

Building a Joined Up Human Services Support System

Project Update - July 2017

The State Government has been working to improve Tasmania's human services system in partnership with the community sector, clients and the broader community.

In 2015, the Government committed \$1.2 million over two years for the Joined Up Human Services Project (Joined Up) to:

- test the viability and sustainability of a joined up human service system through the development, implementation and evaluation of five initiatives;
- assess whether or not, as part of a joined up system, the health and wellbeing of communities, clients, their families and carers could be improved; and
- evaluate the initiatives and apply these learnings to any future rollout of the system on a larger scale.

The 2017 budget provided an additional \$900 000 over two years to continue the implementation of Joined Up.

Significant progress has been achieved on the five project initiatives. The following information provides an update on the progress of each initiative.

Lead Support Coordination Service (Person and Service Based Initiative)

A core component of the Joined Up Human Services Project is the development of a Lead Support Coordination Service (LSCS) for individuals with multiple and complex needs. This service will empower a lead worker to coordinate the wide array of services required to deliver better outcomes for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community.

The LSCS will be evaluated through 2017-18, with advice to be provided to Government on the merits of extending the service beyond the trial.

A service model for the LSCS has been developed in partnership with the community sector which clearly defines elements of the coordination services to be tested throughout the trial, including focussing on people with multiple and complex needs, a person centred approach following their goals and aspirations and building resilience and self-reliance.

Three LSCS partners have been identified to work with the Department on trial the service. They are:

- Australian Red Cross;
- Baptcare; and
- Mission Australia.

During 2017 the trial group will consist of approximately 30 individual or families, including:

- individuals with multiple and complex needs
- family units with their complexity spread across its members
- pre-statutory intervention families from Child Safety Services; and as part of the Youth at Risk Strategy
- young people aged 15 to 17 years of age that are not living with their immediate family.

The 2017 State Budget funding extends the trial to a second group of at least 18 individuals or families in 2018.

To date, a total of 20 participants have been proposed by LSCS partners as participants in the trial. Of these, 16 have been assessed as having the required complexity and diversity required for participation in the LSCS. The LSCS has commenced for a small number of participants, with more participants to be formally receiving the LSCS very soon. The Department is currently liaising with LSCS partners to identify the remaining 14 participants for the trial.

During 2018 the trial group will have a continued focus on young people, as part of the Youth at Risk Strategy.

Submissions will soon be sought to appoint an independent researcher to evaluate participant outcomes, the effectiveness and performance of the LSCS and to implement an action learning process for continuous improvement.

The project team will support partners delivering the service through to December 2018, by providing administration and systems support.

System Based Initiative

A major barrier to information sharing in case coordination for the community sector has been no common point for collecting client information. This initiative will explore the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to support the trial LSCS through sharing of participant information during the LSCS service and support coordination.

Conekter has been appointed as the successful supplier in March 2017, to provide the coordination platform for the LSCS trial.

The Conekter client coordination system provides an Internet-based portal for Lead Coordinators of the LSCS and services to assess the needs of participants, plan services to meet those needs and work towards participant defined outcomes. The portal also provides participants with logon access to their core information.

Conekter software complies with Victorian Commission of Law Enforcement Data Security standards and has operated with highly secure public records with Victoria Police, mental health, welfare and education organisations for over ten years.

Privacy and Information Sharing Initiative

There is a history of privacy and information sharing issues causing barriers to service delivery. This initiative aims to improve information sharing. This will be achieved through improving understanding of privacy related legislation, legal mechanisms to allow sharing, client consent, and security and confidentiality.

The project team will implement and test the initiative through the LSCS. This has included: establishing LSCS partners as personal information custodians, having broad and well defined consent forms for LSCS participants and including consent checks within the Conekter system supporting the delivery of the LSCS.

Strengthening the Service System in the Huon Valley (Place Based Initiative)

For the community to have the best possible access to information and services, the service system must be well connected, and service providers need to have a good understanding of what services are available and how to access them for their clients.

The Joined Up project team conducted a forum for service providers to the Huon valley in October 2015. This saw 46 participants discuss what they saw as a strong collaborative service system and what could be some activities to be undertaken to strengthen the system.

To understand the strength of the service system for the Huon Valley and its weaknesses, a number of interviews and an online survey were conducted by Swinburne University in 2016. The survey saw 57 community sector organisations (CSOs) participate in the online survey. This approach provided an opportunity to understand the level of collaboration and information sharing across the service network and the level of trust between organisations.

The results found that overall, the existing networks of collaboration, referral, trust, and coordination of services are active and well-interconnected, although large CSOs have closer relationships and tend to link with one another. 'Negative' interactions (e.g. difficulties in engaging with another service) generally resulted in less-well connected and less active relationships. Interestingly, the survey found that reputations mattered across both positive and negative interactions.

The survey also found that there was a modest but visible level of agreement on key issues where organisations were interacting frequently.

Finally, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Tasmanian Health Service were seen to be in a strong position to act as a 'bridge' between collaboration partners.

These findings were presented at a workshop for service providers in November 2016, where the Huon Service Providers Network explored what could be done to address the weaknesses found in the survey and build on the strengths.

Working groups were established after the forum to develop an action plan based on the ideas gathered both at the workshop and at the 2015 forum. Objectives for the Action Plan are to:

- Continue to strengthen and build connections among service organisations delivering services to the Huon community.
- Identify innovative strategies to increase collaboration and information sharing between service providers to the benefit of clients and the broader community.

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- Utilise referral networks to collaborate, advocate and progress service issues and community needs.
 - Investigate and incentivise partnership opportunities, particularly between large and smaller organisations to:
 - provide services in the region; and
 - collaborate in grant funding.

Outputs to achieve these objectives include:

- Development of a common referral form for Huon Valley service providers ;
- Development of an induction package for new network members ;
- A bus tour of Huon Valley services by Hobart based service providers;
- A networking event that incorporates a 'speed network' activity to improve network connections and understanding of the services available for community;
- Develop a list of service providers that would be interested in partnering submissions to relevant funding programs; and
- Develop of a 'hot desk' approach to working

A \$20 000 grant was provided to Huon Regional Care to develop the action plan and implement the strategies in the action plan.

Further information

Further project updates will be available through this link: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/joinedup