TEI Data Quality Strategy – September 2022

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to improve the quality of data reported in the Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) program by providing further guidance and support for TEI funded services.

2. Background

Key data quality issues have been identified from service providers contacting the TEI mailbox, fortnightly TEI Open Office meetings with DCJ District staff, and the first TEI Annual Report 2020-21.

These issues primarily relate to incomplete and inaccurate data, such as:

- Many clients for whom demographic details are missing
- A large number of unidentified clients
- The small proportion of clients with outcomes reported.

It's important to note that even if data collected in DEX were complete, the story it tells is limited to the quantitative (numerical) data collected. Therefore DCJ is continuing to work with the sector to strengthen the way we collect and report qualitative (narrative) data so the voices and experiences of clients, communities and practitioners can be used to better understand the context and impact of TEI services.

This includes rolling out an optional Community Wellbeing Survey based on findings from the pilot in 2021 (to be published on LCSA website), and publishing reports that complement the suite of DEX data reports.

3. Why is high quality data important?

As detailed in Using Data in the TEI Program, high-quality data is consistent, complete and comparable.

When data correctly represents what is occurring in service delivery, it becomes a powerful tool for planning, decision-making, advocacy and evaluation.

Reporting high-quality data:

- enables us to gain valuable insights into service delivery models
- helps us understand what works and what needs to be improved to achieve better outcomes for clients.

Data quality issues occur when data is missing, incorrect, inconsistent, or when it is not recorded in a timely manner.

These issues severely limit the usefulness of data and can lead to poor decision-making by both service providers and funding-bodies.

4. Principles-based approach

The TEI Data Quality Strategy includes using a principles-based approach to prioritise the needs of clients and communities; to help service providers deliver services and report high quality data within allocated resources, and to help Districts to locally manage TEI contracts.

The key TEI data quality principles are:

- A **client-centred approach** must be followed when collecting and reporting TEI data. In practice this means data is collected in a way that:
    - o ensures sufficient client rapport is established by service providers
    - o ensures clients understand why we collect data and how it's used
    - o client engagement is sustained
    - o the amount of data reported is proportionate to funding so as to prioritise service delivery.
- Reporting **high quality data** is important for shared learning across the sector, flexible local service delivery, and evidence building across the TEI program.
- **Client privacy** is maintained in DEX by a client's name, DOB and street address never being visible to DCJ or DSS, and only being visible to the organisation supporting the client. Client privacy is maintained within TEI service providers through up to date policies and procedures.

5. TEI data quality issues

Addressing the following issues will be the main focus of the TEI Data Quality Strategy between September – December 2022:

1. Districts need ongoing support to build capacity and confidence using DEX, to enable them to support funded services with DEX.
2. The level of DEX experience varies across TEI service providers.
3. Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations may need tailored DEX training and support.
4. Not all TEI funded services have selected the Partnership Approach Agreement on DEX.
5. Concerns about privacy is leading to low quality statistical linkage keys (SLKs).
6. Low levels of individual demographic data is being reported.
7. Expectations about the percentage of 'individual clients' to be reported for each Program Activity needs clearer messaging.

8. More alignment is needed between TEI contracts, Program Logics and DEX reporting.
9. SCORE outcomes are not being reported as per minimum requirements, and a high number of SCORE outcomes are unpaired.
10. A naming convention for Outlets would help Districts and service providers to manage contracts.

6. What happens next?

- Fams roadshows are running from September to November 2022: https://fams.asn.au/events/fams-roadshow/
- Fams is funded to provide coaching to TEI service providers to improve data quality until June 2023.
- DCJ contract managers will receive training and data reports that will help them identify which service providers might be in most need of support to improve data quality.
- DCJ will release additional resources to the sector including another round of DEX Blasts via the TEI Inform Newsletter.