

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Evaluation of VIM and CPSIM in WA

DRAFT Issues guide for groups with DCP case workers

Introduction

- ◆ Introduction of self and observers
- ◆ Purpose
 - Conducting part of an evaluation for the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
 - Other stakeholders in the project are the Government of Western Australia Department for Child Protection and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
 - The research is part of the first stage of evaluation of VIM and Compulsory IM (CPSIM)—focussing particularly on the impacts, so far, of VIM and Compulsory IM on child and family well-being. We are also interested to know about issues relating to program implementation and possible practice improvements.
 - This component of the evaluation—examining VIM and Compulsory IM in WA— involves the conduct of focus groups with Centrelink staff, DCP case workers, community service delivery agencies, peak bodies and community leaders to seek their feedback.
- ◆ Use of data
 - The information from the discussion today will be analysed and fed into a report on the focus group findings. ORIMA Research will write this report and give it to FaHCSIA.
 - FaHCSIA will provide you with a summary of the focus group research (using the details from your contact card).
 - The report will then be used by the AIHW and FaHCSIA as part of the broader evaluation of IM.
 - Other research components of the broader evaluation will be conducted by AIHW and FaHCSIA and will include analysis of Centrelink administrative data, DCP data, stores data and information from client interviews.
- ◆ Participant role
 - Today we would ask that you present your views as a representative of the organisation you come from.
 - As part of our report we will list the organisations / communities who took part in the focus groups. While individuals will not be identified in the report, the research is not anonymous.
 - If you have personal views about elements of Compulsory IM that are not necessarily shared by your agency we would be interested in these but you may like to identify them as such.
- ◆ Please turn off mobile phones or put on silent mode
- ◆ Purpose and nature of observations
- ◆ Purpose and usage of recording
- ◆ Housekeeping—length of session, catering and amenities.
- ◆ Group rules—different points of view encouraged, no right or wrong answers, respecting views of others.

ASK PARTICIPANTS TO COMPLETE CONTACT CARD AND CONSENT FORM

A. Overall impacts of Compulsory Income Management

What has been the overall impact, so far, of Compulsory IM?
How effective was the implementation of Compulsory IM?

1. Reasons and purpose of Compulsory IM:
 - a. What is Compulsory IM and why do you think Compulsory IM was introduced?
 - b. What was the original purpose of Compulsory IM?
 - c. How effective was the implementation of Compulsory IM?
 - d. Do you think Compulsory IM has achieved what it was designed to do?
2. Impact of Compulsory IM:
 - a. How do you think Compulsory IM has impacted on clients and their families since its introduction?
 - b. Have there been any key positive outcomes / signs of success?
 - c. Have been any key negative outcomes / signs of failure?
 - d. What difference do you think Compulsory IM has made to the wellbeing of children, or is likely to make in the future?

B. Awareness and understanding of IM

How have stakeholders and clients responded to Compulsory IM?

3. Clients' perceptions of Compulsory IM:
 - a. How do you think clients view Compulsory IM?
 - b. What do they see as the purpose of Compulsory IM?
4. Awareness and understanding of Compulsory IM among clients:
 - a. How do clients mainly find out what they need to know about Compulsory IM?
 - b. How easy or difficult have you found it to explain Compulsory IM to clients (including their responsibilities)?
 - c. Are there any supports or materials that would assist you in informing clients about Compulsory IM?
5. Awareness and understanding of Compulsory IM among staff and other stakeholders:
 - a. How well do you think the purpose of Compulsory IM was communicated to caseworkers?
 - b. When you interact with other agencies assisting Compulsory IM clients, how well informed are they about Compulsory IM?
6. Acceptance of Compulsory IM among staff:
 - a. What level of acceptance of Compulsory IM is there amongst staff?
 - b. What factors affected this level of acceptance?
 - c. Has the level of acceptance changed since the introduction of IM and what impact has this had?

C. Targeting of Compulsory IM

How and when is Compulsory IM an effective approach?

7. Targeting to client groups:
 - a. Which types of clients do you feel Compulsory IM is a useful approach for?
 - b. Which clients would not benefit from Compulsory IM in your view?

- c. What services / supports are available for these clients instead?
 - d. Is voluntary IM likely to be a useful option for these clients?
 - e. Do you think Compulsory IM is likely to work equally well for Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients?
 - f. What period of time on Compulsory IM would you recommend for different types of clients?
 - g. Why do you think take-up of Compulsory IM has not increased more rapidly?
8. Impact of Compulsory IM:
- a. What is the value/ benefit of your clients going on Compulsory IM?
 - b. Are Compulsory IM clients any more likely to access other services and supports? What / why?
 - c. To what extent do you know how your Compulsory IM clients are progressing with other supports and services? [e.g. financial services]
 - d. Do you think clients view your role differently since Compulsory IM or has it affected your relationship with clients / families?

D. Referral to Compulsory IM

9. Referral process:
- a. How does the referral process for Compulsory IM work?
 - b. What is working well in the referral process?
 - c. What is not working well in the referral process?
 - d. What are any reasons that you would not refer clients to Compulsory IM? [probe for characteristics of client, case worker approach, process problems]
10. Client behaviour and understanding:
- a. How have clients responded to hearing about or being put on Compulsory IM?
 - b. Do they see Compulsory IM as a punitive or rehabilitative measure?
11. Impact of Compulsory IM on role:
- a. Has your view/ position on Compulsory IM changed since it was introduced?
 - b. Do you see Compulsory IM as improving or detracting from your role or range of options for assisting clients?

E. Impact of Compulsory IM on child wellbeing

How and why has Compulsory IM impacted on child wellbeing?

12. Compulsory IM outcomes for child wellbeing:
- a. Have you seen any evidence that Compulsory IM can impact on child wellbeing?
 - b. How do you think that Compulsory IM could improve the provision of priority needs for the child?
13. Other programs:
- a. Has Compulsory IM had any positive impact in conjunction with other programs for children and families?
 - b. Are there any gaps in the programs available to support / reinforce the positive impact of Compulsory IM?
14. Unintended consequences:
- a. Do you think Compulsory IM has had or is likely to have any positive or negative unintended consequences for child wellbeing?
 - b. What are the risks/ benefits of these consequences?
 - c. How could these consequences be addressed or supported?

F. Impact of Compulsory IM on individual income management

How has Compulsory IM impacted on how people manage and use their payments?

15. Financial abilities:
 - a. Have you seen any evidence that clients are using Compulsory IM to manage their households better?
 - b. Have you seen any changes in budgeting / financial management or changes in usage of money for the needs of the child?
 - a. Has these changes had any impact, or are they likely to have any impact on child wellbeing?

16. Financial management services:
 - c. Do you think that financial counselling / management services are a useful support for Compulsory IM clients?
 - d. In what way can they benefit?
 - e. What motivators and barriers are there to Compulsory IM clients attending financial counselling?

17. Proportion of income managed:
 - a. How effective is Compulsory IM set at 70%?
 - b. What difference does setting Compulsory IM to this level make?
 - c. How effective is it to fully (i.e. 100%) income manage all lump sum payments? Or should lump sum payments be divided? How?
 - d. What would be your views about increasing or decreasing the Compulsory IM percentage of fortnightly payments?

G. Other impacts of Compulsory IM on family wellbeing

How and why has Compulsory IM impacted on family wellbeing?

18. Problem behaviours:
 - a. Have you seen any change in undesirable behaviours since Compulsory IM? [probe for gambling, drug use, violence, [Kimberley only] humbugging¹, pornography]
 - b. Why do you think this has occurred?
 - c. Do you think this change is likely to be sustained in the longer term?
 - d. Have these changes had any impact on child wellbeing?

19. Mobility impacts
 - a. Does Compulsory IM make it difficult for people to move if they need to?
 - b. What arrangements or recommendations can you make for clients on Compulsory IM who are moving locations?

20. Unintended consequences:
 - a. Do you think Compulsory IM has had or is likely to have any positive or negative unintended consequences for family wellbeing?
 - b. What are the risks/ benefits of these consequences?
 - c. How could these consequences be addressed or supported?

¹ Explain—abuse / inappropriate use of reciprocal relationships to obtain money or goods.

H. Medium and long term impacts of Compulsory IM

How can Compulsory IM be most effective in the longer term?

21. Medium and long term impacts of Compulsory IM:
 - a. Do you think Compulsory IM is likely to change practices in a way that is can be sustained or built on after Compulsory IM stops?
 - b. Do you think that any likely negative outcomes can be ameliorated or stopped?
 - c. What positive outcomes do you think may yet emerge in the future?
 - d. What negative outcomes do you think may yet emerge in the future?
 - e. Do you think client attitudes towards Compulsory IM will change over time?

22. Removal of Compulsory IM:
 - a. What do you think would happen to Compulsory IM clients if Compulsory IM is stopped?
 - b. What transition approach would be required?
 - c. Would it be effective to offer voluntary IM as a transition mechanism for Compulsory IM clients?
 - d. Would it have an impact on your work if you no longer had Compulsory IM as an option for clients?

I. Summary

23. Overall assessment:
 - a. What has been happening in the broader community during Compulsory IM implementation that might have impacted on its effectiveness?
 - b. How can Compulsory IM be improved for the future?

J. Thank you and wrap up

- ◆ Thank you for taking part in the research.
- ◆ The issues we discussed will feed into the report on the focus group findings.
- ◆ If you / your colleagues / other community members have further feedback you would like to be considered as part of this stage of the evaluation please contact Arlene Hendricks at ORIMA Research on 03 9251 1000.