

SETS Community of Practice

Communique: COVID-19 Best Practice and Innovation Meeting (QLD/TAS)

Videoconference – 21 April 2020

On 21 April, the SETS Community of Practice (SETS CoP) held its second videoconference for CoP members in QLD and TAS to share their emerging best practice and innovative service delivery through the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Connectedness

There was a general consensus among the attendees that digital literacy and maintaining meaningful two-way interactions clients, are prominent challenges. Providers agreed that maintaining connectedness and meaningful engagement were difficult with the changes to service delivery due to COVID-19.

Some strategies providers are using to maintain connectedness with their clients are:

- sewing, cooking and “how to” online classes;
- regular newsletters to keep clients up to date;
- conversational classes online;
- collective activities and competitions (i.e. colouring-in competition for children);
- staff professional Facebook profiles to regularly engage with clients;
- school holiday workshops online;
- pre-recorded community education sessions;
- blog to allow clients to share their current experiences;
- upskilling community leaders on zoom so they can hold community meetings;
- emailing of translated information and resources;
- welfare checks on all clients;
- identifying those with low and high digital literacy, to adapt service delivery to their needs.

Another common challenge shared by attendees is the ability to measure client engagement, connectedness and outcomes with services being delivered online.

Some providers mentioned greater difficulty in engaging new clients, while others noted that despite limited prior rapport, new clients were easy to engage as they have been referred for assistance with specific issues and supporting them with such tasks, allows greater rapport to develop.

Temporary Visa Holders

Attendees discussed temporary visa holders and the impact of job losses on this cohort. Many providers mentioned needing to source emergency assistance for those on temporary visas, as limited supports are available to them. Some providers also noted the implications on residential tenancies and the importance of providing accurate state-specific information on private rentals.

Home schooling

Despite some feedback from attendees that schools are being very proactive and supportive of school-aged clients, home schooling continues to be a main concern for SETS clients. Providers mentioned concern for maintaining education outcomes for their clients, with many having limited access to required resources (i.e. limited computers at home, lack of sufficient internet data etc.). Some schools have provided laptops and other necessary resources for SETS clients to effectively be home schooled, however being able to get in contact with clients has also been a challenge.

Sharing of COVID-19 information

One provider mentioned that they are working with their local Police Liaison Officers and bicultural workers to meet with clients who are not abiding with social isolation or distancing restrictions, to remind them and ensure that they are aware of the possible consequences, including fines, should they breach restrictions.

Other providers are focusing on educating their clients about COVID-19 scams, to mitigate any risk of clients being targeted.

Some providers are reminding clients to be aware of their emotional wellbeing and any signs of domestic and family violence, to ensure they are safe during this time.

Ideas and opportunities

Some attendees mentioned perceiving the current COVID-19 situation as an opportunity for them to find innovative and new approaches to supporting their clients.

Attendees mentioned they are in the initial stages of some initiatives:

- coordination of remote volunteering;
- education on financial issues and debts;
- campaigns and online platforms for clients and communities to share stories, experiences and messages of hope.

Some attendees highlighted that Ramadan will be a difficult time for Muslim clients, as generally this is a time for family and friends to get together, with a large celebration at the breaking of the fast. There was a suggestion to encourage clients to partake in virtual dinners via Zoom or other online platforms, to still feel a level of connectedness while maintaining social isolation.

Resources and links shared include:

[Birdie flipbook explaining sickness to children \(QLD Health\)](#)

[COVID-19 cyber security advice \(Australian Cyber Security Centre\)](#)

[COVID-19 translated resources \(MRC Tas\)](#)

[Culture of Connection campaign \(Multicultural Australia\)](#)

[Multicultural Communities of Launceston blog](#)

[Tenants QLD](#)