

SETS Community of Practice

Communique: Best Practice and Innovation Meeting

Videoconference – 10 September 2020

On 10 September, the SETS Community of Practice (SETSCoP) held its ninth videoconference for SETSCoP members in VIC and SA to share their best practice and innovation.

Service delivery

Despite the challenges experienced by VIC members, they noted more willingness for online engagement by clients during the second lockdown, as many SETS clients value the social connectedness they experience through group sessions.

Some of the digital initiatives include:

- mums and bubs groups
- English classes
- sewing classes
- homework clubs
- online markets
- youth social events
- behaviour change programs for men.

Attendees from SA shared their experience of transitioning back to office, with their VIC colleagues. SA members noted hesitation towards face to face services from some clients, while others prefer face to face engagement. Digital literacy and computers access continues to be an issue for some SETS clients. There was also a reminder to consider digital safety, particularly when engaging young people online.

Client trends

Attendees agreed that there appears to be an increase in mental health issues and domestic and family violence, however that this is not reflected in referrals. There also appears to be increased interest from clients in applying for citizenship. Lastly, employment has become a key focus for service providers and their clients, with opportunities available through the Working for Victoria initiative and in fruit picking positions.

There continues to be vulnerable people who are ineligible for SETS seeking support from providers during this time.

Public health messages

Attendees discussed the challenge of sharing regular updates with SETS clients, and the value of audio clips and social media to do so. There was also some concern about the influence of media coverage, as some migrant communities in regional areas have seen numerous cases. SETS providers are working closely with contact tracing, however expressed some concern about conflicting and confusing information given to clients about self-isolation.

Impacts on mental health

There was discussion among VIC and SA members on the impact of COVID-19 on staff wellbeing, as some staff are feeling fatigued, stressed and having difficulty with boundaries. Attendees acknowledged the need for ongoing support strategies which include:

- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
- regular supervision (individual and group)
- virtual teambuilding and socialising
- reflective self-development with external supervisors
- professional development opportunities
- self-care days
- connecting with other organisations for mutual support.

Some providers noted that due to limited office space and the inability to socially distance, that working from home would be in place at least until the end of the year. Others have decided to survey their staff to gauge their thoughts and ideas around the future of SETS delivery for their organisation.

Additionally, the mental health impacts of COVID-19 on SETS clients was discussed.

Resources shared

[COVID-19 Financial Supports Summary for Melbourne's Outer South East \(Monash Health Refuge Health and Wellbeing \)](#)

[Emergency relief support – Victoria \(Australian Red Cross\)](#)

[Emergency relief support – nationally \(Australian Red Cross\)](#)

[MyAusCOVID-19 App \(Migration Council Australia\)](#)