



Roma place-based study — February 2018

Exploration of local child and family support services



Purpose

- This place-based study was designed to examine family support services in Roma in terms of:
 - service networks
 - access to family support services
 - service quality
 - facilitators and barriers.



Setting



- Roma is an outer regional town in South West Queensland, which is a large region made up of unique communities with diverse needs.
- Roma is the third largest town in the South West (after Dalby and Kingaroy) and is a central hub for many services in the region.
- High value is placed on the individual in the Local Level Alliance coordinator role and the ability to receive face-to-face support, which promotes a sense of trust in services.



Method

- After a desktop analysis of existing Child Safety Service data, we travelled to Roma for one week.
- Key stakeholders helped us to identify and contact the target population.
- We ran interviews and a workshop with local stakeholders from:
 - local governance groups
 - government agencies
 - non-government organisations
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisations.
- One stakeholder participated in both an interview and a workshop.



Sample



1 stakeholder participated in both an interview and the workshop



Key findings

Context: Facilitators

- Strong relationships between services facilitate access, service networks and service quality.
- There is a trusted and established secondary support system in Roma.
- Strengths-based practice, holistic support and family-led decision making is occurring.
- Informal supports, churches and connections to culture and community exist.

Improve access to family support services

- Service coverage has expanded in recent years, which is partly due to reform investment.
- Outreach models have helped reach vulnerable families.
- Service reputation and trust are critical to the referral system and client engagement.

Establish robust service networks

- The strong existing networks and governance are place-based and driven by key individuals.
- A better understanding of strategic intent would facilitate buy-in from local stakeholders.
- Communication flow between the different levels of governance needs to be improved.

Ensure high quality of services

- A local workforce familiar with the culture and context is ideal.
- Practice is more strengths-based and culturally safe.
- Difficulty with recruitment and retention limits service capacity and capability and creates instability for families.

Context: Barriers

- Service capacity is strained by providing outreach services to surrounding towns.
- There are varying degrees of remoteness and poor public transport connectivity.
- High workloads and turnover constrain networking and can limit time with clients.
- Key services (e.g. Intensive Family Support and Family Wellbeing) are operating with long waitlists, constraining vulnerable families' access to support.