



Australian Government

Department of Families, Housing,  
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

# Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP) National Report 2007–08

A snapshot of the FRSP based upon information drawn from FRSP service providers' Status Reports and FRSP Online data for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

March 2009

Improving the lives of Australians



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# Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Foreword</b>   | <b>v</b>  |
| <b>A Snapshot of the Family Relationship Services Program 2007–08</b>                       | <b>1</b>  |
| Introduction  | 1         |
| The Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP)   | 1         |
| Background  | 1         |
| Report Structure  | 1         |
| Methodology   | 1         |
| Next Steps  | 2         |
| <b>Section One</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Service Delivery Context</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>1. Appropriations</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| Fig 1.1 Table: Appropriations for the Financial Year, 2007–08 – 2005–06                     | 3         |
| <b>2. Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) Industry Representative Body</b>        | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>3. Service Types and Organisations Delivering Services</b>                               | <b>4</b>  |
| Fig 3.1 Table: Number of Services Types and Organisations Delivering Services 2007–08       | 4         |
| <b>4. Breakdown of FRSP Funding by Service Type</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| Fig 4.1: 2007–08 by EIS   | 5         |
| Fig 4.2: 2007–08 by PSS   | 5         |
| <b>5. Client Profile</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| 5.1 Registered Clients  | 6         |
| 5.2 Unregistered Clients  | 6         |
| 5.3 National Client Targets Statistics for 2007–08 Financial Year                           | 6         |
| Fig 5.3.1 Table: EIS and PSS National Client Targets for 2007–08                            | 6         |
| Fig 5.3.2 Table: FRC National Client Targets for 2007–08                                    | 6         |
| 5.4 Walk-in Clients—Family Relationship Centres   | 6         |
| 5.5 National Client Analysis  | 7         |
| Fig 5.5.1: Registered Clients Seen by Age   | 7         |
| Fig 5.5.2: Registered Clients Seen by Marital Status  | 7         |
| Fig 5.5.3: Registered Clients by Weekly Earnings  | 8         |
| Fig 5.5.4: Registered Clients Who Indicated Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Status | 8         |
| Fig 5.5.5: Registered Clients Seen by Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Status       | 9         |
| Fig 5.5.6: Registered Clients that have received multiple FRSP Services                     | 9         |
| 5.6 Registered Clients with Multiple Presenting Needs                                       | 10        |
| Fig 5.6.1: Percentage of Registered Clients with Multiple Presenting Needs for 2007–08      | 10        |
| Fig 5.6.2: Percentage of Clients with Multiple Presenting Needs for 2006–07                 | 10        |
| <b>6. Presenting Needs</b>  | <b>11</b> |
| Fig 6.1 Table: Clients Presenting Needs for 2006–07 and 2007–08                             | 11        |
| <b>7. Client Feedback on Services</b>   | <b>13</b> |
| Fig 7.1: Level of Satisfaction Reported by Clients on Services Provided for 2007–08         | 13        |

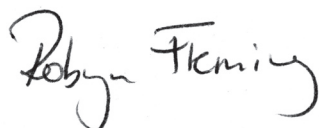
|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>8. Referral Data</b>   | <b>13</b> |
| Fig 8.1 Table: Referrals for 2007–08  | 13        |
| 8.2 Top 10 Referral Sources of Clients into a Service   | 14        |
| 8.3 Top 10 Referrals of Clients out of a Service  | 14        |
| <b>9: FRSP Online and Telephone Services</b>  | <b>15</b> |
| Fig 9.1 Table: Mensline Services for 2007–08 financial year   | 15        |
| Fig 9.2 Table: Family Relationship Advice Line (FRAL) Statistics for 2007–08                              | 15        |
| Fig 9.3 Table: Family Relationship Online (FRO) Statistics for 2007–08                                    | 15        |
| <b>Section Two Status Reports—A Summary</b>   | <b>17</b> |
| <b>PART 1: Service Delivery</b>   | <b>17</b> |
| Question 1—External Impacts   | 17        |
| Question 2—Internal Impacts   | 17        |
| Question 3—Achievements   | 18        |
| Question 4—Innovative strategies  | 18        |
| Question 5—Flexible Service Delivery Activity   | 18        |
| <b>PART 2: Challenges</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| Question 7—Client Target Numbers  | 19        |
| Question 8—Client Target Numbers for Specific Client Groups   | 19        |
| Question 9—Identification of Issues that will Impact on Service Delivery                                  | 19        |
| Question 10—Planned Priorities  | 20        |
| Question 11—Referral Process to External Agencies   | 20        |
| Question 12—Referral Process from External Agencies   | 20        |
| Question 13—Complaints 21   |           |
| Fig 13.1 Table: Number of Complaints by Service Type for 2007–08  | 21        |
| <b>PART 3: Funding</b>  | <b>22</b> |
| Question 14—Income from FRSP Funding  | 22        |
| Question 15—Other Funding received by Organisations   | 22        |
| Question 16—Income from Fees  | 22        |
| <b>PART 4: Staffing</b>   | <b>22</b> |
| Question 17—Average Percentage of Organisational Staff Delivering FRSP Services                           | 22        |
| Question 18—Number of Staff   | 22        |
| Question 19—Estimated Number of Indigenous Staff  | 22        |
| Question 20—Estimated Number of Multilingual Staff  | 22        |
| Question 21—Estimated Number of staff that have been sent on a training course<br>or conference this year | 22        |
| Question 22—Staff Vacancy Time  | 23        |
| Question 23—Positions Vacant  | 23        |
| Question 24—Volunteer Numbers   | 23        |
| <b>PART 5: Evaluation and Review</b>  | <b>23</b> |
| Question 27—Evaluation and Review   | 23        |
| Question 28—Reported Key Priorities for the Coming Year   | 23        |
| Question 29—Issues Raised by Stakeholders   | 23        |
| Question 30—Issues about FRSP   | 24        |
| Quality Compliance Checklist  | 24        |
| <b>PART 6: Family Relationships Services Program (FRSP) Achievements</b>                                  | <b>24</b> |
| FRSP Online Reporting Portal  | 24        |
| FRSP Privacy Impact Report on FRSP Online   | 24        |
| Joint Government-Sector Working Groups  | 25        |

## Foreword

The 2007–08 financial year was a significant year for the Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP). During this year the third and final year of the major selection rounds for the new services under the New Family Law Initiative was finalised. The sector established a single representative body, Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA), and a new model of partnership through joint agency/sector Working Groups to address issues of significance for the sector, covering matters relating to performance management and data quality, sector workforce and contracts and funding.

Family structures and presenting needs continually change and the sector and agencies continued to work closely together to ensure that we are working in concert to offer the most effective service interventions to support families. During this year new self help tools were developed with the sector: Taking the First Step, Then We Were Three and Instant Families for distribution to families, and the DVD Remember Me: children's voices after separation was produced for services dealing with separated families. Similarly, the web site service Family Relationships Online (FRO) and telephone service Family Relationship Advice Line (FRAL) continued to cement their place in the family relationship service system.

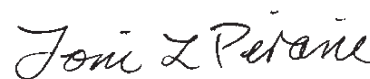
The partnerships approach established in 2007–08 has continued to strengthen across the 2008–09 year and we look forward to providing the next year's report, which will for the first time be able to provide cross year trend data for the services.



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# A Snapshot of the Family Relationship Services Program

## 2007–08

### Introduction

Welcome to the fifth National Report on the Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP).

The 2007–08 National Report provides a user friendly snapshot of key trends and developments across the FRSP as reported by funded organisations through the 2007–08 Status Reports and FRSP Online data.

The Status Report is used by both the Government and the sector to discuss changes in the service delivery environment.

### The Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP)

The aim of the Family Relationship Services Program (FRSP) is to improve the wellbeing of families and children by supporting positive family relationships through the full range of Early Intervention Services (EIS), Post Separation Services (PSS) and Family Relationship Centres (FRC).

The FRSP is jointly funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) and administered through FaHCSIA's State and Territory network.

### Background

The National Report draws together providers' perspectives on the past financial year together with data collected through FRSP Online. The report also includes information for the online and telephone services. This provides a more detailed picture on how families are using the full suite of FRSP services.

### Report Structure

The 2007–08 National Report is divided into two sections. Section One provides a brief overview of how FRSP services are meeting the needs of the family in the community.

Section Two provides a summary of the quantitative and qualitative data that has been drawn from the 160 Status Reports that were submitted by funded organisations, and outlines views on the FRSP from a service provider perspective.

### Methodology

Data presented in Section One has been drawn from FaHCSIA's reporting application system FRSP Online.

Data presented in Section Two was developed by quantifying standard yes/no responses in the Status Report template and converting these responses to a percentage of the total number of responses.

In respect of qualitative responses, these were reviewed to identify where specific responses were numerous enough to constitute a national trend. It is important to note that no attempt has been made to present qualitative data in any order of priority. The broad intention is to flag issues and themes that are identified by FRSP providers and to use this information as the basis for ongoing discussion.

Where specific questions within the Status Report template have not been addressed in this report, the primary reasons for omission are that responses were too broadly based to indicate a national trend and/or information was not suitable for aggregation.

## Next Steps

The report will be distributed to all funded organisations and will be made available on the FRSP webpage. The report will form the basis of ongoing discussions with FaHCSIA, the sector and Family Relationship Services Australia.

# Section One

## Service Delivery Context

### 1. Appropriations

**Fig 1.1 Table: Appropriations for the Financial Year, 2007–08 – 2005–06**

| Financial Years                                   | FaHCSIA | AGD       | Total     |
|---|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 2007–08   | 64.2m   | \$101.00m | \$165.20m |
| 2006–07   | 52.2m   | \$61.36m  | \$113.56m |
| 2005–06   | 39.5m   | \$39.21m  | \$78.71m  |
| <b>Total for 2007–08 \$165.2m (GST exclusive)</b> |         |           |           |

- ▶ Over the last three financial years (FaHCSIA) funding has increased by: 62.5%
- ▶ Over the last three financial years (AGD) funding has increased by: 157%

### 2. Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) Industry Representative Body

FRSA was established on 1 July 2007, as the representative body for the Family Relationship Services sector and provides a whole-of-sector point of view on issues impacting on families and service providers.

Three Working Groups were established during 2007–08:

- ▶ The Service Agreements and Funding Working Group
- ▶ The Quality Performance Measurement Working Group
- ▶ The Workforce Development Working Group

These Working Groups were established to improve understanding and communication between FRSP and the sector around issues of concern in workforce development, contracts and funding and quality and performance measurements.

### 3. Service Types and Organisations Delivering Services

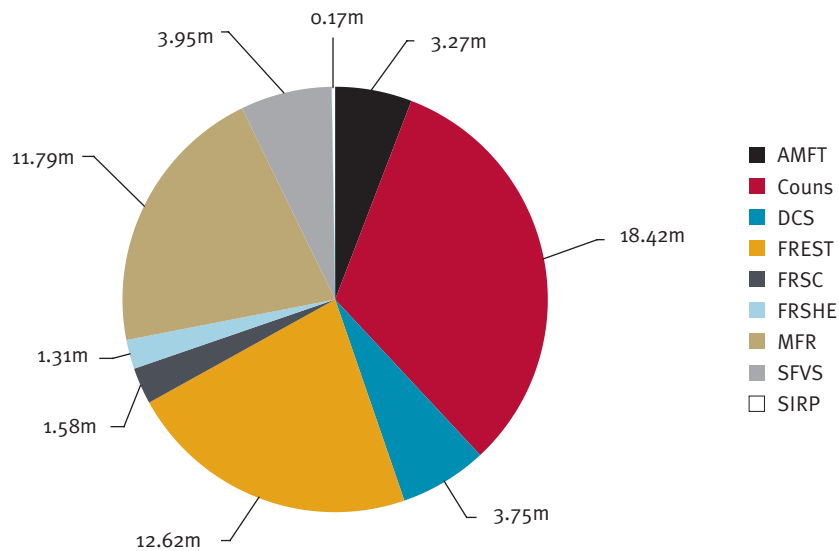
**Fig 3.1 Table: Number of Service Types and Organisations Delivering Services 2007–08**

| Service Type   | Number of Services Offered in 2007–08 | Number of Organisations Offering these Services in 2007–08 |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Adolescent Mediation and Family Therapy (AMFT)                           | 12                                    | 12   |
| Children's Contact Services (CCS)  | 49                                    | 29   |
| Family Counselling (Couns)   | 99                                    | 51   |
| Drought Counselling (DC) / Family Support Drought Response Teams (FSDRT) | 46                                    | 26   |
| Family Relationship Education and Skills Training (FREST)                | 133                                   | 63   |
| Family Dispute Resolution (FDR)  | 24                                    | 18   |
| Family Mental Health Support Service (FMHSS)                             | 7                                     | 7  |
| Family Relationship Centres (FRC)  | 40                                    | 27   |
| Family Relationship Services for Carers (FRSC)                           | 8                                     | 8  |
| Sugar Industry Reform Package (SIRP)                                     | 8                                     | 5  |
| Family Relationship Services for Humanitarian Entrants (FRSHE)           | 6                                     | 6  |
| Men and Family Relationships (MFR)                                       | 101                                   | 59   |
| Parenting Orders Program (POP)   | 20                                    | 13   |
| Regional Family Dispute Resolution (RFDR)                                | 43                                    | 27   |
| Specialised Family Violence Service (SFVS)                               | 42                                    | 24   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>638</b>                            | <b>N/A</b>   |

**Figure 3.1:** numbers of 'Organisations offering these services' was not totalled. As some organisations deliver multiple services types, to do so would give an over estimation of the number of organisations delivering these services.

## 4. Breakdown of FRSP Funding by Service Type

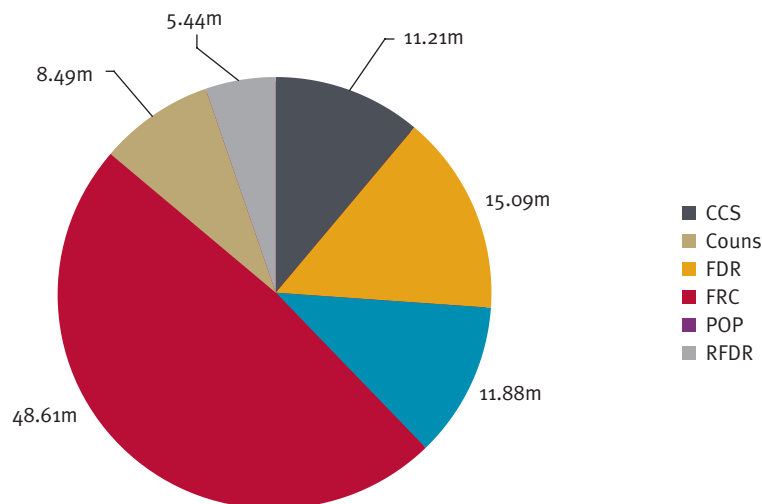
**Fig 4.1: 2007–08 by EIS**



**Figure 4.1:** the chart reflects funding for these services at a point in time during the development of the National Report and may not reflect total appropriation outlined in Table 1.1.

Source: FRSP Online.

**Fig 4.2: 2007–08 by PSS**



**Figure 4.2:** the chart reflects funding for these services at a point in time during the development the National Report and may not reflect total appropriation outlined in Table 1.1.

Source: FRSP Online.

## 5. Client Profile

This provides an overview of clients that have used EIS and PSS face to face services during the 2007–08 financial year.

### 5.1 Registered Clients

#### Definition

A Registered Client is any person who receives a service from an FRSP organisation and whose demographic details have been recorded.

Number of Registered Clients for the 2007–08 financial year as **up to** 30 June 2008: **193,327**

### 5.2 Unregistered Clients

#### Definition

An Unregistered Client is any person who receives a service from an organisation and whose demographic details have not been recorded.

Number of Unregistered Clients for the 2007–08 financial year **up to** 30 June 2008: **44,374**

### 5.3 National Client Targets Statistics for 2007–08 Financial Year

Services are set client targets (with the exception of FRC’s) in the funding agreement. The total of EIS and PSS client targets set were exceeded for 2007–08.

**Fig 5.3.1 Table: EIS and PSS National Client Targets for 2007–08**

| Target | Clients Seen | Variance | Percentage |
|--------|--------------|----------|------------|
| 159133 | 199018       | +39885   | 25.06%     |

\* Fees are able to be collected by providers for some service types on the proviso they are reinvested in the program. Fees may be used to provide services to additional clients. This may contribute to the number of clients seen exceeding the client target numbers specified in funding agreements.

**Fig 5.3.2 Table: FRC National Client Targets for 2007–08**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| <b>Number of Clients seen by FRC’s</b> | 31,689 |
|--|--------|

The above table reflects the 40 FRC’s operating in the 2007–08 period. FRC’s do not have set client target numbers.

Source: FRSP Online.

### 5.4 Walk-in Clients – Family Relationship Centres

Number of FRC walk-in clients for 2007–08: **18,922**

Family Relationship Centres have been providing statistics on the estimated number of walk-in clients over the 2007–08 year on a monthly basis. FRC’s are located in prominent central areas and part of their role is to provide information and referrals to clients.

## 5.5 National Client Analysis

Fig 5.5.1: Registered Clients Seen by Age

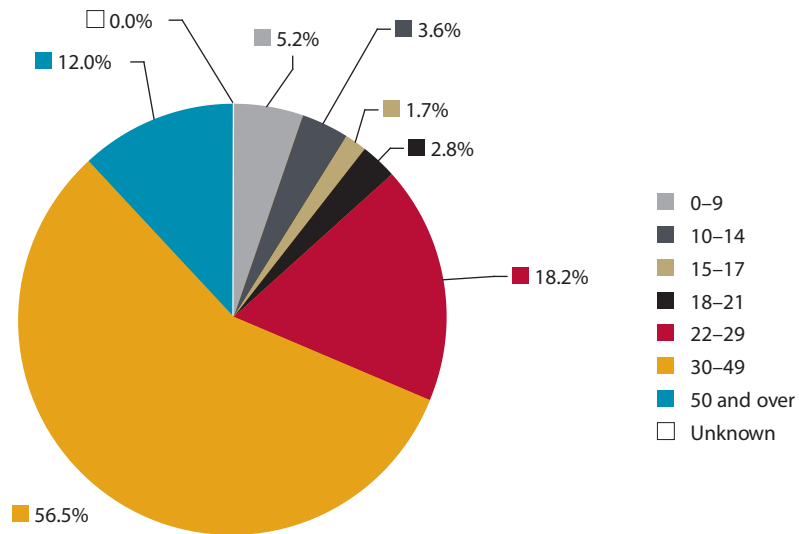


Figure 5.5.1: provides a breakdown of the total number of Registered Clients (193,327) seen by Age Range.

Source: FRSP Online.

Fig 5.5.2: Registered Clients Seen by Marital Status

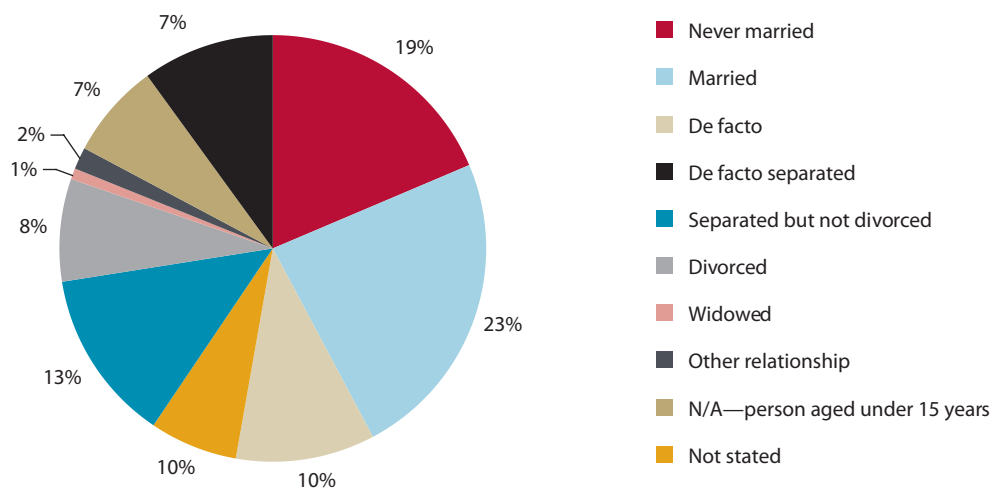
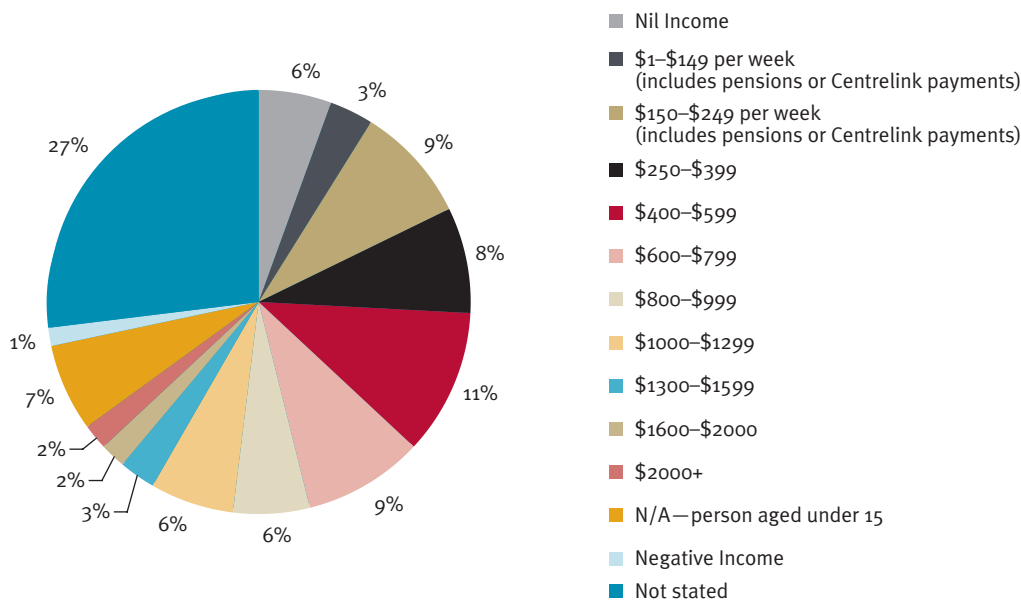


Fig 5.5.2: provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients (193,327) seen by Marital Status.

Source: FRSP Online.

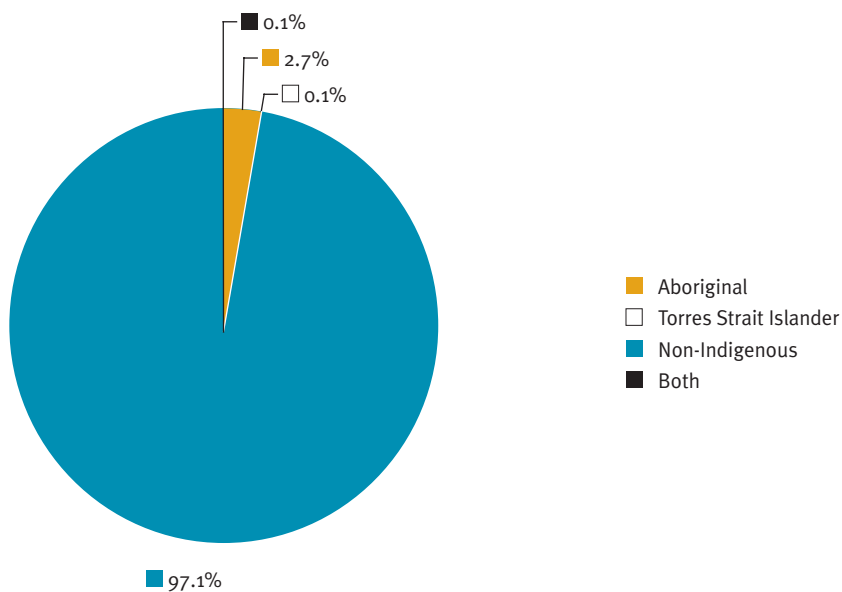
**Fig 5.5.3: Registered Clients by Weekly Earnings**



**Figure 5.5.3:** provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients (193,327) seen by Weekly Earnings.

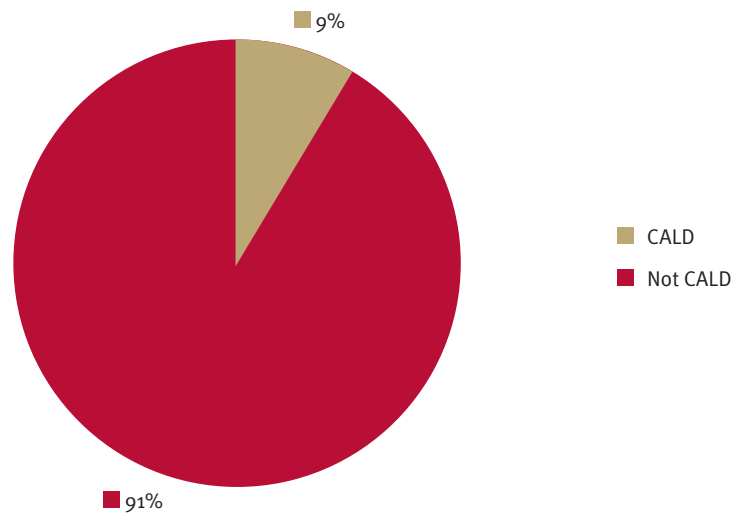
Source: FRSP Online.

**Fig 5.5.4: Registered Clients who Indicated Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Status**



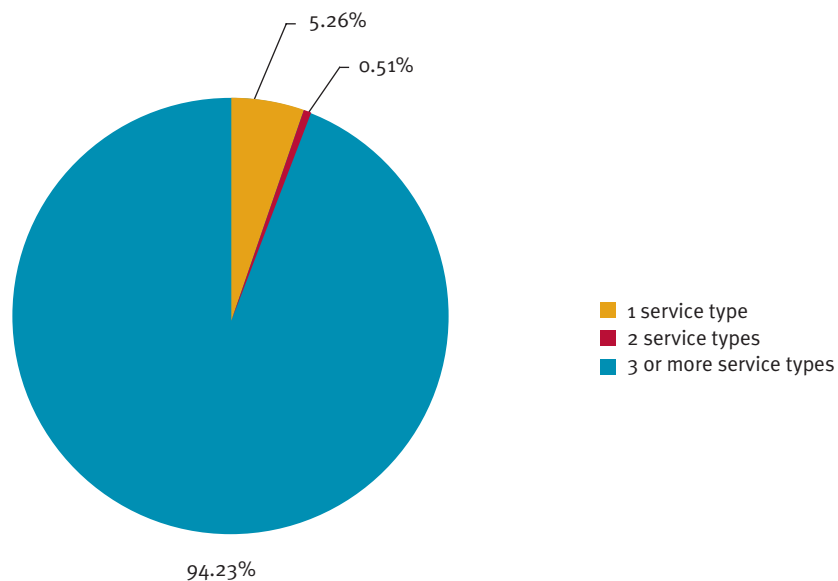
**Figure 5.5.4:** provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients (193,327) seen by ATSI Status. The identification of an ATSI status is voluntary. Figure 5.5.4 outlines only those clients who completed this field. Providers consider this is an underestimate.

Source: FRSP Online.

**Fig 5.5.5: Registered Clients Seen by Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Status**

**Figure 5.5.5:** provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients (193,327) seen by CALD Status. The identification of CALD status is voluntary. Figure 5.5.5 outlines only those clients who completed this field.

Source: FRSP Online.

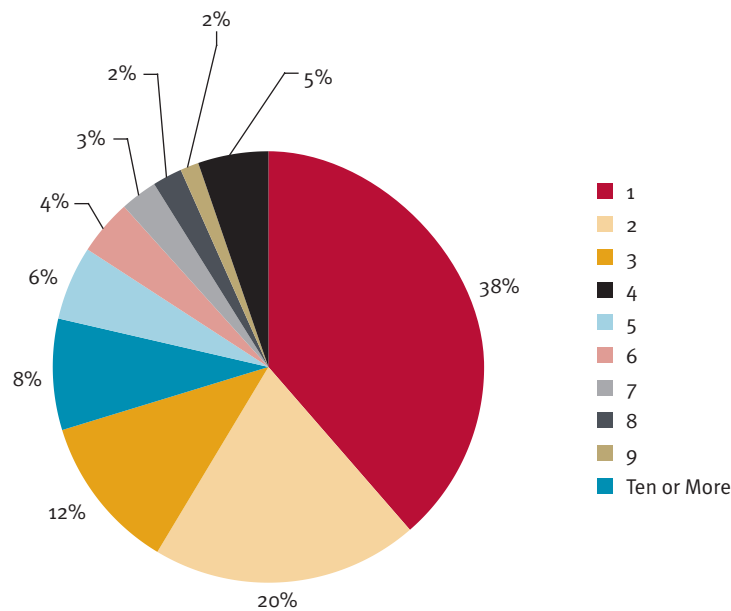
**Fig 5.5.6: Registered Clients that have Received Multiple FRSP Services**

**Figure 5.5.6:** provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients that received multiple FRSP services. For instance a family may have a parenting order plan and also be referred to a counselling service. More than one presenting need may be recorded for a client within a single service type.

Source: FRSP Online.

### 5.6 Registered Clients with Multiple Presenting Needs

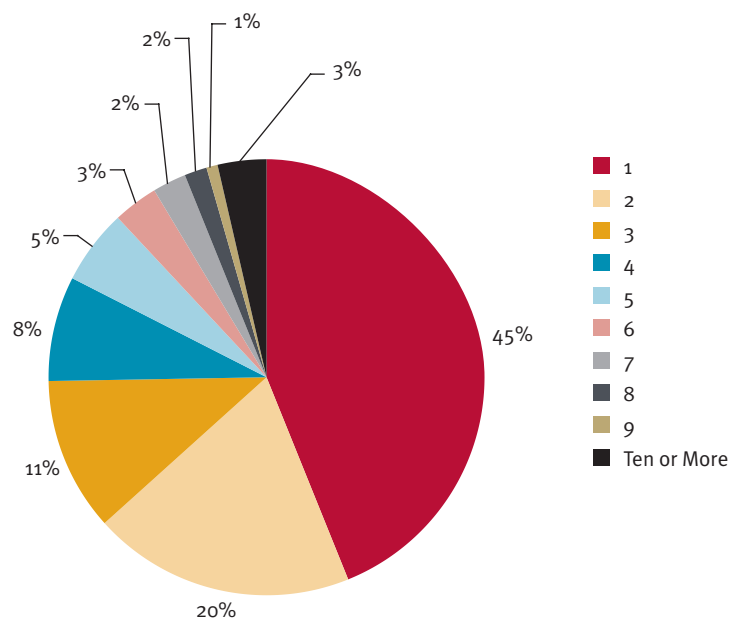
**Fig 5.6.1: Percentage of Registered Clients with Multiple Presenting Needs for 2007–08**



**Figure 5.6.1:** provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients for 2007–08 (193,327) who recorded Multiple Presenting Needs. More than one presenting need may be recorded for a client within a service type.

Source: FRSP Online.

**Fig 5.6.2: Percentage of Clients with Multiple Presenting Needs for 2006–07**



**Figure 5.6.2:** provides a breakdown of the total number of registered clients (193,327) for 2006–07 who have recorded Multiple Presenting Needs.

Between 2006–07 and 2007–08 the percentage of clients with one presenting need fell by 7%, while clients with three or more a presenting needs increased.

Source: FRSP Online.

## 6. Presenting Needs

**Fig 6.1 Table: Clients Presenting Needs for 2006–07 and 2007–08**

| Presenting Need  | Registered Clients |         | Percentage Variation |
|--|--------------------|---------|----------------------|
|  | 2006–07            | 2007–08 |                      |
| Succession planning_care of adult child with severe disability | 200                | 688     | 244.00               |
| Children's issues  | 652                | 2,181   | 234.51               |
| Siblings   | 507                | 1,636   | 222.68               |
| Step parents   | 320                | 1,021   | 219.06               |
| Separation of parents  | 2,616              | 8,170   | 212.31               |
| School   | 791                | 2,341   | 195.95               |
| Family separation  | 3,503              | 10,129  | 189.15               |
| Grandparents   | 311                | 865     | 178.14               |
| Parents  | 1,226              | 3,061   | 149.67               |
| Suicidality  | 597                | 1,382   | 131.49               |
| Trauma   | 1,660              | 3,828   | 130.60               |
| Family formation   | 1,136              | 2,588   | 127.82               |
| Bullying   | 477                | 1,086   | 127.67               |
| Carer's  | 561                | 1,272   | 126.74               |
| Child Support Payments   | 1,677              | 3,751   | 123.67               |
| Post-separation parenting                                      | 21,173             | 46,659  | 120.37               |
| Grand parenting  | 1,133              | 2,430   | 114.47               |
| Self-harm  | 494                | 1,027   | 107.89               |
| Family maintenance   | 3,323              | 6,865   | 106.59               |
| Breach of post-separation parenting agreements                 | 1,128              | 2,330   | 106.56               |
| Adult physical/emotional abuse                                 | 3,859              | 6,856   | 77.66                |
| Communication issues   | 13,674             | 23,211  | 69.75                |
| Property   | 3,657              | 6,137   | 67.82                |
| Adult sexual abuse   | 493                | 827     | 67.75                |
| Accommodation difficulties                                     | 1,557              | 2,584   | 65.96                |
| Re-partnering  | 2,016              | 3,224   | 59.92                |
| Disability   | 1,325              | 2,107   | 59.02                |
| Financial difficulty   | 5,130              | 8,011   | 56.16                |
| Conflict   | 17,257             | 26,646  | 54.41                |
| Drug/alcohol/substance abuse                                   | 4,709              | 7,238   | 53.71                |
| Step-parenting   | 2,155              | 3,217   | 49.28                |
| Grief/Loss   | 8,721              | 13,016  | 49.25                |
| Family violence  | 9,308              | 13,665  | 46.81                |
| Gambling   | 605                | 887     | 46.61                |

**Comparison of Presenting Needs 2006–07 and 2007–08 *Cont'd.***

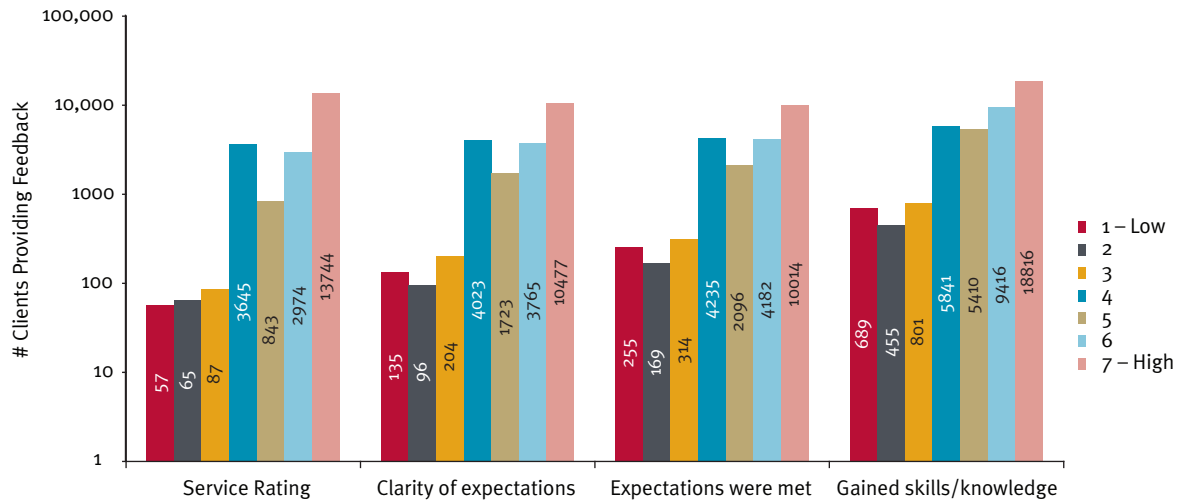
| Presenting Need  | Registered Clients |         |                      |
|--|--------------------|---------|----------------------|
|  | 2006–07            | 2007–08 | Percentage Variation |
| Relationship breakdown   | 18,488             | 26,835  | 45.15                |
| Childhood neglect  | 1,086              | 1,566   | 44.20                |
| Dealing with relationship difficulties                                       | 30,317             | 43,359  | 43.02                |
| Parenting  | 18,495             | 26,428  | 42.89                |
| Childhood physical/emotional abuse   | 2,938              | 4,198   | 42.89                |
| Homelessness   | 419                | 597     | 42.48                |
| Establishing a relationship  | 3,362              | 4,597   | 36.73                |
| Isolation  | 2,961              | 3,983   | 34.52                |
| Childhood sexual abuse   | 1,862              | 2,501   | 34.32                |
| Employment issues  | 2,910              | 3,904   | 34.16                |
| Other  | 20,308             | 26,855  | 32.24                |
| Mental health issues   | 7,652              | 10,046  | 31.29                |
| Enhancing a relationship   | 13,964             | 15,947  | 14.20                |
| Pre-marriage   | 12,905             | 14,545  | 12.71                |
| Stress   | 13                 | 4,317   | -                    |
| Anxiety  | 13                 | 3,339   | -                    |
| Depression   | 15                 | 3,331   | -                    |
| Other Legal issues   | 1                  | 890     | -                    |
| Child Protection issues  | 1                  | 837     | -                    |
| Physical Health  | 3                  | 680     | -                    |
| Cultural   | 2                  | 514     | -                    |
| Aggravated (apprehended) Violence Order (AVO)                                | 5                  | 504     | -                    |
| Diagnosed mental illness   | 1                  | 426     | -                    |
| Migrant  | 0                  | 365     | -                    |
| Criminal charges and/or conviction   | 0                  | 280     | -                    |
| Eating related difficulties  | 0                  | 271     | -                    |
| Marginalisation  | 0                  | 264     | -                    |
| Restraining Order  | 2                  | 256     | -                    |
| Refugee  | 0                  | 106     | -                    |
| Fly in/Fly out (Seperation of families due to work and/or other commitments) | 1                  | 63      | -                    |

**Figure 6.1:** Presenting Needs with a (-) indicates that these classifications were included into FRSP Online in 2007–08 period and comparative data for 2006–07 is not available. A client may be recorded on FRSP Online as having more than one Presenting Need.

Source: FRSP Online.

## 7. Client Feedback on Services

**Fig 7.1: Level of Satisfaction Reported by Clients on Services Provided for 2007–08**



**Figure 7.1:** provides a breakdown of the 41,428 clients who indicated on the client feedback form their level of satisfaction on the FRSP services provided. The graph represents the level of satisfaction on 4 questions asked on the form. The questions represented are:

- Did you receive competent and professional service?
- Were you clear about the expectations you and your practitioners were working towards?
- Were your expectations met?
- Are you able to apply new skills and knowledge to your relationship or situation?

Clients were asked to rate the level of satisfaction for each question from 1–7, 1 being a low level of satisfaction, 7 being high a level of satisfaction.

## 8. Referral Data

**Fig 8.1 Table: Referrals for 2007–08**

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Number of clients referred into a service.      | 186,234 |
| Number of clients referred out of a service.    | 9,047   |
| Number of clients not referred out of a service | 174,071 |

Source: FRSP Online.

## 8.2 Top 10 Referral Sources of Clients into a Service

Clients nominated the source of referral as:

- ▶ Self
- ▶ Family/Friend/Neighbour
- ▶ Clergy
- ▶ Private Legal Practitioner
- ▶ Family Relationship Centre
- ▶ Community Organisation
- ▶ Family Court
- ▶ School
- ▶ Health Practitioner
- ▶ Professional at this service

'Self' is the largest referral source into a service with 37.7% of the clients accessing services on their own. The list is from the highest to lowest client source.

## 8.3 Top 10 Referrals of Clients out of a Service

Providers purpose for the referral out:

- ▶ Other funded Family Relationship Services Types (Family Counselling to MFR)
- ▶ Community Legal Centre
- ▶ Community Organisation
- ▶ Legal Aid Commission
- ▶ Private Legal Practitioner
- ▶ Family Relationship Advice Line
- ▶ Domestic Violence Service
- ▶ Family Relationship Centre
- ▶ Health Practitioner
- ▶ Other non funded Family Relationship Service

'Other funded Family Relationship Services Types' is the largest referral source out of a service with 22.7% of the clients being referred to other organisations for services. The list is from the highest to lowest proposed referral type.

Source: FRSP Online.

## 9. FRSP Online and Telephone Services

**Fig 9.1 Table: Mensline Services for 2007–08 Financial Year**

|                                      | <b>2007–08</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Website Visits                       | 4,181,027      |
| Telephone calls answered             | 38,169         |
| Telephone call back (outbound calls) | 4,531          |

Source: Mensline Australia.

**Fig 9.2 Table: Family Relationship Advice Line (FRAL) Statistics for 2007–08**

|  | <b>2007–08</b>  |
|--|-----------------|
| Telephone calls answered                       | 91,435          |
| Total number of calls per month range between: | 5,750 and 8,398 |

Source: Attorney-General's Department

**Fig 9.3 Table: Family Relationship Online (FRO) Statistics for 2007–08**

|                   | <b>2007–08</b> |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Website visits    | 146,416        |
| Average per month | 12,201         |

Source: Attorney-General's Department



# Section Two

## Status Reports—A Summary

Section Two provides a summary of the quantitative and qualitative data that has been drawn from the 160 Status Reports that were submitted by funded organisations as part of the overall FRSP performance reporting process.

### PART 1: Service Delivery

#### Question 1—External Impacts

Proportion of funded organisations reporting on external events which have had an impact, positive or negative on FRSP service delivery:

84.7%

#### *Impacts Reported*

##### *Positives:*

- Increased number of referrals between FRSP organisations
- Increase in the number of referrals to the FRSP from other non FRSP funded organisations
- Networking with other funded and non funded FRSP service providers
- Opening of new outlets
- Introduction of new programs within organisations catchment areas
- Training provided by FRSP funded organisations for the benefit of all FRSP funded organisations

##### *Negatives:*

- Decreased availability of skilled and/or experienced staff
- Rising cost of service delivery e.g. rent, petrol, wages, insurance
- Changes to the Family Law Act have increased demand for FRSP services
- Cost of living has affected the ability/willingness of clients to attend FRSP services
- Increase in the number of clients and/or complexity of issues being presented for FRSP services
- Natural disasters have increased the demand for services e.g. drought, floods, storms

#### Question 2—Internal Impacts

Proportion of funded organisations reporting on internal events which have had an impact, positive or negative on FRSP service delivery:

85%

#### *Impacts Reported*

##### *Positives:*

- Organisational restructure to ensure increased availability of staff to provide service delivery
- Development of future program plan
- Review of procedures to develop future program planning
- Retention of staff
- Establishment of new or expansion of existing services
- Merging similar non FRSP programs with FRSP programs to improve services

##### *Negatives:*

- Decreased availability of skilled and/or experienced staff
- Staff/management turnover
- Cost of service delivery; specifically wages

- Organisational restructure producing a short term impact on staffing and overheads
- Upgrade of existing site or relocation to new site affecting service delivery
- Competition for skilled staff with state/federal government organisations

### Question 3—Achievements

Proportion of funded organisations reporting on significant achievements in regard to FRSP service delivery: 93%

#### *Achievements Reported*

- Increase in specialised staff training
- Implementing programs specifically targeting CALD/Indigenous clients
- Meeting and/or exceeding FRSP client targets
- Raising community awareness of FRSP programs
- Implementing new or extending existing programs
- Working with other organisations to better meet client needs
- Cross promotion of programs within organisation to better provide for client needs
- Specifically targeting clients needing assistance during difficult times

### Question 4—Innovative strategies

Proportion of funded organisations reporting implementing innovative strategies to address needs of specific target groups: 87.9%

#### *Implementations Reported*

- Work collaboratively with CALD and Indigenous services/communities
- Provide programs targeting parenting skills
- Provide staff with additional specialised training
- Networking/information sharing
- Work collaboratively with schools to provide services to school age children
- Tailoring individual services and group work to better meet the needs of specific target groups

#### *Outcomes Reported*

- Increased Community support/education
- Demand for specific programs has increased
- Service delivery has been improved/streamlined
- Improved parenting skills
- Increased contact with and support of Indigenous clients
- Increase on the number of parenting plans reached to reduce the number of clients having to attend Family Court

### Question 5—Flexible Service Delivery Activity

Proportion of funded organisations reporting use of the following service delivery practices:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Outreach Programs   | 69% |
| Programs targeting particular client groups e.g. Indigenous or CALD Australians | 59% |
| Child Inclusive Practices   | 75% |
| Father Inclusive Practices  | 61% |
| Telephone Counselling   | 54% |
| Provider services after hours/on weekend  | 82% |

## PART 2: Challenges

### Question 7—Client Target Numbers

Proportion of funded organisations reporting difficulties meeting client target numbers for services:

45.5%

#### *Difficulties reported*

- Staff recruitment/retention
- Accessing Indigenous/CALD communities/clients
- Demonstrating that client target numbers have been met
- Data input/retrieval in FRSP Online
- An increase in case complexity has reduced the time available to see additional clients
- With the introduction of the Medicare counselling rebate clients are now more likely to attend a medical practice than FRSP services
- Newly funded FRCs coming on line in local areas have absorbed clients from FRSP services

### Question 8—Client Target Numbers for Specific Client Groups

Proportion of funded organisations reporting difficulties meeting client target numbers for specific client groups:

25%

#### *Client Groups*

- Indigenous
- CALD
- Children
- Men

#### *Difficulties Reported*

- Staff recruitment/retention
- Accessing Indigenous/CALD communities/clients
- Lack of specialised support services, for example (Interpreter services)
- Historical reluctance by target client groups to seek help
- Physical barriers to accessing services such as transport

### Question 9—Identification of Issues that will Impact on Service Delivery

Proportion of funded organisations that have reported identification of issues that will impact on successful service delivery:

68.7%

#### *Barriers Reported*

- Resource constraints; both human and financial
- Staff turnover
- Client need for physical assistance to access services
- Unavailability of specialised support services especially in regional and rural areas
- Complexity of clients issues
- Increase in the amount of staffing required for administration e.g. data entry

#### *Strategies planned to address barriers*

- Re-allocating available resources in response to emerging priorities
- Offering flexible staffing arrangements/staff incentives
- Implementing targeted staff recruitment campaigns
- Providing clients with physical assistance to access services
- Increase the level of training for counsellors
- Entering into partnerships with external organisations to improve the level of service provided

### Question 10—Planned Priorities

Proportion of funded organisations reporting an inability to implement planned priorities: 43%

#### *Priorities not implemented*

- ▶ Staff recruitment/training
- ▶ Enhancing service delivery for specific target client groups
- ▶ Developing new programs/groups
- ▶ Improved internet communication capability
- ▶ Networking/information sharing

#### *Reasons why priorities not implemented*

- ▶ Unavailability of skilled, experienced staff
- ▶ Resource constraints—human and financial
- ▶ Lack of (or inappropriate) referrals
- ▶ Organisational restructure
- ▶ No existing service plan
- ▶ Competition for clients from non FRSP organisations

### Question 11—Referral Process to External Agencies

Proportion of funded organisations reporting issues with the referral process to external agencies and the issues identified: 55%

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. Difficulty accessing appropriate agencies to support clients                    | 67% |
| 2. Intensive resources to maintain referral contacts                               | 34% |
| 3. Client/s unwilling to accept referral   | 41% |
| 4. Other   | 27% |
| ▶ Capacity of other organisations to accept referrals                              |     |
| ▶ Inability to refer clients due to a lack of services in area                     |     |
| ▶ Difficulties due to lack of interaction with government or non FRSP agencies     |     |
| ▶ Lack of resources human and financial  |     |
| ▶ Client unable to accept referrals to other agencies due to financial constraints |     |

#### *Reported action taken*

- ▶ FRSP organisations provide ad hoc services they are not funded to provide
- ▶ Networking with other organisations to ensure effective referral processes
- ▶ ‘Warm’ transfers of clients to overcome any concerns clients may have
- ▶ Maintaining communication between referral organisations
- ▶ Implementing proactive services to reduce the number of referrals required
- ▶ Open communication between mental health/medical practitioners

### Question 12—Referral Process from External Agencies

Proportion of funded organisations reporting issues with the referral process from external agencies and the issues identified: 70.5%

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. Referrals have increased demand for services   | 51.8% |
| 2. Referral agencies have limited understanding of services provided                                  | 56.3% |
| 3. Intensive resources to maintain referral contacts  | 29.0% |
| 4. Other  | 34.5% |
| ▶ Legal practitioners referring clients to get court orders without any form of mediation/counselling |       |

- The complexity of cases being referred
- Limited time/resources
- Lack of services available in the area

### Actions Taken

- Networking with other organisations to ensure effective referral processes
- Working with other FRSP organisations to provide the most efficient service for clients
- Review of referral processes to provide the most efficient service for clients
- Education of government or non FRSP agencies to provide the most efficient service for clients
- Additional support and training for staff
- Addition of telephone / outreach services to reduce waiting lists

### Question 13—Complaints

Proportion of funded organisations reporting complaints concerning FRSP Services:

59%

**Fig 13.1 Table: Number of Complaints by Service Type for 2007–08**

| Service Type | Number of Complaints | Number Resolved | Number Outstanding |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| FREST        | 19                   | 19              | 0                  |
| AMFT         | 9                    | 9               | 0                  |
| FRSC         | 0                    | 0               | 0                  |
| MFR          | 16                   | 16              | 0                  |
| DC           | 3                    | 3               | 0                  |
| SFVS         | 4                    | 4               | 0                  |
| COUNS        | 88                   | 87              | 1                  |
| FRSHE        | 0                    | 0               | 0                  |
| FDR          | 242                  | 233             | 9                  |
| RFDR         | 5                    | 5               | 0                  |
| SIRP         | 0                    | 0               | 0                  |
| POP          | 31                   | 29              | 2                  |
| CCS          | 186                  | 179             | 7                  |
| FRC          | 139                  | 134             | 5                  |
| Total        | 742                  | 722             | 24                 |

**Figure 13.1:** total complaints for 2007–08 reported by services is less than 1% of total clients seen by service providers.

(Total registered and unregistered clients seen in 2007–08, 237,701)

## PART 3: Funding

### Question 14— Income from FRSP Funding

Funded organisations reporting that the proportion of funds coming into the organisation from FRSP represents more than one third of total income: 42%

### Question 15— Other Funding received by Organisations

*Sources of funding other than FRSP as reported by providers.*

|                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Local Government                  | 3.9%  |
| 2. State Government                  | 25.0% |
| 3. Commonwealth Government(non-FRSP) | 22.5% |
| 4. Donations or earned income        | 9.9%  |
| 5. Other                             | 13.3% |

### Question 16— Income from Fees

Proportion of funded organisations collecting income from fees: 74.8%

*Major areas of expenditure of fees reported by providers:*

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. Leasing/purchasing of assets              | 51.3%  |
| 2. Purchase of capital assets                | 41.5 % |
| 3. Staff wages                               | 58.4 % |
| 4. Staff training and development            | 56.6 % |
| 5. Travel                                    | 45.1 % |
| 6. Carried forward to current financial year | 49.5 % |
| 7. Other                                     | 62.8 % |

## PART 4: Staffing

### Question 17— Average Percentage of Organisational Staff Delivering FRSP Services

Estimated percentage of organisational staff involved in FRSP service delivery: 41%

### Question 18— Number of Staff

National average number of staff per organisation directly related to FRSP servicedelivery: 20.3 Staff

### Question 19— Estimated Number of Indigenous Staff

Average number of staff per organisation who have been identified as Indigenous that are involved in service delivery: 0.84 Staff

### Question 20— Estimated Number of Multilingual Staff

Average number of staff per organisation who have been identified as multilingual that are involved in service delivery: 3.8 Staff

### Question 21— Estimated Number of staff that have been sent on a training course or conference this year

Average number of staff per organisation that have been reported they have attended training or a conference this year: 19 Staff

**Question 22—Staff Vacancy Time**

Proportion of funded organisations reporting no staff vacancy time: 25%

**Question 23—Positions Vacant**

Proportion of funded organisations reporting FRSP staff vacancies: 26%

**Question 24—Volunteer Numbers**

Proportion of funded organisations employing volunteers: 26%

*Activities undertaken by volunteers:*

|                            |       |
|----------------------------|-------|
| ▸ Service delivery         | 8.3%  |
| ▸ Support and coordination | 7.5%  |
| ▸ Administration           | 11.2% |
| ▸ Fundraising              | 1.25% |
| ▸ Cleaning/maintenance     | 4.38% |
| ▸ Other                    | 1.25% |

**PART 5: Evaluation and Review****Question 27—Evaluation and Review**

Proportion of organisations that have reported undertaking research and evaluation activities: 78%

- Client survey
- Analysis of feedback
- Evaluation of internal processes
- Client outcomes
- Evaluation of why clients cancel appointments
- Client case file review

**Question 28—Reported Key Priorities for the Coming Year**

Organisations noted the following priorities for 2008–09:

- Networking and referrals
- Internal processes
- Marketing / promotion of services
- Engaging with Indigenous communities
- Expansion of service through regional/outreach partnerships
- Staff training

**Question 29—Issues Raised by Stakeholders**

Proportion of organisations that have had issues raised by their stakeholders: 43%

- Key issues identified:
- Waiting times/demand for services
- Need to increase services in remote areas
- Increase services for men
- Managing expectations of clients
- Intrusive data collection
- Need for service delivery 7 days a week

### Question 30— Issues about FRSP

Proportion of funded organisations who reported issues with the FRSP:

60%

Key issues identified:

- ▶ FRSP Online reporting
- ▶ Data entry
- ▶ Retaining staff
- ▶ Additional funding required
- ▶ Administrative costs
- ▶ A need to reduce administrative red tape

### Quality Compliance Checklist

The majority of funded organisations self assessed and reported full compliance with FRSP Approval Requirements. An independent contractor selected to undertake a national review of organisational compliance against the FRSP Approval Requirements commenced assessments against compliance in 2008.

## PART 6: Family Relationships Services Program (FRSP) Achievements

### FRSP Online Reporting Portal

The FRSP Online reporting portal was officially launched in September 2008. The portal gives organisations the ability to access and print reports on their own organisations data.

The types of reports that are able to be generated by organisations in 2007–08 were:

- ▶ Number of Registered Clients seen by Age and Gender
- ▶ Number of Sessions and Hours held
- ▶ Activities Opened and Closed
- ▶ Number of Unregistered Clients
- ▶ Number of Registered ATSI Clients seen by ARIA location; and
- ▶ Number of Registered Clients seen by a Referral Source.

These reports assist organisations in tracking progress towards meeting client targets.

### FRSP Privacy Impact Report on FRSP Online

In response to concerns raised by service providers and their industry representatives Family Relationships Australia (FRSA), the FRSP Branch engaged two independent consultants to undertake a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) of FRSP Online, to ensure compliance against the Information Privacy Principles (IPP) within the Privacy Act 1988.

While the assessment found that FRSP-Online was compliant with the Privacy Act, the consultants reports also identified some better practice processes to enhance the privacy features of FRSP Online and to further minimise risks around future non-compliance. The recommendations outlined in the reports formed the basis of ongoing discussions between FRSP and the sector through the FRSP Online Sub Working Group.

The PIA was released to the organisations in June 2008. Copies of the report can be accessed via the FRSP Online webpage.

### Joint Government-Sector Working Groups

This year the Family Relationship Services Branch of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Family Pathways Branch of the Attorney-General's Department and Family Relationship Services Australia established joint Government-Sector Working Groups to progress dialogue on key matters relevant to the delivery of the Family Relationship Services Program.

These Working Groups were established to improve understanding and communication between Family Relationship Services Program and the sector around issues concerning workforce development, contracts and funding, and quality and performance measurements.

These forums also identified opportunities for improvements in processes and/or issues of concern.

The Service Agreements and Funding Working Group was established to clarify and review the contractual obligations for providers and to initiate processes to reduce the administrative burden on the sector.

The Quality Performance Measurement Working Group was established to review the Family Relationship Services Program Performance Framework which is being revised to provide a single, outcomes-focused framework for early intervention services, post-separation services and Family Relationship Centres.

In the context of an increased focus on evidence-based policy, the revised Framework will complement ongoing research and evaluation activities and strengthen the evidence base on the therapeutic value of Family Relationship Services Program to families. It will focus on the most important performance indicators while at the same time minimising the administrative burden on service providers and families.

The Workforce Development Working Group is considering the workforce issues facing the Family Relationship Services sector and identifying solutions to these challenges. It is anticipated that the Working Group will work with FaHCSIA on the development of a Workforce Development Plan that will set out key workforce issues and potential solutions. The Working Group is also working with FaHCSIA to undertake a workforce mapping project of the sector. This mapping project will provide data on the demographics, qualifications and training and development needs of the sector.

The Joint working groups are continuing to progress these agendas in the 2008–09 year, ensuring ongoing collaboration in developing best work practices and to address any workforce concerns that the sector may have.



