



## Executive Summary May 2020

### Strategic Focus Areas

The four key areas of our collaborative work are focused on;

Opportunities for collaboration

Continuous quality improvement

Strengthening our teams

Expanding our circle of influence

The SCS collective improvement project is partially funded by a grant from Helen Macpherson Smith Trust Community Program.



Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

### About Us

'Shepparton Community Share' (SCS) network is into its 5th year and is now engaged in a number of projects and local initiatives to meet the needs of the partners and our communities, and achieve the goals of the SCS Strategic Plan (see page 4).

*"The Shepparton Community Share partnership is a unique opportunity for four locally governed community agencies to focus on our joint strengths, rather than our service differences. Together we have a greater capacity to identify shared knowledge, continually improve service provision by listening to our community, and enhance individual outcomes."*

*Melinda Lawley, CEO, The Bridge Youth Services*

### Collective Improvement Project

In 2017, SCS partners commissioned an independent review of the quality compliance rules that apply to the agencies individually and collectively. The review mapped areas of overlap across the group. It also made recommendations about how cooperative effort might produce better, more reliable and efficient systems and outcomes for clients. SCS partners had already acted on several key recommendations of the review. However, the recommendations related to quality systems, internal audit and consumer feedback required a longer-term plan and dedicated funding.

In 2018, SCS made a successful application for a Helen Macpherson Smith Trust grant for a major, multi-year collective project; [\*'Making Quality Happen: enhancing services for families by building organisational capacity for continuous quality improvement'\*](#).

The project commenced in November 2018, with the aim of developing a collective, flexible, responsive, replicable and sustainable quality system, focussed on clients (rather than compliance), to support and further develop programs and services. The project is a major element of the SCS Strategic Plan 2018-21 and in its first year, has made significant progress towards our strategic focus areas and strategies.

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### Collective Improvement Project

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## Opportunities for collaboration

‘Attracting and retaining practitioners in rural areas, is an on-going challenge. Collaboration on this workforce strategy pilot has huge potential as a model for the future’

Rebecca Lorains  
CEO

A key strategy for SCS is to establish other collaborative partnerships to enhance the capacity of SCS agencies to support better outcomes for our clients and communities.

An example of this strategy is SCS involvement in a Collaborative Workforce Strategy - [Student Internship Pilot](#) for Social Work students. This pilot is being run in collaboration with La Trobe University and the Centre for Excellence in Child & Family Welfare.

The collaboration is being facilitated via our ‘Making Quality Happen’ Project.

The aim is to;

- ◆ pilot an innovative approach to boost workforce capacity through the ‘real world’ employment of 4th year Master of Social Work students in the Community Services Sector
- ◆ support future workforce security by encouraging local students to remain locally based post the completion of their studies.

SCS partners have fully funded the pilot locally and five local people have been employed and given the

opportunity to complete their 4th year Fieldwork Placements concurrent with a 2-day a week paid internship, over 11 months, in the Community Sector, in three of the SCS agencies.

Whilst initially focusing on social work students, SCS is also exploring opportunities and seeking partners to facilitate similar pathways in other disciplines (ICT/Business), to meet the needs of the SCS agencies.

SCS is committed to supporting local workforce capacity building and looks forward to mentoring the development of our local students and new graduates moving forward.

## Continuous quality improvement (CQI)

‘The project seeks to engage with the lived experience of consumers/clients, gather meaningful feedback and identify how best to use this information in service innovation & staff development’

Trish Quibell  
Project Manager

SCS partners believe that community services users have a right to expect and receive high quality services that meet their needs.

However, meeting accreditation and compliance requirements for small service organisations can be costly, inefficient and detract from service improvements.

SCS is working in a unique collaboration to develop an approach to accreditation that is driven by client experience and is person-centred, producing more focused and responsive systems, ultimately leading to better outcomes for clients and their families.

Building on cross-agency trust, goodwill and shared values established between

the four SCS agencies, the, [“Making Quality Happen”](#) project aims to create a culture and environment of CQI.

Through the project, SCS partners will work together on a range of innovations, including; CQI, workforce strategy i.e. recruitment, retention and professional development, and client engagement.

A key objective is to put in place a collaborative CQI Community of Practice with oversight of a cross-agency quality review program, which will drive quality initiatives and service enhancements, improving professional development for staff and outcomes for clients. This was established within the 1st year of the project.

Also, a team of Internal Auditors have been trained and have already planned and completed joint audits. A 3-year joint audit program is currently being developed.

In addition, a Shared Workforce Survey has been undertaken and a joint training platform identified.

The project recognises that a framework such as this needs to be interchangeable in order to be able to extend its reach within the community service sector and be applied outside of the SCS agencies.

Sharing learnings is an important aspect of the project and a toolkit for sustainability and replication of the project will be produced.

## Expanding our circle of influence

The SCS strategy is to strive to be a trusted and informed advocate for our clients and communities.

Communication is a key tool in that strategy. Individually and collectively, SCS partners are working to actively promote SCS and our initiatives to local communities and other

agencies. SCS is committed to sharing our learnings. SCS has a dedicated digital presence, which can be accessed by clicking on the image below. News items and details of SCS projects and initiatives will be posted on this site.

SCS has learned that there is power in our collective

voice around some of the social issues in our local communities.

SCS has and will continue to provide joint statements/submissions, in relation to local, state and federal reforms relevant to the sector, in order to advocate for our clients and communities.



‘We are all committed to share learnings & advocate for our community. Our now several years of experience & evidence of what works, helps each SCS agency & all those who use our services’

**David Tennant**  
CEO

## Strengthening our teams

As small, not-for-profit agencies, the SCS partners face specific workforce and system challenges in the transition to the NDIS.

These challenges have been highlighted by the Victorian Regional Readiness Fund (VRRF), and include:

- ◆ recruitment of appropriately qualified and trained staff
- ◆ managing workers and services across smaller populations and wider geographic areas
- ◆ providing staff supervision
- ◆ access to relevant and quality training and specific professional development opportunities.

In collaboration with SCS partners and facilitated via the ‘Making Quality Happen’ Project, Connect GV developed and proposed the [Workforce Connect Project](#). The project is one of 12 successful projects in Victoria to receive VRRF funding to build the capacity and capability of the NDIS workforce.

The nature of the project is an investigative pilot to determine the viability of a shared workforce in rural and regional areas and a collaborative induction and professional development strategy across a number of independent agencies. SCS members recognise the need to minimise the

inherent duplication for agencies and staff across induction and on-boarding activities and will develop a shared professional development process whereby staff across all four agencies undertake common, core e-learning modules.

The VRRF funding will enable SCS to unpack the industrial relations issues and the practicalities of four agencies working together in terms of recruitment, oversight and monitoring.

Tamara Clark has been appointed as dedicated Project Officer and will work closely with all project partners.

“The Victorian Regional Readiness Fund grant will allow ConnectGV and SCS partners to strengthen our workforce capability and capacity as the NDIS rolls out in the Shepparton area.”

**Carolynne Frost**  
CEO

## Our Strategic Plan 2018-21

Focus Area	Strategies	Action Plan	Achievements to date
<b>Opportunities for collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Establish collaborative partnerships to enhance the capacity of SCS agencies to support better outcomes for clients and communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Actively pursue opportunities for collaboration with;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ SCS partner agencies</li> <li>◇ Community sector agencies</li> <li>◇ RTOs</li> <li>◇ Universities, and</li> <li>◇ Other key partners</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Achieved - SCS Partners have a strong and sustainable network</li> <li>◇ Achieved - SCS collaborated with;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ La Trobe University</li> <li>◇ Centre for Excellence in Child &amp; Family Welfare</li> <li>◇ University of Melbourne</li> <li>◇ GO Tafe</li> <li>◇ Melbourne Business School</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Continuous quality improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Build upon existing agency approaches to learning, reflective practice and innovation.</li> <li>◇ Further develop a collective, innovative, flexible, responsive, replicable and sustainable quality system, focused on clients (rather than compliance)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Develop a proposal for long term, collective CQI project</li> <li>◇ Secure funding for a collective project</li> <li>◇ Take a holistic, integrated and collective approach (through 'Making Quality Happen' project) to;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ enhance operational structures, systems and processes to improve client outcomes</li> <li>◇ improve collection, accuracy and analysis of data to support effective decision-making</li> <li>◇ enable our consumers' voice to influence service developments</li> <li>◇ provide a framework for future service development and evaluation</li> </ul> </li> <li>◇ Utilise project learnings to ensure a sustainable and dynamic CQI system is maintained;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) within and/or,</li> <li>b) across SCS agencies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Achieved - proposal developed</li> <li>◇ Achieved - HMS Trust grant</li> <li>◇ In Progress -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ 'Making Quality Happen' Project in place (see page 2)</li> <li>◇ Internal audit team trained</li> <li>◇ Community of Practice in place</li> <li>◇ Joint/Cross Organisational Audit process trial underway</li> <li>◇ 3-year joint audit plan being developed</li> <li>◇ International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum being considered to inform options for client/consumer engagement</li> </ul> </li> <li>◇ Planned - sustainability post project is built into project plan and is a key outcome of the project</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthening our teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Capitalise on existing capability and develop staff through joint training and development programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Support joint HR Mentoring Group</li> <li>◇ Facilitate joint training and development opportunities</li> <li>◇ Liaise with local RTOs/Universities to develop targeted, quality education packages relevant to member agencies</li> <li>◇ Consider joint opportunities to offer appropriate placements for students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Achieved - on-going support in place</li> <li>◇ Achieved -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ variety of joint events taken place or are planned</li> <li>◇ Shared Workforce Survey undertaken</li> </ul> </li> <li>◇ In Progress -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Joint training platform identified</li> <li>◇ Workforce Connect Project in place (see page 3)</li> </ul> </li> <li>◇ Achieved - Internship pilot in place (funded internships) (see page 2)</li> </ul>
<b>Expanding our circle of influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Strive to be a trusted and informed advocate for our clients and communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Actively promote SCS and initiatives to local communities and other agencies</li> <li>◇ Provide joint statements/submissions, in relation to local, state and federal reforms relevant to the sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ In Progress -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ digital presence developed (page 3)</li> <li>◇ local media releases</li> <li>◇ abstract for OPEN Symposium submitted</li> </ul> </li> <li>◇ On-going - submissions made as required</li> </ul>