



NSW Department of
Community Services

Responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the 2008/09 SAAP Service Specification Template.

- Q. Why is the SAAP service specification template changing and who was consulted in the development of the 2008/09 SAAP service specification template?**
- A.** Feedback received on the 2007/08 SAAP service specification template indicated that the template and unit costs did not adequately reflect the work that SAAP services do. The service specification template and unit costs have been revised to better represent the unique nature of the work undertaken by SAAP service providers.
- The three SAAP Peak agencies, Homelessness NSW, Youth Accommodation Association and the Women's Refuge Movement; Regional staff and SAAP sector agencies were all consulted in the development of the 2008/09 SAAP service specification template.
- The SAAP service specification template is a dynamic document that will continue to grow and evolve in response to changes in the sector and feedback from funded agencies, SAAP Peak agencies and DoCS Regional staff.
- Q. Are SAAP funded agencies able to access training or support when implementing the 2008/09 SAAP service specification?**
- A.** The DoCS non-government organisations Training Unit is rolling out sector training in the Performance Monitoring Framework and SAAP service specification across the state. A training calendar can be found on the DoCS website at: www.community.nsw.gov.au/for_agencies_that_work_with_us/home_training/ngo_short_courses.html
- Q. When will Partnership and Planning teams start using the 2008/09 SAAP service specification template?**
- A.** Partnerships and Planning teams began using the template to negotiate unique Service Specifications with SAAP funded agencies in December 2008. The first priority for negotiation would be agencies with a service specification with an end date of 30 June 2009.
- Q. How were the Unit Costs developed?**
- A.** To develop the unit costs, data were obtained from a sample of SAAP services nominated by SAAP Peaks that included a range of service types and sizes and services from both country and metropolitan areas.

Q. I am a worker in a SAAP agency that provides access to showers and laundry facilities for rough sleepers, but not accommodation services. Which Service Activity in the 2008/09 service specification template would my agency fit into?

A. Clients that qualify for a SAAP client Alpha code and access facilities, but do not require accommodation services, would fit into the Case Management Early Intervention or Case Management Post Crisis Support Service Activities.

Q. Why are certain sections of the Performance Targets column in the Service Results Table shaded?

A. This Performance Targets column lists the thresholds for DoCS funding staff to action concerns about performance against Key Performance Measures considered crucial to client outcomes. Performance targets have only been given to high level indicators of how well a service is performing. These are generally the ones that the agency will be required to report against when they complete a self assessment as part of the Performance Monitoring cycle.

Q. Section 1.11 Service Results, in the 2008/09 SAAP service specification template lists "individual agencies" as the data source against some of the outcomes. Is there a format agencies can use to collect this data?

A. A data collection spreadsheet has been developed to help agencies collect this data. Learning and Development will be including information on this in the SAAP Management and Reporting Tool (SMART) training and service specification training that they will be providing to the sector.

Q. If it's found that the total cost for the level of service that an agency has been providing was more than the total SAAP funding should the agency reduce the level of service provision and what should the agency do about data collection?

A. The 2008/09 SAAP service specification template and unit costs are being trialed for a seven month period from December 2008 to June 2009. In April 2009, through an assessment/review process, we will be asking for feedback from the sector and Regional staff about the template and the unit costs. The unit costs were agreed with the three SAAP Peaks and the process of development included a survey across a range of SAAP service providers. One of the aims of the trial is to get advice on how they work in the real world.

The negotiation of a service specification allows both parties to clarify the outcomes and Service Levels being purchased with the funding available and the results that the service will be required to report on. There is an acknowledgment that some agencies might provide a higher level of service (eg more bed nights) than the level DoCS is contracting with them to provide. The agency will only need to report to DoCS on the contracted Service Level.

While there is no expectation that any changes should be made to the way services operate during the trial period if it is found that the level of service is less than the total SAAP funding, the DoCS Community Program Officer (CPO) may discuss what additional services could be provided.

Services are to continue to complete the NDCA data collection for each SAAP client entering their service.

- Q. What is the definition of 'Families' in reference to the Client Group? Would a couple without children be considered a family?**
- A. A family is defined as one or more carers accompanied by one or more children. Couples (same sex or heterosexual) without accompanying children are likely to be sharing a room/apartment, in any SAAP service. For heterosexual couples, men wouldn't be accepted into a women's refuge and vice versa, therefore these couples are likely to access SAAP services set up for families, and the Service Levels for that category will have been calculated at the "Family Unit Night" unit cost.
- Q. Where do Male Victims of Domestic Violence as a specific client group fit into the 'Client Group' section of the Service Specifications?**
- A. The Client Groups used in the 2008/09 SAAP service specification template reflect the primary target groups used by the SAAP National Data Collection Agency. For the purpose of negotiating a unique Service Specification male Victims of Domestic Violence would be included in "Men".
- Q. When determining the Client Group in the Service Specifications, the guide says that you can "nominate *which* client groups will receive a service", does this mean that services can include all client groups or just the ones that they were funded for in previous service specifications?**
- A. This is something that should be discussed with your CPO. However it is unlikely that a service would be nominating a different client group to the one they were previously funded for unless it was part of an agreed change to service delivery negotiated with their CPO.
- Q. Does the funding amount include GST?**
- A. The approved SAAP funding amount that is included in the unique Service Specification for your agency does not contain GST. However when DoCS makes the payments to your agency an additional amount for GST will be included in the payment.
- Q. Will any CPI increases in funding mean that the level of service delivery has to increase?**
- A. No. CPI increases are paid to reflect the increasing cost of providing the service that your agency has been contracted to provide.