



Transcript for Data Exchange Community Services Advisory Group (CSAG) webinar held 29 August 2018

Hello everyone,

My name is Neil Swan. I am from the Data Exchange Engagement and Hub Learning team, in the Department of Social Services. It is my pleasure to be here today to discuss the insights being gained from the data exchange and how these insights are being utilised to inform policy development and improve service delivery.

Joining me today is Nerissa Stewart who will be delivering the webinar and will answer questions throughout today's presentation.

I've allowed time for questions at the end of the presentation so if during the slides you think of a question please note it, and we will cover it off after the presentation.

Before we begin I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land we meet on today. I wish to pay respects to their elders past and present.

<Next Screen >

Throughout the webinar, remember there is a control panel that should have appeared on your screen.

Clicking on any of the grey ribbons will expand that area

Remember to check your sound – your microphone symbol will be red, to indicate that your audio is on mute. Please ensure that your audio is muted otherwise we will hear what is happening on the other side of the microphone.

<Next Screen >

When the control panel hasn't been used for a period of time, it automatically minimises from view. To expand the panel again, simply select the orange arrow.

Also a reminder that the webinar today will be recorded and placed on the Data Exchange website under the webinar library tab in the next couple of weeks.

I will now handover to Nerissa to run through the presentation.

<Next Screen >

As you would be aware this webinar is in follow-up to the last CSAG meeting where members expressed an interest in the insights the Department is getting from the Data Exchange.

To help inform this webinar we approached DSS policy areas to get a range of case studies on how they are using DEX data. Please note we will try to answer all of your questions today, but there may need to be

some things we need to refer to the policy experts, so if that's the case we'll take it on notice and get back to you.

<Next Screen >

Data that is provided by organisations is highly valued by the Department and has many uses.

The data:

- Informs program management, helping the Department to get a better feel for what is happening on the ground,
- It also informs our public reporting. Under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act, the Department is required to publicly report what has been delivered using taxpayer money. This includes reporting at Senate Estimates, and publishing program data in the DSS annual report. This reporting is necessary to demonstrate the return on Government investment; so it needs to be accurate and up to date.
- DEX data is also used to support evidence-based conversations between Funding Arrangement Managers and your organisations, and helps our Delivery Network understand what services are being delivered in their local region.
- In the past the data has also assisted with disaster recovery planning for Cyclone Debbie in April 2017. The data was useful in helping forecast services that may be impacted by the cyclone and where clients could access similar services in other locations that weren't affected.

The data is also used to understand client pathways across services; with the goal of eventually understand what combinations of services lead to the best results for clients.

<Next Screen >

One of the key uses for data is as an input to program evaluations. The information provides the opportunity to monitor data by project, outlet or organisation, population, location and so on.

The DSS Evaluation Unit currently has 22 evaluations scheduled across the Department for the 2018-19 financial year.

One of the most high profile evaluations being undertaken is for the Try, Test and Learn Fund.

<Next Screen >

The Try Test and Learn Fund was announced in the 2016-17 Federal Budget as an initial response to the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare. It develops and funds new or innovative policy responses aimed at improving workforce participation or capacity to work for groups at risk of long term welfare dependence.

The Try Test and Learn Fund is designed to gain insight into what works to improve the lives of clients from priority groups.

The overarching evaluation of the TTL Fund (\$96.1 m) and the evaluation of the tranche 1 projects are being conducted by the University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research. The evaluation of the tranche 2 projects is expected to commence as projects are gradually mobilised.

- The Data Exchange is used by both internal DSS staff and the external evaluators to monitor the implementation and progress of TTL projects. TTL funded organisations are encouraged to enter the data on a regular basis to enable any issues to be identified early.
- As many of you would be aware, de-identified data from the Data Exchange can be linked with the Department of Human Services (DHS) administrative data to identify basic welfare receipt information of those individuals that are receiving a service that reports into DEX. This is done using the Statistical Linkage Key, to ensure the client's privacy is protected. This de-identified linkage work is particularly useful for the TTL fund because it is specifically targeting clients at risk of welfare dependency. Linking to the DHS welfare data enables the Department to look at data that is not currently collected through DEX, such as a de-identified individual's history of benefit receipt, aspects of housing instability, caring responsibilities, reported earnings, and receipt of crisis payments.
- Again, I want to strongly emphasise that this linkage work is being done on a de-identified basis, in line with the Data Exchange privacy and consent provisions which are outlined in the Privacy Impact Assessment.

<Next Screen >

Now I'd like to move onto the next case study; this time in the Settlement Services space.

Data Exchange data was used in the Evaluation of Settlement grants report to:

- compare the changes in SCORE reporting over consecutive reporting periods,
- consider how key client demographics (such as country of birth) changed over consecutive reporting periods
- compare how client attendance at different session types changed over consecutive reporting periods

In response to this review, an enhanced program (SETS – Settlement Engagement and Transition Support) will be introduced from 1 January 2019.

If you're interested in learning more about this evaluation, you can read the report on the DSS website.

<Next Screen >

The next case study is also in the settlement space. DEX data was used to inform the Youth Transition Support (YTS) Pilot Period (January 2016 – June 2017) Evaluation Report. This evaluation was conducted by independent evaluators Synergistiq, who were given access to de-identified DEX data.

In this evaluation, DEX data was used to compare client demographics for each service provider and the full YTS cohort.

DEX SCORE data allowed the evaluators to analyse the outcomes for the SCORE domains of Circumstances, Goals and Satisfaction.

It should be highlighted that all YTS providers are using the Partnership Approach to capture Outcomes data, which has proved very helpful for evaluating the pilot.

Key findings from the Evaluation Report show that:

- the pilot assisted 5,492 clients, with a total of 15,496 sessions delivered across all providers

- the majority of young people entered the YTS to achieve employment, education and training outcomes and to improve their community participation and networks
- younger clients are more likely to seek assistance in community participation and networks, while older clients are more likely to seek assistance in employment, education and training
- the pilot has increased client confidence, self-esteem and motivation, increased work readiness and access to work experience opportunities
- the pilot is showing some early success in generating medium-term outcomes, such as increased employability for young people and clients completing vocational qualifications.

If you're interested in learning more about this evaluation, you can access this report from the Multicultural youth advocacy network's website on the screen.

<Next Screen >

The **Family Safety Branch** (FSB) have a number of programs on DEX under the Women's Safety Package and the Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children (the National Plan). Two of these are the Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes and the Local Support Coordinators.

The DEX data for these programs is being used to determine the extent of program delivery in each jurisdiction, and inform an audit of the programs. Findings of these audits may inform the future policy development and implementation of the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan.

As many of you are no doubt aware, Family Programs and Policy have started to consider what families and children services will look like beyond 30 June 2020, when the majority of grant funding expires. There are five programs in-scope for consideration:

- Family and Relationship Services
- Communities for Children Facilitating Partners
- Children and Parenting Support
- Intensive Family Support Services, and
- The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters.

The analysis of Data Exchange data has informed the Stronger Outcomes for Families Background and Discussion Papers being used in consultations with stakeholders in the last few months.

In 2016 ARTD Consultants conducted an analysis of the Families and Children Activity and the Financial Wellbeing and Capability activity.

This analysis considered all clients and did specific analysis on Indigenous clients. For both client groups, the analysis looked at:

- Demographic profile of clients
- Geographic pattern of service locations
- Service access by clients
- Geographic pattern of client attendance

- Multiple service usage and median number of service attendances for the same activity.

Outcomes data for Indigenous clients was also examined, however the sample size of completed assessments for Indigenous clients was deemed too small to be representative when compared to the number of Indigenous clients accessing services.

The overall analysis was replicated in late 2017 to inform policy development on improving outcomes for Indigenous families and children, and to inform the Stronger Outcomes for Families Indigenous roundtables conducted in August 2017.

<Next Screen >

Questions – We will now leave the webinar open for about 10 minutes to allow you to ask any questions.

Thank you for your time