

# Report

## TEI Program Reform Illawarra Shoalhaven District Workshops

Department of Family &  
Community Services

Nexus Management Consulting  
302/1 Marian St Redfern 2016  
ABN 44 076 308 006

[www.nexusmc.com](http://www.nexusmc.com)

## INTRODUCTION

The NSW Government has initiated a reform of the Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Programs, managed by the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS), which cover a broad spectrum including:

- Community development
- Prevention and early intervention
- Support to families with greater need.

Under these categories are nine programs, all of which aim to improve child and family outcomes and build community capacity. The nine programs are:

• Child Youth and Family Support (CYFS)	\$54.2m
• Community Builders	\$43.1m
• Families NSW	\$26.5m
• Youth Hope	\$10.2m
• Staying Home Leaving Violence	\$5.0m
• Aboriginal Child Youth & Family Strategy	\$4.3m
• Integrated Domestic & Family Violence Services	\$3.5m
• Getting it Together	\$2.1m
• Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)	\$0.48m

FACS has recently released a *Sector Consultation Paper* as part of the engagement process on the TEI reforms<sup>1</sup>. The paper sets out the reform aims, which are to:

- Improve outcomes for clients of targeted earlier intervention services
- Create a service system continuum grounded in evidence-based best practice
- Target resources to those with the greatest needs
- Facilitate District decision making on the design and delivery of local services
- Increase flexibility so that clients are the centre of the system.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Family and Community Services 2015, *Targeted Earlier Intervention Programs Sector Consultation Paper*,  
[http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/335165/CS\\_TIER\\_consultation\\_paper.pdf](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/335165/CS_TIER_consultation_paper.pdf)

The consultation process for the TEI reform comprises several elements:

- District responses to the Sector Consultation Paper
- Specific cohort consultation sessions (managed by the Families and Place Unit of the FACS central office in consultation with peak organisations)
- District-led consultation sessions with the local sector
- Inter-government consultation (managed by Families and Place).

To assist the District-led consultations with the local sector, Families and Place offered to provide an external facilitator and Nexus was subsequently engaged to facilitate sector consultations for a number of the 15 FACS Districts. This paper summarises the key outputs of the facilitated workshops for the Illawarra Shoalhaven District held in Wollongong and Nowra on 8 September 2015. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 presents some key themes that emerged across all the District consultations
- Sections 2 to 5 present the data from the small group discussions of four TEI reform questions:
  1. What works well with the current District TEI services and service system?
  2. What are three key things you would change to improve the way TEI services are delivered in the District to vulnerable children, families and communities?
  3. What are three key things you would change to improve FACS's management of TEI programs?
  4. How would you like to be informed and involved in the reform and consultation process?

The data for sections 2 to 5 were derived from 'report back templates' (see appendix 1) that were used to capture the key messages from the small group discussions. It should be noted that these data are in raw form and have not been edited or analysed. Accordingly, the responses should not be read as representing a consensus and, indeed, some responses are in conflict with others.

Nexus has also prepared a report that consolidates the key state-wide themes across the above four questions.

## 1. KEY THEMES

Fourteen key themes or ‘areas of concern’ emerged from our consultations across *a//* Districts:

- Flexibility
- Service coordination
- Service integration
- Resourcing and procurement
- Data collection and reporting
- Outcomes measurement and evaluation
- Evidence-based decision-making
- Capabilities of the sector
- Responsiveness and adaptability
- Service relevance/legitimacy
- Autonomy
- Continuum and quantum of services
- Engagement

Many of these themes cut across issues of service system design, service delivery, program improvement and program support. It is important to note, however, that these themes resonate differently, depending on the context that which they refer to, and to keep this in mind when drawing insights from the data presented in the next sections.

For example, while service flexibility was identified frequently across all districts, it was used in different senses. In many cases, flexibility referred to either increased service provider autonomy in decision-making, and in some cases, less rigid contractual arrangements. From the perspective of the service system design and service delivery, flexibility was also identified as the general ‘sector or system capability’ required in order to accommodate differences in delivery styles, service culture and ways of working, and to adapt to different community or client needs. In other contexts, flexibility referred to a broadening of program guidelines, definitions (particularly definitions of early intervention) and funded activities, and implies program design change, rather than system change necessarily.

## 2. WHAT WORKS WELL

*What works well with the current District TEI services and service system?*

### Wollongong

- 
- Autonomy - flexibility
  - Interagency/networking
  - Programs & partnerships are flexible
  - Collaboration between organisations
  - Holistic approach
  - Able to accommodate difference in demographics
  - Stability of services & workers
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- Local knowledge
  - Good partnerships among local services
  - Diverse range of services reaching broad range of clients
  - Programs that target groups and individuals
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- Community-based programs driven by community
  - Flexibility & diversity (Community Builders)
  - Drop-in youth services
  - Collaboration between some services
  - Connecting & supports people in their community
  - Place-based services
  - Building social capital
  - Community development
  - Reducing social isolation
  - Entry point info & referral
  - Non-threatening
- 
- Local networks, history of services working together using local expertise
  - Portal reporting
  - Services providing quality evidence-based service that is responsive to local need

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- Local knowledge & good networking
  - Strong referrals
  - Engagement in universal programs
  - Variety of programs informed by need
  - Doing a lot with a little - cost effective
  - Volunteer involvement
  - Network meetings help new workers orient
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- Families NSW network & leadership
  - Partnership & risk taking
  - Strong referral pathways
  - Staff retention & knowledge
  - Acceptance of new staff
  - Upskilling & networking opportunities
  - Mindshift: silos to collaboration
  - 0-9 plan
- 
- Locally-based & flexible
  - Outreach capacity - not confined to building
  - Relationships with local FACS office & stakeholders
  - Diverse service system
  - Ability to collaborate/partnership
  - Building long-term relationships
  - Utilise local assets/people
  - Relationships with funding body & local CPO
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### **Nowra**

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- Networks that are specific & targeted
  - Services working together (e.g. community events)
  - Knowledge of referral pathways
  - Sharing of information/collaboration
  - Reporting framework clear and data feedback useful
  - Relationship with local FACS staff

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- FNSW interagency-funded facilitation makes it work
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- Families NSW networks
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- Inter-agency networks
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### 3. IMPROVEMENTS TO TEI SERVICES

*What are three key things you would change to improve the way TEI services are delivered in the District to vulnerable children, families and communities?*

#### Wollongong

- 
- Broadening of eligibility criteria
  - Improved access to services, including funding for interpreters
  - Increased focus on early intervention and less time responding to crisis
  - Improved data collection, reporting and evidence base
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- Limitations to client/service eligibility
  - Reporting too quantitative and doesn't reflect qualitative outcomes
  - More effective reporting necessary, including case studies & qualitative data
  - Greater client and consumer feedback in data collection tools
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- More collaborative relationships among NGOs
  - Aligning the data collection tools to better achieve the TEI reform aims (flexible, responsive etc) which are already being achieved
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- More holistic, integrated systems
  - More flexibility - transitional/life stages
  - Value of outcome rather than numbers
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- More flexible approach to service delivery so clients can move from universal program to intensive service provision
  - Broader community development to support case management practices
  - Improved evaluation processes such as quantitative data and story telling
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- Lack of coordination, 12-18 years
  - Lack of focus on youth and 8-12 years
  - Guidelines too rigid
  - Programs to support whole family
  - Lack of flexible, affordable learning options from early childhood to high school and beyond
  - Lack of a strategic approach to funding services in an area
- 
- Increased flexibility across all services
  - Measurement of outcomes as opposed to outputs
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- Improved communication/feedback on data
  - Establish a pool of funds to meet diversity of client groups (e.g. Transport, interpreters)
  - Community transport
  - ECN home visits
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- Regular contact with CPO for all services
  - Shared vision, plan and delivery
  - Outcomes and data collection
  - Improved communication about the program (e.g. national newsletter) so all households have access to service information early
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### **Nowra**

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- Service delivery to cover all life stages
  - Recurrent funding (e.g. 5 year minimum) to improve staff retention, and planning
  - Increased flexibility rather than time/eligibility restrictions
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- Improved inter-agency referral processes
  - Improved communication between schools and community services
  - Replicating good practice programs
  - Improved community transport
  - Addressing gaps in services (e.g. services working with clients they are not funded for)
  - Recurrent funding assists program planning and delivery
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- Services delivered with greater flexibility
  - Improved information sharing between services and schools
  - Fewer families falling between gaps created by funding guidelines
  - Services delivered in less siloed ways: outcome measures developed around collective impact
  - Identifying opportunities for services to collaborate
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## 4. FACS's PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

*What are three key things you would change to improve FACS's management of TEI programs?*

### Wollongong

- Interdepartmental support and coordination especially with the Department of Education to enable early intervention in schools
- Address potential loss of early intervention through NDIS implementation
- Improved reporting to capture more information about client outcomes
- Facilitation of events (conferences, brainstorming, networking etc) to build strategic relationships between FACS-funded services
- Improved partnership with CPOs
- Improved, flexible reforms
- More two-way communication
- Assistance in gathering evidence-based data
- Ongoing contact, not just at audit and reporting
- Support for evidence-based evaluation processes
- Increased program flexibility
- Competitive funding/reporting and balancing accountability and transparency
- Increased FACS's knowledge about services on the ground
- FACS being more transparent and accountable
- Long-term funding
- Flexibility in reporting
- Increased use of strategic approaches and evidence
- Improved reporting and portal access
- Streamlining services to reflect community needs
- Listening to expertise on the ground
- Reduced cross-over/duplication and replication of services
- Better tools to collect evidence and identify service gaps
- More flexible eligibility and funding guidelines
- Change vocabulary to reduce stigma for client groups

- Reduction in competitive environment that negates sharing and collaboration
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### **Nowra**

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- Opportunity to provide qualitative data - good news stories
  - A single portal
  - Involvement of FACS at program-specific meetings
  - Locally-based FACS worker in the Shoalhaven
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- Review the evaluation sheets and reporting - shared language across programs
  - FACS involvement in program-specific meetings
  - Improvement of data collection and online technology
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- More flexibility
  - Improved data collection tools and outcome measures
  - Closer collaboration between ADHC and CS systems and processes
  - More proactive monitoring of services (to identify strengths as well as weaknesses)
  - Greater transparency of funding of services in ensuring roles/responsibilities are understood across the sector
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## 5. TEI REFORM CONSULTATION

*How would you like to be informed and involved in the reform and consultation process?*

### Wollongong

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- Newsletters/updates
  - Face-to-face forums
  - Opportunities for communities to be involved
  - Social media
  - Evaluation before implementation of programs
  - Webinars
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- Earlier advice re forums
  - Involvement of communities
  - Different methods of consultations, including community consultations
  - Governance structure for local consultation/planning
  - Progressive feedback to the services
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- Electronic updates
  - Opportunities for feedback at each stage
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- Variety of communication methods
  - Consultations with services in their own space
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- Real consultation process, not tokenistic
  - Clarity of processes and consultation
  - Direct engagement with communities/stakeholders/service users/families
  - Alignment with CYP Advocate's planning process
  - Variety of ways for input and to be informed
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- Use of networks
  - Newsletters
  - Consultation with existing services re transition risk during implementation of any reforms
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- Quarterly meetings
  - Monthly emailed newsletter (jargon-free)

- Allocated contact person
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### **Nowra**

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- Adequate notice of consultation
  - Ongoing feedback via email newsletter
  - Multiple methods including webinars, online groups, face-to-face meetings, use of existing forums, CPOs, newsletters
  - Multiple methods
  - Local level consultation as well as District level
  - Opportunities to connect with other parts of the service system
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## APPENDIX 1: REPORT BACK TEMPLATE

### Targeted Earlier Intervention Reform District Consultation Sessions ILLAWARRA SHOALHAVEN DISTRICT

#### REPORT BACK TEMPLATE

1. What works well with the current District TEI services and service system?

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2. What are three key things you would change about the way TEI services are delivered in the District to vulnerable children, families and communities?

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## Targeted Earlier Intervention Reform District Consultation Sessions ILLAWARRA SHOALHAVEN DISTRICT

### REPORT BACK TEMPLATE

3. What are three key things you would change about FAC's management of TEI programs?

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4. How would you like to be informed and involved in the reform and consultation process?

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