

SETSCoP

Communique: WA COVID-19 Response Meeting

Videoconference – 2 September 2021

On 2 September 2021, SETSCoP members from Western Australia attended a WA-specific meeting to discuss resources and strategies they are using to support clients with ongoing issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to identify areas where there is a need for further support.

COVID-19 Vaccines

Attendees discussed strategies being implemented to provide in-language resources for clients and to inform and assist clients regarding vaccinations. Providers have worked with the Department of Health and community leaders to deliver information sessions, a number of these for specific language groups. Some agencies have established pop-up clinics in or near their offices.

Key concerns for clients

Providers shared some of the most common challenges for their clients, which include:

- The challenge of the vaccine booking systems, particularly for those with limited digital literacy
- Difficulty accessing interpreters
- The spread of misleading information and myths regarding vaccines
- High levels of stress and trauma associated with heightened conflicts in country of origin. Recently, this has been particularly evident within the Afghan community

Ongoing impacts of COVID-19

While WA has not been affected by lockdowns as much as other states, agencies are working to prepare for a potential future lockdown. This includes working with clients and community leaders to support preparation for home schooling.

Ongoing challenges faced by clients

The ongoing issues clients are facing which have been highlighted through the COVID-19 pandemic include:

- The gap in levels of digital literacy – for some this has increased and for others it is taking a lot of support and time to learn digital skills
- Increased family conflict, particularly through previous lockdown periods