

SETSCoP Meeting Summary Communiqué

Regional & Rural Subgroup – 26 November 2024

Secretariat: The Social Policy Group (SPG)

1. Regional & Rural Subgroup:

The SETSCoP Regional & Rural Subgroup was formed in response to regional SETS providers requesting a dedicated subgroup where SETS practitioners could come together with others in regional locations across Australia.

2. Discussing SETS programs:

SETS providers discussed their SETS programs and key characteristics of their regional locations.

3. Deep-dive issue – Working with interpreters in regional locations:

Sensitive issues: SETS providers face a number of challenges in interpreting for migrant and refugee communities. In small communities in regional locations, SETS providers note the importance of adherence to codes of conduct and codes of ethics for interpreters, especially with the need for anonymity and responsive interpreting on sensitive issues such as domestic & family violence (DFV), queer migrants and refugees, faith matters, and sensitive health issues. SETS providers will often ask for interstate or national interpreters for sensitive issues, even when there are high financial burdens associated with contracting interpreters, given the need to protect sensitive information.

Working with settlement staff, community leaders, education providers, and interpreting agencies: SETS providers are continuing to work with staff on this issue (including bilingual staff) – for instance, around clear guidance and processes for when settlement staff should be referring for interpreters and external support (i.e. on sensitive topics). This work extends to working with community leaders around the need for sensitivity. SETS providers can provide feedback directly to agencies if there are quality issues (e.g. if phone interpreters are clearly travelling or taking care of children and not fully engaged, or if they are also continually adding advice or information outside of the job remit). SETS providers are working with local education institutes who are delivering training and certification for interpreters, especially on issues of ethics and conduct.

Phone interpreting preferable to family members interpreting: There can be higher phone interpreting usage in regional areas, especially with the costs imposed by the need for travel for in-person interpreting. While it can be challenging to interpret over the phone, it is preferable to family members and children interpreting. Children interpreting can expose them to sensitive topics and cause stress.

Need for qualified interpreters for specific topics: SETS providers note that external, qualified interpreters are preferable for particular matters, including legal issues and health. However, there can be issues accessing qualified interpreters.

Mainstream services capacity (government, health, real estate): There is a need for capacity building with government and mainstream services such as health and real estate. These services can

be reluctant to use interpreters. One SETS provider noted that they are often approached by mainstream services, including NDIS, to provide interpreters. In response, the SETS provider conduct training on best practice, because oftentimes mainstreams services do not have the confidence to use interpreters. There are online videos that have training for providers.

Further Community of Practice work in this area: Subgroup to explore dedicated further work in interpreting in settlement. Stakeholders include: SETS providers, NAATI, TIS, AUSIT, interpreting agencies. Selected SETS providers have run social enterprise employment programs that support people become interpreters, which helps employment but also the need for additional qualified interpreters. Subgroup to explore revisiting free interpretation for SETS as a response to these issues.

4. Additional issues to be discussed in future:

- > Secondary migration
- > Skills transition
- > Working with regional employers
 - a) Invitation to organisations working directly with employers to see if there are adaptations or specific activities for regional employers (Community Corporate & GlowUp Careers)
 - b) Query on materials on benefits of diverse hiring
- > Gaps in cultural competency and responsiveness among regional mainstream services
- > Generational gaps between youth and elders in regional migrant and refugee communities and how different age groups can support each-other in the resettlement process
- > Settlement providers in disaster response

Outcomes

1. **SETSCoP Webinar on Regional Settlement:** Invitation to SETS providers, the Department of Home Affairs, other government bodies, and regional settlement stakeholders. To explore issues outlined above and regional settlement in general.

Attendees (22 Staff / 17 SETS Organisations):

Nick Ross (SPG – SETSCoP Secretariat)

Ko Yeh (Wyndham CEC VIC)

Ira (Centacare FNQ QLD)

Heeyoung (Ballarat RMC VIC)

Victoria (Pilbara CLS WA)

Robert (Wyndham CEC VIC)

Ali (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Madan (Mosaic NSW)

Nino (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Javier (Centacare FNQ QLD)

Julia (Great Southern MS Albany WA)

Simone (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Sammy (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Skye (North Coast - Coffs Harbour NSW)

Daniel (Wagga Wagga NSW)

Sadia (RAILS QLD)

Amanda (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Linny (Multicultural Australia QLD)

Martine (Bendigo CHS VIC)

Nayif (CatholicCare Toowoomba QLD)

Khaled (Connecting CS Dubbo NSW)

Nikki (La Trobe CHS Gippsland VIC)

Jen (Cultura Geelong VIC)