



MEAM Approach evaluation

Invitation to Tender

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Deadline: 5pm, Friday 20 October 2017



**NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDED**

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1. Introduction

Making Every Adult Matter

People with multiple needs face a combination of problems including homelessness, substance misuse, contact with the criminal justice system and mental ill health. They fall through the gaps between services and systems, making it harder for them to address their problems and lead fulfilling lives.

The Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition is made up of the national charities Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind. We also work closely with Collective Voice, which represents the substance misuse sector. Working together, we support local areas across England to develop an effective, coordinated approach to multiple needs that can increase wellbeing, reduce costs to public services and improve people's lives.

We draw on our shared knowledge and practical experience to change policy, so that everyone experiencing multiple needs can reach their full potential and contribute to their communities.

The MEAM Approach

Over the last five years, we piloted and developed the MEAM Approach, a framework to help local areas design and deliver better coordinated services for people with multiple needs. It's currently being used by partnerships of statutory and voluntary agencies in 15 local areas across England. Separately to this, MEAM also supports the twelve Big Lottery Fund's Fulfilling Lives partnerships, which are working on similar issues on a larger scale.

MEAM Approach areas consider seven principles, which they adapt to local needs and circumstances. We provide hands-on support to the local partnerships as part of this process.

In April 2017, the Big Lottery Fund made a major strategic investment in our work for the next five years (1 April 2017 to 31 March 2022). This allows us to significantly expand our practice work; combine and better utilise data and learning from across the MEAM Approach and Fulfilling Lives networks; and ultimately to improve outcomes for people with multiple needs.

From this autumn we will expand the MEAM Approach network from 15 to 25 areas across the country, with a further expansion to 40 areas expected in years four and five of the programme.

Alongside the practical support that our team will provide to these areas, we are putting in place a national evaluation of the MEAM Approach. All MEAM Approach areas will be expected to help co-produce the evaluation and to provide data and information to the evaluator(s). The evaluation will build on previous evaluations of our work, which are available to read [here](#). The evaluation partner(s) will work closely with MEAM, the lead organisations in local areas, and people with lived experience of multiple needs to coproduce the evaluation programme.

2. Scope of the evaluation

What are we commissioning?

MEAM is commissioning an evaluation partner (or partners) to conduct a thorough five-year evaluation of local areas using the MEAM Approach. The evaluation will cover the five years of our programme from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2022. There will be a break clause in the evaluation contract at the end of year three (31 March 2020) to mirror our break clause with the Big Lottery Fund.

Links to the Fulfilling Lives evaluation

The evaluation will run alongside the national evaluation of the Big Lottery Fund's Fulfilling Lives programme, conducted by CFE Research. We have designed this evaluation scope to enable compatibility and comparison across the two research programmes. The successful partner(s) will need to work closely with CFE Research in order to share and compare findings. CFE Research has agreed to:

- Provide a copy of the Common Data Framework (CDF) for the Fulfilling Lives evaluation to any provider that is considering submitting a tender for this evaluation. (Note that as outlined below we expect the CDF for the MEAM Approach evaluation to be only a sub-set of the Fulfilling Lives CDF).
- Work with the successful provider of this evaluation as they design the evaluation and Common Data Framework with MEAM Approach areas, to ensure that annual reports can 'compare and contrast' MEAM Approach findings with the Fulfilling Lives evaluation and vice-versa.

Scale

In the first three years of the programme we expect there to be 25 MEAM Approach areas. Around half will be new areas that will spend the first months planning and developing their interventions; the other half will be existing areas, with interventions already in place. Each area with an intervention in place will have a rolling caseload of 15-20 clients and we expect 30-40 clients per area over the first three-year period. At the beginning of year four we expect the number of areas to increase from 25 to 40.

Core elements

The MEAM Approach evaluation will involve five core elements:

- a) Building research capacity in MEAM Approach areas
- b) An outcomes evaluation of MEAM Approach areas
- c) An economic evaluation of MEAM Approach areas
- d) A process evaluation of MEAM Approach areas
- e) A comparison with the outcomes from the Big Lottery's Fulfilling Lives areas, using data from CFE Research

Information on each is provided below:

a) Capacity Building

The successful evaluator(s) will work closely with the MEAM Approach areas and be seen as an integral part of the overall MEAM Approach programme. Building strong relationships with the local areas will be critical, and we are seeking an evaluator who can:

- Engage proactively and empathetically with the 25 MEAM Approach areas (40 in later years), understand their specific needs, and have a strong commitment to co-producing the evaluation.

- Play an active role in supporting local areas to put in place processes for data collection, including presenting and agreeing an approach to informed consent from clients in order to access both administrative and client-reported data. We expect this to require a significant amount of direct work with the areas and therefore to be a key focus of the evaluation.
- Work with MEAM, people who have lived experience, local partners and CFE Research to agree a Common Data Framework (CDF) for the MEAM Approach areas. This should allow areas to collect wellbeing and service use data for beneficiaries corresponding to a number of key interactions, in a way that is proportionate to the cost of the intervention in the locality. The CDF that is developed will have read-across to the CDF that is used by CFE Research for the Fulfilling Lives areas, but is likely to be much smaller due to the smaller scale of the MEAM Approach interventions. We provide more information on likely variables in the elements below. An online system for each local area to input data to the CDF will be developed (at no cost to the evaluators) through Homeless Link's [In-Form](#) system.

b) Outcomes evaluation

We want to understand the impact that implementing the MEAM Approach is having on people with multiple needs in each local area. As part of this, the evaluation should:

- Work with local partners to collect wellbeing data via the CDF (likely to be the ten questions that form the [New Directions Team](#) assessment) and use these to measure changes in individual beneficiaries' risk profile over time.
- Make a qualitative assessment of the experiences people have and their responses to the support they receive through the local interventions designed using the MEAM Approach.

c) Economic evaluation

We want to measure changes in the use and cost of wider services as a result of interventions designed using the MEAM Approach. We are interested in 'treasury costs' rather than wider 'social costs'. As part of this, the evaluation should:

- Agree as part of the CDF the collection of service use data for measures such as those outlined below. We want to collect each of these from two sources (i) client-reported and (ii) formal administrative sources, shared via informed client consent. A minimal dataset might cover five or six measures and will need to 'read-across' to the CFE dataset. Examples may include:
 - Police: arrests, nights in custody
 - Health: A&E attendances, inpatient admissions, inpatient mental health care
 - Criminal justice: court appearances, nights in prison
 - Housing: nights in hostel / temporary accommodation
- Collect data on the cost of implementing the MEAM Approach intervention from lead partners
- Analyse the costs associated with the wider service use data (using the New Economy Manchester costs database) and assess the overall financial impact of the MEAM Approach interventions.
- Undertake some qualitative assessment of the extent to which these costs have been 'cashable' and whether there have been any other 'opportunity cost' savings.

d) Process evaluation

We want to understand the nature of the change that happens when a local area uses the MEAM Approach to design new interventions, and how this affects outcomes for clients, economic impact, and the culture of participating (and wider) services and systems. As part of this, the evaluation should:

- Capture and analyse the work carried out in each MEAM Approach area to reflect:
 - Structure of partnership, funding arrangements and working practices
 - Model for coordination and service flexibility
 - Contribution to service and policy change in the wider system
- Assess the degree of fidelity in each area to the principles of the MEAM Approach by reviewing status information (red/amber/green ratings) gathered by the MEAM Local Networks Team on a quarterly basis and conducting qualitative research with stakeholders in each area.
- Assess the degree to which the outcomes and financial impact measured by the evaluation can be attributed to the processes and practices adopted.

e) Comparison with Fulfilling Lives areas

As well as evaluating MEAM Approach areas in the above ways, we also want to understand how they compare to the local areas that are part of the Fulfilling Lives programme, using data supplied by CFE Research. The evaluation should:

- Use data on outcomes and costs to assess how the efficacy of the work undertaken differs across MEAM Approach and Fulfilling Lives areas, and whether this is associated with fidelity to the MEAM Approach principles.

Approach to the counterfactual

Interventions designed to support people experiencing multiple needs are inevitably complex and can be challenging to evaluate, particularly in terms of finding an appropriate control group or counterfactual given the ethical and practical difficulties of gathering data from clients who do not receive support. These issues are discussed in detail in Battrick et al (2012), [Evaluation of the MEAM pilots](#), p. 20 (Note that this initial report was followed by a [second evaluation report](#) in 2014, which is referenced above). We ask that all proposals to this tender set out a clear, manageable and robust approach to setting a counterfactual for this study.

Reporting and dissemination

We expect the evaluation to produce two sets of formal outputs:

- Six-monthly working papers reporting latest data from the outcomes, economic and process evaluations. These should be formative results rather than full modelling.
- Annual reports that present a more detailed picture and compare this data with the Fulfilling Lives data from CFE Research. These should present the results in the context of findings from the process evaluation.

Alongside these formal outputs, the evaluation partner(s) will work closely with the MEAM policy team and specifically with the Policy and Practice Officer to support dissemination of research findings to national and local audiences. The evaluation partner(s) will also ensure that each local area is able to understand the results of the evaluation and use these to support continuous improvement in their locality.

3. Criteria for applicants

Within the parameters set out above, we invite potential partners to design an effective approach to the evaluation, and specify the methods they will use. We welcome proposals that address some or all of these elements, and joint proposals where several partners would work together to deliver the evaluation.

The successful evaluator(s) will need to demonstrate:

- A commitment to MEAM values and in particular to involving people with lived experience of multiple needs and the MEAM Approach areas in the design and delivery of the research
- Evidence of a track record delivering robust evaluation work of a comparable nature and scale
- Evidence of collaborative working across multiple organisations and research partners
- One named member of staff who will be the main point of contact for the evaluation, liaising with MEAM staff, MEAM Approach areas, and people with lived experience of multiple needs on a regular basis, and who will be seen as a key part of the MEAM programme team.
- A commitment to working closely with MEAM on reporting and dissemination.

4. Budget

We have allocated a maximum budget of £50,000 per year for evaluation. Applications will be judged on price as well as quality (see below). We are inviting proposals to cover the five years of our programme (please note that we are already part-way through year one). There will be a break clause at the end of year three (31 March 2020) in line with our grant agreement with the Big Lottery Fund. The budgeted amount should cover all costs including VAT, expenses and any organisational overheads.

5. Application process and initial timescales

We anticipate identifying an evaluation partner or partners according to the timetable below.

Interested parties should submit a tender document that is a maximum of twenty standard A4 pages (font size 11 or higher) by the deadline to tassie.weaver@meam.org.uk

The proposal should set out:

- A detailed plan for delivering the evaluation, either in its entirety or with identified partners. This should include how the evaluator(s) will deliver against each of the five core elements of the evaluation
- The approach that the evaluator will take to the counterfactual
- How the evaluator meets the 'criteria for applicants' detailed above
- An overall timeline for each year of the evaluation, with key actions and outputs identified on a month-by-month basis.
- The weighting of time and resources for each element of the evaluation and a clear budget for each of the five years of the programme.

Assessment

We will judge each proposal against:

- The approach to each element of the evaluation and the counterfactual (60%)
- The criteria for applicants (20%)
- The value for money that they offer in delivering the services (20%).

Shortlisted providers will be invited to interview at the time set out below.

Contract

A five year contract will be agreed between Homeless Link (for MEAM) and the successful provider, with a break clause as outlined above.

Contacts

Any enquiries about this invitation to tender should be directed initially to the MEAM director, Oliver Hilbery at: oliver.hilbery@meam.org.uk

Timetable

Item	Date
Tender document published	19 September 2017
Conversations with potential partners	Until the deadline
Deadline for submissions	5pm, Friday 20 October 2017
Interviews	Monday 6 November 2017
Appointment	Week commencing 6 November 2017
New MEAM Approach cohort 'launch' meeting (Evaluator(s) to meet the areas and begin coproduction of the evaluation)	Week commencing 20 November
First data flows from areas with interventions in place.	Early 2018
First report at end of 'year one'. This will be focused on set-up of the cohort and will include limited data and analysis	31 March 2018
Regular reporting	Six monthly – 30 Sept 2018 End 'year two' – 31 March 2019 Six monthly – 30 Sept 2019 End 'year three' - 31 March 2020 Etc. for years 4&5