

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLANNING



In this tool, you will find:

- » An overview of community engagement principles and considerations
- » A Community Engagement Plan template that can be used by CaFIS providers and guidance on how to use the template
- » A Community Engagement Outcomes template that can be used by CaFIS providers and guidance on how to use the template

KEY GUIDANCE

Background

CaFIS providers are required to engage with the community regularly to ensure the types of services being delivered and the locations being serviced are informed by the community. Any emerging areas of need for children, young people and their families and ways these needs could be addressed can also be discussed. It is expected that CaFIS providers will work with the community to identify the desired outcomes for the CaFIS program that respond to specific issues impacting on children and families in the community/region.

CaFIS providers will need to reflect community engagement processes in your Activity Work Plan, including any changes you are proposing to make to your services over time to meet the community's needs.

It is acknowledged that some CaFIS providers will already have well-established relationships and processes for engaging with community.

This tool sets out some principles that CaFIS providers could consider in approaching community engagement. Having a set of principles might help you clarify and communicate with community representatives why you are engaging with them and how your service will use the information they provide. The provided templates could be used to document your community engagement planning and the outcomes of your community engagement.

Principles to inform community engagement

There are several resources available that describe good practice in engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) has developed a research policy for Northern Australia. [AMSANT's research policy](#) recommends the following principles, which have been adapted for CaFIS providers:

- » **Consent:** Consultation, negotiation, and free, prior and informed consent are the foundations of engaging with Aboriginal peoples.
- » **Participation:** Services should, to the maximum extent possible, include the involvement of the relevant Aboriginal communities, organisations and individuals in their design, execution, monitoring and evaluation.
- » **Authority:** Most Aboriginal communities have elected local councils, boards, and committees that represent their local community. These are the appropriate authorities and decision-makers concerning determining priorities for service delivery and its control and coordination within the context of Aboriginal communities.
- » **Knowledge transfer:** Services must include in their design and implementation, effective strategies for the transfer of knowledge and information related to the service to Aboriginal communities and services, governments and others who may use it.
- » **Cultural security:** Services must be culturally intelligible to Aboriginal people and must not compromise or endanger their legitimate cultural rights, values and expectations.
- » **Cultural safety:** The delivery of services must provide an environment that is spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need.

Intellectual and cultural property rights: Service providers must respect Aboriginal peoples' intellectual and cultural property rights in relation to knowledge, ideas, cultural expressions, and cultural materials and ensure that culturally-restricted and culturally-sensitive information is protected from inappropriate use or publication.

Ethics approval: Any research conducted with Aboriginal communities must obtain the approval of the relevant formal Ethics Committee/s.

Data management: The collection, use and storage of data related to service delivery must comply with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Data Principles, which set out a culturally respectful foundation for the collection, storage and use of personal and community information.

Using the Community Engagement Plan template

It might be helpful to plan how your CaFIS service will engage with the community to inform your service delivery model and outcomes.

This section sets out how to use the Community Engagement Plan template on the following page, including what information should be captured in each of the columns. An example has been provided in the first row of the template.

1 Identify community representatives: The Community Engagement Plan template encourages your CaFIS service to think through how you will engage with different stakeholder groups in the community. These groups could include but are not limited to:

- Key family group representation
- Key community people
- Council or Local Authority representation
- Representation of Traditional Owners
- Representation of Elders
- Representation of men and women
- Representation of youth

Use this column to identify which community representatives you are planning the engagement with.

2 Identify the appropriate engagement type: The template encourages your CaFIS service to consider what the most appropriate type of engagement is for the stakeholder group. Some different engagement options could include for example, community forums, smaller focus groups or yarning circles or individual discussions. Use this column to identify the appropriate engagement type for the community representatives you have identified.

- 3 Identify the organisations that will be represented, if any:** Use this column to document which organisations will be involved in the engagement, if relevant. For example, the community representatives involved may also be on the Board of or employees of organisations, including other service providers.
- 4 Identify the participants who will be invited to be involved:** Use this column to document the names of participants who have been invited to be involved, if relevant. Alternatively this might involve identifying groups of participants.
- 5 Identify the goals or objectives for engaging with the community representatives:** Use this column to set out the goals or objectives of engaging with the community representatives.
- 6 Identify when the community engagement will occur:** Use this column to specify when the community engagement will occur, this could be a one-off event or ongoing involvement in community meetings or events.
- 7 Identify where the community engagement will occur:** Use this column to identify the most appropriate place for the community engagement to occur, taking into account cultural safety considerations.
- 8 Identify who will undertake the community engagement:** Use this column to document who will undertake the engagement, taking into account the community representatives involved and any relevant cultural safety considerations.
- 9 Identify any resources or supports that are required:** Use this column to identify and plan any resources or supports that might be required and the associated cost.

Remember that community engagement isn't a once off exercise and should be done regularly to ensure your CaFIS service is responsive to the needs of the community. You might like to set intervals to revisit and refresh your community engagement plan (for example, every 3 months).

Using the Community Engagement Outcomes template

The Community Engagement Outcomes template is similar to the Community Engagement Plan template, but instead helps to document the outcomes of the community engagement after it has been undertaken.

This section sets out how to use the Community Engagement Outcomes template, including what information should be captured in each of the columns. An example has been provided in the first row of the template.

- 1 Document community representatives involved: In this column you should document the different stakeholder groups in the community that your CaFIS service has engaged with. These groups could include but are not limited to:
 - Key family group representation
 - Key community people
 - Council or Local Authority representation
 - Representation of Traditional Owners
 - Representation of Elders
 - Representation of men and women
 - Representation of youth
- 2 Document the engagement type: Use this column to document how you engaged with the community representative group.
- 3 Document the actual attendance: Use this column to document numbers of participants and any organisations that were represented.
- 4 Document the goals or objectives for engaging with the community representatives: Use this column to document the goals or objectives of engaging with the community representatives.
- 5 Document when the community engagement occurred: Use this column to specify when the community engagement occurred.
- 6 Document the outcomes: Use this column to capture the outcomes of the engagement in detail and how these relate to your CaFIS service. Include as much information as possible to ensure you have a detailed record of the views and perspectives that were shared.

Disclaimer

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Community representation	Engagement type	Organisational representation	Invited participants	Goals/objectives	When	Where	Who	Any resources and costs
Example: Women	Example: Yarning circle	Example: Local Women's Centre	Example: Women who access the centre, including Elders	Example: Gather views of women on what supports are needed for families and children in the community	Example: 10am-12pm, Monday 26 July	Example: Local Women's Centre	Example: Female Aboriginal CaFIS worker	Example: Morning tea Local female interpreter

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Community representation	Engagement type	Actual attendance	Goals/objectives	When	Outcomes
Example: Women	Example: Yarning circle	Example: 10 local women	Example: The goal was to gather views of local women on what supports are needed for families and children	Example: 10am-12pm, Monday 26 July	Example: Participants expressed that it is important for CaFIS to focus on families with older children (10-18 years) in addition to families with younger children as there are less supports for older children currently in the community