



Rockhampton 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 Rockhampton in terms of:
 - service networks
 - access to family support services
 - service quality
 - facilitators and barriers.



Setting



Rockhampton
39 stakeholders

- There has been considerable investment in the Rockhampton child protection and family support system, resulting in a large number of services and multiple providers offering some of the same service types. However, service choice is seen as more limited for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- Rockhampton acts as a hub for child protection and family support services across the Central Queensland region.
- The capacity of local services to provide accessible and high-quality services to families is affected by families' location and outreach service provision.

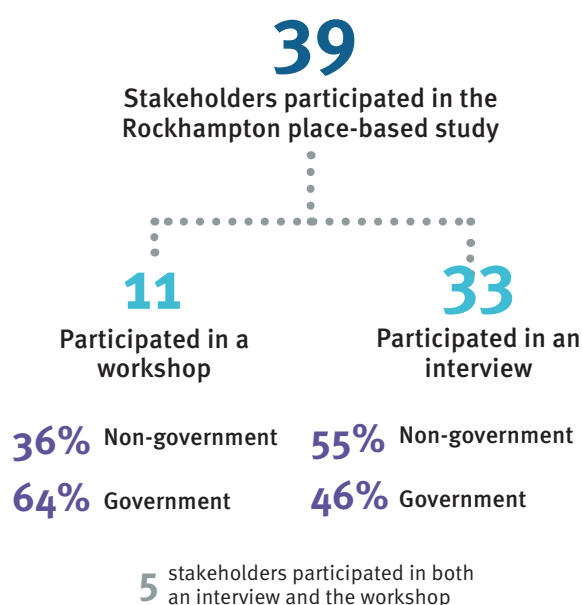


Method

- After a desktop analysis of existing Child Safety Service data, we travelled to Rockhampton 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.
- Some stakeholders participated in both an interview and a workshop.



Sample





Key findings

Context: Facilitators

- There are a large number of services and multiple providers of some types of services.
- Strong relationships between service providers enable families to move across services.
- Frontline workers use non-stigmatising and individualised approaches for working with clients.
- Some local stakeholders are increasingly focussed on building collaborative relationships.

Improve access to family support services

- The number of services available offers families a range of supports and choice in providers.
- It is difficult for families and service providers to navigate the large and changing service system.
- Relationships and trust between service providers and families are critical.

Establish robust service networks

- Strong information sharing enables multiple services to co-develop responses for families.
- Multiple networks and meetings create stakeholder fatigue.
- A better understanding of the intent and a focus on driving outcomes would encourage agencies to participate in networks.

Ensure high quality of services

- Frontline staff use tools and approaches which are strengths-based and tailored to the client.
- Workers have less time with clients if they provide support to neighbouring communities or carry high caseloads.
- It is difficult to attract and retain a regional workforce.

Context: Barriers

- Local stakeholders have limited awareness of available services or their capacity to take on new families.
- There is poor public transport to connect families in surrounding communities to the services in Rockhampton.
- Services are filling up with low-risk cases, limiting the support available for high-risk families.
- There are pockets of strained relationships between services which restrict referral pathways.
- There are limited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific services in Rockhampton.