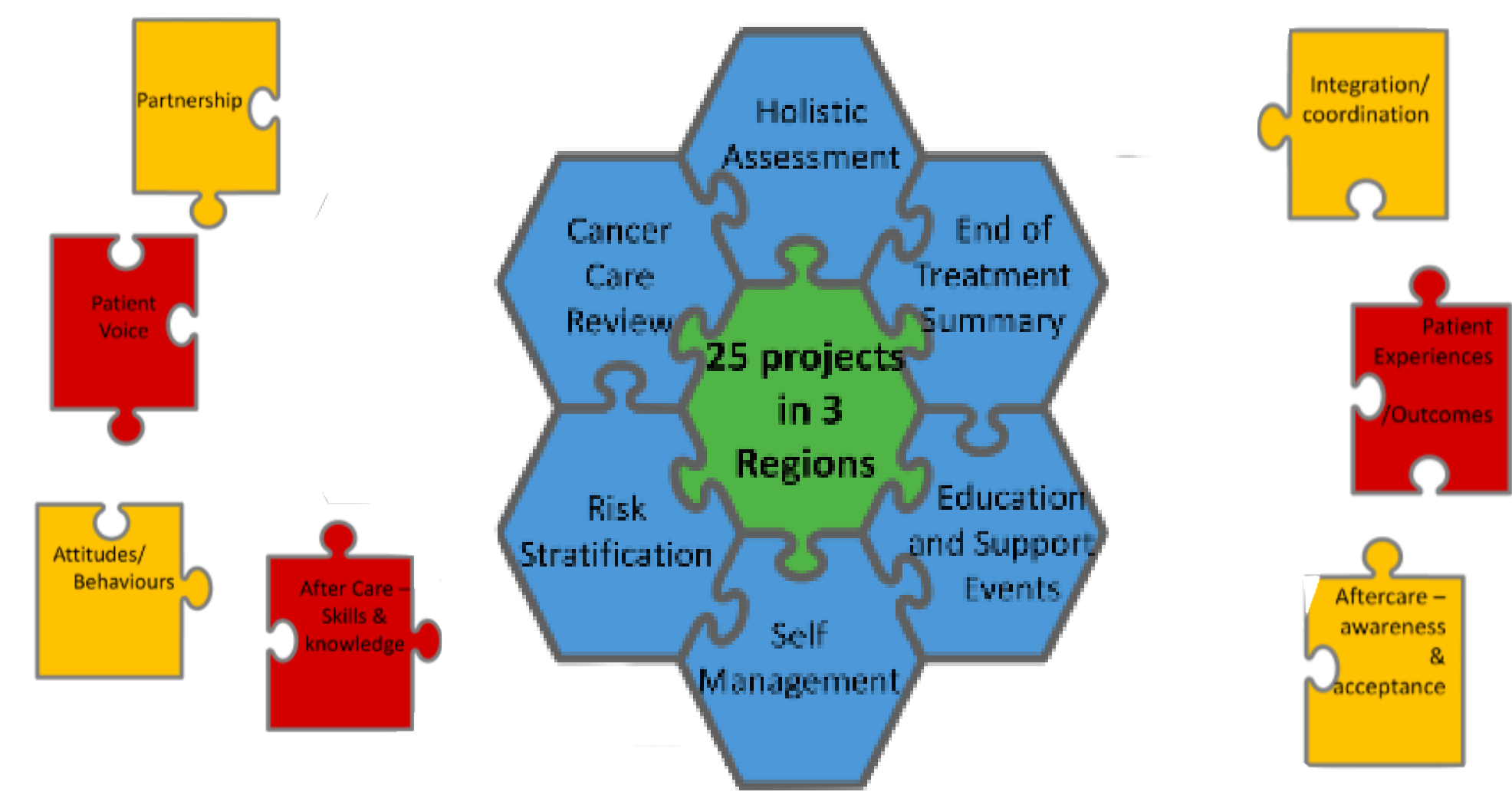


Figure 1: TCAT as a complex intervention

## REALISTIC EVALUATION

Realistic evaluation focuses upon identifying and making sense of the context, the mechanisms of actions and outcomes of care after treatment (1). Paying attention to each of these connected concepts enables a greater depth of understanding:

CONTEXT + MECHANISMS = OUTCOMES

## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative enquiry focuses on identifying what works well and taking time to understand why this is so and then adapting practices to capture more moments of success (2).

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS? ✗

WHAT'S WORKING? + HOW CAN WE DO MORE OF IT? ✓

The TCAT programme in Scotland is not one model of ‘care after treatment’ set up in different locations, but 25 different interventions/projects that are linked by the programme’s overarching aims. They have one destination but many routes to success. Combining evaluation models provides a focus for fieldwork and analysis to enhance understanding regarding: context of the projects, the drivers of change and the resulting outcomes. In addition, there is a deliberate focus on what works well and understanding why and how success can be generalised and deliberately replicated and transferred to other areas. The benefits and challenges of our dual approach are shown below.

| BENEFITS   | CHALLENGES   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merging approaches provides a consistent, applied theoretical framework to evaluating the entire TCAT programme</li> <li>The dual methodology facilitates a structured approach to understanding potential solutions</li> <li>The application of positive and appreciative language blended with academic-led scrutiny of context, mechanisms and outcome configurations enhances local reflection on developing practices</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring we are actually blending the approaches and not using them separately or sequentially</li> <li>Limited evaluator and local project capacity to develop collective reflection on CMOs and other emerging findings</li> <li>Consistently applying a meaningful coding framework to construct valid CMO configurations- especially over 5 years and 3 different levels</li> </ul> |

(1) Cooperrider, D., Whitney, D., & Stavros, J. (2008). *Appreciative inquiry handbook* (1st ed.). Brunswick, OH: Crown Custom Pub.  
 (2) Pawson, R. & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation* (1st ed.). London: SAGE.