



Tuesdays at Twelve webinar

Questions answered – 21 April 2020

- 1. Can we please publish (at least internally) stories about some of the initiatives Communities, and its partners, are undertaking e.g. Woodman Point camp for Homeless people which I read about in the local paper (Herald), and in the Regions?**

Yes, that's something we will do.

- 2. Is Nous only interviewing taskforce members only or are they also interviewing service providers?**

At this point, we're just looking at the task force members but we're happy for service providers to pick up the phone and call if they're interested and maybe it's something that we can work through.

- 3. There have been some specific proposals put to the State Government, how have these been considered?**

These proposals are being collated at the moment and being worked through. Each of the task force leads are putting those through to the collective. We will be working through them to see how we can get some of those proposals through and articulating clearly and feeding back to the sector what that authorisation pathway looks like.

- 4. What are the key messages we as leaders we can give to the communities within which we work?**

I think developing key messages is incredibly important and something that we definitely need to be doing.

I'm curious to explore, with the taskforce, about what those messages are, and look at our communication channels to ensure the experiences and voices of frontline staff and consumers are coming into the room and being part of that conversation.

There are some very experienced people with deep expertise on those work task forces so I'm sure it's there, but I am curious to establish, through this 'rapid reset' if we've got that right or if there are other things that we could do to maybe adjust it.

In terms of communication out to the broader community around community services, there's more work that we need to do in that space. I was at a meeting this morning where there was some concern that some of our service providers were not taking new referrals. So, we really need to make sure that the community understands that our

services are still operating, albeit maybe slightly differently in this environment. They're the sorts of messages that we need to make sure that we're getting out there.

5. Will the pandemic be over by the time that there is action?

A lot of action is already happening and I think we can achieve a lot quickly. But regardless of whether the pandemic is declared over or not, the road to recovery and the impact on the most vulnerable cohorts that these task forces have been formed around, will be enduring. For some people it will take a lifetime to recover and for some it will be a year, and everything in between.

There is an incredibly important role for the task force to play right now, noting the profound frustrations, but also keeping an eye to the state disaster response. As they start to land and we see what their recovery process might be, I think the task force could very intelligently and strategically advise and influence how that recovery can go and make sure vulnerable folk have a clear 'seat at that table'.

So, in terms of the pandemic over or not, I think the collective partnership around those groups is a long road ahead.

I know everyone also feels frustration at times. However, it has been a pretty short period of time, five or six weeks and even though we might feel like we're going around in circles, it has actually been foundational work that we really had to do to get to the point we are now and it has all been worth it. So, I take the point that we need to get on with some things, but I think it's all work that's just had to be done to get to this point.

6. How are you engaging with the Commonwealth/Federal agencies to reduce duplication?

From a mental health perspective, we are working very closely with WAPHA (WA Primary Health Alliance) which is our connection with our primary services. We're actually seeing where we can leverage and link up and work better together in that space and there's some good work happening there.

In terms of what else is going on nationally, I meet with my equivalents across Australia and there's a lot of things that we can leverage through that, including the National Mental Health Commission so we're trying to keep involved in all of that.

So as part of this evidence base and understanding what we have 'on the table' is doing an assessment of what's happening from the Commonwealth point of view and other jurisdictions around Australia.

I know many of the task force leads have those connections into their counterparts as well. For example, in the housing and homelessness space, there is a meeting called the 'H Song' which has been meeting every week and talking about what everyone is doing, where we are seeing successes, sharing journeys and sharing proposals.

A lot of hard work was done around the Residential Tenancy Act drawing on those groups. There's also been some analysis to understand where the dollars are flowing and what areas that they're flowing into, so that we can identify the gaps or where the money isn't hitting or where the programs aren't addressing some of the critical needs.

So that work is being done to help identify those critical areas to help us be really targeted in our responses.

From a Minister level, the Deputy Premier is meeting with all the mental health commissioners this Friday to talk about the impact of COVID-19 on mental health. So there's stuff happening at all different levels on all different aspects.

7. How do taskforces plan to communicate their work with the service providers? Are there minutes and action plans available for review?

Yes, we are planning to share this information, we just want to make sure that whatever system we establish, we can continue. We don't want to chop and change because while we need to make sure that we can get the information out to you, we also need to protect the task forces in the conversations that they're having at the same time.

It's one of the things that needs to be clarified. There will be a lot of communication through peaks and other mechanisms already going directly to service providers, that's going well and is critically important and you wouldn't want to kind of duplicate or complicate it. Then, there's information coming out of government, and then there's information coming out through other updates specific to the task force. So, I'm starting to map all the elements and check back with task force members to know if this is enough and find out what parts of the sector might feel like they're not getting that information, and if they are getting that information, is it granular enough or is it too broad?

I think the level of communication is high in some spaces and not so much in others and then not really hitting the mark in other areas. So, together we will figure out how best to address that.

Communication is always an issue in any environment. I think we've been really challenged because of the fast pace and the changing nature of the past few weeks. So, I guess it just means that we need to work harder on that because I think there definitely is room for improvement.

8. Do you have regional representatives on the Taskforce?

I'm not sure. In some yes but in others, it's not clear. I think the regional remote lens is necessary and this is something I will look at.

9. Where can we find a list of the chairs of each of the task forces?

Yes, we will provide a full list.

10. Can you please share the 'Governance' slide as soon as possible? And are there any details of the responsibilities for each of those of groups/committees?

Yes, we can certainly share that slide.

11. Will you be doing minutes of the discussions today and distributing?

There will be answers to all the questions shared and a transcript will also be put online.

12. How are the slides and responses being shared please? Who will this come from?

All the questions that come through will be answered out of session and responses will be provided on the website. Not all questions from last week have been answered yet but there is a commitment that both the remainder of last week's questions and this week's questions will be answered.

13. Please ensure consistency of messages between taskforces as there are service providers who work in multiple spaces and it can be overwhelming with all the different communications

Yes, I think there's some work that we need to do to make that more clear. Not all task forces are the same - some are quite advanced, some have strategies sitting underneath them and some have already had Federal Government money come through, so they're all a little bit different.

But I agree, the consistency of the messaging should be the same even though the task force is a different and that is certainly something we need to work harder on.

14. The concern with Taskforce communication is that it appears they are dealing with the same or similar issues and risk duplicating or failing to coordinate their efforts because there is no sharing across taskforces of the issues and if we don't know what issues are on a taskforces' radar from the outside we will continue to lobby to get them on the agenda

Yes, that's become very clear just in the way that the governance and communications have been organised and whilst people have got on with it in the various groups there is room to strengthen that strategic coordination and actually figure out the right way to make those linkages across task forces where it makes sense to do so in a more regular formalised and useful way.

I would say that would include bringing government and community sector partners across all those task forces.

That's something that can be quickly built, and we will work with you to figure out the best way to do that.

Let's make a decision together, test it, give it a go, and if it doesn't work, adjust it.

15. The concern with Taskforce communication is that it appears they are dealing with the same or similar issues and risk duplicating or what are the mechanisms to put your hand up to join teams to be part of the new structures to help where help is needed?

I'm always looking for more help. I think anyone's passion and enthusiasm can be drawn in and I think once we get those chair of the task forces details out to you, I suggest talking to those chairs and sharing what you'd like to bring to the table and how that can be best used.

There's a lot of subgroups sitting under task forces as well, so there's a lot of avenues in.

- 16. Given the collective enthusiasm for doing things differently - how are we best placed to forward initiatives again for consideration given it's different times, different policy settings and new ways of needing to do things - e.g. policy changes, not just things requiring money?**

We'll also make sure that you get email addresses so that you can feed questions or ideas into us or put your hand up to help. It is for me then to funnel through all of those initiatives and provide clear feedback to the task forces so when things aren't progressing, there's a reason why and we also need to feed that information back to you.

- 17. Emma, what actions have actually happened as a result of the Task forces work to date in terms of helping people in need?**

AND

What mechanisms are currently in place to ensure that task forces responses will be coordinated and joined up?

It's becoming very clear through these questions, that there is a need to share stories and capture learnings and document what all these efforts are resulting in. There's a lot of rich and important things that are happening along the way that would be useful, I suspect, to capture for the future and to share and communicate what's happening out there now.

So, I've jotted that down as something that we need to get really clear on and through this process quickly find a way to do that and do it well.

- 18. What processes are there to get expertise outside of the usual players involved - not just bureaucrats and peaks?**

That's a really good point and something I will definitely be working through. I don't have a clear answer on that now, but it is something we've talked about and will be able to come back on that with some thinking that we're doing.

- 19. How will we ensure that the responses are person-centred and place-based?**

I think that's in part how the task forces have already started to work. So, if I look at some of the work of individual task force, they have very deliberately taken quite a local place-based approach, particularly in some of the bigger ambitions that they're putting forward.

When it comes to broader recovery efforts that will come down the track, that localized place-based, person-centred thinking needs to really come out quite strongly from the task force. I think the sector and the partnership between community and government are really well placed to do this. It fits in with a whole lot of existing things that everyone was working towards prior to COVID-19 and since. So, I do think there's quite a sense of urgency, but also a great opportunity to really make sure that those 'lenses' and that

way of thinking is front and centre and I can see in some of the task force that's already the case and certainly going into the future.

On the mental health and alcohol and drug task force we're trying to make sure that we've got that lived experience now built into the task force and showing that's happening, and that's something that we have to continue to be mindful of and make sure that it's embedded in the processes.

20. Are task forces making any or special efforts to ensure representation of special needs groups such as culturally and linguistically diverse communities or LGBTIQI?

Yes, I know this has been a focus for task forces. I think there's a lot of representation and thinking for all different parts of those cohorts in those areas, and it comes up all the time and is at the forefront.

The cultural lens, more broadly, is something we are strengthening every single day. There is still work to do in that area but if you think we need to do more, please let us know so that we can strengthen that because it's fundamental.

From the Mental Health Commission's perspective, we know we've got a lot of specific cohorts, and it's really hard to get the task force to cover all of those. We think we've got a good, broad representation of our community. However, a task force can't be everything to everyone. So, if there's specific things that are coming up at the task force that are maybe slightly outside the scope or a bit niche, then we actually take them off and make sure that we're addressing them in a separate way. So, it's not perfect but absolutely we need to be mindful of the specific cohorts that we know are at risk.

21. Is there an opportunity for Tiffany and Emma to brief the Regional Executive Directors and Regional Directors in their own forum so we do get that place-based accountability and response?

Yes, and certainly, we have been talking a lot about service delivery in the regions so Emma I'm more than happy to have that conversation and it's vital actually to have that conversation. Emma - I'd be really curious to (in our conversations with the taskforce) to understand more deeply what relationship if any there is to the task force with regional coordination groups that might be operating or in fact, might need support to stand up and get stronger. I'm not sure, I'm still learning that kind of relationship at this early point but I'm really keen to understand it and see how that sort of better strategic coordination can kind of benefit right through the system.

22. How will you improve closing the loop when Task force's put up recommendations but have not been provided feedback.

I think closing the loop is actually getting to a final answer, so things aren't sitting in limbo and being able to feed that back very clearly but sharing the thinking behind that. So if the answer is no why is it a no, if it's we're parking it why are we parking it, so that there's a clear link so that future projects or innovations or initiatives that are put up understand the context of how we working, and we're constantly gathering that from treasury and other parts of government and it is moving. I think that's only going to help others so we're not spinning our wheels were not wasting our time we've all got other

things to be doing than bashing our heads against the walls so we will close that loop it is vital and something that I'm very keen to get back to the task force leads.

The mental health task force in terms of communicating where processes are at and what's happening so that people aren't left not knowing, we talked about that this morning at our task force. Sorry, at the risk of sounding like a consultant, I think this one to me, I think product, we need to develop that process of feedback loops in closing the loops and document it and then use it to help us keep that communication going knowing that sometimes things change, some things are out of our control. But in broad terms, this is the process that we're all signed up for and be very clear about where those communication loops and updates need to be. I actually think it's on a product list that can quickly can be developed and really shared, and we can work together to kind of keep each other accountable and everyone accountable to that to the degree we can, so that would be something we're really keen to work with everyone to develop super quickly. I'm sure it's in lots of people's heads, we've got to get it written down and shared and understood and start to use it.