

# DEVELOPING A PROGRAM LOGIC



In this tool, you will find:

- » Advice to guide the development or adaptation of your CaFIS program logic
- » The key components of a program logic
- » A template for your CaFIS program logic
- » Links to helpful resources

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

CaFIS providers may wish to develop a program logic to show how the CaFIS service being delivered will lead to outcomes for children and families.

The CaFIS program has outcome areas that CaFIS providers will need to report on to the Department of Social Services (the Department) through an Activity Work Plan. CaFIS providers will also be able to engage with the community to choose additional outcome areas to focus on from an agreed list provided by the Department.

Developing a program logic will help CaFIS providers to complete their Activity Work Plan.

This tool includes a template for a program logic and guidance on how to populate the template.

### What is a program logic?

A program logic visually represents the links between the service context, program activities, outputs, short, medium and long-term outcomes and goals.

The program logic for your CaFIS service will be informed by:

- » your service agreement with DSS
- » the CaFIS operating guidelines
- » the overarching Pathways to Outcomes program logic for the CaFIS program
- » any local outcomes you have identified with the community
- » your organisation's principles and mandate
- » your experience in service delivery and knowledge of best practice
- » any implementation, research and/or evaluation support you may have for your CaFIS service.

## DEVELOPING A PROGRAM LOGIC

### Program logic components

The key components of a program logic and a description of each component are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Program logic components

Component	Description
Agency/ community context	What are the community strengths, needs and expectations in relation to the service? What are the features of the agency and the community context that may support or affect service delivery?
Principles of service delivery	These detail how the service will be provided and should reflect the principles for CaFIS and your agency mandate (e.g. child focussed, family based; community led; child safe; trauma informed).
Target group	Who are the intended clients and beneficiaries of the service?
Inputs	These are the resources that are provided for the service and can include items such as funding, staffing, cultural knowledge, policies, procedures, IT, transportation, research and evaluation, etc.
Activities	This includes what will be done within the service to produce outcomes for clients.
Outputs	These are the immediate result of the activities (e.g. number of assessments conducted, case plans developed, home-based activities, inter-agency discussions, staff trained).
Short-term outcomes	These will depend on the theory of change, and the period over which change is expected to occur. For example, outcomes such as client engagement, involvement in decision making, risks in the home being addressed, immediate needs being met (e.g. medical treatment for children) may be examples of short-term outcomes.

Component	Description
Medium-term outcomes	Medium term outcomes build upon short term outcomes and begin to reflect changes within the family and their broader context. This may reflect stronger, more positive relationships between family members, calmer times within the family, greater bonding between parents and children.
Longer-term outcomes	This reflects things that may take longer to change because they build upon other outcomes, are longer-term journeys for clients (eg mental health treatment which is ongoing) or because clients can't immediately access support and help they need (eg if they are on a waiting list).
Goals of the program	This is the ultimate why of service delivery and may include goals that CaFIS builds towards (eg child safety, family empowerment) that rely on more than just the work of the CaFIS team in the community.

**Where to go for more information on this topic**

Examples of program logics and their use in evaluation and outcomes measurement:  
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/research/Publications/developing-program-logic.pdf>

Provides a checklist to support the development of program logics for family support services:  
<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/expert-panel-project/program-planning-evaluation-guide/plan-your-program-or-service/how-develop-program-logic-planning-and-evaluation>

Resources to develop theories of change:  
[https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/rainbow\\_framework/define/develop\\_programme\\_theory](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/rainbow_framework/define/develop_programme_theory).

## Approaching the development of your program logic

You may like to start with the activities and/or the intended goals of the program. The important point is that there is a logical link between each step of the program logic. This logical link is sometimes called a “theory of change” – in other words, why will doing these activities lead to these outcomes?

It is useful to develop program logics together with staff, community members and evaluators/external expert support. This helps test some of the assumptions that underpin the program logic and makes sure the logic is well grounded in the community and service context, and reflects best practice.










It is also useful to share your program logic with other services in the community, as many will be striving to achieve the same outcomes for children and families. Sharing the “why”, “how”, and “what” of your service with other services can help them to understand what you want to achieve for clients and can enhance collaboration and joint work towards shared outcomes.

A template that CaFIS providers can use to develop a program logic is set out on the following page. This template could be helpful in setting out the links between the service context, program activities, outputs, short, medium and long-term outcomes and the goals of your CaFIS service. Once you have gathered this information, you might also find it useful to present your program logic in a visual or diagrammatic way to share this with families, children and the community.

### Disclaimer

This document has been prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (the Department) for the purpose of disseminating important information for the benefit of the public. While the Department has used its best endeavours to ensure the information included is correct as at the time of publication, the Department makes no representation or warranty about the accuracy, reliability, currency or completeness of any of the information provided. The information is provided on the understanding that the Department is not providing professional advice and individuals and organisations should obtain their own appropriate professional advice before relying on any of the information provided in this document.

## CaFIS PROGRAM LOGIC TEMPLATE

Community and agency context 	Describe the community strengths, needs and expectations and the features of the agency and the community context that may affect service delivery.
Principles of service delivery 	Describe the CaFIS principles of service delivery.
Target group 	Describe the intended recipients of CaFIS.
Inputs 	List the inputs/resources that your CaFIS service will use.
Activities 	List the activities that your CaFIS service will undertake to achieve its intended outcomes. These will include activities with clients, staff and the community.
Outputs 	List the immediate results of the activities set out above.
Short-term outcomes 	List the expected short-term outcomes of your activities and the time frame for these. There should be a clear link between the expected outcome and the activity.
Medium-term outcomes 	List the expected medium-term outcomes of your activities and the time frame for these. These should build on the short term outcomes.
Long-term outcomes 	List the expected long-term outcomes of your activities and the time frame for these. These should build on short and medium term outcomes and reflect changes that may take longer to achieve.
Goals	Reflect the goals of the CaFIS program, including goals that may rely on more than just the work of the CaFIS team in the community.