The Data Exchange Protocols

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document is intended to provide operational guidance to users of the Data Exchange across the full range of grant funded services associated with the Community Grants Hub and hosted by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The Data Exchange Protocols (referred to in this document as the Protocols) should be read in conjunction with:

- The Data Exchange Framework (outlining the principles and vision which underpin the Data Exchange)
- The organisation’s grant agreement
- The task cards and e-Learning modules available on the Data Exchange website (for users of Data Exchange web-based portal) and
- The Data Exchange technical specifications (for users submitting their data through system-to-system transfer or bulk upload from their own case management software).

The Protocols are not intended to prescribe how organisations should run their business or how they should collect data; they are intended to provide practical information for managers and front-line staff to assist them in integrating the Data Exchange data definitions and requirements into existing service and administrative practices.

The Protocols are periodically updated to provide current and accurate guidance. All resources associated with the Data Exchange Framework are available on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

1.2 The Data Exchange Framework

The Data Exchange Framework represents the approach taken to program performance reporting in client facing grant agreements. DSS progressively introduced standardised, prioritised, and collaborative reporting processes across grants programs from 1 July 2014. From 1 July 2016, the Data Exchange has been progressively expanded as part of the Commonwealth Government’s Community Grants Hub (https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/).

The data requirements of the Data Exchange are divided into two parts: a small set of mandatory priority requirements that all organisations report, and an extended data set that providers may be required or can choose to share with their funding agency in exchange for relevant and meaningful reports to help inform service delivery, known as the partnership approach.

This approach to reporting is streamlined, automated and includes a shift in focus of performance measurement from ‘outputs’ to more meaningful information about service delivery ‘outcomes’ through:

- **Streamlined reporting arrangements.** A standard client level data record (the priority requirements) applies across the broad suite of government funded client-based programs, replacing aggregate data reports, ‘smart forms’ and multiple IT reporting systems.

- **Free access to a web-based portal.** Providers who do not have their own case management tools can access an IT system (the Data Exchange web-based portal) at no cost to the user. This allows for recording client, service and outcomes data that meets all the grant agreement program performance data requirements and allows providers to confidentially manage their core client and case information.

- **Bulk uploading and system-to-system transfers.** The Data Exchange supports providers who have compatible case management software to transfer information directly from their own systems through bulk uploading and system-to-system transfers.
- **Promoting a partnership approach to reporting.** Organisations are invited to participate in the partnership approach to share client outcomes data with their funding agency in exchange for relevant reports. These reports are outcomes focused and include a rich set of added information to help inform service delivery using program performance, client survey and government data.

Further information about the policy principles underpinning this approach to program performance reporting can be found in the Data Exchange Framework, available on the Data Exchange [website](https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

For additional program specific policy guidance and in order to ensure consistency and quality of the data being provided, please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange.
2. Recording client-level data

This section describes the key concepts and terminology associated with collecting and reporting client level data. It is important that managers and front-line staff understand these concepts because they underpin the whole Framework.

2.1 Client level data

Client level data refers to data collected and reported on each individual client rather than as summary (aggregate) data. The Data Exchange is designed to capture individual client level data. However, for instances where collecting client data is not practical or possible (such as an activity involving a large group of people or a whole community) aggregate reporting is still accommodated by the system (see Section 5.2.3 of this document).

The main advantages of client level data are:

- The flexibility to analyse and report administrative data in multiple formats for different audiences, without burdening organisations with multiple data requests.
- The improved reliability of administrative data, as all organisations collect the same raw data records without the need to apply complex counting rules.
- The improved usefulness of administrative data, due to the use of a Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) allowing for the matching of de-identified data records across funded program activities.
- The improved capacity for reporting data back to organisations, as the de-identified administrative data is held within a common data repository.

Client level data provided through the Data Exchange is de-identified so that no identifiable client information is able to be used by an organisation’s funding agency.

Data Exchange staff work with organisations to ensure clear information is available to clients to affirm that only de-identified data is captured as part of program performance reporting and used for the purposes of policy development, grants program administration, research and evaluation.

For further information about collecting and protecting client information see the fact sheet on Information for clients on privacy (https://dex.dss.gov.au/policy-guidance/information_for_clients_on_privacy/) and Section 4 below.

2.2 Who is a client?

When delivering program activities the term ‘client’ is used in many different ways, potentially covering individuals, families, groups, other organisations and whole communities; as well as casework, participants, audiences and one-off contact. While this appropriately reflects the diverse strategies used to deliver services, we recognise that it may also create particular challenges for program performance reporting.

A specific definition of ‘client’ is used under the Data Exchange to ensure comparable information is reported regarding the number of clients that received a service within a reporting period. This means that ‘apples with apples’ comparisons are possible within and across activities.

For the purposes of recording a ‘client’ record in the Data Exchange, a client is defined as:

An individual who receives a service as part of a funded activity that is expected to lead to a measureable outcome.
This definition includes a number of components that must be met in order to count a person as a client. Answers about whether these components have been met are program and context specific, but ultimately involve determining whether the individual in their own right is expected to achieve an outcome that can be linked to a program-specific objective. More information about who is considered a client can be determined in the Protocols Appendix B: Program Activity Guidance.

There are many different types of outcomes that can be achieved as part of service delivery. Outcomes are not limited to high level, life changing events. Client outcomes can also be as simple as learning a new skill, receiving a service that is required, or gaining increased knowledge about other services that are appropriate and available. All of these outcomes are able to be recorded within the Data Exchange.

There may at times be other support people present at a service who do not meet the definition of a client. This could include carers of clients, family members or young children. While there are no requirements to record the details of support people in the Data Exchange, if an organisation so wishes, this can be accommodated by recording these participants as ‘support persons’ at the session level. Support persons are not counted as clients.

In cases where an organisation is funded to provide training, support and skills development of organisation’s staff, the staff member can be considered a ‘client’ for the purposes of reporting in the Data Exchange. More information about which programs require the recording of staff interactions in the Data Exchange as a client can be determined in the Protocols Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance.

2.3 Services for individuals

For many case management services, clients are easily identifiable because service recipients have their own case plan with individual goals and outcomes. In these circumstances:

- The client is an individual person; and
- The client has received a service delivered as part of a funded activity within the reporting period; and
- It is appropriate to record information about the individual service recipient and the service they received; and
- The service is expected to lead to a measurable individual outcome.

2.4 Services for children

A child can be recorded as a client in the Data Exchange if that child directly received the service delivered and meets the above definition of a client. When children are recorded within the Data Exchange it is best practice to seek consent from a child’s parent or guardian, except in circumstances where the organisation considers that the child is able to provide informed consent on their own.

2.5 Services for couples, families and households

The Data Exchange captures information about individual clients, however there are some funded activities where multiple individuals are assisted as part of the same ‘case’, ‘family’ or ‘group’. In instances where a service is delivered to multiple individuals, more than one ‘client’ record can be created and grouped together using a ‘case’ record.
Practice examples of when to create a client record:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Service Context</th>
<th>Who is the client?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assisting a couple at risk of homelessness to manage their finances in order to prevent a future accommodation crisis.</td>
<td>Both persons in the couple are considered clients, as they are both receiving the service, benefit from that service, and meet the definition of ‘client’ as per the program activity guidelines. Two client records should be created and used within the Data Exchange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A couple attend family counselling and their two children are in the room during the counselling session.</td>
<td>Both of the parents are counted as clients as they received a service and will achieve an outcome. The children present are not recorded as clients as no measureable outcome will be achieved for them on this occasion. The children could be recorded as ‘support persons’, however this is not mandatory and will not be counted in reports. If the children attend a counselling session and participate directly (achieving their own outcomes) they would then be recorded as clients.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Services for groups

There are some funded activities that deliver services to the community. These can include information sessions and public events. The purpose and delivery of this work differs across activities but can include early intervention and prevention, education, awareness raising and capacity-building. Sessions can range in size and there may be identified clients (where a client record is created for each individual attending), and unidentified ‘group’ clients (where only an aggregate attendance figure is recorded) or a mix of both.

Organisations should capture client records for some (or all) individual participants in a group (such as a regular playgroup) where it is possible and appropriate to do so. If it is impractical to collect information about individual participants, for example in community outreach activities where several hundred members of the general public may participate, the aggregate number of unidentified ‘group’ clients can be recorded. This demonstrates how many persons attended an event, but does not include any further data (such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background, age groups etc).

For organisations participating in the partnership approach, the outcomes achieved from these group activities can be recorded through Community SCORE (Section 7.4).

Practice example of when to create a community or group session:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Service Context</th>
<th>Can unidentified ‘group’ clients be recorded?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental health awareness event for carers and families in the community. 25 individuals participate in information and advisory workshops.</td>
<td>As anonymous members of the public, these 25 persons are recorded as an aggregate count (unidentified ‘group’ clients) because it is not practical to record individual client details or measure individual client outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Linking client data to service delivery

3.1 What is a service?

In a similar way to defining a client, the Data Exchange Framework introduces a specific definition of a service based on key service delivery concepts. These have been introduced to ensure that an instance of service can be consistently applied across varying funded activities and service delivery contexts that are reported in the Data Exchange. This will ensure ‘apples with apples’ comparisons to better understand what has been achieved.

For the purposes of the Data Exchange, a service is defined as:

One or more individual instances or episodes of assistance (known as sessions) within a reporting period that are delivered within a distinct case.

The concept of a ‘case’ and ‘session’ are integral to the Data Exchange as they maintain a consistent set of counting rules for services and record information about the different activities clients are accessing, how they are being delivered and the location(s) they are being delivered from. These concepts are discussed below and in further detail at Section 5.3 of this document.

3.2 What is a case?

Cases act as containers, linking client and session data to location and program activity information.

A case captures one or more instances of service (known as sessions) received by a client or group of clients that is expected to lead to a distinct outcome.

A case record allows for an understanding of what funded activity is being delivered, the location it is being delivered from and the number of clients receiving a service.

There is no right or wrong reason to create a case and each organisation is free to create cases in a format that best suits their needs. For users of the web-based portal, cases may also facilitate navigation.

- A case can operate over multiple reporting periods, for instance if a client returns to receive the same service.
- Depending on the nature of the service, a case can contain an individual, a couple, a family, or an unrelated group of individuals (such as a regular weekly or monthly group meeting).
- If a client attends a number of different funded activities, each of these is treated as a separate case.
- If a client receives the same services from a number of different locations (known as outlets) managed under the same program activity, each of these is treated as a separate case.
- For additional program specific policy guidance on cases, please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange.
3.3 **What is a session?**

A session is an individual instance or episode of service, stored within a case and which can be 'related' to other sessions (when / if they occur) by its inclusion in the same case. A case may contain between one and a potentially unlimited number of sessions.

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. For organisations participating in the partnership approach, client pathways information (such as referrals) can be recorded at a session level. More information about this extended data set can be found in Sections 6 and 7.

For two specific service types (advocacy / support and record searches), an instance of service can be recorded, even if the client is not physically present or is only present on the telephone. This is due to the nature of the service provided, and only applies if a substantive effort has been put into providing the service.

For additional program specific policy guidance on sessions, please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange.

3.4 **Counting rules for clients, cases and sessions**

A client will be counted against a reporting period if the client was recorded as attending at least one session within that reporting period.

A case will be counted against a reporting period if at least one session has been recorded under the case within that reporting period.

A session will be counted against a reporting period if the date of the session fell within the reporting period and at least one client is attached.

Note that an unlimited number of clients can be added to a case: however, within a session you can only add up to a maximum of 999 clients.

3.5 **What is an outlet?**

For the purposes of the Data Exchange an outlet is defined as the physical location from where a service is primarily being delivered.

- Each outlet is assigned the program activities which it delivers and can have different staff, service information, program activities, and contact details.
- Where the service is mobile in nature, the outlet used should be the nearest administrative premises where staff are based, and where they are likely to be travelling from to deliver the service.
- Creating multiple outlets for services delivered from the same address should be avoided.
- Post office boxes cannot be used in place of a physical location.
- An outlet should never be created for a client’s residential address (if a service is delivered in a client’s home) or a sensitive / protected location such as a refuge.
- In the instance of service delivery at a residential address, the outlet should reflect where staff are based or travelling from. In the instance of service delivery at a protected address or refuge, the outlet can use an address of a non-identifiable, public place nearby (such as a post office, police station or shopping centre).

For additional program specific policy guidance on outlets, please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange.
3.6 Delivery partnerships and consortium arrangements

Organisations make different choices when it comes to setting up their delivery partners and outlets. As these decisions will affect who can enter, view and report on data in the Data Exchange, set-up needs to happen in agreement between the two parties, i.e. lead / facilitating and delivery partners. Particular attention needs to be paid to the naming of outlets, outlet addresses, the visibility of data and the protection of client privacy and personal information.

More guidance on this topic is available in the training resources section of the Data Exchange website.

3.7 Funding received from multiple sources

It is important that program performance information is entered into the Data Exchange in a manner consistent with the Data Exchange Protocols for each funding period. The Data Exchange Framework is intended to capture client outcomes from services funded through programs in scope for the Data Exchange. Where an organisation receives funding from multiple sources to assist with the delivery of an activity, the following guidance should be considered:

(a) Where an individual client engages with a program that is partially funded in this way, it is important to collect their information within the Data Exchange in order to understand the client’s interaction with programs over the whole funding or reporting period (as opposed to only seeing a snapshot over shorter period).

(b) If Data Exchange-related funding is only provided for a specific aspect of the service offering, such as in a certain location or to a specific client group, it is acceptable to only report on those clients or that specific outlet.

(c) When an organisation distributes a voucher or other specific items (such as Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) vouchers) and these types of items are acquitted in relation to the agency that provided the item, this is not recorded in the Data Exchange.
4. Protecting a client’s personal information

The Data Exchange Framework has been designed to ensure a client’s personal information is protected through stringent protocols that comply with the requirements of the Commonwealth Privacy Act (the Privacy Act), including the Australian Privacy Principles.

According to the Privacy Act, ‘personal information’ is information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:

(a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and

(b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

Information that is stored by DSS on the Data Exchange is ‘personal information’ if the information relates to an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable, and this information says something about them. For example, DSS would store a client’s personal information on the Data Exchange in circumstances where the information includes the client’s name and information about his or her reasons for seeking assistance from an organisation – in this case, the information says something about an identified individual.

It is important to note that, at no time should organisations provide identifiable client information to the Department, for instance as part of telephone or email communications.

4.1 Data Exchange privacy protocols

When reporting client-level records, the personal information that organisations enter on the Data Exchange, either through the web-based portal, bulk uploading of files or a system-to-system transfer, will be stored by DSS on the Data Exchange.

Where an organisation enters client data through the Data Exchange web-based portal, only the organisation will access the personal information stored on this DSS-hosted information system. Strict IT security protocols will prevent DSS staff from accessing personal information in this system for policy making, grants program delivery, or research and evaluation purposes. The Department will apply best practice data de-identification and aggregation methods when producing information for these purposes, including reports for sharing with organisations, to ensure that a client cannot be identified or re-identified by the Department or organisations.


4.2 Organisation obligations when using the Data Exchange web-based portal

When using the Data Exchange web-based portal to manually enter data, the personal information that organisations enter is stored by DSS on the Data Exchange. This includes a client’s name, date of birth and address information.

While this information is de-identified and never visible to DSS or any funding agency using the Data Exchange (as per section above), it is visible to the organisation using the portal so that they may easily navigate and enter their performance data.

Organisations who use the Data Exchange web-based portal must adhere to the notification and consent arrangements identified below, which are relevant to DSS’s obligations under the Privacy Act.
As detailed below, the notification arrangements require that organisations include the form of words set out below on their registration forms. If, however, organisations do not wish to use this form of words on their registration forms, providers are required to:

(a) notify the client (through their registration forms or in other ways) of the matters that are listed below; or

(b) otherwise ensure that the client is aware of the same matters that are listed below.

Organisations are required to notify the client, or otherwise ensure that the client is aware, of these matters at or before the time that the client’s personal information is entered on the Data Exchange or, if that is not practicable, as soon as practicable after that client’s personal information is entered on the Data Exchange.

Organisations who use registration forms may design and implement their own forms when collecting a client’s personal information for entry on the Data Exchange; however, to enable DSS to store a client’s personal information on the Data Exchange, which is hosted by DSS, providers must include the ‘DSS standard notification’ on their registration forms. The DSS standard notification is the following form of words:

“The information that we collect from you on this form includes your personal information. Your personal information is protected by law, including by the Commonwealth Privacy Act.

The client management system that we are using is an IT system called the ‘Data Exchange’. This system is hosted by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Your personal information that is stored by the Department on the Data Exchange will only be disclosed to us for the purposes of managing your case.

The Department de-identifies and aggregates data in the Data Exchange to produce information for policy development, grants program administration, and research and evaluation purposes. This includes producing reports for sharing with organisations. This information will not include information that identifies you, or information that can be used to re-identify you, in any way.

You can find more information about the way the Department will manage your personal information in the Department's APP privacy policy, which the Department has published on its website. This policy contains information about how you may access the personal information about you that is stored on the Data Exchange and seek correction of that information. This policy also includes information about how you may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles by the Department, and how the Department will deal with your complaint.”

If organisations do not wish to include the DSS standard notification on their registration forms, they are required to notify the client (through their registration forms or in other ways), or otherwise ensure that the client is aware, that:

(a) the Data Exchange is an IT system that is hosted by the Australian Government Department of Social Services; and

(b) the Department will collect the client’s personal information from the organisation for storage on the Data Exchange because the provider is using the Data Exchange as a client management system; and

(c) the personal information of the client that is stored by the Department on the Data Exchange will only be disclosed to that organisation for the purposes of managing that client’s case; and

(d) the Department de-identifies and aggregates data that is stored on the Data Exchange to produce information for policy development, grants program administration, and research and evaluation purposes, and that this information will not include information that identifies the client, or information that can be used to re-identify the client, in any way; and

(e) the Department’s APP privacy policy, which is published on the Department’s website. The website contains information about how the client may: access the personal information about them that is stored on the Data Exchange and seek correction of that information; and, complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles by the Department, and how the Department will deal with the client’s complaint.
Organisations are required to notify the client, or otherwise ensure that the client is aware, of each of these matters at or before the time that the client’s personal information is entered on the Data Exchange or, if that is not practicable, as soon as practicable after that client’s personal information is entered on the Data Exchange. This requirement is relevant to DSS’s obligations under the Privacy Act.

In addition to providing the required notification to a client, an organisation using the Data Exchange as a client management system will need to:

- obtain the express consent of a client, on behalf of DSS, for DSS to collect the client's personal information from the provider and store it on the Data Exchange; and
- record that consent in the Data Exchange IT system; and
- inform the client that they may withdraw this consent at any time.

DSS will not store the client’s name or pseudonym, and/or street-level address, on the Data Exchange unless this consent has been obtained.

The Department will not review, approve or store organisation registration forms where organisations use these forms to obtain the required consent. Where organisations obtain the required consent using other procedures (for example, over the telephone), the Department will not review or approve those procedures, nor will it store an organisation’s own records of a client’s consent. Organisations should determine their own record-keeping procedures in relation to client consent.

However, for the purposes of DSS’s obligations under the Privacy Act, the required consent is to be recorded in the Data Exchange IT system using the tick box provided when reporting client-level records through the web-based portal. When reporting client-level records through bulk uploading of files or a system-to-system transfer, this consent is to be recorded within these files. While organisations are required to record a client’s consent in the Data Exchange, they are not required to provide copies of the client’s consent to DSS.

When obtaining this consent from a client who is a child, it is best practice to seek parental consent from the child’s parent or guardian except in circumstances where the organisation considers that the child is able to provide informed consent on their own.

When obtaining this consent from a client whose capacity to consent may be compromised (e.g. a client with a physical or mental disability), it might be appropriate to implement special practices. For example, it might be appropriate for the client’s consent to be witnessed by family members or another key support person.

If a client withdraws consent for DSS to store his or her personal information on the Data Exchange, an organisation must record the client’s decision in the Data Exchange. Organisations using the web-based portal will need to un-tick the tick box. Organisations who report using system-to-system transfers or bulk uploads will need to update the client level record consistent with a client’s decision to withdraw their consent. When an organisation has recorded a client’s decision in the Data Exchange, DSS will process the decision by removing its record of the client’s name or pseudonym, and/or street-level address, from the Data Exchange.

4.3 Organisation obligations when not using the Data Exchange for their own client management purposes

The consent and notification arrangements identified in section 4.2 do not apply to organisations if they choose not to use the Data Exchange for their own client management purposes.

Where organisations choose not to use the Data Exchange as a client management system, they will indicate that client consent has not been provided when reporting through the web-based portal, a system-to-system transfer or bulk upload. The SLK for a client will be saved in a client-level unit record that is stored by the Department in the Data Exchange. The information that is stored in a client-level unit record will not include the client’s name, pseudonym or street-level address. Please refer to Section 5.2.2. Statistical Linkage Keys (SLK) for more information on SLKs.”
4.4 Arrangements for follow-up client research

In addition to the information collected in the Data Exchange, funding agencies and third parties (such as universities) are interested in commissioning client research in future, in order to better understand client needs and find opportunities to improve service delivery outcomes. Obtaining client consent to be contacted to participate in research will create a pool of willing participants for such research projects. Any contact with clients will respect client privacy at all times.

The specific details about commissioning and administering client research is likely to vary depending on the nature of that evaluation. Basic steps are listed below:

- Organisations must ask clients if they are open to participating in client research at some point in the future. This consent forms part of the priority requirements.
- Any research conducted will be approved by a recognised ethics committee.
- DSS, other funding agencies and organisations commit to clear and simple communication with clients to help them understand the reasons why client research, such as surveys, are important and what it would mean to participate.
- Clients will not be obliged to participate in this research, and can withdraw their consent at any time.
- Further communication will occur with organisations prior to the commencement of any research activities.

The specific details about commissioning and administering client research (surveys and evaluations) are likely to vary dependent on the nature of the activity being conducted. Further communication will occur with organisations prior to the implementation of any research activities.

4.5 Other potential organisational privacy considerations

Once a client record is created it will be visible to all Data Exchange users within the organisation. Organisations will need to address any potential issues through their own internal business processes.
5. Collecting the priority requirements

The priority requirements are a small set of mandatory data items. They allow for an understanding of the demographics of clients accessing program activities, how often clients are attending, where they are attending and what program activities they are attending.

In summary, the priority requirements reflect the collection of information about client details (Section 5.1 and 5.2); case and session details (Section 5.3); and client consent to participate in follow-up research (Section 5.4).

This section presents practical information about each of these concepts to support managers and front line staff to consistently and accurately collect the required data. It does not include technical information for IT managers to configure their systems and is not a computer guide for using the Data Exchange web-based portal.

Information for IT managers is readily available in the Data Exchange Technical specifications, found on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

Guidance and learning materials for use of the Data Exchange web-based portal is readily available in a suite of task cards and e-Learning modules, also found on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

The rationale underpinning the selection of the data items in the priority requirements is outlined in the Data Exchange Framework document.

5.1 Client level data

The first tier of the priority requirements reflects a client and their key demographic characteristics. This provides an understanding of the pathways of each client over time, remembering that this is achieved on a de-identified basis.

A client record only ever needs to be created once. It can then be maintained, updated and edited at any time.

Client level data is reported for all individuals who receive a service as part of a funded activity, in line with the definition and counting rules outlined in Section 2 and 3. These records are the basic ‘building blocks’ of the Data Exchange Framework and are used to answer standard questions:

- How many clients were assisted?
- How many clients were assisted in previous reporting periods?
- How many clients received assistance under different funded activities?
- How many clients received assistance from a funded activity delivered by a different organisation?
- How many clients receiving assistance were from vulnerable target population groups?

Answers to these questions will help tell the broader story about the outcomes being achieved, by providing an understanding of who these outcomes are being achieved for and when.
5.1.1 Collecting client given and family names

This would typically be collected the first time that a client accesses any funded activity from an organisation, either in a registration form or an intake interview. Organisations are free to gather this information in accordance with their standard practices.

A client’s given name and family name are recorded because they form part of the SLK (see Section 5.2.2) used to uniquely identify clients without disclosing personal information (see Section 5.2.2). **Given name** is typically a client’s first name, but it may include one or more middle names. Ideally, the given name should be recorded exactly as it is on key identification documents such as a passport or driver’s license.

**Family name** is typically the client’s last name (or surname) and ideally should be recorded exactly as it is spelled on key identification documents.

Where clients are known by more than one name, or prefer to be called by a particular name (for example Joe rather than Joseph), their given and family names as used on key identification documents should still be used to create the client record.

Where a client does not have identification documentation or chooses not to disclose this information, the organisation should record the given and family name that is most commonly used or preferred to be used by the client.

Where a client does not wish to disclose their ‘real’ name, the organisation should indicate that a pseudonym is being used and record a pseudonym that ideally can be used again if the client returns for other services.

5.1.2 Date of birth

A client’s date of birth is recorded for two reasons: it forms part of the SLK (see Section 5.2.2) and provides a direct means of calculating the client’s age.

Age groups demonstrate part of the standard demographic profile for clients required by many government programs and is of particular importance to programs that target age-specific cohorts.

Where a client doesn’t know their date of birth or does not wish to disclose it, it is acceptable for an estimated date of birth to be used. An estimated date of birth indicator is available in the Data Exchange and should be used to flag when this occurs. For example, if a client thinks they are approximately 30 years old (and it is 2017), the date of birth is recorded as 1st January 1987.

5.1.3 Gender

A client’s gender is recorded because it forms part of the SLK (see Section 5.2.2) and is recorded based upon how the client self-identifies. Please note that gender is different to sexuality and sexual orientation which are not recorded in the Data Exchange.

The Data Exchange uses standard data collection definitions by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), with four options available to record a client’s gender:

- Male
- Female
- Intersex / indeterminate
- Not stated or inadequately described

The ‘Intersex / indeterminate’ response can be used in circumstances where a client does not identify as male or female.

If a client chooses not to disclose their gender it is acceptable to record ‘Not stated / inadequately described’.
5.1.4 Residential address

Information about where clients live can assist with understanding if services are located in the right area. A client’s residential address can also be compared to an outlet address to understand how far the client may be travelling to access a service, or how far staff may be travelling to deliver a service to a client.

A client’s residential address can also be linked to other useful information to help understand a client’s circumstances, such as the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) rankings and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) community profiles.

Within the Data Exchange there is the capacity to record a full residential address for each client. At a minimum, a client’s state, suburb and postcode are considered part of the priority requirements and must be recorded to create the client record.

The identity of clients providing their full residential address is protected by converting the data to the ABS standard mesh block code. This means that a mesh block code is recorded in place of the client’s address, which de-identifies the record.

In exceptional circumstances it may not be appropriate to record the client's full residential address, such as where the client is experiencing domestic violence and does not wish to provide even their suburb, state and post code due to fears for their personal safety. In such limited circumstances, the service outlet suburb, state and postcode can be recorded instead.

5.1.5 Recording a homeless client’s residential address

If a client is homeless or of no fixed address, the client or organisation can determine the most appropriate address to be recorded. This may be the suburb, state and postcode of where the client usually spends the night, or suburb, state and postcode of the outlet where the client is seeking assistance. A flag to indicate the client is currently homeless is available in the ‘extended demographics’ section of the Data Exchange, which falls under the partnership approach (see Section 6).

5.1.6 Indigenous status

A client’s Indigenous status is recorded because it provides an important understanding of whether clients who identify as Indigenous are accessing services. Under standard data collection definitions used by the AIHW, five options are available to record a client’s Indigenous status. These are listed in Section 11 (List of data values).

Indigenous status is part of the standard demographic profile for clients of many government programs and is of particular importance in ensuring Indigenous people and communities have appropriate access to funded services.

Where a client chooses not to disclose their Indigenous status, it is acceptable to record ‘Not stated/Inadequately described’.

5.1.7 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)

A client’s CALD background is recorded because it provides an important understanding of whether CALD clients are accessing services. Under standard data collection definitions used by the AIHW, two questions are used to record a client’s CALD status:

(a) Country of birth
   - Record the country of birth indicated by the client
   - A list of values is available to select based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard Australian Classification of Countries, 2016
(b) Main language spoken at home

- Record the main language spoken at home indicated by the client.
- A list of values is available to select based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL), 2016

More detailed information about a client’s CALD background such as ancestry can be collected in the ‘extended demographics’ section of the Data Exchange, which falls under the partnership approach (see Section 6).

CALD status is part of the standard demographic profile for clients of many government programs and is of particular importance to ensure CALD clients and communities have appropriate access to funded services. This information can also be beneficial for organisations in determining whether the engagement of translating services or bilingual staff may assist in better service delivery for their clients.

Where a client chooses not to disclose their CALD status, it is acceptable to record ‘Not stated / Inadequately described’.

5.1.8 Disability, Impairment or Condition

Clients are asked to self-identify whether they have a disability, impairment or condition because it is important for organisations and funding agencies to know whether clients with a disability are accessing services.

Under standard data collection definitions used by the AIHW, disability is recorded in groupings that most clearly express the experience of disability by a person. Disability groupings constitute a broad categorisation of disabilities in terms of the underlying health condition, impairment, activity limitations, participation restrictions, environmental factors and support needs. The categories in the Data Exchange include:

- **Intellectual/learning** – associated with impairment of intellectual functions which limit a range of daily activities and restrict participation in a range of life areas (For example, but not limited to; dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyslexia).
- **Psychiatric** – associated with clinically recognisable symptoms and behaviour patterns frequently associated with distress that may impair personal functioning in normal social activity (for example, but not limited to; Asperger syndrome, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism, behavioural disorders, bipolar, depression, eating disorders, epilepsy, manias, phobias, schizophrenia, somnias).
- **Sensory/speech** – including vision disability (blindness, vision impairment); hearing disability (deafness, hearing impairment that cause severe restrictions in communication); deaf-blind (dual sensory impairments causing severe restrictions in communication); speech disability (speech loss, impairment which causes severe restrictions in communication).
- **Physical/diverse** – associated with the presence of an impairment, which may have diverse effects within and among individuals, including effects on physical activities such as mobility. This grouping includes physical disability (for example; paraplegia, quadriplegia, muscular dystrophy, motor neurone disease, neuromuscular disorders, cerebral palsy, absence or deformities of limbs), acquired brain injury, neurological disability (including epilepsy, dementias, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson disease).
- **None** - no disability, or no disability, impairment or condition having been identified by the client.
- **Not stated / inadequately described.**

When recording data about disability, impairments or conditions clients should self-identify, and can identify with more than one group (for example physical/diverse and intellectual/learning).
Data about disability status is part of the standard demographic profile for clients of many government programs and is of particular importance to ensure people with a disability have appropriate access to funded services.

Where a client chooses not to disclose if they have a disability, impairment or condition, it is acceptable to record ‘Not stated / Inadequately described’.

5.2 Unique client identifiers

As highlighted in Section 4, program performance data provided by organisations through the Data Exchange will be de-identified and encrypted so that no personal client information will be accessed by DSS or any other funding agency.

Two client ID data items are included in the priority requirements to assist users of the Data Exchange to identify individual clients without disclosing personal information.

5.2.1 Client ID

Each client record in the Data Exchange includes a client ID that must remain unique to that client in all circumstances. The client ID is a technical data item used only to organise client records within the Data Exchange and does not include any personal information.

Organisations using the Data Exchange web-based portal will have the option of either entering their own client ID (an ID used internally by the organisation to administratively manage clients) or by leaving the field blank, the system will generate a client ID that can be used by organisations to search for their record at a later time.

Should a provider choose to enter their own client ID, this should be an alpha-numeric or numeric code only. Providers are advised never to use a client’s name or other identifiable information as a client ID under any circumstances.

For organisations using their own client management system and uploading their data to the Data Exchange through bulk uploads or system-to-system transfers, the client ID becomes a mandatory field that will be pushed across from their own system and used to cross reference the record between the two systems in future interactions.

Technical information for IT managers to configure their systems to transmit client IDs is available on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au/) in the Data Exchange Web Services technical specifications.

5.2.2 Statistical Linkage Key (SLK)

The Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) effectively enables two or more records belonging to the same individual to be brought together. The SLK 581 used in the Data Exchange was developed by the AIHW as a unique client identifier. The SLK is an algorithm that creates a code consisting of the second, third and fifth characters of a person’s family name, the second and third letters of the person’s given name, the day, month and year of the person’s date of birth and the gender of that person.

For example John Smith, a male born on 14th February 1971 has an SLK of: MIHOH140219711

A client’s SLK is not visible to organisations in the Data Exchange. The SLK is only visible to a highly restricted number of DSS employees who perform database administration duties to ensure the IT system behind the Data Exchange remains functional.
For organisations using the Data Exchange web-based portal, the SLK will be automatically generated within the system. For organisations using bulk uploads or system-to-system transfers to upload data to the Data Exchange, the algorithm to generate a valid SLK can be incorporated into their own client management information system.

Technical information for IT managers about configuring their systems to push the SLK across to the Data Exchange is available within the Data Exchange Web Services technical specifications on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

5.2.3 Recording aggregate (group) attendance

The Data Exchange Framework is focused on the collection of de-identified individual client records. This is driven by the desire to understand client pathways across services being delivered as part of funded activities, to better understand the outcomes achieved for clients over time. Organisations are strongly encouraged to create individual client records for as many of their clients as possible.

However it is recognised that in limited situations (such as the delivery of services to large groups) it is not always possible or practical to record each client as an individual record. In these circumstances organisations can still record the number of persons as a simple aggregate number who attended a service using the field ‘Unidentified client attendance’. This number is reflected against both the case and session records.

Unidentified ‘group’ client numbers captured at the case level estimate the total number of unidentified ‘group’ clients who are anticipated to attend services. In contrast, the unidentified ‘group’ client attendance numbers captured at the session level records how many unidentified clients actually attended a particular instance of service. This prevents double counting.

In some instances there may be a combination of unidentified ‘group’ clients and individual clients to the same case and sessions. For example, if delivering a community event, a number of regular clients (that are able to be identified) may attend as well as a number of unknown new clients or members of the general public. This level of detail can also be recorded in the Data Exchange.

For additional program specific policy guidance, please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange.

5.3 Service delivery information

As highlighted in Section 3, the concept of a case and session are integral to the Data Exchange Framework as they maintain a consistent set of counting rules for services and help tell the ‘story’ about outcomes achieved for clients.
5.3.1 Case details

The second tier of the priority requirements is a case record, which includes a case ID, program activity, and outlet information. A case record is only created once for each unique case you wish to create and can be used over multiple reporting periods. Each case record includes the following:

- **Case ID** – a numeric code or title that uniquely identifies the case, and which is named in a way that is meaningful to the user. The case ID business rules are the same as those for the client ID: the case ID must be unique within the organisation and not include any identifiable information, such as a client's name or a Customer Reference Number. Users of the Data Exchange web-based portal may leave the field blank, in which case an ID will be automatically generated (numeric only). The field is mandatory for those uploading data through the bulk upload or system-to-system methods.
- **Program activity** – the funded activity that the case is being delivered under.
- **Outlet** – the location the case is primarily being delivered from (see Section 3.5).
- **One or more client records** – links one or more clients to a case (or in limited circumstances an aggregate number of unidentified ‘group’ clients).

The number of case records an organisation creates will be dependent on the type of funded activity(ies) they deliver and the way these services are delivered. For example, if providing counselling to couples or families it could make sense to create a case for each couple/family. This would allow a user to see and reflect on the family composition of each couple/family, easily navigate the portal for efficient data entry, and potentially count the total number of cases as the number of couples/families accessing services.

In contrast, for providers delivering activity-based services, it may be better suited to create a case for each of the locally run activities you deliver in the community, such as a breakfast club or education course.

For organisations using their own client management systems, the concept of a case is a node that allows all three tiers of the Data Exchange data (clients, cases and sessions) to be effectively uploaded.

For additional program specific policy guidance, please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange.

5.3.2 Session details

The third tier of the priority requirements is a session record. A session record captures the types of services being delivered under the relevant case, which clients attended, and the dates of service. Sessions also indicate that a case was active within a reporting period. Each session record consists of the following:

- **Session ID** – a numeric code or title that identifies a particular instance/episode of service. The session ID must be unique within the case and cannot include identifiable client information. Users of the Data Exchange web-based portal may leave the field blank and a session ID will be automatically generated (numeric only). The field is mandatory for those uploading data through the bulk upload or system-to-system methods.
- **Session date** – the date the instance/episode of service occurred.
- **Service type** – the main focus for the session delivered. If a session covered multiple service types the most relevant one should be chosen, either based on the majority of time spent or the main way an outcome was achieved.
- **Client attendance** – recorded for each client that was present at the session.
- **Unidentified client attendance** – the aggregate number of ‘group’ clients who attended a session. This should be limited to large groups where the collection of client level information is not feasible. Unidentified client attendance at a session must be less than or equal to the number of unidentified clients against the case.
When recording a session, organisations should select the service type which best reflects the nature of service delivery in that particular session. Different service types are associated with different funded activities. Within the Data Exchange web-based portal only the relevant service types will be available for a user to choose from. For a comprehensive list of the service types available to each program activity, please refer to Appendix A: Service Type Matrix.

For organisations using their own client management systems, sessions are a node that complete all three tiers of Data Exchange data (clients, cases and sessions) being effectively uploaded.

5.4 Consent to participate in follow-up research

The commissioning of client research, such as surveys and evaluations, forms an important part of the Data Exchange Framework as it helps to better understand client needs and opportunities to improve service delivery outcomes.

Client participation will always be voluntary, and any research undertaken will always be designed to respect a client’s privacy.

Please refer to section 4.4 above for details on the rules and safeguards relating to the commissioning, conduct and administration of client research.

5.5 Program specific mandatory client fields

The Data Exchange Framework establishes streamlined and standardised program performance reporting to inform priority information requirements. A small number of funded activities require additional mandatory data items to be reported.
5.5.1 Commonwealth Home Support Program mandatory fields

These items are only required and will only present if the client is participating in the specific program activity.

- **Accommodation setting** - Organisations are asked to record the accommodation setting category that best describes that of the client.
- **Living arrangements** - This is required for this program activity as it provides important information about a client’s presenting context. Living arrangements and its categories have been adapted from the data collection definitions used by the AIHW. This information can also be collected as ‘household composition’ in the partnership approach.
- **DVA card status** - A client’s Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) card status is collected for this program.
- **Existence of a Carer** - This field is required as a means to determine how many clients have care arrangements in place. This question is a yes/no response.
- **Amount of assistance provided** – Measured as hours and minutes, quantity, cost and/or type. These data fields will only present once the service type is selected in the session. For more information please refer to Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance for the Data Exchange and consult the CHSP Programme Manual.
- **Fees charged** – This item is captured at the session level. It allows organisations to report whether the participants of the session were charged a fee to attend the service and reflects the program activity policy regarding fee collection. This item is captured as a dollar figure.

For specific selection items in the above list, please refer to Section 11 (List of data values). Practice examples and scenarios for CHSP are also available in the CHSP Programme Manual and in Appendix B – Program Activity Guidance on the Data Exchange website.
5.5.2 Family Law Service Activity mandatory fields

The following items are only required and will only present when a Family Law Service program activity is selected at the case creation level:

- **Parenting agreement reached** – this item is captured at the case level. It supports the measurement of an important program specific outcome, reflecting if a parenting agreement was reached between parties. The response options are Full agreement, Partial agreement, or No agreement.
- **Date of agreement** – records the date the parenting agreement was reached.
- **Did a legal practitioner assist with formalising agreement** – This yes/no question is also related to the above questions and must be completed.
- **Section 60(I) certificate type** – this item is used to record a section 60(I) certificate.
- **Date of certificate issued** – this item is related to the Section 60(I) certificate data field and records the date the Section 60(I) certificate was issued.
- **Fees charged** – this item is captured at the session level. It allows organisations to report whether the participants of the session were charged a fee to attend the service and reflects the program activity policy regarding fee collection. This item is captured as a dollar figure.

5.5.3 Financial Wellbeing and Capability mandatory field

The following items are only required for the Commonwealth Financial Counselling and Financial Capability, and Money Support Hubs program activities where it is part of the case creation process. When the service type ‘Education and Skills Training’ has also been selected, the following question becomes mandatory:

- **Money management course delivered** – this item is captured at the session level. The field contains the nine workshop types able to be delivered under this program activity and allows organisations to show that clients have undertaken the required training.

5.5.4 Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants mandatory fields

The following items are only required for the Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants program activities where it is part of the case creation process. The following questions are mandatory.

- **Amount of Assistance provided** – this item is captured session level. This field allows organisations to report the number of hours/minutes provided to a client.
- **Fees charged** – this item is captured session level. This field allows organisations to report the fee charged in whole dollars only, when it is applicable.

5.5.5 National Disability Advocacy Program mandatory fields

The following items are only required for the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) program activities where it is part of the case creation process. The following question is mandatory.

- **Topic** – this item is captured at the session level. This field allows organisations to select the reason why a client is accessing a service. Refer to Section 11 for a comprehensive list of Topics.
6. Collecting partnership approach data

Organisations participating in the partnership approach report an extended data set, in exchange for access to additional self-service reports. Organisations can opt into the partnership agreement, unless this is a requirement of their grant agreement.

Organisations who participate in the partnership approach are expected to report client circumstances SCORE’s for the majority of their clients (over 50%).

The extended data set includes information about a client’s presenting needs and circumstances, such as the reason for seeking assistance, referrals (in and out), household composition and income status. Other outcomes focused data is collected using Standard Client/Community Outcomes Reporting (SCORE).

A SCORE is recorded in two parts. An initial SCORE (also known as a pre-SCORE) should be recorded against a session toward the beginning of service delivery and a follow-up SCORE (also known as a post-SCORE) should be recorded against a session toward the end of that service delivery. In the instance of long term services, multiple follow-up SCOREs can be recorded at regular intervals, to track how the client’s outcomes change over time.

This section presents practical information about the extended data requirements of the partnership approach describing a client’s presenting needs and circumstances. Detailed information about collecting and reporting SCORE is presented separately in Section 7 and can also be found in the training materials available on the Data Exchange [website](https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

6.1 Client needs and presenting context.

Organisations that participate in the partnership approach can report additional data items about client needs and presenting circumstances where they already collect such data, or where they consider this information to be relevant and are able to collect it.

There are eight additional data categories, set out below, which identify client needs and presenting circumstances. For many organisations, this information is already collected as part of internal service planning. Other items (such as migration visa) may only be relevant for specific funded activities. An organisation can choose to record some or all of the additional items, selecting those that are relevant to their clients and services. All of the following items listed in Section 6.2 through to 6.11 are optional.
6.2 Reasons for seeking assistance

Data about the reason clients sought assistance is collected to inform service planning to better respond to presenting needs. The categories for describing the reason for seeking assistance are standardised to reflect the SCORE outcome domains that cover the range of funded activities captured as part of the Data Exchange Framework. For each client, data is recorded about the main reason for seeking assistance and, if relevant, a secondary reason for seeking assistance. Reasons for seeking assistance are recorded at the case level, to allow organisations to reflect that clients go to different activities to address different needs. The categories for describing the reason for seeking assistance cover:

- **Age-appropriate development** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to improve age-appropriate development.
- **Community participation and networks** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to change the impact of poor community participation and networks on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Family functioning** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to improve family functioning and change its impact on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Financial Resilience** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to change the impact of inefficient money management to improve financial resilience and change its impact to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Employment** is selected as the reason for seeking to change the impact of a client’s lack of employment on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Education and skills training** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to engage with education and skills training on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Material wellbeing and basic necessities** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance to address the client’s immediate lack of money and basic items needed for day-to-day living to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Housing** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to improve their housing stability or address the impact of poor housing on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Mental health, wellbeing and self-care** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to change the impact of mental health issues and self-care issues on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Personal and family safety** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to change the impact of personal and family safety issues on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Physical health** is selected as the reason for seeking assistance where the client is seeking to change the impact of their physical health on their independence, participation and wellbeing.

Many clients’ needs are complex and change over time. The ‘real’ reason for seeking assistance is often not apparent until after a client initially engages with the organisation. While recognising these limitations, data about the reasons for seeking assistance is recorded towards the start of the service to provide a high-level indication of the presenting need—within one of the ten standard outcome domains.

Reasons for seeking assistance can be recorded as either the:

- **Primary reason for seeking assistance** – the main reason for seeking assistance, classified as one of ten possible categories.
- **Secondary reasons for seeking assistance** – the secondary reasons for seeking assistance, if relevant select another reason from the ten possible categories. In most cases this should be limited to one or two.
6.3 Referral source

Referral source refers to the person or agency responsible for the referral of a client to an organisation. The source of referral is important in mapping client pathways and access points. It can assist organisations to identify the main avenues their clients come through to reach their services. This information can be used to help target networking and communication strategies to increase client engagement with a particular funded activity if desired.

Based on the data collection definitions used by the AIHW, referral source is classified into three standard categories (agency/organisation, non-agency, not stated). This information will be recorded at the case level and allows organisations to reflect that clients can be referred from different sources for each case.

**Agency / organisation**

- Health agency
- Community services agency
- Educational agency
- Internal
- Legal agency
- Employment/job placement agency
- Centrelink/Department of Human Services (DHS)
- My Aged Care Gateway
- Linkages Program
- CoS Program
- Local Area Coordinator (LAC) Referral
- NDIS Referral
- Humanitarian Settlement Program
- Other agency

**Non-agency**

- Self
- Family
- Friends
- General Medical Practitioner
- Other party
- Not stated/inadequately described

6.4 Referrals to other services

Data is recorded about referrals made to other services because they reflect client needs for assistance outside the scope of the funded activity. Referrals should be recorded at the level of sessions (see Section 5.3.2) – because different referrals can be made as part of any service episode or instance.

Two data items are recorded to reflect referrals to other services:

**Referral to other service**

- Internal – made to another service offered within the same organisation
- External – made to a service that is provided by a different organisation
Referral purpose

- **Physical health** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of their physical health on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Mental health wellbeing and self-care** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of client’s mental health and self-care issues, on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Personal and family safety** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of personal and family safety issues on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Age-appropriate development** is selected where the client is referred to assist with improving age-appropriate development.
- **Community participation and networks** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of poor community participation and networks on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Family functioning** is selected where the client is referred to improve family functioning and change its impact to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Financial Resilience** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of inefficient money management to improve financial resilience and change its impact to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Employment** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of a client’s lack of employment on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Education and skills training** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of a client’s ability to engage with education and skills training on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Material wellbeing and basic necessities** is selected where the client is referred to assist with the impact of the client’s immediate lack of money and basic items needed for day-to-day living to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Housing** is selected where the client is referred to improve their housing stability or address the impact of poor housing on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Support to caring role** is selected where the clients is referred to assist with their caring responsibilities.
- **Other** is selected when the referral purpose has not been captured in the list provided.

6.5 Household composition

Data is reported about household composition as it provides important information about a client’s presenting context. Adapted from the data collection definitions used by AIHW, household composition is classified into standard categories. For a list of these categories please refer to Section 11.

6.6 Highest level of education / qualification

Data is reported about highest educational achievement a person has attained. It lists qualifications and other educational attainments regardless of the particular field of study or the type of institution in which the study was undertaken. For a list of these categories please refer to Section 11: List of data values.

6.7 Employment Status

Data is reported about a client’s employment status. Adapted from the data collection definitions used by Disability Employment Services, Employment status is classified into standard categories. For a list of these categories please refer to Section 11: List of data values.
6.8 Main source of income

Data is reported about main source of income as it provides important information about a client’s presenting context. Based on the data collection definitions used by the AIHW, main source of income is classified into standard categories. For a list of these categories please refer to Section 11.

6.9 Approximate gross income

Data is reported about approximate income as it provides important information about a client’s presenting context. Data is recorded as a numerical value for the estimated dollar value of the client’s gross income (earnings before tax). This should be based solely on what is reported by the client. No evidence of income is required.

As clients can receive their income at different frequencies, the Data Exchange web-based portal allows estimated gross income to be provided as either a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or annual figure. Income frequency must be recorded in order to be able to record the approximate gross income.

6.10 Expanded CALD indicators

Additional data is reported about CALD background as this information provides important context about clients’ circumstances. This includes:

- **Date of first arrival in Australia** – is available to record the date a client first arrived in Australia where appropriate for a funded activity. While primarily included as an eligibility indicator for the Settlement Services Grants Program, it can also be used as a potential indicator of disadvantage for other program activities.
- **Migration Visa category** – is available to record the Visa category the client arrived on, where appropriate for a funded activity. While primarily included as an eligibility indicator for the Settlement Services Grants Program, it can also be used as a potential indicator of disadvantage for other program activities.
- **Ancestry** – is available to record a client’s ancestry if relevant. The list of values is drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups (ASCCEG).

6.11 Client exit reason

For Commonwealth Home Support Program cases, users can record the reason a client exited a service. For a list of these categories please refer to Section 11: List of data values.
7. Recording client and community SCOREs

The main focus of the extended data set (the partnership approach) is collecting information about client and community outcomes achieved for individuals accessing funded activities.

Client and community outcomes can be achieved in a variety of different ways and progressively over different periods of time. They range from immediate short term outcomes to longer-term changes that positively affect a client’s life circumstances.

SCORE has been designed to do this in ways that do not impose additional administrative costs on organisations, recognising that organisations are not funded to be specialist researchers or to spend disproportionate amounts of time measuring outcomes.

Many organisations use a diverse range of instruments and methods for measuring and assessing client and community outcomes, often linked to organisational and sector-specific priorities. In some program areas, specific validated instruments are already used (such as Kessler 10, etc).

The SCORE approach used in the partnership approach allows organisations to measure outcomes using these tools, but report them through SCORE so as to be captured in a consistent and comparable way.

A translation matrix has been developed to assist organisations in converting results from commonly used outcomes measurement tools into SCORE. The translation matrix can be found on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

If an organisation does not currently have a standard or systematic approach to measuring outcomes, it is then possible to use SCORE as an outcomes measurement tool. Alternatively, organisations may prefer to adapt the SCORE scales and domains to create their own interim outcomes measurement tool that can be adjusted to the audience the organisation is providing services to.

There are four different types of outcomes measured through SCORE to help tell the story of what has been achieved; three for individual clients (their circumstances, goals and satisfaction) and one for a group/community.

- **Circumstances** - changes in client circumstances, such as mental/physical health, material well-being and situation.
- **Goals** - progress in achieving specific goals, such as behaviours, skills of lessening the impact of a crisis.
- **Satisfaction** – did the client feel the service met their needs?
- **Community** - changes in group, organisation, and community capacity to address identified needs.

SCOREs are captured at the session level, and are reported using a five-point rating scale. This provides a consistent and comparable way to translate outcomes across programs using the Data Exchange. A SCORE is also recorded in two parts; using an initial SCORE towards the beginning of service and a subsequent SCORE either at the end of service delivery, or at regular intervals into the future to track a client’s progress.
7.1 How to record into SCORE

Organisations have the flexibility to record assessments directly into SCORE, or to use externally validated instruments or internally developed tools. When reporting this information into the Data Exchange, the ‘Assessed by’ field captures whether a validated tool was used, and who made the assessment.

A ‘validated tool’ is an instrument that has been psychometrically tested for reliability (the ability of the instrument to produce consistent results), validity (the ability of the instrument to produce true results), and sensitivity (the probability of correctly identifying a client with the condition).

If you don’t have an outcomes measurement tool, or have developed your own tool but have not validated it, the you should report using ‘SCORE directly’ in the ‘Assessed by’ field.

A SCORE may be determined by the practitioner’s professional assessment, a client’s self-assessment, a joint assessment between the client and practitioner, or an assessment by the client’s support person (such as a carer).

Organisations are encouraged to collect SCORE in a way that bests suits their own unique service delivery context.

7.2 Collecting and reporting Circumstances SCOREs

Organisations who participate in the partnership approach agree to report at least two client Circumstances SCOREs for the majority of their clients (over 50%).

While it would be valuable to have multiple SCOREs for all clients, it is recognised that there are a range of situations where this may not be possible. Despite best endeavours, there are occasions where subsequent SCORES may not be able to be recorded due to clients unexpectedly exiting a service.

7.2.1 Circumstance domains

The Circumstance SCORE is linked to eleven outcome domains. The type of outcome domain that will be relevant to each client will depend on the context of the funded activity being delivered. Organisations should only report a numerical rating against the domain(s) that are most relevant for their client and the outcomes they are aiming to achieve.

Given that there are potential connections between all of the domains across program activities, there are no fixed rules for selecting the most relevant domain for a particular client or funded activity. However, guidance on which domains would be most relevant has been provided by policy areas of each program using the Data Exchange. This information can be found in Appendix B of this document.

- **Physical health** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of a client’s physical health to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Mental health, wellbeing and self-care** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of a client’s mental health and self-care, to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Personal and family safety** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of personal and family safety issues to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Age-appropriate development** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to improve a client’s age-appropriate development to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Community participation and networks** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of poor community participation & networks to improve a client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Family functioning** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to improve family functioning and change its impact so it enhances the family’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Financial Resilience** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of poor money management to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Employment** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of a client's lack of employment on their independence, participation and wellbeing.

- **Education and skills training** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of a client's ability to engage with education and skills training on their independence, participation and wellbeing.

- **Material wellbeing and basic necessities** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change the impact of the client's immediate lack of money and basic items needed for day-to-day living to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.

- **Housing** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to improve the client's housing stability or address the impact of poor housing to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.

### 7.2.2 Circumstance rating scale

A five-point rating scale is used to report changes in client outcomes when using SCORE. This scale is used for all four SCORE components (Circumstance, Goal, Satisfaction and Community):

1 - is used to report that the client's current circumstances are having a significant **negative impact** on their independence, participation and wellbeing. For example, a significant negative impact of poor family functioning on the family's wellbeing; or a significant negative impact of a lack of safe housing on an individual's independence.

2 - is used to report that the client's current circumstances are having a **moderate negative impact** on their independence, participation and wellbeing—for example, a moderate negative impact of physical health issues on their independence; or a moderate negative impact of family safety on the family's wellbeing.

3 - is used to report that the client's current circumstances are in a 'middle ground' between the significant/moderate negative impacts (indicated by Ratings 1 and 2) and the adequate circumstances over the short and medium term (indicated by Ratings 4 and 5). For example, progress towards improving a client's community participation without having reached a point where the client's current circumstances are adequate over the short or medium term.

4 - is used to report that the client's current circumstances are **adequate over the short term** to support their independence, participation and wellbeing—for example, adequate access to money to meet basic needs in the short-term; adequate family functioning to support the family's wellbeing in the short-term.

5 - is used to report that the client's current circumstances are **adequate and stable over the medium term** to support their independence, participation and wellbeing—for example, adequate and stable money management to support an individual's independence; adequate and stable family functioning to support the family's wellbeing.

To record a client SCORE, organisations need to record a rating between 1 and 5 against a relevant domain.

A summary of the 'generic' scale for the Circumstance SCORE is presented in the table on the next page:
## Circumstances SCORE Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE outcome domain</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No progress in achieving outcome</strong></td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor physical health on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving physical health to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Sustained initial improvements in physical health to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing physical health to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Outcome fully achieved</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical health</strong></td>
<td>Significant negative impact of poor physical health on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor physical health on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving mental health, wellbeing and self-care to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate short-term mental health, wellbeing and self-care to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Adequate ongoing mental health, wellbeing and self-care to support independence, participation and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental health, wellbeing and self-care</strong></td>
<td>Significant negative impact of poor mental health, wellbeing and self-care on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor mental health, wellbeing and self-care on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving age-appropriate development to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing age-appropriate development to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Adequate ongoing age-appropriate development to support independence, participation and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal and family safety</strong></td>
<td>Significant negative impact of poor personal and family safety on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor personal and family safety on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving personal and family safety to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing personal and family safety to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Adequate ongoing personal and family safety to support independence, participation and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age-appropriate development</strong></td>
<td>Significant negative impact of poor age-appropriate development on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor age-appropriate development on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving age-appropriate development to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing age-appropriate development to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Adequate ongoing age-appropriate development to support independence, participation and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community participation &amp; networks</strong></td>
<td>Significant negative impact of poor community participation and networks on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor community participation and networks on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving community participation and networks to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing community participation and networks to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Adequate ongoing community participation and networks to support independence, participation and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCORE outcome domain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No progress in achieving outcome</td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor family functioning on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving family functioning to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate short-term family functioning to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing family functioning to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family functioning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor family functioning on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate short-term family functioning to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate ongoing family functioning to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial resilience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate short-term financial resilience to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing financial resilience to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material well-being and basic necessities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate short-term basic material resources to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing basic material resources to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate ongoing housing stability to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of lack of employment on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving employment to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate short-term employment to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing employment to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education &amp; skills training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of lack of engagement with education and training on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards improving engagement with education and training to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate short-term engagement with education and training to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing engagement with education and training to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate negative impact of poor housing on independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Progress towards housing stability to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate short-term housing stability to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
<td>Adequate ongoing housing stability to support independence, participation and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3 Collecting and reporting client Goals SCOREs

Organisations who participate in the partnership approach agree to report at least two client Goals SCOREs for the majority of their clients (over 50%).

While it would be valuable to have multiple SCOREs for all clients, it is recognised that there are a range of situations where this may not be possible. Despite best endeavours, there are occasions where follow-up SCOREs may not be able to be recorded due to clients unexpectedly exiting a service.

A client Goals SCORE is a measure of the extent of achievement of a client’s individual goals. The term ‘goal’ is used very broadly. In some service contexts, goals refer to planned objectives that are documented in the client’s case plan. In other situations, goals are better described as simply the things clients want help with. In both scenarios, the client Goals SCORE is used to measure the goal attainment or extent to which the organisation has been able to address the things a client sought help with.

7.3.1 Goals domains

The Goals SCORE is linked to six outcome domains. The type of outcome domain that will be relevant to each client will depend on the context of the goals a client wants to achieve. Organisations should only report a numerical rating against the domain(s) that are most relevant for their client and the outcomes they are aiming to achieve.

Given that there are potential connections between all of the domains across program activities, there are no fixed rules for selecting the most relevant domain for a particular client or funded activity. However, guidance on which domains would be most relevant has been provided by policy areas of each program using the Data Exchange. This information can be found in Appendix B of this document.

- **Changed knowledge and access to information** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to change a client’s knowledge and understanding of issues to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing or to improve their access to relevant information about these issues.
- **Changed skills** are selected where the funded activity is seeking to enhance a client’s skills set to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Changed behaviours** are selected where the funded activity is seeking to change a client’s behaviours to improve their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Empowerment, choice and control to make own decisions** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to enhance a client’s confidence, choice and control to make their own decisions and take empowerment on issues that impact on their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Engagement with relevant support services** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to improve a client’s engagement with services to support their independence, participation and wellbeing.
- **Changed impact of immediate crisis** is selected where the funded activity is seeking to address or reduce the impact of an immediate crisis to improve the client’s independence, participation and wellbeing.
7.3.2 Goals rating scale

A five-point rating scale is used to report changes in client outcomes when using SCORE. This scale is used for all four SCORE components (Circumstances, Goals, Satisfaction and Community):

1 - is used to report that the client has made no progress in achieving their individual goals within the selected goal domain.
2 - is used to report that the client has made limited progress in achieving their individual goals within the selected goal domain but there is emerging engagement in addressing the issues they sought assistance with.
3 - is used to report that the client has made limited progress in achieving their individual goals within the selected goal domain but there is strong engagement in addressing the issues they sought assistance with.
4 - is used to report that the client has made moderate progress in achieving their individual goals within the selected goal domain.
5 - is used to report that the client has fully achieved their individuals goals within the selected outcomes domain.

To record a client SCORE, organisations need to record a rating between 1 and 5 against a relevant domain. A summary of the ‘generic’ scale for the Goals SCORE is presented in the table on the next page:
## Goals SCORE Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE outcome domain</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Outcome fully achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge and access to information</strong></td>
<td>No progress in increasing access to information and knowledge in areas relevant to clients' needs and circumstances</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving information / knowledge goals - but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving information / knowledge goals - but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate progress to date in achieving information / knowledge goals</td>
<td>Full achievement of goals related to increasing access to information and knowledge in areas relevant to client's needs and circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td>No progress in increasing skills in areas relevant to client's needs and circumstances</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving skills goals - but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving skills goals - but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate progress to date in achieving skills goals</td>
<td>Full achievement of goals related to increasing skills in areas relevant to client's needs and circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behaviours</strong></td>
<td>No progress in changing behaviours in areas relevant to client's needs and circumstances</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving behaviour goals - but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving behaviour goals - but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate progress to date in achieving behaviour goals</td>
<td>Full achievement of goals related to changing behaviours in areas relevant to client's needs and circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empowerment, choice and control to make own decisions</strong></td>
<td>No progress in increasing confidence and exercising choice / control in making decisions that impact client's needs</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving empowerment, choice and control goals - but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving empowerment, choice and control goals — but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate progress to date in achieving empowerment, choice and control goals</td>
<td>Full achievement of goals related to increasing confidence and exercising choice / control in making decisions that impact client’s needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement with support services</strong></td>
<td>No progress in increasing engagement with support services relevant to client's needs and circumstances</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving engagement goals - but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving engagement goals — but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate progress to date in achieving engagement goals</td>
<td>Full achievement of goals related to increasing engagement with support services relevant to client’s needs and circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact of immediate crisis</strong></td>
<td>No progress in reducing the negative impact of the immediate crisis</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving goals to reduce the negative impact — but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited progress to date in achieving goals to reduce the negative impact — but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate progress to date in achieving goals to reduce the negative impact</td>
<td>Full achievement of goals related to reducing the negative impact of the immediate crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Data Exchange Protocols (Version 5, October 2018)
7.4 Collecting and reporting client Satisfaction SCOREs

Unlike the other areas of SCORE, Satisfaction is only measured at the end of service delivery. Organisations who participate in the partnership approach agree to report client Satisfaction SCOREs for a small sample of their clients (at least 10% per reporting period).

While it would be valuable to have Satisfaction SCOREs for all clients, it is recognised that this may be time consuming for some organisations to collect. There can also be situations where SCOREs cannot be collected, such as clients unexpectedly exiting a service.

7.4.1 Satisfaction domains

The Satisfaction SCORE relates to three key questions about a client’s perceptions of the responsiveness and value of the service received:

- The service listened to me and understood my issues
- I am satisfied with the services I have received
- I am better able to deal with issues that I sought help with.

7.4.2 Satisfaction rating scale

A five-point rating scale is used to report changes in client outcomes when using SCORE. This scale is used for all four SCORE components (Circumstances, Goals, Satisfaction and Community):

1 - is used to report that the client disagrees with the statement about the service (for example, disagrees that the service listened to them and understood their issues).
2 - is used to report that the client tends to disagree with the statement about the service (for example, tends to disagree that the service listened to them and understood their issues).
3 - is used to report that the client neither agrees or disagrees with the statement about the service (for example, neither agrees nor disagrees that the service listened to them and understood their issues).
4 - is used to report that the client tends to agree with the statement about the service (for example, tends to agree that the service listened to them and understood their issues).
5 - is used to report that the client agrees with the statement about the service (for example, agrees that the service listened to them and understood their issues).

To record a client SCORE, organisations need to record a rating between 1 and 5 against a relevant domain. A summary of the ‘generic’ scale for the Satisfaction SCORE is presented in the table below:
Satisfaction SCORE Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE outcome domain</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The service listened to me and understood my issues</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree or disagree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the services I have received</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree or disagree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am better able to deal with issues that I sought help with</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree or disagree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4.3 Measurement and reporting of client Satisfaction SCOREs

If an organisation already uses an existing outcomes measurement tool that meets their needs, they can continue to use it and simply translate the outcome data to SCORE.

If an organisation does not currently have a standard or systematic approach to measure client satisfaction, it is possible to use the Satisfaction SCORE table above as a simple survey tool. Alternatively, organisations can adapt the SCORE scales and domains to create their own interim measurement tool that can be adjusted to the audience the organisation is providing services to.

Given that Satisfaction SCOREs are intended to be collected as part of good practice service delivery, each organisation is responsible for ensuring that the data collection process is ethical and reliable. Key practices to consider when collecting client feedback are outlined below.

Data collection methods

It is important that client satisfaction feedback is voluntary and that it does not cause discomfort or anxiety for clients. In particular, the pre-existing relationship between clients and the organisation may bias client results. A number of measures can be taken to ensure that clients understand the nature of participating and their options:

- All participants are provided with information that makes it clear that completing the survey is voluntary.
- Participants are provided with information that makes it clear that the purpose of collecting the client feedback is to improve services.
- Participants should be encouraged to share their honest views and to make constructive suggestions if they think the service could be improved.
Consent procedures

Consent for recording client feedback should be obtained as part of the standard consent arrangements for collecting clients’ personal information (see Section 4). While all clients have a right to participate in providing client feedback, specific conditions may affect some participants’ capacity to consent. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to consider additional practices. For example:

- Consent from the participant may be witnessed (but is not mandatory) by family members or another key support person.
- Refusal or reluctance to participate in the survey should always be respected, and a person declining to participate in, or deciding to withdraw from, the client feedback process should not incur any negative consequences or disadvantages.
- Parental consent may be required for children and minors (however this may be context specific and may therefore not apply in all circumstances – see Section 2.4).

Client confidentiality

It is important that clients can provide feedback anonymously. There is a range of ways to achieve this. For example:

- The client feedback is collected by a person not directly involved in service delivery.
- Using an e-survey so that clients can complete and submit the survey without showing the organisation their response.
- If paper-based forms are used, consider using sealed envelopes for returning completed surveys.

7.5 Collecting and reporting Community SCOREs

Organisations who participate in the partnership approach agree to report Community SCOREs for the majority of group or community activities where it is not feasible to record the changes for individual clients.

7.5.1 Community domains

The Community SCORE is linked to four domains that reflect changes that may occur for a group or community rather than individual clients:

- Group / Community knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours for a group of clients or community members participating in the service (where it is not feasible to record the changes for individual members of the group or community)
- Organisational knowledge, skills and practices to better respond to the needs of targeted clients or communities.
- Community infrastructure and networks to better respond to the needs of targeted clients and communities.
- Social Cohesion to demonstrate greater community cohesion and social harmony.
7.5.2 Community rating scale

A five-point rating scale is used to report changes in community outcomes when using SCORE. This scale is used for all four SCORE components (Circumstances, Goals, Satisfaction and Community):

1 - is used to report no change in the group / organisation / community capacity to address or respond to their own needs or the needs of targeted clients and communities.

2 - is used to report limited change in the group / organisation / community capacity to address or respond to their own needs or the needs of targeted clients and communities, but there is emerging engagement in addressing the issues.

3 - is used to report limited change in the group / organisation / community capacity to address or respond to their own needs or the needs of targeted clients and communities, but there is strong engagement in addressing the issues.

4 - is used to report moderate change in the group / organisation / community capacity to address or respond to their own needs or the needs of targeted clients and communities.

5 - is used to report significant change in the group / organisation / community capacity to address or respond to their own needs or the needs of targeted clients and communities.

To record a Community SCORE, organisations need to record a rating between 1 and 5 against a relevant domain.

A summary of the 'generic' scale for the Community SCORE is presented in the table below:
### Community SCORE Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE outcome domain</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group / community knowledge, skills, attitudes behaviours</strong></td>
<td>No change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours</td>
<td>Limited change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours — but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours — but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours</td>
<td>Significant positive change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational knowledge, skills and practices</strong></td>
<td>No change in organisational knowledge, skills, practices to respond to the needs of targeted clients / communities</td>
<td>Limited change in organisational knowledge, skills, practices — but emerging engagement</td>
<td>Limited change in organisational knowledge, skills, practices — but strong engagement</td>
<td>Moderate change in organisational knowledge, skills, practices</td>
<td>Significant positive change in organisational knowledge, skills, behaviours to better respond to the needs of targeted clients / communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community infrastructure and networks</strong></td>
<td>No change in community infrastructure / networks to respond to the needs of targeted clients / communities</td>
<td>Limited change in community infrastructure / networks — but emerging engagement of community networks</td>
<td>Limited change in community infrastructure / networks — but strong engagement of community networks</td>
<td>Moderate change in community infrastructure / networks</td>
<td>Significant positive change in community infrastructure / networks to better respond to the needs of targeted clients / communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social cohesion</strong></td>
<td>No change in demonstration of greater community cohesion and social harmony</td>
<td>Limited change in demonstration of greater community cohesion and social harmony — but emerging engagement in issues</td>
<td>Limited change in demonstration of greater community cohesion and social harmony — but stronger engagement in issues</td>
<td>Moderate demonstration of greater community cohesion and social harmony</td>
<td>Significant positive demonstration of greater community cohesion and social harmony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.5.3 Measurement and reporting of Community SCORES

If an organisation already uses an existing outcomes measurement tool that meets their needs, they can continue to use it and simply translate the outcome data to SCORE. For example, if an organisation is using an outcomes measurement tool that has been used and reported on by other evaluators and researchers to measure changes in community circumstances on a ten-point scale, they can create a ‘concordance’ table to report these outcomes as part of the Data Exchange.
8. Client Surveys

As the host of the Data Exchange, the Department is looking at additional ways to better understand how funded services are achieving outcomes for individuals and communities.

Asking clients if they would like to participate in follow-up research, such as surveys and evaluation, forms part of the Data Exchange priority requirements, the standardised core set of mandatory reporting that applies to all Data Exchange in-scope programs. Client surveys give clients an opportunity to provide independent feedback on their satisfaction with the services they use.

Organisations will be able to access aggregated information gained from any surveys through self-service reports, and use this to inform their planning and service improvement activities.

Organisations are encouraged to visit the Data Exchange website for the latest information about client surveys and follow-up research.

8.1 Client survey pilot

The Data Exchange client survey was created to capture the client's voice, as a complementary data source for the information collected through the Data Exchange. Survey questions are aligned to the SCORE outcomes measurement framework and enable clients to self-report on why they sought assistance and what their outcomes have been as a result of accessing the service.

The client survey pilot was launched in mid-October 2016, with the public release of the Client Survey Discussion Paper. All organisations, which deliver services in scope of the Data Exchange reporting, were invited to participate in the pilot.

The pilot ceased in October 2017. Full implementation of the survey has been deferred while the outcomes from the pilot are being considered.

8.2 Program specific surveys

The Department is using lessons learnt from the client survey pilot for program specific surveys and evaluations.

In 2018 the Department commenced development of a program specific survey for the Try Test and Learn Fund. Once the survey is finalised, all organisations funded to deliver the Try Test and Learn Fund will be required to offer clients the program specific survey, as part of the Try Test and Learn Fund evaluation.
9. Data Exchange reports

As part of the Data Exchange, all organisations that use the Data Exchange will have access to their own set of reports which reflect the information submitted by their organisation. All available reports are accessed via the Data Exchange web-based portal. The ability to access the data and run reports will reflect the level of user access within the organisation.

9.1 Report types

Standard self-service reports

These reports cover the mandatory priority data submitted by the organisation during a particular reporting period. For a current, open reporting period the report will refresh every 24 hours to allow near real-time access to the information transmitted.

Partnership approach reports

Organisations choosing to participate in the partnership approach will have access to a sophisticated suite of reports. Using both priority requirement data and extended partnership data, combined with government and population data sets, these reports will provide valuable insights into service delivery and client outcomes.

Client survey reports

Reports covering aggregate client survey data are not yet available. These are currently under development as part of the client survey pilot.

9.2 Benefits of reports

Reports provide visibility of the data that has been entered, and enables verification of data quality and integrity. They also provide organisations an evidence base for the evaluation to inform best practice.

The Data Exchange uses de-identified, aggregate information to look at both short and long term outcomes achieved for clients across the broad suite of in-scope programs. It allows for an understanding of the collective impact of service provided and what combinations of services deliver the best outcomes for clients.

This information is shared back with organisations through self-service reports to inform best practice and early intervention approaches to service delivery.

9.3 Access and visibility of reports

Within the Data Exchange, access and visibility of reports will depend on the way organisations set up their structures in terms of outlets and delivery partners.

By default, organisations cannot see a delivery partner’s data. However, the ‘handshake’ allows the sharing of reports data in the form of de-identified, aggregate information. The handshake is a virtual agreement between a lead organisation and their delivery partner/s, to share data from the delivery partner to the lead for their activity. Under a handshake, a lead organisation cannot access any data that is not otherwise available to the delivery partner.

More detailed information on this topic can be found in the training resources (https://dex.dss.gov.au/training-resources/) on the Data Exchange website.
10. Administrative matters

10.1 In-scope program activities for the Data Exchange

A list of program activities in-scope for the Data Exchange is available on the Data Exchange website. This list is updated on a regular basis as new program activities start using the Data Exchange.

10.2 Access and set-up

In order to use the Data Exchange, an organisation must complete a number of access and set-up steps before client and session information can be entered into the system. Organisations are strongly encouraged to complete these steps as early as possible in the reporting period. They include:

- Applying for an AUSkey through the Australian Business Register
- Submitting a User Access Request to the Data Exchange Helpdesk
- Accessing the Data Exchange portal to set up their organisation
- Create Outlets
- Add program activities to Outlets
- Add delivery partner details (if required)
- Create additional users (if required)
- Setting up bulk upload (if required)

More detailed information on this topic is available in the ‘Quick Start Guide’ and other training and guidance materials on the Data Exchange website.

Completing access and set-up steps in a timely manner is the responsibility of the organisation, as part of their grant agreement obligations.

Where these steps are completed too close to the end of a reporting period, the Department may not be able to process access and set-up requests with sufficient time remaining for the organisation to complete their data reporting before the due date.

10.3 Reporting periods and deadlines

The Data Exchange has two standardised six monthly performance reporting periods each year:

- **Reporting Period 1** runs from 1 July to 31 December
- **Reporting Period 2** runs from 1 January to 30 June

Organisations can enter data at any time within a reporting period, and are encouraged to do so regularly to make best use of the self-service reports and avoid unnecessary backlog or ‘crunch’ periods. Organisations new to the Data Exchange, in particular, need to plan for and allow sufficient time for access, set-up and other lead times, in order to meet reporting deadlines.

Users of the Data Exchange also have an extra 30 days at the end of each reporting period, known as ‘closing periods’, to allow time to quality check their data before the reporting period automatically closes at the end of the 30 days (i.e.: the 30 July and 30 January each year).

Once a reporting period has closed, data relating to that period of time will no longer be able to be recorded. Data outside of a reporting period may only be entered if an organisation has sought and been granted a system re-opening.
10.4 Compliance issues and system re-open requests

If an organisation has experienced a crisis or event outside of their control that will impact their ability to meet performance reporting requirements, they can request a re-opening of the system.

System re-opening requests can be submitted via the Request to re-open the Data Exchange Form on the Data Exchange website, however organisations should also consult with their Funding Arrangement Manager or funding agency contact.

System re-openings will only be granted under exceptional circumstances following consultation with Funding Arrangement Managers. Submission of a request does not guarantee a system re-open will be granted.

10.5 Flexible ways to transmit data

Users can transmit their data to the Data Exchange in one of three ways; system-to-system transfer, bulk file upload, or manual entry into the web-based portal. It is recommended to select one of these as the main transmission method for the longer term. However, in some circumstances, such as the period of initial transition into the Data Exchange, manual entry may need to be used in combination with another transmission method.

All users of the Data Exchange must have an AUSkey account prior to registering for the system. AUSkey is a secure credential and is used for many government online services on behalf of a business or entity. All government agencies are required to implement AUSkey for all new business to government transactions, and many organisations already have AUSkeys for other purposes. AUSkey is administered by the Australian Business Register (ABR) and more information can be found on their [website](https://abr.gov.au/AUSkey/).

At least one person within your organisation will need to complete and submit the Data Exchange User Access Request Form so as to have OrgAdministrator access to the Data Exchange. This form can be found on the Data Exchange [website](https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

**System-to-system transfers**

Organisations with their own client management software systems capable of pushing data via web services through to the Data Exchange can continue using this software to collect and transfer their performance data. For this to occur, organisations will need to make a one-off adjustment (or ‘enhancement’) to their application in accordance with the Data Exchange Web Service technical specifications. The technical specifications are updated periodically to reflect enhancements to the Data Exchange system and are available on the Data Exchange [website](https://dex.dss.gov.au/).

**Bulk File Upload**

Organisations with their own client management software systems capable of creating and exporting XML files can continue using this software to collect and transfer their performance data. For this to occur, organisations will need to make a one-off adjustment (or ‘enhancement’) to their application in accordance with the Data Exchange bulk upload technical specifications. The technical specifications are updated periodically to reflect enhancements to the Data Exchange system and are available on the Data Exchange [website](https://dex.dss.gov.au/).
Free web-based portal

Organisations can use the Data Exchange web-based portal to manually input their data. Once saved in the portal, data is automatically submitted within the Data Exchange. The web-based portal can be used like a basic case management system, although it only allows for data that is relevant to performance reporting. This option is available for organisations who do not have their own proprietary client management software, or for those whose systems cannot accommodate the requirements to submit data through either system-to-system transfers or bulk file upload.

The Data Exchange web-based portal collects the data requirements set out in this document and is available to all organisations funded to deliver in-scope program activities.

Organisations that already have their own case/client management system and submit their data through system-to-system transfers and bulk upload can access the web-based portal to use the Data Exchange functionality.

For example, organisations who report information (consistent with the priority requirements) via a system-to-system transfer or bulk upload, may also wish to use the web-based portal to record SCORE information about changes to their client’s circumstances, goals and outcomes (consistent with the extended data items in the partnership approach). This approach may be adopted where the functionality for recording and reporting the extended data items is not available within an organisation’s existing client management system.

Organisations who choose to report using both their client management systems (i.e. via a system-to-system transfer or bulk upload) and the web-based portal will be able to retrieve the personal records of their clients from the web-based portal to monitor and manage the services they provide to these clients.

10.6 Data Exchange user responsibilities

Every user of the Data Exchange is bound by the Privacy Act and must ensure they meet these requirements at all times. Data Exchange users must ensure they only access records they have a genuine need to access.

Organisations using the Data Exchange like a client management system also have an additional obligation to follow the protocols for providing notification and obtaining consent (see Section 4.2).

Data Exchange users must ensure the data entered into the Data Exchange is accurate and up to date, to the best of their knowledge. If incorrect data has been uploaded, it is the organisation’s responsibility to correct or delete this data.

Information captured in the Data Exchange will only be used for the purpose for which it was captured. Data Exchange information will not be provided to other parties in Australia or elsewhere in the world for any other purpose.

Organisations should notify the Department as soon as practical if they become aware of any security or privacy breaches.
10.7 Organisations no longer reporting via the Data Exchange

Organisations that have been reporting performance data via the Data Exchange for a particular reporting period are able to receive self-service reports on the data submitted for that period. They will not, however, be able to enter any additional data for a period which has closed, or for any current or future periods within which they do not have in-scope funding.

Organisations that are no longer funded to provide services in scope with the Data Exchange may not be able to access their reports from previous reporting periods after a period of time. This could be because their access to the portal has been removed, or the organisation no longer has a user ID, or is experiencing other access restrictions related to AUSkey issues.

In this situation, the organisation can request a copy of the report. This can be provided by the Funding Arrangement Manager or the Data Exchange Helpdesk upon confirmation that the organisation

- has authority to receive this report as a former grant recipient;
- reported via the Data Exchange for the requested report period.

10.8 Training materials and further assistance

Users of the Data Exchange web-based portal can access self-guided training material via the Data Exchange website.

Task cards

A set of task cards are available that take users step by step through the processes required to create and manage records in the Data Exchange web-based portal.

e-Learning modules

Users of the Data Exchange can also access a suite of training videos known as e-Learning modules. These videos can be accessed via the Data Exchange website.

The Data Exchange Helpdesk

A helpdesk is available to provide technical assistance to users of the Data Exchange.

You can contact the Data Exchange Help Desk by email to dssdataexchange.helpdesk@dss.gov.au or phone 1800 020 283 between 8:30am – 5:30pm (AEST/AEDT), Monday to Friday.
## 11. List of data values

### Priority requirements – mandatory data set

#### Client level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client ID</td>
<td>Free text - limit of 50 characters. If left blank a system generated number will be assigned in the web-based portal, beginning at 001.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given name *</td>
<td>Free text – limit of 30 characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family name *</td>
<td>Free text – limit of 30 characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth *</td>
<td>Date format of dd/mm/yyyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated date of birth *</td>
<td>Tick box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudonym used</td>
<td>Tick box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender *</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intersex / indeterminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated or inadequately described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential address</td>
<td>Residential address line 1 (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address line 2 (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suburb (mandatory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State (mandatory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post code (limit of 4 digits) (mandatory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous status</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Torres Strait Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated / inadequately described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Country of Birth</td>
<td>Drop-down list of values based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard Australian Classification of Countries, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Main language spoken at home</td>
<td>Drop-down list of values based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL), 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These fields generate an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) 581 algorithm.*
### Client level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability, impairment or condition indicator</td>
<td>Intellectual / learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychiatric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sensory / speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical / diverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None (no disability)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated / inadequately described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent to have personal information stored in the web-based portal</td>
<td>Tick box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent to participate in follow up research, surveys and evaluation</td>
<td>Tick box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Case level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case ID</td>
<td>Free text - limit of 50 characters. If left blank a system generated number will be assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlet</td>
<td>In the web-based portal – to be selected from a list of options in the drop-down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Activity</td>
<td>In the web-based portal – to be selected from a list of options in the drop-down. The drop-down will only display program activities that have been assigned to the outlet selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified ‘group’ client count</td>
<td>Free text – number only with limit of 999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attach clients</td>
<td>In the web-based portal – to be selected from a list of options in the drop-down. The drop-down which provides a mechanism to associate one or more client records to the case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Session level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session ID</strong></td>
<td>Free text - limit of 50 characters. If left blank a system generated number will be assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session date</strong></td>
<td>Date format of dd/mm/yyyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unidentified clients attending this session (optional).</strong></td>
<td>Number field. The default value is 0, maximum 999 (however cannot exceed the value specified at the Case level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Client attendance</strong></td>
<td>Record for each case clients present at the session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service type</strong></td>
<td>The number and variety of service types available will depend on the program activity selected. The full list of values available in Appendix A – Service Type Matrix.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Program activity specific (Commonwealth Home Support Program only)

**Client level data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodation setting</strong></td>
<td>Boarding house  &lt;br&gt; Crisis, emergency or transition  &lt;br&gt; Independent living unit  &lt;br&gt; Indigenous community/settlement  &lt;br&gt; Institutional setting (i.e. residential aged care, hospital)  &lt;br&gt; Private residence – client or family owned/purchasing  &lt;br&gt; Private residence – private rental  &lt;br&gt; Private residence – public rental  &lt;br&gt; Public shelter  &lt;br&gt; Supported accommodation  &lt;br&gt; Other  &lt;br&gt; Not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living arrangements</strong></td>
<td>Single (person living alone)  &lt;br&gt; Sole parent with dependant(s)  &lt;br&gt; Couple  &lt;br&gt; Couple with dependant(s)  &lt;br&gt; Group (related adults)  &lt;br&gt; Group (unrelated adults)  &lt;br&gt; Homeless/no household  &lt;br&gt; Not stated or inadequately described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DVA card status</strong></td>
<td>DVA Gold Card  &lt;br&gt; DVA White Card  &lt;br&gt; DVA Orange Card or other  &lt;br&gt; No DVA entitlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Existence of Carer</strong></td>
<td>Yes  &lt;br&gt; No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of assistance provided</strong></td>
<td>The information required for this field will depend on the service type selected. Please refer to Appendix B to determine which fields apply to each service type:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5.5.1                                   | - Hours/minutes  
- Quantity  
- Cost  
- Type                                                                                          |
| **Fees charged**                        | Number field (whole dollars only) - appears where applicable                                                                                 |
| 5.5.1                                   |                                                                                                                                               |

### Program activity specific (relevant Family Law activities only)

The following data items are required for Family Law activities.

### Case / Session level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fees charged</strong></td>
<td>Number field (whole dollars only) - appears where applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Was a parenting agreement reached?</strong></td>
<td>Appears, where applicable when a case is created. The values are:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5.5.2                                                          | - Full  
- Partial  
- Not reached                                                                                     |
| **Date of parenting agreement**                               | Date format of dd/mm/yyyy                                                                         |
| 5.5.2                                                          |                                                                                                                                               |
| **Did a legal practitioner assist with formalising agreement?** | - Yes  
- No                                                                                                                                 |
| 5.5.2                                                          |                                                                                                                                               |
| **Section 60(I) certificate type**                             | Attended – genuine effort  
Attended – not genuine effort  
FDR began – considered inappropriate to continue  
Matter inappropriate for resolution  
Not held due to refusal or failure of other person to attend |
| 5.5.2                                                          |                                                                                                                                               |
| **Date issued (Section 60(I) Certificate)**                   | Date format of dd/mm/yyyy                                                                         |
| 5.5.2                                                          |                                                                                                                                               |
### Program activity specific (Financial Wellbeing and Capability only)
#### Session level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Which Money management course was delivered?</strong></td>
<td>This question only appears if an applicable activity and service type is selected when the case and session is created. Applicable values are:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5.5.3                                          | o Workshop 1 - Making Money Last Until Payday  
|                                                | o Workshop 2 - Planning For the Future  
|                                                | o Workshop 3 - How Can Banks Help  
|                                                | o Workshop 4 - Internet and Phone Banking  
|                                                | o Workshop 5 - Credit Can Be a Hazard  
|                                                | o Workshop 6 - Money Loans Sharks and Traps  
|                                                | o Workshop 7 - A Roof Overhead - Home Ownership  
|                                                | o Workshop 8 - A Roof Overhead Tenancy  
|                                                | o Workshop 9 - Managing Paperwork  
|                                                | o Other workshop                                                                                                                                     |

### Program activity specific (Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants only)
#### Session level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of assistance provided</strong></td>
<td>5.5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fees charged</strong></td>
<td>5.5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Program activity specific (National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) only)
#### Session level data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Topic**  | 5.5.5  | o Abuse/Neglect/Violence  
|            |       | o Access to non NDIS service  
|            |       | o Child Protection  
|            |       | o Community Inclusion - Social/Family  
|            |       | o Disability services complaints  
|            |       | o Discrimination/rights  
|            |       | o Education  
|            |       | o Employment  
|            |       | o Equipment/aids  
|            |       | o Finances  
|            |       | o Government payments  
|            |       | o Health/ Mental Health  
|            |       | o Housing/Homelessness  
|            |       | o Legal/Access to Justice  
|            |       | o NDIS - Internal Review  
|            |       | o NDIS - Access/Planning  
|            |       | o NDIS - Support implementing plan/Accessing services  
|            |       | o Other  
|            |       | o Physical access  
|            |       | o Transport  
|            |       | o Vulnerable/isolated  

Data Exchange Protocols (Version 5, October 2018)
### Data Field - Field Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homeless indicator</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household composition</strong></td>
<td>Single (person living alone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Sole parent with dependant(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couple with dependant(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group (related adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group (unrelated adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homeless/No household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated or inadequately described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Level of education/qualification</strong></td>
<td>Pre-primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced diploma and diploma level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor degree level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate diploma and graduate certificate level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postgraduate degree level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment Status</strong></td>
<td>Paid work full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Paid work part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unpaid work (includes volunteering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not working and not looking for work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unemployed (not working but looking for work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studying full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studying part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Field</td>
<td>Field Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main source of income</td>
<td>Nil income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employee salary / wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other income including superannuation and investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-employed (Unincorporated business income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government payments / pensions / allowances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not stated/Inadequately described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income frequency</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate gross income</td>
<td>Number field (whole dollars only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month of first arrival in Australia</td>
<td>Drop-down menu of twelve month calendar year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of first arrival in Australia</td>
<td>Drop-down menu of year in chronological order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa Type</td>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestry</td>
<td>Select from the list of values which is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups (ASCCEG).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is client a carer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDIS eligibility</td>
<td>NDIS in-progress access request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NDIS eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NDIS ineligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Case level data – Referral Source and Reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Reason for seeking assistance** 6.2 | Physical health  
Mental health, wellbeing and self-care  
Personal and family safety  
Age-appropriate development  
Community participation and networks  
Family functioning  
Financial resilience  
Employment  
Education and skills training  
Material well-being and basic necessities  
Housing |
| **Referral source** 6.3       | Health agency  
Community services agency  
Educational agency  
Internal  
Legal agency  
Employment / job placement agency  
Centrelink / Department of Human Services (DHS)  
Other Agency  
Self  
Family  
Friends  
General Medical Practitioner  
My Aged Care Gateway  
Linkages Program  
CoS Program  
Humanitarian Settlement Program  
LAC Referral  
NDIS referral  
Other party  
Not stated / inadequately described |
| **Client exit reason** (program specific only) 6.9 | Client no longer requires assistance  
Service unable to provide assistance  
Client now requires higher level of aged care  
Client has moved out of area  
Client terminated the service  
Client died  
None of the above |
### Session level data – Referrals to other services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Field</th>
<th>Field Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Referral type** | **6.4** Internal – made to another service offered within the same organisation  
|                  | External – made to a service that is provided by a different organisation  
| **Referral purpose** | **6.4** Physical health  
|                  | Mental health, wellbeing & self-care  
|                  | Personal and family safety  
|                  | Age-appropriate development  
|                  | Community participation & networks  
|                  | Financial Resilience  
|                  | Family functioning  
|                  | Employment  
|                  | Education and skills training  
|                  | Material well-being and basic necessities  
|                  | Housing  
|                  | Support to caring role  
|                  | Other  |
### Standard Client / Community Outcome Reporting (SCORE)

| Circumstance SCORE domains | Physical health  
Mental health, wellbeing and self-care  
Personal and family safety  
Age-appropriate development  
Community participation and networks  
Family functioning  
Financial resilience  
Employment  
Education and skills training  
Material well-being and basic necessities  
Housing |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Goals SCORE domains       | Changed knowledge and access to information  
Changed skills  
Changed behaviours  
Empowerment, choice and control to make own decisions  
Engagement with relevant support services  
Changed impact of immediate crisis |
| Satisfaction SCORE domains | I am satisfied with the services I have received  
The service listened to me and understood my issues  
I am better able to deal with issues that I sought help with |
| Community SCORE domains   | Community infrastructure and networks  
Organisational knowledge, skills and practices  
Group / community knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours  
Social cohesion |
| Assessed by               | SCORE directly – client  
SCORE directly – practitioner  
SCORE directly – joint  
SCORE directly – support person  
Validated outcomes tool – client  
Validated outcomes tool – practitioner  
Validated outcomes tool – joint  
Validated outcomes tool – support person |
12. Version History

Version 5, October 2018

The Department released version 5 of the Data Exchange Protocols in October 2018 to reflect the release of the Data Exchange system enhancements that occurred in August 2018. Details of the August 2018 enhancements can be found in the System enhancement data items Task Card (18 August 2018) and partnership approach data items Task Card (18 August 2018) available on the Data Exchange website (https://dex.dss.gov.au).

1. Section five has been updated to reflect program-specific fields for Career Pathways Pilot for Humanitarian Entrants and the National Disability Advocacy Program.
2. Section six has been updated to reflect policy decisions to include the partnership approach as a requirement of some program grant agreements. New extended data items ‘employment status’ and ‘highest level of education/qualification’ have also been included.
3. Section seven has been updated to reflect changes to the naming, definition and scope of Circumstances outcome domains that have been made to better reflect the contemporary policy and program environment.
4. Section eight has been updated to reflect that the client survey pilot has ended, and the Department is exploring program-specific surveys.
5. Section nine now references the ‘handshake’ agreement.
6. Section 11 includes new and updated data values made as part of the August 2018 enhancements.
7. The term ‘service provider’ has been replaced with ‘organisation’. This is a better reflection of who is reporting into the Data Exchange.

Version 4, March 2017

This review was conducted in the context of the Data Exchange expansion to other agencies and jurisdictions, and the creation of the Community Grants Hub.

Although no changes have been made to the Data Exchange Framework itself, a general review of the Protocols document was required, as well as changes to the structure and style of the document. Examples include removing or replacing ‘DSS’ in the document, where appropriate

Due to the nature of this review, only major and general changes are noted here.

1. Section names and numbering:
   - New Section 8 – Client Survey
   - New Section 9 - Data Exchange Reports
   - Section 10 - Administrative Matters (previously section 8)
   - Section 11, Data Values and Section 12 Version History (previously Attachments 1 & 2)
   - Some subsections have also been modified, renumbered or combined, to allow for expanded guidance and clarification. Examples include set-up processes, definitions of client and outlet, funding sources, compliance and extension requests.

2. The Appendix B Program Activity Guidance document has been referenced throughout, where appropriate. Also, given that Appendix B provides program specific information which will enable greater consistency and data quality, a number of examples became redundant and have been removed from the main Protocols document.

Version 3, October 2015

What’s new and different in the updated Data Exchange Protocols

The Department released version 3 of the DSS Data Exchange Protocols in October 2015 to include enhancements made to the system for the Commonwealth Homes Support Programme activity and enhance and clarify protocols relating to protecting the privacy of personal information.

1. Added an example for ‘who is a client’ for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme – Section 2.3.
   - The section has been updated with a practice example from the Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

2. Included definition of outlet – Section 3.5
   - This section has been added to explain how an outlet is defined. It provides guidance on what address to use when a service is being delivered to a client’s home or a sensitive location.
3. **Introduced definition of ‘personal information’ – Section 4.**
   Provided the definition of ‘personal information’ under the *Privacy Act*, and an example of when ‘personal information’ will be stored in the *DSS Data Exchange*.

4. **Consolidated and clarified information about the de-identification of personal information – Section 4.2.**
   Clarified details explaining how the Department de-identifies and aggregates personal information stored in the *DSS Data Exchange*. These details appear in the notification arrangements that apply to organisations who choose to use the *DSS Data Exchange* as a client management system.

5. **Limited the content to deal only with the Department’s privacy obligations – Section 4.1; Section 8.5.**
   Arrangements with providers for protecting the privacy of a client’s personal information now focus only on meeting the Department’s obligations under the *Privacy Act*. This change recognises it is ultimately the responsibility of providers to ensure they are compliant with their own obligations under privacy law.

6. **Limited arrangements for follow-up client research – Section 4.4.**
   Removed requirement for organisations to retain contact details of clients for future follow-up client research. While the methodology for client surveys is currently under development, DSS no longer requires organisations to retain the details of clients for research. This will simplify requirements.

7. **Expanded client management functions of the *DSS Data Exchange* – Section 4.2; Section 4.3; Section 8.4.**
   Amended the Protocols to recognise that organisations reporting through a system-to-system transfer or bulk upload may use the *DSS Data Exchange* as a free client management system, in conjunction with their own. These providers must adhere to the consent and notification protocols. Providers who do not use the *DSS Data Exchange* as a free client management system are not required to adhere to these protocols.

8. **Revised the consent and notification protocols – Section 4.2.**
   Revised and enhanced the consent and notification arrangements that apply to organisations using the *DSS Data Exchange* as a client management system. These changes ensure maximum flexibility for organisations in relation to how they give the required notification and obtain the required consent. These changes also make it more explicit that organisations must obtain the express consent of a client for the Department to collect their personal information from the provider and store it on the *DSS Data Exchange*. Organisations must record that consent in the *DSS Data Exchange* IT system and must inform the client that they may withdraw this consent at any time.

9. ** Clarified how to report the client’s residential address – Section 5.1.4**
   This section has been updated to include an example of the ‘limited circumstances’ in which it may be appropriate to record an outlet address as the client’s residential address.

10. **Clarified the operation of the Statistical Linkage Key – Section 5.2.2.**
    Details explaining how the Statistical Linkage Key is used to enable data matching in a way that does not use an individual’s personal information have been clarified and consolidated in section 5.2.2.

11. **Introduced data items for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme – Section 5.5.1.**
    This section has been updated to reflect mandatory data items added for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme including “accommodation setting”, “living arrangements”, “DVA card status”, and “existence of a carer”. All program-specific mandatory client fields are now in the one section of the Protocols (Section 5.5).

12. **Updated “household composition” in the extended data items – Section 6.5**
    This data item has been updated to include a value for “homeless/no household”.

13. **Introduced “client exit reason” for Commonwealth Home Support Programme cases – Section 6.9.**
    Organisations delivering the Commonwealth Home Support Programme who choose to participate in the *partnership approach* can record the reason the client exited their service.

14. **Included information about the Translation Matrix for SCORE – Section 7.**
    This section has been updated to include a reference to the Translation Matrix. The Translation Matrix assists organisations in converting results from commonly used outcomes measurement tools into SCORE.

15. **Moved the list of “in-scope activities” and “service types” into an appendix - Appendix A – Service Type Matrix**
The list of programs using the DSS Data Exchange and their applicable service types have been moved into a separate Appendix to allow updates on a more regular basis. The Service Type Matrix includes definitions of each service type and specifies which types apply to which program activities.

Version 2, March 2015

The Department released version 2 of the DSS Data Exchange Protocols in March 2015 to provide clarification on content in light of the release of the DSS Data Exchange Technical requirements (December 2014) document and the partnership approach in the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal (February 2015).

1. Introduction of the concept of a “support person”.
   A person can now be recorded within a session who does not meet the definition of a client to provide additional contextual information if desired.

2. Updated data items for the collection of client’s residential address.
   This section has been updated to reflect the new residential client address details data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

3. Updated country of birth data items - Page 16.
   This section has been updated to reflect the new “country of birth” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

4. Updated main language spoken at home data items - Page 16.
   This section has been updated to reflect the new “main language spoken at home” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

5. Updated “Referral source” data items – Page 22.
   This section has been updated to reflect the new “referral source” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

   This section has been updated to reflect the new “referral reason” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

7. Updated “Main source of income” data items – Page 23, Page 46.
   This section has been updated to reflect the new “Main source of income” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

8. Inclusion of the data items for “Ancestry” - Page 24, Page 46.
   This section has been added to reflect the “Ancestry” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

9. Update to program specific data items – Page 24, Page 45.
   This section has been updated to include the additional Family Law Programme specific data items of “Date of parenting agreement”, “Did a legal practitioner attend”, “Section 60(I) certificates” and Date of certificate issued”. These additions are reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

    This section has been updated to reflect the increased list of DSS program activities able to use the DSS Data Exchange as at March 2015.

11. Update to the list of “Standard service types” – Pages 42-43.
    This section has been added to reflect the “Service type” data items as reflected in the DSS Data Exchange Technical Requirements and latest release of the DSS Data Exchange web-based portal.

The original version of this document was published in August 2014.