

## **SETS Community of Practice**

### **Communique: COVID-19 Best Practice and Innovation Meeting (NT/WA)**

#### **Videoconference – 8 April 2020**

On 8 April, the SETS Community of Practice (SETS CoP) held its second videoconference for CoP members in NSW and ACT to share their emerging best practice and innovative service delivery through the current COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Changes to service delivery**

The majority of attendees reported complete transition to working from home arrangements for their SETS service delivery. Some providers are continuing work in the office, however limiting face-to-face contact where possible through encouraging phone calls. Where face-to-face meetings are necessary, organisational policies and procedures have been put in place to mitigate risks.

There was a general consensus from attendees of the challenges they are facing with changes to service delivery and closure of offices.

Issues with working from home include:

- feeling more detached from clients;
- finding it difficult to separate work from home life;
- missing a sense of 'teamwork'.

Some strategies providers are currently employing are:

- regular Zoom or Microsoft team meetings with colleagues;
- supervisors meeting weekly with each staff member individually;
- delivering of packs for playgroups;
- video recordings and screen sharing on Zoom for group programs;
- engaging and sharing information to young people through Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber and Messenger groups;
- differentiating work from home life by keeping to a routine, going for walks and switching off work phones after hours;
- minimising stress through stress-management techniques (meditation, breathing and online group activities with colleagues);
- staff rotations for open offices.

#### **Temporary Visa holders seeking support**

Attendees noted an increase in temporary visa holders (e.g. backpackers) seeking support from SETS providers for emergency relief due to job losses. People in these situations can be referred to providers of the Emergency Relief program. For more visit the Department of Social Services website (<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/communities-and-vulnerable-people/programs-services/emergency-relief>).

### **Business Continuity Planning**

Some providers are in the process of developing business continuity plans that factor in the impact of COVID-19 on service delivery. Many reported that this is being undertaken at an organisational level rather than being SETS specific.