Questions and Answers on Data Exchange (DEX) - technical questions

Context

DEX reporting is a key component of the Government's 2014 streamlined grants administration initiatives. DEX was introduced to focus on the collection of consistent data across all Government programs. Through the aggregated service delivery data items, government is seeking to build the evidence base regarding the effectiveness of client facing programs and service delivery approaches. SETS providers are also required to submit an annual Activity Workplan Report which is complementary to DEX reporting and was designed to capture qualitative reporting.

Q) How can we register people under 18 years of age in the Household Composition section of DEX?

Registering people under 18 years of age in the Household Composition section in DEX functions the same as a person over 18 years. The household composition will be 'Couple with dependent(s)' if the client is a child with two parents plus siblings in the household. If the client's living situation does not fit into the available options, 'inadequately described' is the appropriate option.

Q) Would it be possible for there to be a function on DEX, which provides access to an organisation's client list and an individual caseworker's client list?

There is a feature within the DEX to accommodate this with clients, referred to as Tags. Tags can be added to a Client record in DEX to group or categorise different records. For example, users may elect to create a Tag called 'Friday' and attach all clients who attend a service on a Friday to this Tag.

Providers could create a Tag with the name of the caseworker, or some other relevant name. Then at the 'Find a Client' screen in the DEX, you simply type in the Tag you wish to search for in the Tags search field, add it to the search, and run the search. The list of clients that will be returned will be all clients with that specific tag, i.e. clients for that caseworker.

More information about adding Tags can be found in the Add a client and Find and edit a client task cards at the DSS Data Exchange website https://dex.dss.gov.au

In regards to Cases – at the 'Find a case' screen, users are able to search for cases using *Advanced* search options. To do this, click 'Show Advanced Options' beside the search fields. This will populate additional fields to which to search for cases. One of these is 'Search cases created by me'. By checking this box and running a search, you will only return cases that were created by yourself. This can be a helpful way to find your case list.

There is currently no way for a user to search for *another* user's created cases.

Q) Can the selection of languages be expanded to include Kachin and Karenni?

As per the information in the Data Exchange Protocols (section **5.1.7 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)**), the 'Main language spoken at home' values in the Data Exchange come from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL), 2016

Languages that are not part of this classification can not be added on an ad-hoc basis. Although not guaranteed, a new version of the ASCL may be released in 2022, based on the 2021 Australian Census results. If there are changes to the languages in the ASCL, the Data Exchange would make the corresponding changes in the 'Main language spoken at home' values.

Q) Where can I find the operational definition of reported 'income'?

The Data Exchange Protocols states on p. 25 that the approximate gross income relates to the client's gross income (earnings before tax) and relates to the individual client rather than the household.

Q) What is the age bracket for reporting children on DEX?

There is no age limit or bracket for reporting children in DEX. Clients of all ages can have data recorded on DEX. You need to be mindful of how to collect consent from children if their personal information is being reported on DEX.

Q) Can we enter data for a client we have supported under SETS who is not in our organisation's catchment area?

In accordance with service areas specified in Grant agreements and Activity Workplans, providers should target clients in those locations. The Department of Home Affairs notes that in some instances clients may choose to travel to seek services through a SETS provider, outside of their immediate residential location and that providers often do not turn clients away from services because of where they reside.

If this occurs, for DEX client's details should be recorded against the appropriate outlet where the service was delivered. Catchment areas are an internal organisational process and outlets are not restricted to these areas when recording clients in DEX.

Where other stakeholders are referring clients from outside provider's current service areas, the Department would encourage providers to provide further guidance to these organisations on referral pathways, and funded providers offering SETS services in relevant locations.

Q) Who should we speak to if we are having technical issues with DEX, such as it is not recording the data we have entered and is affecting our contractual requirements?

Please contact the Data Exchange Helpdesk. The Helpdesk can provide a variety of technical support and if necessary, escalate issues. The Helpdesk is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am – 5.30pm (AEST/AEDT) and can be contacted on 1800 020 283 or dssdataexchange.helpdesk@dss.gov.au, as per the website.

Q) Has an exit reason been added to DEX? If so, where can it be found?

Yes, an exit reason has been added to DEX. When exiting a client from a case, open the relevant case records and then select the 'referral source and reasons icon' against the client to which you wish to add the exit reason. This will open the edit form of the referral source and reason screen. At the bottom of this screen there is a section called "Reason for client leaving this case." The exit reason drop dox box is found here. Please see the Add a Case Task card on the DEX website for these instructions.

Q) Is there a report on the type of services that have been delivered within a group? If so, where can we find this?

Within the Program Overview report there is a service type sheet that details the different types of services delivered. If you would like to see these results for group clients, select group clients on the filter page instead of individual or all clients.

Q) What is considered a "session" that should be reported on DEX?

In the Data Exchange, a session is defined as *'an individual instance or episode of service, stored within a case, which is 'related' to other sessions (when/if they occur)'.*

A session record includes the date the service occurred, the kind of service the client(s) received (known as service type) and which of the clients associated to the case were present.

All sessions of service should be leading towards the client achieving a measurable outcome.

A Recording alternative forms of service delivery guide was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to assist organisations in better understanding when an interaction with a client should/should not be recorded in the Data Exchange.