



Human Services
Community Services

PERFORMANCE MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR FUNDED SERVICES

DECEMBER 2010

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Foreword

In 2006, Community Services released the *Performance Monitoring Framework for Funded Services*, a document created to inform funded organisations about the requirements of a new approach to formal performance monitoring.

Since then, the practices described in the *Framework* have been implemented in a number of Community Services programs, and this experience has resulted in clarification of certain aspects of funded services performance monitoring policy.

This revised version of the *Framework* has been created to bring these changes to the attention of service providers and peaks. It contains additional information on Community Services performance-based approach to contracting that provides the context for formal performance monitoring. The Framework also includes examples of the tools used for performance monitoring – the service provider self assessment and the performance improvement plan.

In the main, changes to the 2006 Performance Monitoring Framework act to streamline and simplify the process. Service providers should not experience these changes as increased workload.

Community Services is confident that the new arrangements for contracting and performance monitoring are making a difference to the way that funded services are delivered and monitored. This view is echoed in the report of the Wood Special Commission in which the directions of Community Services funding reforms are supported.

PART A – THE CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING

This part describes the context in which Community Services has introduced arrangements for formal performance monitoring of funded programs

Background

In 2002, Community Services managed four funding programs with a renewable funding base of around \$190 million. Eight years later, in 2010, this has grown dramatically in scale and complexity to 13 substantial separate funding programs totalling almost \$1.04 billion p.a. (almost 62% of Community Services total budget). This growth occurred partly as a result of substantial funding enhancement from 2002-03 onwards, as well as through transfer of a number of funding programs from other NSW Government agencies.

Before these changes, Community Services program funding operated essentially as grants programs, with funding predominantly allocated in response to ad hoc, historical pressures. Only rarely did this involve explicit negotiations with funded organisations to deliver specific, detailed results. Reporting and accountability arrangements were rudimentary, being largely restricted to counting inputs, acquitting funds and specifying service delivery and accountability procedures. While these funding practices were able to ensure a minimal level of probity, they resulted in a fragmented service system, for which there was little robust and consistent evidence that improvements were being achieved for clients or that public money was being well spent.

Funding reforms

In 2004 Community Services started a significant reform process focussed on the funded service system. The three main themes of this reform, as set out in the Funding Policy (2005) are:

- Enhancing the capacity of the service system to ensure service viability and diversity
- Options for the way Community Services selects the provider best placed to deliver the services required
- A focus on performance and results as the foundation of Community Services approach to contracting

The policy signalled a major change to the way organisations would be funded and supported to deliver services. Implementing these reforms has required a fundamental shift in approach for Community Services staff and for the organisations Community Services funds. Major elements of the reforms are:

- Clarity in what Community Services funds based on evidence of what works
- Allocation of new resources based on economic modelling and detailed analysis of demand
- Standardisation of contracting, monitoring and reporting processes and template tools across Regions and funding programs
- A new, rigorous framework for monitoring the performance of funded services and negotiating ongoing improvements
- More intensive Head Office support for regional staff in the form of policy frameworks, template tools and advice
- Initiatives designed to build the capacity of non-government organisations

Performance-based contracting (PBC)

Community Services new approach to contracting for funded services is in keeping with a current global human services trend that emphasises performance above other aspects of the funding

process. For convenience, this is known as performance-based contracting. The principles of performance-based contracting as Community Services has applied it are that:

1. The objectives of funding programs are explicitly aligned with Community Services objectives as a government agency. Formal guidelines articulate the purpose and parameters of a program and ensure that Community Services (the funder), service providers, and service users, as well as the wider community are informed about what is being funded and why.
2. In turn, service providers undertake to achieve results that are consistent with program objectives. These expectations are described explicitly in documents formally agreed between Community Services and service providers - the service agreement and service specification(s).
3. In all Community Services dealings with the organisations it funds, there is an emphasis on service outputs and results (i.e. impact on clients). These are spelled out explicitly in service specifications.
4. Emphasis on results has, in turn, highlighted the importance of data systems and reporting arrangements.
5. Emphasis on performance has made it possible for Community Services to step back from the approach in which it prescribed inputs and processes as a means of controlling what service providers did and sought to achieve. Community Services no longer stipulates in detail the inputs to service delivery or process requirements – beyond what is necessary to ensure fair access, etc. Instead, the new approach gives service providers more flexibility in the way they manage their operations to achieve the agreed results for clients.
6. A new framework for monitoring the performance of funded services and negotiating ongoing improvements now supports decisions that Community Services makes about continuing to fund organisations.

Application of performance-based contracting

For the new programs established by Community Services from 2004 onwards with enhanced funding, performance-based contracting principles were applied from the commencement of each program.

Performance-based contracting principles have been introduced selectively to Community Services existing grants-based programs. This has been done as incremental adjustments designed to bring services closer to the performance-based contracting model implemented with the newer funding programs. Staged introduction allows time for funded organisations to adapt to the new expectations and processes, particularly data-recording and reporting. This process will continue where appropriate.

The service specification

Community Services relationship with the organisations it funds is regulated by a service agreement. This is the legal document that sets out the terms and conditions under which Community Services provides, and the funded organisation receives, government funds. It also specifies how important issues such as financial accountability, dispute resolution, and so on are to occur. Community Services currently negotiates one service agreement with each of the organisations it funds in each Community Services Network.

The service specification is a detailed description, under standard headings, of certain aspects of the service that the funded organisation agrees to provide. These are:

- the clients to be served
- the geographic locality
- the service activities
- the service results to be achieved
- the levels of service to be provided.

A separate service specification is negotiated for each separately-identified sum of funds in each program. A service agreement with an organisation may therefore cover a number of service specifications at any given time.

Community Services periodically reviews the service specification template used for a particular program, involving the relevant service providers and peak organisations in this process. This template provides the basis for negotiations between Community Services regional staff and local service providers about funding and the services to be provided.

The service specification is the key document for Community Services formal monitoring of the performance of funded organisations.

Amalgamating service specifications

Service providers are encouraged to approach Community Services at any time to discuss options for streamlining service specifications under each funded program, within networks or regions, in the interests of efficiency. Funded organisations should take up this issue with Community Services staff at the nearest network office.

PART B – THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PERFORMANCE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

This part describes the main features of Community Services Performance Monitoring Framework for Funded Services.

Ongoing monitoring

Community Services staff based in regions are responsible for monitoring the performance of funded organisations. Among other things, this involves year-round, ongoing interaction with the staff of funded organisations in which every document received, and each site visit and telephone contact contributes to the stock of information that Community Services holds about the organisation and about its performance. This informally acquired information is always available to CS to inform decisions about the performance of a funded organisation. There is thus no artificial distinction between information acquired through day-to-day monitoring and the formal performance monitoring activities described here.

Formal performance monitoring

This Framework describes the formal performance monitoring practices and template tools that accompany the application of performance-based contracting principles to a Community Services funded program. These practices and templates are being applied progressively to Community Services programs as they are brought under the new approach to contracting.

Purpose

The purpose of formal performance monitoring is to provide Community Services with evidence that the organisations it funds:

- comply with the service agreement, and
- achieve the intended results and service levels set out in service specification(s)

Scope

All organisations that receive funds from one of Community Services funding programs under a service agreement are expected to take part in formal performance monitoring. However, the specific requirements that apply to the different types of funded organisation – i.e. state government agencies, local councils, incorporated associations, commercial providers – may vary.

Formal performance monitoring is required for all services funded through renewable agreements and fixed term agreements of more than 12 months duration. This includes NSW government agencies and local councils. Formal performance monitoring of services provided on Community Services behalf by other NSW Government human services agencies will be negotiated when funding arrangements are agreed. Of necessity, these will differ from the formal performance monitoring arrangements that involve non-government and commercial service providers and local councils.

Where a service provider receives funds through a program that has implemented performance-based contracting, that organisation is subject to the requirements of formal performance monitoring even if the organisation's main business consists of programs that are not yet subject to performance-based contracting. Only that part of the organisations' funding that is received through the performance-based contracting program will be subject to this Framework.

The performance of funded organisations that receive one-off funding of one year duration or less, or that participate in fee-for-service arrangements will not be monitored using this Framework. The

performance of organisations receiving funds under these arrangements will be monitored under conditions laid down in the agreements they have with Community Services.

Performance monitoring activities

In summary, Community Services formal performance monitoring framework consists of the following activities:

- Self assessment by funded organisations of their performance against service specifications
- A desk-top review by Community Services staff of the self assessment and other information available to Community Services about the service provider's performance
- Where necessary, an onsite review meeting at which Community Services staff will examine evidence
- Where Community Services identifies a significant risk or performance issue, development of an agreed performance improvement plan (PIP),
- A decision about continuation of the organisation's funding

These activities are described in detail in Part C of this document.

Features of Community Services formal performance monitoring system

Community Services funded services performance monitoring system has the following features:

1. Formal performance monitoring consists of standard activities based on template tools and explicit performance expectations described in service specifications. The deliverables that are created by these activities provide Community Services with a standardised record of the performance of funded organisations, and this information is available to inform Community Services decision to continue funding an organisation.
2. The activities of formal performance monitoring can be thought of as elements in a cycle that takes place at particular points in the financial year. Community Services intends these activities to be carried out as consistently as possible throughout the State and across programs, but it is acknowledged that formal performance monitoring must take into account the special circumstances of the different Community Services programs. In practice, this means that there will not be a uniform performance monitoring process for all programs, with identical template tools and a single calendar.
3. Community Services has adopted a program-by-program approach to implementing formal performance monitoring processes and templates to its funded services. Broadly, timing is determined by the readiness of organisations funded through a program to respond favourably to performance-based contracting methods. Within programs, the circumstances of particular organisations are also taken into consideration. This staged approach means that organisations funded from the different Community Services programs will be asked to work with slightly different formal performance monitoring practices and templates for services funded through different programs. These templates and the explanatory guides that accompany them can be accessed through the Community Services website.
4. As formal performance monitoring activities are implemented in each program, Community Services will review this experience to understand how the organisations that provide services under the program have been impacted.
5. Performance monitoring activities will be streamlined wherever possible to remove unnecessary duplication of effort, process and documentation. To the extent feasible, the

effort that funded organisations will be asked to devote to formal performance monitoring will be in proportion to the volume of funds concerned.

6. Funded organisations are encouraged to consider themselves partners in formal performance monitoring and to be creative in the evidence they put forward in support of self assessments or in discussions with Community Services staff about performance.
7. Community Services has introduced a new computer system – the Community Online Management System (COMS) – to support current and future business processes for managing funded programs. The design of COMS reflects changes introduced by the funding reforms, including performance-based contracting, and this Framework. It is planned that funded services will have the opportunity to complete aspects of formal performance monitoring online.
8. Disputes that arise in the implementation of formal performance monitoring will be dealt with using the dispute-resolution process set out in the Community Services standard service agreement.

Roles and responsibilities

Head office units

Community Services head office units are responsible for setting performance monitoring policy, designing and implementing the associated procedures and templates, and supporting regional colleagues with briefings, training and advice.

Regional/network teams

Community Services regional and network staff are responsible for undertaking the detailed activities that make up the formal performance monitoring cycle. They also provide support to the staff of funded services through briefings and advice as necessary.

Funded organisations

The staff of funded organisations are responsible for data-gathering, participating in the completion of performance monitoring templates, and attendance at meetings with Community Services staff to discuss performance matters.

Calendar

The activities that make up Community Services formal performance monitoring cycle were initially intended to occur to a single, system-wide calendar. Experience of rolling these activities out across Community Services funded programs has shown that it will be some time before all programs are in a position to undertake formal performance monitoring to the same standard calendar.

While a single, standard calendar remains the long-term goal, the current position is that formal performance monitoring activities will be scheduled to occur at points in the year when it is convenient for this to happen. A number of practical considerations will shape the general timeline for formal performance monitoring activities:

- It is likely that self assessments will continue to be submitted to the same end October deadline that Community Services uses for submission of financial acquittal documents.
- All formal performance monitoring activities must be concluded in time for the results to inform Community Services decision to continue funding an organisation. This decision is usually made before the end of March.
- Because formal performance monitoring is heavily reliant on data and because annual service activity data will need to be checked before it can be used safely, there will be a delay

between the end of the financial year and the point at which data is available for self assessments. This period will vary from program to program.

For these reasons, Community Services will continue the current practice of confirming the annual calendar for formal performance monitoring activities program by program. These calendars will be communicated to service providers through Community Services regional staff and peak organisations.

For convenience, formal performance monitoring activities are associated with the financial year in which they take place, rather than the year of the service specification, and the service data. This means, for example, that an organisation's 2008-09 self assessment will be completed during the later part of 2008, based on data collected during financial year 2007-08, against performance requirements described in the service agreement and specifications in force during 2007-08.

Financial acquittal

Like other funding agencies, Community Services requires the organisations it funds to account formally for the funding they receive. This process is known as financial acquittal. The requirements of financial acquittal vary according to the type of organisation – state/local government, incorporated association, commercial service provider – and the volume of funding received. Financial acquittal is managed separately from Community Services formal performance monitoring system for funded services but is closely associated with it.

The requirements for financial reporting are set out in the Community Services standard service agreement. There are separate requirements for reporting at the level of the funded organisation and for individual service specifications.

Funded organisations are required to submit this financial acquittal information to the relevant Community Services network office before the end of October each year. For convenience, Community Services requires service providers funded from certain programs to submit formal performance monitoring reports at the same time.

Unannounced visits to service provider premises

Under Community Services service agreement, representatives of Community Services may visit sites or inspect records without notice. This action would be rare and must be authorised either by the Community Services regional director or head office. The Community Services representatives who make this visit/inspection must provide reasons for the inspection when they enter the service provider's premises.

Targeted strategy for service provider non-compliance or poor performance

As performance-based contracting and formal performance monitoring become established throughout the Community Services funded services system, information will be accumulated about patterns of compliance/non-compliance and good/poor performance. Community Services will work actively to seek better understanding of these patterns as they are revealed over time.

This information may be used to shape a program of targeted actions by Community Services to address particular performance or compliance issues across the Community Services funded service system.

Existing general audit provisions in the Community Services service agreement

The Community Services service agreement provides for audit of a service provider's compliance. If an audit is initiated, Community Services will provide the service provider with:

- written advice at least 10 working days prior to commencing an audit
- clear, written terms of reference for the audit

- clear instructions about the organisation's obligations during the audit
- a copy of the report arising from the audit
- an opportunity to respond to the audit report.

Community Services may appoint an independent person to assist in or carry out the audit.

The Community Services Good Practice Guidelines for Funded Services (2006)

The Community Services *Good Practice Guidelines for Funded Services* (the Guidelines) is a structured program of activities geared to improving important aspects of a funded organisation's internal working and operations. The *Guidelines* are closely modelled on the *NSW Human Services Quality Framework (2004)*, a cross-agency resource developed to inform the service improvement activities of NSW human services organisations. A shorthand way of thinking about the *Guidelines* is that they are intended to promote all-round organisational 'health'.

The *Guidelines* package includes the following components:

- Nine statements of good practice covering the following: governance, systems management, human resource issues, access, service design, service delivery, community development, networks, and funding partnerships and agreements
- A self assessment tool
- A workplan tool

The statements of good practice and tools are intended to be used as part of a continuous improvement cycle that involves self assessment, development of a workplan, implementation, review, and so on. These documents can be accessed through the Community Services website.

Community Services regional staff are available to assist service providers to integrate the good practice described in the Guidelines into their systems and practice. The Guidelines are, however, not part of Community Services formal performance monitoring framework. Service providers will not be monitored for their compliance with the Guidelines as part of Community Services formal performance monitoring system.

PART C – COMPONENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE MONITORING CYCLE

This part describes the activities that make up the Community Services performance monitoring cycle.

The performance monitoring cycle

Community Services formal performance monitoring framework consists of five standardised activities:

- self assessment
- desktop review
- monitoring & review meeting (if required)
- performance improvement planning (if required)
- the decision to continue funding a service

These activities will be applied flexibly to the circumstances of the different Community Services funded programs. Wherever these activities are applied, they have the same meaning. These activities replace the activities described in the 2006 Community Services Performance Monitoring Framework under Risk Assessment, Joint Review and Random Audit.

Activity one – self assessment

Each year, funded organisations will be asked to undertake a self assessment of their performance against the expectations described in their service specification(s). They will also be prompted to consider whether they have systems in place to allow them to comply with commitments they have entered into in their service agreement with Community Services.

Self assessment is carried out using the Self Assessment template - see Appendix Two for an illustration of a self assessment template. The self assessment template for a particular Community Services program may vary from those used for other programs. It may also vary from year to year for a particular program because it is modelled on the current service specification for that program.

A separate self assessment is required for each service specification a funded organisation has agreed with Community Services. A service provider that wishes to reduce the number of separate self assessments, should first approach Community Services about amalgamating similar service specifications.

Self assessment is practical recognition by Community Services that the service provider is a partner in the delivery of funded services and that responsibility for service performance is shared. It also provides an opportunity for service providers to reflect on their performance and present Community Services with evidence that they have fulfilled the requirements of the service specification. A list of prompts to assist in completing the self assessment template is attached to this *Framework* (Appendix One). This is not a definitive list and funded organisations are encouraged to present any relevant information in support of their self assessment.

Service providers will have access to Community Services regional staff for advice and assistance during the process of completing self assessment and may choose to have Community Services staff comment on a draft before the finalised self assessment is submitted formally.

Once the self assessment is formally submitted to Community Services, regional staff will check that it is complete and free of errors. A service provider may be asked to correct an error or obvious omission before the self assessment is accepted formally.

Activity two - desktop review

Each year, Community Services will review the information it holds about the organisations it funds in order to form a view about the organisation's performance and future funding. This will be a 'desktop' review in that it relies on information that Community Services holds in files or that forms part of the experience of the Community Services staff concerned.

The desktop review draws on information contained in documents such as:

- The service agreement
- Self assessments, completed by funded organisations
- Service data supplied by the funded organisation or by Community Services head office
- Financial statements supplied by the funded organisation
- Annual reports and/or minutes of Annual General Meetings
- Notes of meetings about general funding issues
- Official correspondence
- Client service complaints
- In the Out-of-Home Care Program, feedback from the Office of the Children's Guardian and relevant Community Services units

Desktop review also draws on information collected by Community Services regional staff during their ongoing interactions with the services they monitor, including:

- Evidence that the organisation complies with undertakings it has entered into by signing a service agreement with Community Services
- Evidence that the organisation has achieved or made progress with implementing agreed performance improvements that Community Services has asked it to make

Desktop review will have two possible outcomes:

One – where Community Services staff determine that the funded organisation is complying with the service agreement and meeting the performance expectations detailed in the service specification, the organisation will be informed that Community Services is satisfied that performance requirements have been met. This will be done in writing.

Two – where Community Services staff determine that an organisation appears not to be complying with the service agreement or meeting the performance expectations detailed in the service specification, the organisation will be asked to attend a formal discussion of the issues.

At Community Services discretion, a formal visit may be arranged with a selection of service providers to confirm compliance with the contract and the information provided in their self assessment.

Activity three – monitoring & review meeting

The monitoring and review meeting is the forum where Community Services formally discusses the concerns it has identified with some aspect of the funded organisation's compliance with the service agreement or performance against the service specification. It may be necessary to hold a number of meetings to resolve the issues to Community Services satisfaction.

The monitoring and review meeting is a formal process. Service providers can expect at least two weeks notice of this meeting. Funded organisations should prepare for the meeting by locating relevant papers and ensuring that there is evidence to support the claims described in their self assessment. Interviews may be arranged with board members, management, staff and service users as part of this process.

Where significant continuing performance issues are identified by Community Services, the service provider will be asked to develop proposals for improving performance. These will be described in a performance improvement plan (PIP).

The minutes from monitoring and review meetings, and other relevant papers form part of Community Services permanent record about the service provider. When Community Services staff are satisfied that the funded organisation has addressed the issues identified for discussion, the organisation will be informed in writing.

Activity four - performance improvement plans (PIPs)

The performance improvement plan (PIP) is an agreement between the service provider and Community Services about actions the service provider will take to improve performance. A PIP will be negotiated where Community Services regional staff identify a significant contractual or performance issue for the service provider to address. A funded service should not draft a PIP on its own initiative and submit it to Community Services for endorsement.

Performance improvement plans are developed using the PIP template - see Appendix Three for an illustration of a PIP. Note that the format for PIPs for a particular Community Services program may vary from those used for other programs. They may also vary from year to year. This is because the PIP template is modelled on the current service specification and self assessment template for that program.

While Community Services identifies the need for a PIP, the contents of the PIP will be negotiated between Community Services regional staff and representatives of the funded service. Negotiation will continue till Community Services is satisfied that the PIP:

- accurately describes the issues
- describes solutions that are specific, measurable and achievable. PIP actions must have timeframes.

If there is no agreement between Community Services and the service provider about PIP actions, the dispute resolution process laid down in the Community Services service agreement will be used. If this becomes necessary, executive approval must be obtained for this course of action.

It may be necessary to prioritise the actions described in a PIP, and where this is so, priority will be determined by the relative impact and urgency associated with the action. Community Services will advise the service provider about the relative urgency of PIP actions.

A copy of the agreed PIP will be attached to, and form part of, the service agreement the funded organisation has entered into with Community Services. Because it has this status, the PIP has the same signoff criteria as the service agreement. For Community Services this will usually be the relevant Director Partnership & Planning; and for the service provider, an authorised representative will countersign the PIP.

As part of their day-to-day functions, Community Services regional staff will actively monitor the progress that service providers make in implementing actions listed in a PIP.

A performance improvement plan remains current until the actions have all been achieved or it is replaced by a new PIP. Some PIP actions will extend beyond 12 months and these will be reviewed, and if found still to be necessary, included in the next PIP.

Activity five – continuation of funding

A service specification may refer to two types of funding – fixed-term (i.e. funding provided for a predetermined period), or renewable (i.e. funding that is available indefinitely).

Fixed-term funding may be available for more than one financial year but will always be associated with a definite end date. Funded organisations cannot expect to continue receiving this funding beyond the date listed in the agreement.

Renewable funding, on the other hand, is available indefinitely provided that the following conditions are met:

1. That Community Services does not have serious concerns relating to the funded organisation's performance due to consistent and material failure to meet the specified performance requirements
2. That there is no significant change in Government policy
3. That Community Services receives an appropriate annual allocation of funds from Parliament.

Good stewardship of public funds requires Community Services to be informed about, and act on, information about consistent and or substantial poor performance by a funded organisation. Community Services is also obliged to take account of the relative effectiveness and efficiency of funded service providers when allocation decisions are made.

Formal performance monitoring enables Community Services to monitor the capacity of service providers to achieve the performance commitments described in service specifications. Where a funded organisation is judged to have failed to meet performance requirements, Community Services will consider any circumstances outside the funded organisation's control which may have affected its ability to achieve the specified performance requirements, including any actions, delays or omissions by Community Services. Progress towards implementing actions agreed in a PIP will influence the decision to renew funding or to change the conditions under which funding is offered.

The basis on which funding is allocated must be consistent with current Government priorities. If the Government's priorities change, Community Services must negotiate with service providers to change or vary the purpose of funding.

APPENDIX ONE

Preparing for self assessment

These points are intended to prompt reflection by service providers when they undertake self assessment under Community Services performance monitoring framework. It is not an exhaustive list; service providers are encouraged to present any relevant information in support of their self assessment.

Note: The numbering in this appendix aligns with headings used in all new Community Services service specifications.

Financial management

Can we demonstrate that:

- we submit the appropriate organization-level financial statements as required by the service agreement. Where audited financial statements are a requirement of registration with the appropriate authority, that we comply with the audit requirements.
- we submit the required certificate for each service specification covered by our agreement with Community Services. Where we are required to supply Community Services with an income and expenditure statement for a specification, that we do so.
- we have written financial policies and procedures that we use to allow us to operate within budget
- we ensure satisfactory accountability for funds through financial recording and control systems, regular fraud risk assessment, internal reporting and reviews, and staff training
- we provide annual reports to our stakeholders which include financial reporting
- we have systems in place to manage significant assets we have bought using Community Services funding
- we have appropriate insurance cover as required by the service agreement
- we can provide evidence that demonstrates our effective financial management practices

Service data collection

Can we demonstrate that:

- data are reported to Community Services on time
- relevant staff are trained to operate data systems
- the data we submit to Community Services accurately reflects client data
- we collect and share information from and with other stakeholders appropriately
- we participate in evaluation and reviews (service reviews, client satisfaction and other feedback mechanisms) when requested to do so
- we can provide evidence of other effective data collection and management

1.8 *Client group*

Can we demonstrate that:

- we are working with the client group(s) defined in the service specification
- we document and organise relevant systems for assessments, case plans, referrals, exit, client feedback and case management

- we have reporting mechanisms in place to record where clients have met case plan goals
- our policies and procedures include measures to support equity of access which are used in assessment processes
- our case management policies and practice are consistent with good practice
- we document and implement client assessment and referral processes
- case plans are developed, reviewed and updated.
- we document and implement client feedback mechanisms to improve practice and service delivery
- we document and implement client complaint handling procedures
- we can provide additional material – list - to demonstrate that we use appropriate client management practices

1.9 Geographic coverage

Can we demonstrate that:

- services are provided to clients in the geographic area agreed in the service specification
- services are provided at convenient locations
- we have tried, within available funding, to deliver services to clients at the location(s) of their choice.
- we have post code data that confirms the geographic coverage provided by the service

1.10 Service activities

Can we demonstrate that:

- our services reflect the activities agreed in the service specification
- project work plans were developed, actioned and reviewed consistent with the service specification
- we conducted internal or external service reviews, and documented the outcomes
- we have implemented the recommendations from past service reviews
- we are able to roster staff with adequate training and qualifications required to provide appropriate services
- our service reports (caseworker reports, annual reports etc) detail the range of services and activities we provide
- we have additional documents – list them - that show that we are providing the service activities agreed in the service specification
- service data confirms that the services we provide match the service specification

1.11 Service results / levels

Can we demonstrate that:

- our service achieves results we have agreed to achieve, at the agreed levels
- data are used for service management and development
- we undertake and implement a service planning process annually
- service data confirms that we are case managing appropriately and that our clients are achieving or mostly achieving their case plan goals

APPENDIX TWO

The self assessment template

Notes

The self assessment template is used by funded organisations to report on their compliance with the service agreement and performance on the service specification(s) they have agreed with Community Services.

The template uses a standardised approach to gathering the following information from service providers:

1. The service providers' assessment of the 'level' of compliance with requirements described in the service specification (options are: full, partial or non-compliance)
2. Where compliance is less than 'full', an explanation of why this is so
3. Where less than full compliance is due to factors the funded organisation can be expected to control, a description of actions the service provider will take to avoid or prevent future non-compliance

The template is structured to align with headings used in all new Community Services service specifications. It provides for reporting on the client group, the geographic coverage of the service, the service activities, and the results the service has achieved.

This self assessment template is included in the Framework for the purpose of illustration only. The actual self assessment templates that will be made available to funded services for their use will be tailored for particular Community Services programs.

Performance Monitoring Framework Self Assessment

[Year]

Service provider name		
COMS number		
Program and sub-program		
Service specification name		
Period of the service specification (years)		
Service operating name		
Service specification start & end dates		
Community Services region and network		
Type of funding (delete as necessary)	Renewable	\$.....
	Fixed term	\$.....
	One-off	\$.....

	For Community Services		Date
	Name	Signature	
Approved by			
	For Service provider		Date
	Name	Signature	
Prepared by			
Approved by			

Notes

Community Services relationship with your organisation is regulated by the **service agreement**. This is the legal document that sets out the terms and conditions under which Community Services has funded your organisation to provide certain services. Community Services negotiates one service agreement with each of the organisations it funds in each Community Services Network.

The services your organisation has agreed to provide are described in a **service specification**. A separate service specification has been negotiated for each separately-identified sum of funding your organisation receives from Community Services. This means that at any given time, a number of service specifications may be covered by Community Services service agreement with your organisation.

Service specifications are negotiated in regions, using a template that provides for detailed information on:

- the clients to be served
- the geographical area within which the service is to be provided
- the service activities to be delivered
- the results the service will achieve (expressed as performance measures and targets)
- the levels of service to be provided

Your organisation uses the **self assessment template** to report on its compliance with both the legal obligations in the service agreement and the performance requirements detailed in the service specification it has agreed with Community Services.

Part A - COMPLIANCE WITH THE SERVICE AGREEMENT

Under the terms of the service agreement, your organisation undertakes to comply with financial management requirements and participate in service data collections for the program. You are asked to report on your compliance with these requirements.

A1 - Service data collection

1	Assess your level of compliance with service data collection requirements (sections 7 and 8 of the service agreement (tick one))	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant
2	If you ticked 'partially compliant' or 'not compliant', describe how your organisation is not fully compliant	
3	Explain the reasons for this less than full compliance. If variation from these requirements were agreed to beforehand by Community Services, record the date of this agreement (and attach a copy of the written authority)	
4	If the non-compliance was due to factors within the control of your organisation, explain how this will be avoided or prevented from happening again	

A2 - Financial management

1	Assess your level of compliance with financial management requirements (sections 22.1 of the service agreement (tick one))	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant
2	If you ticked 'partially compliant' or 'not compliant', describe how your organisation is not fully compliant	

3	Explain the reasons for this less than full compliance. If variation from this requirement was agreed to beforehand by Community Services, record the date of this agreement (and attach a copy of the written authority)	
4	If the non-compliance was due to factors within the control of your organisation, explain how this will be avoided or prevented from happening again	

Part B - COMPLIANCE WITH THE SERVICE SPECIFICATION

Note: The numbering in Part B reflects the numbering of sections of the 2009-10 Community Services service specification template.

1.8 Client group

In the 2009-10 service specification, your organisation agreed to provide services to a defined client group (or groups). You are asked to report on your compliance with this requirement.

1.8.1	Assess your level of compliance with requirements described in the service specification (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant
1.8.2	If you ticked 'partially compliant' or 'not compliant', describe how your organisation is not fully compliant	
1.8.3	Explain the reasons for this less than full compliance. If variation from the specification was agreed to beforehand by Community Services, record the date of this agreement (and attach a copy of the written authority)	
1.8.4	If the non-compliance was due to factors within the control of your organisation, explain how this will be avoided or prevented from happening again	

1.9 Geographic coverage

In the 2009-10 service specification, your organisation agreed to provide services within a defined geographical locality. You are asked to report on your compliance with this requirement.

1.9.1	Assess your level of compliance with requirements described in the service specification (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant
1.9.2	If you ticked 'partially compliant' or 'not compliant', describe how your organisation is not fully compliant	
1.9.3	Explain the reasons for this less than full compliance. If variation from the specification was agreed to beforehand by Community Services, record the date of this agreement (and attach a copy of the written authority)	
1.9.4	If the non-compliance was due to factors within the control of your organisation, explain how this will be avoided or prevented from happening again	

1.10 Service activities (and components)

In the 2009-10 service specification, your organisation agreed to provide defined service activities. You are asked to report on your compliance with this requirement.

1.10.1	Assess your level of compliance with requirements described in the service specification (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant
1.10.2	If you ticked 'partially compliant' or 'not compliant', describe how your organisation is not fully compliant	
1.10.3	Explain the reasons for this less than full compliance. If variation from the specification was agreed to beforehand by Community Services, record the date of this agreement (and attach a copy of the written authority)	
1.10.4	If the non-compliance was due to factors within the control of your organisation, explain how this will be avoided or prevented from happening again	

1.11 Service results

In the 2009-10 service specification, your organisation agreed to achieve agreed service results at agreed service levels. You are asked to report on your compliance with this requirement. The Key Performance Measures and Performance Targets are obtained from the service specification.

1.11.1	Assess your level of compliance with requirements described in the service specification (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant
1.11.2	If you ticked 'partially compliant' or 'not compliant', describe how your organisation is not fully compliant	
1.11.3	Explain the reasons for this less than full compliance. If variation from the specification was agreed to beforehand by Community Services, record the date of this agreement (and attach a copy of the written authority)	
1.11.4	If the non-compliance was due to factors within the control of your organisation, explain how this will be avoided or prevented from happening again	

Part C – GENERAL FEEDBACK

Are there any comments you wish to make that would help us to improve this monitoring process and template?

Comments:

APPENDIX THREE

THE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP) TEMPLATE

Notes

The Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) template is used for the formal performance monitoring activity of performance improvement planning.

The PIP template provides for descriptions of:

1. The issues that Community Services has identified for the service provider to address, and
2. The actions the service provider and Community Services have agreed on to address the issues.

The PIP template is structured to reflect the new, standard Community Services service specification. This includes information on: the client group, the geographic area the service is provided in, the service's activities and the results the service has achieved.

When it has been endorsed by authorised representatives of Community Services and the service provider, the PIP forms part of Community Services service agreement with the service provider.

Performance Monitoring Framework Performance Improvement Plan

[Year]

Service provider name		
COMS number		
Program and sub-program		
Service specification name		
Period of the service specification (years)		
Service operating name		
Service specification start & end dates		
Community Services region and network		
Type of funding (delete as necessary)	Renewable	\$
	Fixed Term	\$
	One-off	\$
PIP start & end dates		

	For Community Services		Date
	Name	Signature	
Approved by			
	For Service provider		Date
	Name	Signature	
Prepared by			
Approved by			

Notes:

- The numbering in this document reflects the numbering of sections of the current Community Services service specification and the self assessment template.
- Community Services will inform you if your organisation is required to develop a performance improvement plan (PIP) to address issues it has identified with the performance of your organisation. You should not develop a PIP independently.

- Community Services will work with you to develop improvement proposals in one or more of the parts of the service specification: the unused parts of this document will be deleted before the PIP is signed.

Service data collection

	Issues	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
1				
2				
3	[create additional rows]			

Financial management

	Issues	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
1				
2				
3	[create additional rows]			

1.8 Client group

	Issues	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
1				
2				
3	[create additional rows]			

1.9 Geographic coverage

	Issues	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
1				
2				
3	[create additional rows]			

1.10 Service activities (and components)

	Issues	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
1				
2				
3	[create additional rows]			

1.11 Service results

	Issues	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
1				
2				
3	[create additional rows]			