

SETS Community of Practice

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

Videoconference – 21 May 2020

On 21 May, the SETS Community of Practice (SETS CoP) held its fifth videoconference for CoP members in VIC and SA to share their emerging best practice and innovative service delivery through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Leaders and Communities

Attendees shared their approaches to supporting community leaders and communities through the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the approaches discussed include:

- assisting community leaders to learn and use Zoom
- assisting community leaders to use live streaming platforms (i.e. Facebook live)
- providing zoom workshops and training on governance, grant writing, business skills and strategic planning

Providers noted that some community groups have adapted better to online platforms, than others. In addition, providers highlighted the need to invest time to support communities and clients to be more digitally literate.

One provider shared how online engagement has provided a new platform for community forums, with it being cheaper and easier for community leaders to organise (i.e. no need for a venue etc.).

Face to Face vs Online

Attendees discussed the strengths and limitations of online service delivery. Further, there was agreement that COVID-19 has brought challenges but also many opportunities for the SETS program and how it is delivered.

Initiatives and activities that have been successful online, include:

- playgroups and pre-recorded videos on WeChat
- settlement hub, where clients can virtually drop in for support and be triaged
- Couch choir project for youth
- homework clubs
- women's group on messenger
- English classes, support groups and citizenship training on Zoom
- parenting groups
- Zumba classes
- welfare checks via phone or video call

Providers shared how online service delivery has provided an opportunity for some clients to open up and engage more in SETS, particularly those who previously could not physically attend workshops and those in more regional areas. One provider shared that the level of online engagement is at 80-90% and another provider shared that their number of SETS clients doubled in

April. Other attendees noted that many clients are now engaging in torture and trauma counselling online as they have more time and flexibility to attend.

Some of the activities or services that are better face to face include:

- sewing classes
- supporting clients with complex needs
- identifying domestic and family violence
- youth activities

Despite some benefits of online service delivery, issues with access, costs and ability to use technology, remains a significant challenge for SETS clients.

Concerns for clients

Attendees expressed concern about an increase in domestic and family violence once restrictions are lifted. To try to combat this, some providers are running workshops on anger and frustration management for their clients.

There was a general consensus, that providers are anticipating significant challenges for SETS clients in September, once supplement payments cease.

Additionally, there was concerns for those who have been in Australia for over 5 years and can no longer access settlement support. Many have been seeking support of providers as they are struggling, despite their ineligibility.

Digital literacy continues to be an issue for many SETS clients. To support their clients, many providers have developed in language “How to” guides which cover topics such as setting up email, using Zoom and accessing MyGov.

Providers also noted that SETS clients are at risk of scams and one provider shared how some of their clients have been exposed to employment scams. Factsheets and information on scams was shared.

Other providers brought up the issue of citizenship refusal letters for many of their clients and Immicard renewals.

Resources shared

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

[Emergency Relief \(Australian Red Cross\)](#)

[Current COVID-19 scams \(Scam Watch\)](#)

[Scam Information \(Anglicare SA\)](#)

[Easy English Factsheet on Scams \(Consumer Affairs Victoria\)](#)

[Avoiding Scams – Karen Factsheet \(Consumer Affairs Victoria\)](#)

[Scams resources and tools \(Consumer Affairs Victoria\)](#)

[Thomastown West Community Hub \(Whittlesea Community Connections\)](#)

[Awa Project \(Centre for Multicultural Youth\)](#)

[Volunteer Faye Guyatt helps Shepparton's new arrivals learn English \(Riverinne Herald\)](#)

[Webex](#)