Indigenous Data Sovereignty and the TEI Program

December 2020

Overview

This document describes how the Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Program plans to move forward on Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDS) and Indigenous Data Governance (IDG).

TEI is moving to an evidence and knowledge-based way of working to deliver more effective, culturally competent services to Aboriginal children and families.

TEI recognises the importance of incorporating the principles of IDS and IDG to work in a more culturally appropriate way.

Definitions

Indigenous Data Sovereignty refers to the right of Indigenous peoples to exercise ownership over Indigenous Data. Ownership of data can be expressed through the creation, collection, access, analysis, interpretation, management, dissemination and use of Indigenous Data.

Indigenous Data Governance refers to the right of Indigenous peoples to autonomously decide what, how and why Indigenous Data are collected, accessed and used. It ensures that data on or about Indigenous peoples reflects Indigenous priorities, values, cultures, worldviews and diversity.

IDS Principles

Indigenous peoples have the right to:

1. Exercise control of the data ecosystem including creation, development, stewardship, analysis, dissemination and infrastructure.
2. Data that is contextual and disaggregated (available and accessible at individual and community levels, and by Aboriginality).
3. Data that is relevant and empowers sustainable self-determination and effective self-governance.
4. Data structures that are accountable to Indigenous peoples and Aboriginal peoples.
5. Data that is protective and respects their individual and collective interests.

Developed by the Maiam nayri Wingara Indigenous Data Sovereignty Collective

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IDS and the Data Exchange

Data is an important resource to develop and implement responsive and impactful services.

From 1 January 2021, all TEI service providers must report data in the Data Exchange.

The Data Exchange is an improvement on previous reporting methods:

- **Relevance:** the Data Exchange collects data on client **outcomes.**
- **Ownership**: Service providers can use data to make informed decisions and improve service delivery.
- **Access**: service providers can access their own data at any point in time. It has a self-service reporting function that allows organisations to access a series of reports which provide valuable information on client service delivery. These reports reflect the information submitted by organisations.
- **Data Quality:** Supports service providers to tell their own data stories of who their clients are and how they should be known.

The Data Exchange, as with other data systems, does have its limitations and challenges. However, by working in partnership with the sector, we hope it can be aligned to the perspectives, values and aspirations of Aboriginal communities.

The aim is for TEI Aboriginal service providers to:

- Be engaged in decision making about data
- Have the opportunity to give feedback that is valued and recognised by DCJ
- Exercise greater authority over the data routinely collected.
- Build capability and expertise to use data effectively.

TEI will work with providers to ensure they:

- have the skills to understand the information in the Data Exchange reports.
- build technical capability to collect, analyse, and report data.
- can demonstrate success from Aboriginal perspectives as opposed to highlighting the gaps.

By empowering Aboriginal organisations to be custodians of their data, data will be a more accurate representation of the outcomes clients and communities achieve.

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Aboriginal Evidence Building

Documenting local programs and measuring outcomes is vital to building the evidence-base for what works in Aboriginal communities and ensuring that any program implemented is effective and culturally safe.

TEI plans to work with the sector to help build the evidence base for local Aboriginal service delivery. We will identify promising and emerging programs by reviewing program logics and data reported in the Data Exchange. This will support us to know more about what works for Aboriginal children, young people, families, and communities.

Over time, this information will be incorporated into a publically-available evidence portal. This portal will feature summaries of research evidence and locally-designed programs. This will ensure that more programs implemented in NSW are effective and culturally safe.

We recognise the sector needs support and training to successfully adopt an evidence-informed approach. As such, we will be delivering tailored workshops, online training and resources as well as one-on-one support as needed. This support will better enable providers to use evidence to design, implement and improve programs and activities.

What's next?

We are working towards a responsive and adaptive system supporting culturally appropriate processes. Key upcoming focus areas include:

- How can we collect, report and analyse qualitative data that captures story telling;
- How can we incorporate client voice into service design and reporting; and
- The approach to identifying promising and emerging programs.

TEI is committed to in-depth and ongoing engagement with Aboriginal service providers. TEI will be hosting a series of co-design webinars in 2021 on critical areas requiring stakeholder input. These will be interactive 'brainstorming' sessions which will give the opportunity for providers to be involved in the design of solutions. An invitation to participate in these webinars will be circulated via the TEI Inform newsletter.

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DCJ program of work on IDS and IDG

We recognise IDS and IDG is a journey that consists of many evolving phases. TEI will continue to link in with the broader DCJ Aboriginal Knowledge Program (**Ngaramanala**). The Ngaramanala program of work aims to:

- Investigate how the principles of IDS can be applied to how evidence and data is collected, used and governed in DCJ;
- Recognise the historical and current misuse of data about Aboriginal Peoples;
- Work with Aboriginal Peoples to understand the historical, political, social and cultural context of historical and contemporary data; and
- Develop frameworks, tools and new knowledge to help DCJ to see the strengths, challenges and resilience of Aboriginal people.

Projects for Phase Three of Ngaramanala: November 2020 – June 2021 are:

1. Identify and define the information required to decide and negotiate whether an Aboriginal Data Sharing agreement, in response to the principles of IDS & IDG, is feasible within DCJ

2. Develop an operational plan for research in DCJ to foster a culture of Aboriginal led research and research priorities that are aligned to the principles of IDS & IDG.

3. Develop a culturally relevant ethics framework for FACSIAR

4. Implement the *Ngaramanala Change Mindfulness Program*

Further Information

TEI is currently supported by a staff member from the Aboriginal Outcomes Team. Please email the TEI Inbox if you would like further information on the above.