

Targeted Earlier Intervention Program

Sector Assistance Strategy Stage One



Targeted Earlier Intervention Program Reform

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Executive Summary

The Targeted Earlier Intervention Sector Assistance Strategy

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) is undertaking Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) reform to develop a locally responsive, evidence-informed and client-focused service system that maximises positive outcomes for families and communities.

The reform aims to:

- Improve outcomes for clients of TEI services
- Create a service system continuum grounded in evidence-informed 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.

The vision for TEI reform is that:

- Families, children and young people needs are met earlier to prevent the escalation of need.
- Families are able to access support earlier in the lives of their children and young people, and are empowered to live independent meaningful lives.
- Risk factors that lead to child abuse and neglect and domestic family violence are addressed earlier.
- Aboriginal children, young people and families have access to effective and culturally safe support and services.

With a focus on earlier intervention, the TEI program provides targeted services at the point where they can have the most impact - early in life and early in need.

The target group for the TEI program is vulnerable children, young people, families and their communities, within NSW. Within this broad target group, there are three priority groups:

- 0-3 year olds
- young parents
- Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities in NSW.

The TEI Sector Assistance Strategy (the Strategy) aims to support existing TEI funded services to effectively and confidently transition to the new TEI program. The Strategy is designed to build upon the wide range of existing work being conducted by FACS, peak agencies and other organisations, and deliver additional support to the sector where it is needed.

The Strategy will deliver assistance in two stages. Stage One will support services to engage with the TEI commissioning process and Stage Two will focus on program implementation, building the TEI service delivery evidence base, and enhancing supporting activities.

This document outlines the Stage One assistance measures of the TEI Sector Assistance Strategy. In this early phase of transition, the focus is on:

- Building a shared understanding in the sector of TEI commissioning
- Supporting organisations to assess how they need to change in the new TEI program
- Engaging stakeholders and communities in service design
- Strengthening local practices and service pathways.

The Strategy focuses on assisting organisations develop the new capabilities required in TEI commissioning, rather than capabilities that are considered business as usual in TEI service delivery.

Stage One assistance measures are funded until July 2018, when Stage Two of the TEI Sector Assistance Strategy will commence. Where relevant, this document identifies initiatives that will be relevant for Stage Two noting that the needs of the sector will evolve over this period and Stage Two of the Strategy will be developed through a separate process.

Focus areas for stage one assistance

Stage One strategy assistance measures have been designed to respond to the different level and type of needs of TEI service providers as they transition into the new TEI program. It sets out a comprehensive suite of initiatives that can be accessed by services providers if and when they require assistance, aimed at meeting the varying individual organisation support needs of existing TEI services during the transition period, see Figure 1.

Stage One assistance measures are classified into five focus areas:

1. Information on TEI commissioning
2. Strengthening local practice
3. Workforce and skills development
4. Organisational development
5. Aboriginal sector capacity building.

Figure 1. Structure of Stage One assistance



The approach of the Strategy is to first establish a shared understanding of commissioning within the context of TEI currently in the sector, and to develop the relationships and processes required in FACS Districts to support effective commissioning. Building on this foundation, targeted support is available for TEI funded services to develop employee skills, manage organisational change and build capacity to deliver services to vulnerable children, young people, families and their communities, within NSW. A specific focus is given to increasing Aboriginal sector capacity.

The five focus areas of the stage one Strategy are outlined below in Table 1, including the rationale for inclusion and the available assistance measures in each area. The following sections of this document elaborate on the assistance measures in further detail.

Table 1. Overview of stage one assistance

Focus area	Rationale for assistance	Available assistance measures
Information	TEI service providers have emphasised the importance of clear, consistent and practical information and guidance on TEI commissioning. Understanding the TEI commissioning process is a fundamental component of the TEI organisational capability framework.	<p>Information assistance measures are funded within existing resources, additional to the Sector Assistance funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TEI website (existing resources) ▪ Further information and resources for service providers (existing resources)
Strengthening local practice	Building on a sound understanding of TEI commissioning, service providers need to be aware of their local priorities and needs in their district. TEI service providers indicated they need support to build a common understanding of TEI services and referral pathways in their districts and what is considered best practice. Establishing local communities of practice and practice forums can help build and strengthen relationships, and set up processes for continuous learning and improvement.	<p>Funded through Sector Assistance Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice forums ▪ Communities of practice/learning circles
Workforce and skills development	TEI service providers and sector stakeholders highlighted the importance of addressing skills gaps that may arise as a result of TEI reform. TEI service providers expressed a preference for training to help bridge these gaps. Available training should be tailored to the needs of each district as part of a broader workforce development strategy to align the TEI workforce to both current and future service demands based on district priorities.	<p>Funded through Sector Assistance Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training and other workforce development opportunities (also supported by communities of practice/learning circles)
Organisational development	TEI service providers identified that they need support to assess how their organisation will need to change as a result of TEI reform. Some organisations depending on their size and location may need more intensive assistance than others.	<p>Funded through Sector Assistance Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational development ▪ Individualised transition support <p>Funded within existing resources, additional to the Sector Assistance funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal services (existing resources)

Focus area	Rationale for assistance	Available assistance measures
Aboriginal sector capacity building	TEI reform includes a commitment that 30% of Targeted Earlier Intervention programs funding will be directed to Aboriginal service delivery. Mainstream organisations also need support to enhance the cultural safety and quality of their services.	Funded through Sector Assistance Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational development ▪ Cultural competency framework ▪ Staff training ▪ The TEI Sector Assistance Strategy will align with, and support, other Aboriginal child and family services industry development work underway across FACS

Funding

The Stage One TEI Sector Assistance Strategy has a budget of \$750,000, to end-June 2018, to deliver assistance measures to the sector. This funding will be prioritised for direct service delivery and support to TEI service providers. Other assistance measures in the Strategy will be implemented by FACS drawing on existing internal resources where available.

Table 2.

Assistance	Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice Forums ▪ Communities of Practice and Learning Circles ▪ Individualised Support 	<p>Funding to be allocated to TEI sector support partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ deliver sector wide and individualised support to assist mainstream service providers to manage change, including support to engage effectively in: local planning; contracting; transition planning; implementation; and change management. ○ establishing local communities of practice and practice forums can help build and strengthen relationships, and set up processes for continuous learning and improvement.

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- Workforce and skills development
 - Organisational development and support

Funding to be allocated to establishing an Industry Fund to respond to workforce skills gaps, organisational development gaps, and workforce development opportunities to build the capacity of service providers to respond to needs identified within District plans, and individual Service Provider TEI Transition Plans.

-
- Individualised Support (Aboriginal organisations)
 - Cultural Competency
 - Aboriginal Engagement

Funding to be allocated to Aboriginal TEI sector support partners to support:

- deliver sector wide and individualised support to assist Aboriginal organisations to manage change, including support to engage effectively in: local planning; contracting; transition planning; implementation; and change management.
 - Develop a Cultural Competency Framework across the TEI sector.
 - enhance the capability of organisations to engage with their local Aboriginal communities in the design, development and delivery of TEI services.
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Introduction

The TEI Sector Assistance Strategy

The TEI Sector Assistance Strategy aims to support existing TEI funded services transition through the TEI program reform into the new TEI program.

The Strategy has two stages:

- Stage One (1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018) will assist services transition through the TEI commissioning process and through activities like: local planning; contracting; transition planning and implementation; establishing the new data collection; and implementing new reporting systems and performance measures.
- Stage Two (1 July 2018 – 30 June 2020) will support further activities within the reform implementation, such as: improving cultural capabilities; building the TEI service delivery evidence base; enhancing local planning processes; working with the sector to embed evidence-informed practice within the program; common systems and processes; sector-wide training needs; and developing sector capability.

Stage One objectives

This document outlines the support that will be available to TEI funded service providers in Stage One of the TEI Sector Assistance Strategy. The Stage One Strategy objectives are to:

- Provide assistance measures that will support TEI existing funded services to effectively and confidently participate in the TEI commissioning process
- Establish mechanisms to support ongoing change in TEI service providers and the TEI workforce to equip the sector with the capability and capacity to operate in the new TEI program
- Identify initiatives to build the capacity of Aboriginal organisations, Aboriginal staff and mainstream organisations to engage with and deliver high-quality and culturally safe services to Aboriginal communities.

The Strategy aims to offer assistance to service providers so that they can effectively participate in the reform, while maintaining continuity of services to clients. The Strategy is designed to build on the wide range of existing work currently being conducted by FACS, peak agencies and other organisations to help services effectively transition to the new TEI commissioning process.

Strategy development

The Strategy was developed through a six month process that examined what capabilities TEI funded services will require in a commissioning environment, what assistance TEI funded

services would like to support their transition, and the views of peak bodies and FACS districts. The following activities have informed the Strategy.

- An organisational capability framework was developed from a TEI desktop review and a workshop with peak bodies. The framework identifies the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for TEI funded services to effectively participate in TEI commissioning.
- An online survey of TEI service providers was conducted to identify what parts of the commissioning process, local planning and transition service providers felt they need assistance with, and how they would like this support to be delivered. The online survey resulted in over 350 (69%) of TEI funded services participating and identified seven priority areas for assistance.
- Interviews and workshops were held with peak agencies to understand their perspectives and priorities on what assistance will be most important to assist TEI funded services through the TEI reform process.

The online survey identified seven main priorities for assistance

TEI service providers indicated they need support to:

- understand the requirements of the TEI commissioning process
- assess how their organisation will need to change as a result of TEI reform
- build a common understanding of TEI service and referral pathways in their districts
- understand evidence-informed practices and how to incorporate them into services
- use data in service design and delivery including collecting, analysing and managing data service data as well as collecting outcomes data
- negotiate contracts with FACS in a commissioning environment
- engage with Aboriginal communities to inform service design.

Service providers were also asked in the survey how they would prefer support to be delivered in the Strategy. Training across a range of topics was the most popular suggestion as well as the provision of clear and consistent information on TEI reform. TEI funded services also requested assistance for supporting interagency relationships and collaboration such as local networks, communities of practice and peer groups.

It is noted that the timing of the survey along with other factors in the reform process may have influenced service providers' priorities for assistance. The Strategy has taken this into consideration and has used the survey results in conjunction with the desktop review, capability framework and stakeholder views to inform the assistance measures.

Building sector capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal families and communities

The new TEI program identifies Aboriginal children, families and communities as a priority group in recognition of their continued over-representation in the NSW child protection system. The TEI Program Guidelines emphasise the need for all services to be culturally safe and culturally relevant for Aboriginal children young people, families and communities. FACS

has made a commitment to target 30% of Targeted Earlier Intervention programs funding to Aboriginal service delivery. Where possible, these services are best delivered by Aboriginal organisations, or where capacity is limited, by mainstream organisations with Aboriginal workers providing services to Aboriginal people.

The Strategy is aligned with other sector-wide work that is being driven by FACS to build the capacity and capability of both Aboriginal organisations and mainstream services to meet the needs of Aboriginal families and communities. Increasing the proportion of TEI services that are delivered by Aboriginal organisations will be a long-term task.

Stage One of the Strategy will support this goal through:

- providing individualised support to Aboriginal organisations to enhance their organisational capacity to transition to the new TEI program
- supporting build the Aboriginal workforce
- developing a Cultural Competency Framework across the TEI sector aimed at building the cultural proficiency of service providers delivering services to Aboriginal people
- increasing the capability of mainstream organisations to engage their local Aboriginal communities in the design and development of TEI services.

1. Information on TEI commissioning

Rationale

Establishing a common understanding of TEI commissioning within the sector is vital to building a strong foundation for TEI reform. Existing funded service providers need to understand the new TEI program service streams and priorities, including district-specific priorities, in order to participate effectively in the commissioning process.

In the TEI Sector Assistance Survey, service providers indicated they need support to understand the requirements of the commissioning process and assess whether their organisation is aligned with the new TEI program. This area of assistance received the highest proportion of responses overall in the survey. However, the overwhelming preference of service providers was for 'some support' rather than 'a lot of support' in this area, suggesting broad rather than intensive assistance is required to meet this need. The importance of developing a consistent understanding within the TEI sector was also emphasised in workshops with peak bodies.

The information needs of TEI service providers could be met through two assistance measures: enhancing the TEI website to elevate its role as a central resource and repository for all TEI information and resources; and actively promoting and disseminating additional resources for service providers about TEI commissioning and negotiating processes.

Assistance measures

- ***Enhance the TEI website***

Enhance the existing TEI website to serve as a central resource, supporting continuous improvement and information sharing

The TEI Sector Assistance Survey showed that existing funded services access information from a wide range of sources including the TEI newsletter, the TEI website, district meetings, peak bodies and FACS Commissioning and Planning Officers (CPOs). To support the consistent sharing of information and understanding of TEI reform, the Strategy will enhance the existing TEI website to ensure that is the central 'go to' resource for all TEI information and guidance.

The website will be maintained and updated regularly so that service providers can be confident that they are receiving the most recent information. Enhancements to the website will also feature the inclusion of district-specific information. The TEI Sector Assistance Survey indicated that service providers were less aware of district priority groups and locations than

they were of TEI program priorities. The TEI website will have district profile information and relevant links to ensure service providers can readily access information on their own area.

The information requirements of TEI funded services will evolve during the reform process. For example, in Stage Two of the Strategy there will be a need to develop and disseminate resources on evidence-informed practices. The TEI website will continue to be updated to respond to the information needs of the sector.

FACS Central Office will have responsibility for enhancements to the TEI website. This measure will be cost-neutral in the Strategy and drawn from internal resources. Changes to the TEI website may involve the following actions.

Actions:

- Identify and review processes, procedures, policies and toolkits and other material in use in the sector, or being developed for the TEI sector, that would be appropriate resources to share across the sector
- Identify existing and/or develop new content for inclusion on the website, which specifically addresses the priority support areas identified by service providers in the Sector Assistance survey e.g.:
 - Aboriginal and wider stakeholder engagement
 - assessing capabilities
 - collaborative impact work
 - commissioning for service providers
 - contracting
 - cultural competencies and awareness
 - evidence informed practice
 - referral pathways and TEI tiers
 - TEI performance measures and outcome indicators
 - TEI service continuum
- Ensure TEI website has district profile information or links to district websites and peak bodies
- Consult with Aboriginal agencies to confirm the best practice resources for inclusion in the central resource and develop Aboriginal specific resources in line with the FACS Aboriginal Targeted Earlier Intervention Strategy e.g. evidence informed practice, Cultural Competency framework, stakeholder engagement.

- ***Information resources***

Provide existing TEI funded services with further information about TEI commissioning and negotiation processes

Along with a central online resource for TEI information, a range of other communication channels and forums could be provided to service providers. Responses to the TEI Sector Assistance Survey suggested that service providers have different needs and preferences for TEI communication material. Some providers asked for more online communication, others asked for more face-to-face communication such as sessions to update organisations on the

progress of the transition, more district meetings and contact with their CPO. Some providers also wanted communication to have a greater emphasis on local contribution rather than a high-level overview of state-wide activities. Some survey respondents had specific suggestions for information sessions, webinars, fact sheets and more written guidance on TEI program transition and requirements.

The various information needs of existing TEI service providers will be met through a range of communication methods. Further information on commissioning in FACS generally, as well as how this is being applied in TEI reform will be disseminated and discussed in workshops, information sessions and conversations with FACS district staff.

Existing funded services also specified in the survey that they would like further information on contract negotiation in a TEI commissioning context. An information package including templates, guidance on processes and meetings on contract negotiations will be provided to existing TEI service providers through FACS district offices. Some of this information will be delivered in time for the next planning cycle as part of Stage Two of the TEI Sector Assistance Strategy.

Actions:

- Disseminate further information to service providers about commissioning in FACS generally, as well as how this is being applied in the TEI reform. This information may be provided via FAQs, factsheets, tools, workshops, information sessions or local conversations with FACS staff.
- Provide service providers with material to support contract negotiations, for instance:
 - copies of contracting templates, which include the transition plan
 - further information about the TEI transition process and expectations
 - contract negotiation meeting agenda which will be sent to each service prior to meeting
 - District plans that outline local goals.

2. Strengthening local practice

Rationale

In the new TEI program there will be an expectation that service providers will work in partnership to plan and deliver services to the local community. Commissioning requires stakeholders within each district to collaborate to:

- Assess client and community needs
- Agree on outcomes
- Design and evaluate the most efficient response to meet outcomes for clients over the short and long-term.

Information and guidance on TEI commissioning will need to be interpreted and applied by stakeholders in each district to effectively plan services to meet local needs. District governance groups are responsible for facilitating this local planning process, agreeing on priorities and designing a response for the local service system.

Commissioning represents a significant change for the sector in the way services are planned, designed and delivered. Best practice processes will take time to be learnt and embedded in districts. Peak bodies raised the importance of promoting high quality local planning processes with co-led governance structures that genuinely engage with the community and design services around their needs. TEI funded services also identified in the TEI Sector Assistance Survey that building a common understanding of referral pathways in their local district and service systems is an important area for support in the Strategy.

The Strategy will support the development of processes for continuous learning and improvement in TEI local planning and commissioning. Each district will have an opportunity to participate in local practice forums to learn about good practice and refine and consolidate local processes. TEI service providers will also have access to communities of practice and learning circles to share experiences and best practice where there is local demand.

Assistance measures

▪ *Practice Forums*

Develop a series of Practice Forums to assist districts to collectively learn and establish good practice processes related to TEI commissioning

Practice Forums aim to provide an opportunity for Districts to collectively learn about good practice in TEI commissioning and explore how these practices can be best applied within their local service system.

These Forums will support the achievement of several outcomes including: increasing districts' awareness and knowledge of good practice in relation to core activities in TEI commissioning; strengthening relationships within the local service system; disseminating good practice; and establishing or refining effective local governance, planning and community engagement processes. In Stage Two of the Sector Assistance Strategy, these Practice Forums could focus on specific topics related to TEI implementation such as evidence-informed practices, data collection, and outcomes measures.

Practice Forums will be available to each District and could focus on potential topics such as:

1. Engaging the community effectively in TEI reform and service design
2. Effective governance for district TEI governance groups
3. Designing and implementing effective local planning processes that engage stakeholders and communities.

Practice Forum participants could include FACS district staff, TEI funded services, and their management committees and staff. The Forums will be designed to increase the knowledge and skills of these stakeholders on relevant topics, facilitate reflections on current practice in their local context and refine these to align with best practice planning and governance processes.

These Forums could also promote a shared understanding of the requirements of cultural change, change management and how to establish ongoing learning and improvement processes within District planning. Providing an opportunity for stakeholders within each District to reflect and learn about TEI commissioning could help establish a strong foundation for future commissioning cycles.

Actions:

- Develop a program of Practice Forums based on feedback from service providers in the TEI Sector Assistance Survey and feedback from other stakeholders in the sector. Topics may be state-wide or district-specific if certain topics are particularly relevant.
- Establish Practice Forums including scoping, set up and defining an on-going support structure and sustainability plan.

- ***Communities of practice and learning circles***

Provide on-going professional development and peer support, through Communities of Practice and/or Learning Circles

TEI funded services in the Sector Assistance Survey asked for assistance in collaborating and networking with other organisations transitioning to the TEI program. Types of assistance suggested by respondents included networks of practice, peer groups, and local working groups. Survey respondents commented that these could be based on locality, funding stream and program area separately. A few respondents also suggested specific ways for these activities to be run, including limiting participation to relevant people in the area rather than offering open participation to improve efficiency, as well as running networking activities through an independent provider.

TEI funded services considered this type of assistance as important for promoting collaboration, building trust within regions, supporting culture change for organisations, knowing how other organisations are approaching reform, and sharing information and preventing duplication.

The Strategy will meet the expressed needs of TEI funded services by establishing communities of practice and learning circles to help share information and practice that is relevant to their local area. Communities of practice and learning circles are groups of people who have a shared interest in a particular domain and learn how to improve their practice as they interact regularly, participate in joint activities and discussions and share information. These groups build relationships that enable participants to learn from each other and develop a shared practice that may include resources, tools, and ways of addressing certain challenges.

Communities of practice and learning circles could also be beneficial for groups of Aboriginal staff employed in both Aboriginal organisations and mainstream organisations in a local area. These groups could help build relationships between staff in districts, build their capacity and support them to assist the TEI sector to engage with local Aboriginal communities to identify needs and inform service design.

Actions:

- Define the scope of each community of practice and learning circle and set up:
 - a program of topics (defined locally)
 - on-going support structure
 - sustainability plan
- Establishment will include building the capacity of the TEI sector with a view to the sector taking carriage of continuing the Communities of Practice and/or Learning Circles into the future.

- ***Individualised support***

Individualised support will be available for TEI funded service organisations that require more intensive assistance to help them understand and prepare for change as part of TEI reform. Support and advice will be available on what changes organisations may need to make to participate effectively in the new TEI program as well as information and assistance on managing organisational and cultural change.

It is anticipated that existing TEI funded services could access individualised support for needs as identified within their Transition Plans. Priority will be given to organisations that have a higher level of need, such as smaller organisations that may not have the internal resources available to effectively manage change. The intensity of the assistance delivered will be dependent on the needs of the organisation.

Actions:

- Provide tailored support, assistance and advice to organisations and staff on how they may need to change as part of TEI reform and potential change management strategies that may be required to support their TEI Transition

3. Workforce and skills development

Rationale

TEI reform will change some of the skills required in the TEI workforce. Service providers indicated in the TEI Sector Assistance Survey that out of the different aspects of managing change as part of TEI reform, they were most uncertain about their ability to recruit and train staff to fill skill gaps that may arise. Providing support for service providers to develop the workforce to confidently and effectively operate in the new TEI program is an important component of the Strategy.

Training was the most common type of assistance requested by TEI service providers. Many survey respondents requested training on specific topics, including (in order of most responses):

- data collection and reporting
- evidence-informed practice
- TEI changes and change management
- cultural competency
- complex support – for CALD families, trauma informed practice, domestic violence
- child development and early intervention
- working with priority groups and parenting programs
- how-to-manage TEI changes on a day-to-day level.

Some of these topics will also be relevant for Stage Two of the Sector Assistance Strategy including evidence-informed practice and data collection and reporting. Workforce development training will form part of both Stage One and Stage Two of the Strategy to support the TEI workforce to develop their skills in areas important in the new TEI program. Training will complement other assistance measures such as communities of practice and learning circles.

Skills development is a core part of a broader workforce strategy for the TEI sector. Given that the specific changes to the TEI workforce in each district will only become apparent overtime as the sector transitions to the new program, this Strategy focuses on improving the skills of existing funded services to effectively participate in TEI commissioning.

Assistance measures

▪ *Workforce Development*

Resource access to training for service providers, to enhance workforce capability, in line with service provider transition plans

A range of workforce development options will be made available for TEI funded services in each District to enhance workforce capability. These options will be tailored to individual workforce development needs of organisations, as identified through District TEI Plans and priorities, and Service Provider TEI Transition Plans.

Existing District-level interagency groups of TEI service providers could also identify other training options that would be relevant to the needs of service providers in their District.

Consistent with the focus of TEI reform on building sector capacity to deliver services to Aboriginal communities, one of the key workforce development options in Districts would be strengthening organisational cultural competency and designing services to meet the needs of local Aboriginal communities and families.

A TEI Industry Fund would be established to identify and respond to workforce skills gaps, identify training needs, organisational development gaps, and workforce development opportunities to build the capacity of service providers to respond to needs identified within District plans, and individual Service Provider TEI Transition Plans.

Qualified training delivery providers will deliver workforce development in Districts. Training may be delivered through a variety of platforms such as face-to-face workshops or webinars.

Actions:

- Establish a TEI Industry Fund to respond to workforce skills gaps, organisational development gaps, and workforce development opportunities.
- The TEI Industry Fund will resource access to training, as identified through District TEI Plans and priorities, and Service Provider TEI Transition Plans.
- Training will be district-focussed, though some topics may be delivered state-wide, and available through a range of platforms.

4. Organisational development and support

Rationale

The impact of TEI reform on existing funded services will vary depending on the extent to which organisations' current service delivery aligns with the new TEI program streams and priorities. Some organisations will be required to change more than others and will require a higher-level of support.

To assist organisations develop and change to align with the new TEI program, the Stage One Strategy includes both broad information and resources on governance and change management, as well as individualised support and legal services for organisations who are seeking specific advice and assistance.

In this early stage of transition, Stage One will focus on helping TEI service providers assess how their organisation will need to change as a result of TEI reform and what resources and strategies may be helpful to them to prepare for organisational changes that may occur in Stage Two. The results of the TEI Sector Assistance Survey reiterated this need, with service providers nominating they would benefit from specific advice on how their organisation needs to change. Some service providers suggested one-on-one advice and mentoring on-site, a helpline that could answer questions specific to the provider, and direct support.

▪ **Organisational development**

Support will be available to TEI service providers on organisational development in a range of ways, including: information resources and tools; individual support; and training. Resources will focus on governance, change management and other topics identified through agencies' self-assessment of their capability.

Actions:

- Provide governance information, resources and tools to service providers to assist management and Boards, through the Individualised Support assistance measure of the Strategy
- The TEI Industry Fund will resource access to governance and organisational development training, including managing organisational change, business planning and understanding change management practices, as identified through District TEI Plans and priorities, and Service Provider TEI Transition Plans.
- Utilise online tools such as the Collaboration Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) or Finance checks for service providers to self assess their capacity and capability
- FACS district staff can also provide targeted support to service provider staff and Boards of Management on a needs basis.

- **Legal services**

Free legal services will be available to TEI funded organisations as part of the Strategy to assist them to navigate legal issues that may arise during the transition to the new TEI program, such as contract negotiation, employment law, governance and different ways of agencies working together.

Justice Connect, an organisation that coordinates referrals to pro bono legal work, offers this support as part of their Not-for-profit Law program that provides free legal help to not-for-profit organisations. This help is provided through online information resources, access to a telephone advice session with Not-for-profit Law's legal team and for more complex enquiries, referral to a pro bono law firm in Justice Connect's network of 52 member firms.

The assistance of FACS, the peaks and regional organisations is required to build the awareness and expand the reach of this service. FACS will work with Justice Connect and peak agencies to share information about Not-for-profit Law's services.

TEI-funded community organisations can access Not-for-profit Law's resources at www.nfplaw.org.au or contact Not-for-profit Law through an online enquiry or by calling 1800 NFP LAW with particular legal enquiries. Eligible organisations could then be given telephone advice or a referral to a pro bono law firm.

5. Aboriginal Sector Development

Rationale

Delivering culturally safe and relevant services to Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities is a central focus of the new TEI program. Building the capacity and capability of existing funded services, including both Aboriginal organisations and mainstream organisations, is a priority for the Strategy.

The TEI Sector Assistance Strategy will align with, and support, other Aboriginal child and family services industry development work underway across FACS, to ensure that Aboriginal children and families have access to a strong safety net of Aboriginal community controlled organisations. This broader industry development work will focus on:

- ensuring state-wide service coverage
- supporting existing capacity to reach scale and maturity to deliver quality services
- enhancing current workforce capabilities and promote employment opportunities in the sector
- targeting supports to assist organisations through periods of rapid growth or change
- measuring outcomes and share knowledge.

TEI funded services identified engaging with Aboriginal communities to inform service delivery as one of the top seven priority areas requiring support in the TEI Sector Assistance Survey. A high proportion of respondents indicated they would need 'a lot of support' for this activity, suggesting that a higher intensity of support may be required in this area. In response to this need, specific training will be made available to existing TEI funded services on cultural competency and how to engage with Aboriginal communities.

To guide best practice and the consistent application of this knowledge, a Cultural Competency Framework on working with Aboriginal families and communities will be developed, and implemented with the TEI sector. This work also aligns with other work led by FACS in this area.

Aboriginal organisations expressed the need for assistance, through the TEI Sector Assistance Survey, in:

- Understanding the requirements of TEI commissioning
- Assessing whether their organisation's services align with new TEI program guidelines and local priorities
- Analysing, interpreting and managing service data
- Designing services with evidence-informed practices.

In recognition of the importance of building the capacity of Aboriginal organisations to be able to confidently and effectively participate in TEI commissioning, Stage One of the

Strategy will fund individualised support to Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal staff across NSW.

Assistance measures

▪ ***Individualised support for Aboriginal Organisations***

Provide individualised support to Aboriginal organisations

An Aboriginal sector support partner will be funded as part of the Strategy to:

- Provide tailored support, assistance and advice to Aboriginal organisations and staff on how they may need to change as part of TEI reform and potential change management strategies that may be required to support their TEI Transition

▪ ***Cultural Competency Framework***

Develop a Cultural Competency Framework for people working with Aboriginal people and communities

A cultural competency framework will be developed to support TEI service providers working with Aboriginal people and communities. The Framework will be aligned with other work underway with the TEI reform to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people. .

Actions:

- Develop framework to build the service provider Aboriginal cultural proficiency.

▪ ***Training on engaging Aboriginal communities in service design***

Deliver information and training on engaging Aboriginal communities in service design and development

Training will be made available for TEI service providers on specifically engaging with Aboriginal families and communities to ensure Aboriginal communities are directly engaged in defining priorities and design services to meet their needs. This was identified as an area that required 'a lot of support' by TEI funded services and specific training is warranted on this topic for organisations to participate as needed.

6. Next Steps

FACS will work with its sector development partners, peak bodies, service providers, and Districts to implement the TEI Sector Assistance Strategy Phase One, by July 2018. The Strategy will link with other strategies and reforms occurring within FACS, to maximise opportunities to build capacity within the sector and support service providers to effectively transition into the new TEI program.

The Strategy will be overseen and driven by the TEI Central Council. The Central Council is the state-wide governance body for the TEI program reform. The Council oversees the implementation of the TEI program across the state and where necessary advise Districts as to its implementation. Council membership is comprised of representatives from FACS Central Office and Districts, Peak Bodies, other Government Departments (Health, Education, Justice and Treasury).

A communication strategy will accompany the implementation of the Strategy to ensure that sector awareness of and engagement in the Strategy is optimised.

Work will take place over the coming months to scope out and draft Sector Assistance Strategy Phase Two which will begin implementation from July 2018.

For more information

- Local champions in each FACS District have been identified to inspire and lead others, including frontline staff, managers and Board members
- The TEI Program Reform newsletter provides the latest information and developments in the reform process – [click here to register](#)
- A range of questions and answers are provided on the NSW Family and Community Services website – [click here to view](#)

For further enquiries please email TEIReform@facs.nsw.gov.au