



Settlement Council of Australia

AT A GLANCE



Target Participants

Newly arrived Humanitarian and Family stream entrants who have been living in Australia less than 5 years



Aim

To provide support, information and referral to develop independence and enable full participation in the civic life of the community



Organisations Involved

MultiLink Community Services Inc



Location

Logan QLD



Funding

Department of Home Affairs

CASE STUDY

MultiLink Community Services Inc.

MultiLink Community Services is a multi-disciplinary community organisation providing Settlement (SETS), Youth (Reconnect-NAYS), Aged Care, Disability (NDIS), Employment & Training, Community Engagement & Capacity building and Financial Wellbeing services across South-East Queensland.

With a multi-disciplinary focus, MultiLink is well experienced in applying sector standards and quality frameworks across the organisation, particularly –

- Aged Care Quality Standards,
- Human Services Quality Framework (QLD), and
- More recently the NDIS Practice Standards & Quality Indicator's.

With this experience, in 2015 when the NSOS was first launched, it wasn't a huge ask for MultiLink to focus the standards onto our settlement service program in the first instance and begin strengthening -

- What we did,
- What we intended to achieve, and
- What did our client support outcomes look like using the NSSOS Indicator's as benchmarks of settlement best practice?

Implementing the National Settlement Outcome Standards (NSOS)

Since 2015, there has been a continual embedding of the NSOS (as a framework, guide and roadmap) into the settlement service model and it has provided enormous practical value in raising the quality of the activity outputs of MultiLink's Settlement program, for example –

- Refocusing regular information sessions and activities to match the 10 standards and indicators
- Refocusing support on building capability and empowering clients in their settlement journey through skills development
- Using the NSOS as the framework for our annual community consultations
- Using the NSOS as a roadmap for annual planning and as a quality check to ensure –



- Activities link to NSOS framework
 - There is a clarity of purpose for an activity to be developed and delivered
 - Articulation of expected outcomes against the NSOS indicators, and
 - Provision of an evaluation framework against client, group and community activities
- The NSOS framework informed and was written into MultiLink’s SETS funding Tender
 - The NSOS framework was written into our SETS Activity Work Plan
 - NSOS has influenced our recruitment processes - successful applicants understand the settlement issues client face as reflected in the NSOS through their recruitment phase and supports selection criteria ensuring future staff have the ability and skills to build capability and empower refugee clients and communities towards independence
 - Inclusion of the NSOS into MultiLink’s Governance and Quality Policies and Procedures
 - The NSOS has provide the framework for the development of a new comprehensive Intake, Assessment systems and action orientated settlement support planning tools
 - The NSOS has provided the benchmark for internal evaluation of our Annual Activity Work Plan Report, and been a productive “lens” to focus on “gaps” in our service delivery, and
 - The NSOS has kept us focused on ensuring meaningful partnerships and collaborations (both external and internal) are identified and developed to support client needs and referral pathways across the 10 standards and indicators.

Challenges

Embedding the NSOS into MultiLink and our Settlement services has come with some challenges.

These have included:

- Ongoing development and support of staff to understand the NSOS and its importance in their day to day practice
- The need for ongoing mentoring and coaching of staff to understand and accept the range of improvements to systems, processes, that flow directly from embedding the NSOS into the service activity and Organisation; requiring focused change management processes and support from Management levels in the organisation
- Challenging staff and teams to “think” about what they are planning and link their intended purpose and potential outcomes to the NSOS and the direct support outcomes of clients.

Outcomes

Through this work, MultiLink’s SETS program has been able to focus on support that matters and be focused in developing best practice service systems, proactive in planning, delivery and evaluation of support services, and embedding the NSOS across all aspects of MultiLink’s SETS activity, its outputs and resources.



Key Learnings

This experience has generated four key learnings for MultiLink Community Services:

1. The framework needs to influence and be used across all areas of a service and organisation for it to become part of the organisation's vision and culture.
2. Whole of organisation acceptance and support (from Board/Management level to direct client support level staff) is vital to the successful embedding of the standards into the practice of the activity and organisation.
3. Training of staff in understanding and implementing the NSOS is a vital component of achieving successful implementation.
4. Organisations may have to be prepared to restructure service delivery models or redeploy staff who are unable to progress to new and improved standards to ensure high quality service delivery and outcomes for clients.

More information

You can contact MultiLink's SETS team through: reception@multilink.org.au

