

8. RESOURCES

Funding resources for programs and sufficient personnel to carry out 'copmi' duties without work overload were key aspects raised as enablers. Sub-themes highlighted included:

- State, area level and specialist services coordinator positions;
- Recurrent funding and longevity of key personnel; and
- Funding for activities/materials.

Barriers as introduced in Figure 5 will also be documented including the child mental health funding focus; lack of funding for activities; lack of evaluation funding and short term position funding.

8.1 State, area level, specialist services coordinator positions

Many focus group participants raised the importance of funded positions for coordinators of 'copmi' work at the state, area-based levels and within specialist services. State level coordinators are particularly important and some jurisdictions have now achieved this although not always as a recurrent position. Where a statewide position has not been forthcoming, there have been appointments made in some jurisdictions for area level persons or for specialist services. For example at the district level in one jurisdiction, early intervention funding resulted in a funded position to develop a resource kit including brochures, tip sheets for supporting young 'copmi' in peer support groups, also training and promotion regarding 'copmi', also conferences. Given that there was no statewide coordinator, children began to be referred to this district from other regions. This project would not have been possible without funding availability.

However area and statewide positions to ensure overall coordination of the strategic plan and network links within regional areas is the desired funding requirement identified by many of the focus group participants. The importance of funded positions is indicated by one area level coordinator, who also highlights lack of funding and the pressure this places on existing roles available at an area level:

Getting 'copmi' on the agenda and the statewide policies and strategic plan ...if there is a strategic plan and There's someone there to be able to dedicate funding to different districts or at least having a part-time positionif it's on the agenda it has to happen. If the funding's there for it then the services can grow within each of the individual service districts and the support is there structurally ...to get the training. Whereas without someone coordinating all of that it's basically up to individuals to get out there and promote it ...there's no-one else ...

8.2 Recurrent funding and longevity of key personnel

Some jurisdictions have now achieved recurrent funding for 'copmi', particularly for a statewide coordination role and this is recognised as a key enabler both currently and for the future.

However, most states in the past decade and currently have been providing some funding for 'copmi' state, area-based or training roles and project activities but essentially on a non-recurrent basis, and this is viewed as a significant barrier:

From my point of view we have a bit of a track record...and I suspect from across the world, of funding projects for about two years and setting up a whole host of expectations. And something that should be a ten year project from a project management point of view is managed as a twelve month project.... ..getting adult services involved...but the core business issue is to do with adult mental issues but we've dropped the ball before we've done 20% of the job (jurisdictional government service leader).

This means that cross-sector committees may be established, support projects for children, resource materials development and training, often accompanied by high levels of enthusiasm and achievement. However, given their time-limited nature, as the funding finalisation nears and there are staff changes, people are not replaced. Staff uncertain of their futures, begin to seek other employment and committees lose their sense of purpose. The following statement from an area-based coordinator reflects this barrier:

After the two year funding period I collated some stats and collated a report and put it up to the Mental Health branch and said about all these great things we'd done and the fact that we'd got 38% of enquiries from outside the area and the type of young people we were getting..I was ready to go to the next level and try and get a statewide approach goingand we needed people on the ground but at that point there was no interest...That was part of my frustration...unless there was a strategic move in the area of 'copmi' I had done what I wanted to do... And there was no commitment from the state to develop strategically ...Things like getting a line in the assessment form (about whether adult mental health clients had dependent children) ..Now one of the hospitals took it on board.... and they added in do you have any children...things like that.... So policy would mean that those sorts of things are implemented in the procedures.

Several focus group representatives spoke about 'copmi' staff who have been highly influential and built strong personal links within their communities and wider networks because of their ongoing commitment to 'copmi' over time. Some non-government organisations who were previously funded for specific 'copmi' projects have used their own funding to ensure that some 'copmi' services and a degree of continuity of employment for key personnel occurred, even when government funding was not available.

Other concerns raised by area-based staff were that part-time positions were sometimes funded from central funding sources for periods of time of perhaps two or three years, with area health services making resources available after this timeframe and overstretching existing staff: *'Up to earlier this year there was a statewide mental health officer dedicated to 'copmi', linked to the national agenda and coordinating. However the region's groups, using their staff, have sometimes taken up the 'copmi' cause (after statewide resourcing ended).'*

The impact of the additional workload from existing staff were required to take on 'copmi' work when other funding ceased was recognized as a significant problem: *'one person in another service has started 'copmi' work and adding this to her other work and it's to breaking point'*.

8.3 Funding for activities

Funding for key coordination staff and those developing training programs has been discussed as one aspect of resourcing in terms of being an enabler and other costs for conducting children's 'copmi' camps or training programs was also highlighted in the consultations.

However, sometimes, when funding for these activities ceases, this becomes a significant barrier. For example, one area-based program was provided with staff to conduct 'copmi' children's camps and a database of children was established. The difficulty was that no funding was provided for the costs associated with the camp program. In another area-based children's camp program, they were reliant on local service clubs for the activity program costs. Similarly, in another jurisdiction, the cost of staffing in order to develop training materials was made available, but the resourcing for actually conducting any training programs was not subsidised.

8.4 Interconnected resources

Various organisations and jurisdictions highlighted the increasing use of interconnected resources involving various services to more effectively deliver 'copmi' programs to as many children as possible. Various combinations of interconnected services were described including dual 'copmi' and parenting positions, 'copmi' and drug and alcohol roles.

Sometimes interconnectedness occurred through arranging various services within a team and having an interagency manager bringing the group of individuals and services together for regular meetings, to share information about their work or for joint training. Interconnectedness of resources is also occurring through 'copmi' and other organisations pooling resources for joint national conferences. In one jurisdiction, early intervention funding given to district has been supported to be more effective through additional resourcing provided by a university and their post-graduate student involvement with young people enabling small group work to occur.