

Building a Joined Up Human Services Support System

Privacy and Information Sharing Initiative

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) under the Joined Up Human Services project, (Joined Up) will deliver an initiative to support the sharing of information in client coordination. Through the Person Based Initiative's Lead Support Coordination Service (LSCS), we will develop a client consent process and form that will support information sharing with all service providers common to that client. We have examined the legislative requirements for information sharing and sought the advice of DHHS legal service and determined that a client is able to give consent or to have consent provided on their behalf by authorised persons.

This initiative arose following initial consultations with stakeholders, where it was identified that there are some concerns, both within Government and across the community sector, about their capacity to share client information.

Concerns were also raised around the implications of privacy legislation in regard to sharing personal information at the service-to-service interface (including inter-departmental and intra-departmental sharing) to promote better client outcomes, and the use of de-identified data to assist service planning, reporting, evaluation and research.

The key objectives of this initiative are to develop a clear client information sharing policy; and to establish protocols to assure clients, service staff, providers, and personal information custodians that personal information is being used appropriately.

The completion of this initiative will:

- reduce the need for clients to re-tell their story;
- improve confidence among service providers about appropriate sharing of their clients' personal information;
- achieve agreement among all relevant personal information custodians around the manner in which de-identified data can be used under privacy legislation for the purposes of service planning, reporting, evaluation and research;
- increase collaborative practice because staff and clients will be clear about what client information can be shared, with whom, and the level of client consent required; and
- see the development of guides on sharing information for service and support coordination.

Project updates and further information on the project and its initiatives, including the Person Based Initiative, are available through this link: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/joinedup