

SETS Community of Practice

Communique: COVID-19 Best Practice and Innovation Meeting (VIC/SA)

Videoconference – 2 July 2020

On 2 July, the SETS Community of Practice (SETS CoP) held its seventh videoconference for CoP members in VIC and SA to share their emerging best practice and innovative service delivery through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lockdown in Melbourne

Providers based in suburbs locked down due to the recent outbreak in Melbourne, shared some of the difficulties they are facing. Some of the issues shared include:

- challenges with reverting back to electronic support only
- needing to coach clients over the phone to submit applications and documents
- ensuring clients are aware of current restrictions and lockdown zones
- confusion around lockdown areas (e.g. postcodes rather than suburbs named, and clusters of areas)
- many local communities are very lax about social distancing
- many clients had plans for school holidays and/or are wanting to visit family, in restricted areas.

Some of the strategies that providers in affected areas of Melbourne are implementing include:

- welfare checks for clients
- WhatsApp in-language audio messages to advise of latest restrictions
- form-filling sessions on Zoom.

Employment

One provider shared client survey results, which highlight the necessity for targeted employment support and working with employers. Some of the key results include:

- only 6 of the 83 clients surveyed are employed (approx. 7%)
- 72 of the 83 clients surveyed receive some form of Centrelink payment (approx. 86%)
- 27 of the 83 are actively looking for employment (approx. 32%)

Communities

Providers shared the importance of working with community leaders to disseminate information about COVID-19 and changing restrictions. There was general consensus that despite the translated resources, many clients have specific questions and need further information.

One provider shared that the refugee health service in their region has noticed that there are not many people from CALD backgrounds getting tested for COVID-19, and as such there has been a more targeted approach, with mobile testing at local religious and community venues.

There was also some discussion about the current negative media towards migrant communities.

Innovative projects

Despite the challenges from COVID-19, providers agreed that they have developed greater efficiencies and have become more flexible. Some of the initiative projects that providers shared include:

- a digital literacy program
- Mygov training resources
- homework clubs and playgroups online
- Zoom and Facebook groups for clients
- community leader workshops on sustainable business in difficult times
- iso care packages for women.

Some providers expressed concern about the impact that no client arrivals for HSP, will have on SETS. With sponsorship of some families on hold, clients are feeling anxious about their family members overseas.

SETSCoP sub-groups

The SETSCoP operational and thematic sub-groups will commence from 14 July. Providers were reminded to nominate for sub-groups if they have not already done so.

Resources shared

[In-language audio clips for Victoria restrictions \(Uniting Goulburn North East\)](#)

[In-language audio clips for Changes to Victoria restrictions updated 30 June \(Uniting Goulburn North East\)](#)

[Coronavirus Bendigo Refugee Resource Hub: Information in Karen, Dari and Dinka \(Bendigo Community Health Services\)](#)

[Karen Hotline Flyer \(Bendigo Community Health Services\)](#)

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