

SETSCoP

Communique: Tasmania COVID-19 and Best Practice Meeting

Videoconference – 31 January 2022

On 31 January 2022, the SETS Community of Practice (SETSCoP) held a videoconference for CoP members in Tasmania to share their best practice and innovative service delivery, along with challenges faced through the recent outbreaks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Good News

Service providers have been able to support many **clients to get vaccinated** through hosting vaccine hubs on their premises and with the support of bi-lingual staff. These were well attended by clients in view of the trust-based relationship they have with the providers.

Service providers have been able to **continue face-to-face services** by limiting the number of staff in the building. For clients who are meant to attend at a time when the building is at capacity, phone support is provided or appointments are booked.

Service providers have supported the Tasmanian Department of Health to **share information with specific communities** when outbreaks have occurred. This was done through the support of bi-cultural staff and resulted in an increase in the number of clients isolating when positive, although some misinformation continues to be spread about COVID-19.

Challenges

Service providers are struggling to support clients into **housing**. Landlords are putting pressure on tenants, and it is particularly difficult to find houses for large families.

There are large groups of clients who had attended vaccine hubs through the support of service providers and have been unable to get their vaccination certificate due to their **records going missing**. In other cases, records have been made under different names, or there was a discrepancy in the client's name spelling between the Medicare account and the myGov account. This is causing service providers to spend a lot of time trying to resolve these issues. In addition, due to the inability to get their vaccine certificates, many clients have **hesitated in getting their booster vaccines or getting their children vaccinated**. This also restricts the clients' capacity to access other settlement services, such as **accessing English language classes**.

Clients have also struggled to **access rapid antigen tests (RATs)**, particularly due to the lack of transport. There are significant concerns that clients may not understand the correct process for using RATs. Further, there is a lack of understanding of the various RATs available and which ones are approved for use in Australia.