### Navigator Information Sessions Q&A

## Is the Navigator service different between rural and urban areas?

Whilst the broad parameters of the program are consistent across the state, Navigator services are tailored for each area in consideration of local needs. This could include geographical variations and its impact on factors such as travel time, caseloads and how staffing are structured. There will also be demographic variations and needs that should be considered in a place-based service model.

**Regarding the outreach component of the program, what has been the experience in Central Highlands with the referrals for students in rural communities?**

In Central Highlands, the majority of referrals have been for students in a regional city (Ballarat) with the remainder in smaller regional centres, such as Ararat, Bacchus Marsh or Daylesford. Most students have been living within an hour of Ballarat.

**Can you provide insights on how other service providers are covering large geographical areas, perhaps reflecting on the experiences of Inner Gippsland, a region that covers a large area of the state?**

We are anticipating a consortium. You should consider the option of setting up new offices or basing staff around the area so that you can provide outreach services from that base. It is also possible to connect with other service providers to be able to offer outreach in that location. In some areas, providers have staff working out of different locations on different days to enable coverage across the service area. Some metro areas have also done this.

## Are service models consistent across the state?

Throughout the pilot period, there are a variety of service models that have been developed within the guidelines of the Navigator program. Each model has evolved in response to the program’s demands, and in response to the needs of local communities, schools young people and their families.

**Is there a preferred model that you have seen in the evaluations that you have done?**

There are a parameters that are set through the Navigator guidelines that have been informed by previous evaluations. Please refer to the Program Overview document that also stipulates the key service components that should be part of the model you propose. We do want the model to be place based and localised, but we are continuing to learn what elements need to be consistent. For example, there ahas been a recent focus on the Active Hold component and building consistency across the State in how this translates into practice. We are currently undertaking an evaluation which will further inform areas that require consistency and improvement and also learnings of what is working well.

## Can Service Providers’ in-house supports and other services be part of Navigator?

Wrap around supports are an important element of service delivery, and this may include those that are part of a Service Provider’s broader range of services. Navigator aims to work collaboratively and productively with all services that may be involved with a young person to support them to connect and re-engage with education. Referrals and engagement with relevant supports both in-house and partner services are encouraged.

**With the consortia in current navigator program, what kinds of arrangements are in place?**

These have mostly been sub-contracting arrangements, however they do differ structurally. In one metro area, the lead organisation is a governing body with three delivery partners across different locations in the service area. In other areas, sub-contracting arrangements are in place to deliver supports to different cohorts or engaging a lead partner and a support agency to deliver support to specific student groups, such as indigenous students. There are some agencies that have put in in-kind funding to increase the service level offered.

**Is it expected that a consortium would determine the service delivery model, the split of funds and the service delivery locations in the region?**

The consortium has autonomy over the funds and is responsible for determining how it will meet the key service components and how the service coverage for the area will be managed (within the requirements and parameters set out in the Program Overview pack)

**In Barwon, can we split the areas? Can you have two separate service delivery arms as long as it covers the areas?**

The whole area must be covered by the service provider or consortium. If you enter into a consortium, a lead agency must be nominated and governance mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that coverage over the whole geographical area.

**Could you elaborate on how the funding works in particular regarding to costing travel?**

There is flexibility to determine how the funding will be used. It would need to reflect expectations around volume of referrals, brokerage funding, geographical coverage and triaging. This should be stipulated in the application and in the contract.

**Is the funding amount set?**

Currently yes, all 14 areas will be have the same funding amount. There is no room for negotiation on the funding amount.

## Can the independent and catholic schools refer to Navigator?

Yes, anyone can refer a disengaged learner to the Navigator program, including those who are not enrolled in any schools.

**In relation to brokerage, is it permitted to pre-purchase places in RTOs and other providers using brokerage funds?**

This is possible but it is noted that this has not been a common occurrence in the existing sites due to the need to be flexible with individualised approaches for students. The need for brokerage to be used for this purpose would become apparent during service delivery and would be in response to trends in student needs. Some providers fund group programs for all clients to attend and this is offered to Navigator students as an in-kind service.

## What work is expected for the active hold or differentiated support structure?

This depends on the model and level of demand in each areas. The Navigator service delivery model requires an approach to managing an active hold – our current sites generally have dedicated staff that manage this component of the model. The provision of a differentiated support model is expected to be agile, flexible and responsive.

**How do you see the active hold model within the model – would agencies be providing the supports outside the navigator model?**

Active Hold is contained within the navigator model and is focused on providing light touch support to ensure high needs young people are not waiting for a period of time to receive support.

## When is a parental consent sought and who the does this work?

As part of compulsory educational for young learners, DET doesn’t require consent to receive a referral, however Service Providers have their own parental consent process. The Provider leads in the provision of services to the young person and their family, however schools and the Navigator Coordinator work collaboratively to support engagement with the program.

## What are the service provider obligations for those who don’t engage?

Regular liaison with the Navigator Coordinator and communication with DET more broadly is important in relation to students who do not engage with the program, or who exit the program before re-engaging with education. Service providers are required to record their assertive outreach efforts and report on relevant data. The Navigator program wants to ensure young people do not ‘fall through the cracks’ of the system so effective tracking and monitoring of these students is essential for the Provider and DET.

**What is the FTE in Western Melbourne to give an indication of resourcing requirements?**

There are currently four case managers. This can be different in each Area. Usually staffing includes a team leader, person to triage and several case managers.

**What are the targets? The challenges in rural and remote is less families but much greater distance to travel which impacts assertive outreach ?**

We haven’t set specific targets given the challenges around metro vs rural. Another reason we don’t have targets is because of the risk of disincentives in terms of who providers support. We want to ensure that all young people that are eligible have access to Navigator.

**Is gaining employment an outcome measured through the Navigator program?**

Data on engagement in employment is not collected directly through the Navigator program. This data is captured in recording alternative positive outcomes. The Navigator program is focused on return to education because it is a program designed for young people who are compulsory school age.

## How is school information and communication managed?

The Navigator central team communicates with schools via DET channels. Building local relationships with schools is an important element of the Navigator model, and will be a significant component of the initial work of the program by the Provider and the Navigator Coordinator.

## What DET conditions are applicable on employment of staff for Navigator service?

Service Providers are expected to have robust systems in place to employ suitably qualified and/or experienced personnel for delivery of Navigator services. They should comply with relevant legislations and Child Safe Standards including securing a valid Working with Children Check. Service Providers should assure availability of adequate professional supervision and professional development opportunities for those involved in delivery of Navigator services.

## Can attachments be provided with the applications?

Yes, however the template must be used.

## What is the caseload expectations?

This can slightly differ for each Area and dependent on the varying factors within each Area. Current Navigator sites have varied caseloads between 15 – 25 dependent on complexity, level of intervention and type of service delivery model.

## Is case complexity level considered in caseload expectations?

Navigator works with highly disengaged learners who often present with complex needs and issues. Within service delivery models, complexity is a factor to consider in terms of the proposed model of service delivery. Over the duration of the program we have seen the development of differentiated levels of support to support the variation of complexity in the client population, and in order to address the varying support needs of young people and their families.

**If the young person is attending but not engaged in school are they eligible for case management?**

The eligibility target is designed to capture those that haven’t benefited from school based interventions – there are other services that operate more in the school that would likely be a more appropriate for that young person. Navigator is intended to be for those children and young people who have 30% or less attendance. It is highly likely that the new areas will be oversubscribed – relaxing eligibility criteria will place further strain on case management.

## How many schools would a provider likely to be engaging?

This can differ in each Area – any school within the Area can refer a student to the Navigator program. This also includes catholic and independent schools. There may be certain schools within an Area that have a more active relationship with the Service Provider and the Navigator program due to higher numbers of students engaged with the program.

## How is the referral process managed and triaged?

The Navigator Coordinator receives all referrals to the Navigator program. Referrals can come from schools, community services and parents either by direct contact with the Navigator Coordinator or via a centrally monitored online referral page. The Coordinator assesses eligibility and gathers relevant information from DET sources and schools. Referrals are then forwarded to the Service Provider for further assessment and service provision.

## What support are available for service providers by DET?

Navigator Service Providers are supported by DET through provision of relevant data regarding student disengagement in the local Area. The Provider is expected to work closely with the Navigator Coordinator in relevant DET Area office, and the broader Area teams to effectively engage disengaged students. Providers will be supported to strengthen links with schools and other providers and programs e.g. LOOKOUT Education Support Centres. Service Providers are expected to work collaboratively with relevant Children and Youth Area Partnerships and Local Learning and Employment Networks.

## How will the application be assessed?

An expert selection panel will assess all applications against the Key Selection Criteria outlined in the application form. The selection process will be focused on identifying applicants who are best able to deliver the specified Navigator service, demonstrate innovation and provide value for money.

**In preparing for the submission, do potential providers have access to the Department’s data?**

There is some publically available data that can provide information on disengagement in particular areas. The Department is restricted in the attendance data that it can distribute.

**Will interviews be a part of the selection process or will the evaluation of applications be based on the submission only?**

Interviews may be required in the event of applications with very similar merit for the same area or where more information is required.

**Is there a range of staffing on the assessment panel or is it comprised of DET staff?**

The panel will be comprised of DET staff.

## How is program data reported to and managed by DET?

Currently program data on outcomes and progress is collected manually at the end of each quarter. DET is working on an automated system that is expected to be implemented in the future. Service Providers are expected to have their own case management data recording systems to support their collation of required client information, and the tracking of outcomes.

## Who has the responsibility of ongoing monitoring of Navigator service?

DET will monitor the Navigator service via quarterly data and financial reporting and other reporting and evaluations. The Service Provider is expected to contribute to data reporting, through regular reporting of outcomes and progress. The Navigator Coordinator also contributes to reporting and service monitoring.

## Is the Navigator Coordinator employed by DET?

Yes, a dedicated Navigator Coordinator is employed by DET for each Area. They are based in the relevant DET Area office, and are the conduit between the Navigator Service Provider and DET - they are the primary contact for Service Providers. The Coordinators have a key role in the implementation of the Navigator program and facilitating connections between Service Providers and educational institutions. They also support and manage relationships between Service Providers, schools, DET Area teams and other key services.

Navigator Coordinators receive all referrals to the program and engage in relevant data reporting processes that monitor re-engagement processes and outcomes for young people. Navigator Coordinators determines eligibility of referrals to the program and facilitate the linkage of young people to broader Area and community supports.

## Where is the Navigator Coordinator located?

In each Navigator Area, the Navigator Coordinator is based in one of the DET Area offices.

**Will there be one Navigator Coordinator for each Area (including one for the whole of Wimmera South West)?**

Yes. The funding is consistent across all areas and allows for one Coordinator per area.

## Are there connections between Navigator and other DET initiatives?

Yes - there is a strong connection with other DET initiatives focused on student disengagement, as well as the broader community service sector. Navigator has strong governance requirements that facilitate the connections between these services so that ongoing discussion and identification of relevant issues that impact on the young people that Navigator is supporting.

**What has been the role of LLENs been in the pilot areas?**

LENs are critical partners. The role of LLENs has depended on the local context. LENs are a critical part of the established networks that a lead service provider would be encouraged to tap into. There are areas where LLENs have been a lead provider and have delivered services. In other areas they have been a governing body or a partner agency. LLENs have also participated in strategic governance across some areas.

**What is the interface between School Focused Youth Service (SFYS) and Navigator? Some of the strategies used by SFYS is about building young people’s capacity – does navigator not do that?**

Navigator operates under the assumption that the young person is not attending school but it is focused on the providing supports that are tailored for the young person. The school capacity is more incidental in the process of working with the young person. Navigator’s focus is primarily on the young person and addressing their barriers to education through intensive case management and linking to other services.

**Can SFYS programs be applied to the young person in Navigator?**

SFYS does not focus on individual supports for the young person, however young people on the Navigator program can also be working with SFYS. Navigator does not exclude people from being in the Navigator Program if they are also accessing the SFYS. Currently there are not many young people in Navigator accessing SFYS because SFYS are targeted at kids that are coming to schools.