



Creating opportunities to work strategically across the region with multi-sectoral partners

EMHSCA
Partnership
Survey
Report

June 17

2021

EMHSCA aims to evaluate the strength of its partnership and the effectiveness of the strategy. This survey is one aspect of that evaluation and findings will be used to improve the Alliance going forward.

Eastern Mental
Health Service
Coordination
Alliance

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Background

The EMHSCA partnership has been operational since 2009 and supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The current MOU includes signatories from 31 health and community service organisations. EMHSCA is an active regional partnership.

The EMHSC Vision is for people who experience mental ill-health and co-occurring concerns, and the people who support them, to access responsive, appropriate and collaborative services to assist with the multiple facets of their individual recovery journey. EMHSCA will continue as the key local platform for health and community service consultation and collaborative decision making in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.

EMHSCA aims to strengthen Mental Health and AOD service collaboration, coordination and system integration across Inner and Outer Eastern Melbourne for improved consumer outcomes. With this aim, EMHSCA strongly promotes partnership activities across the Eastern Metropolitan Region including Alliance meetings, EMHSCA events, workshops and the EMHSCA Shared care protocol. EMHSCA provides a key platform for leadership level consultation regarding Mental Health and AOD sector developments.

Survey Goal This Survey is one method being used to evaluate the partnerships formed within the Alliance and to identify changes in the EMHSCA relationship. Results are compared with those of similar surveys conducted in 2015 and 2019.

Participating members N=16, with 100% completion rate. The average completion time was 4 minutes.

Method and Aims

A quantitative survey was developed by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee in 2015. The limited uptake of this survey (completion rate was 23% of membership) led to a review and substantial revision in 2018. The survey which originally contained 40 questions was reduced to 6 questions. This 2021 version of the survey is similar to the one conducted in 2019. One alteration was made to improve our understanding of how EMHSCA has supported organisations in relation to COVID-19, given the substantial focus on this during the previous 18 months.

Members of the EMHSCA operational leadership group were invited to participate via email in late May 2021. The Survey was provided online via Survey Monkey, and as an email attachment.

Objectives The survey questions were designed to assess the impact EMHSCA has had on system and structural change in relation to improving collaborative and coordinated care.

This survey does not attempt to define partnerships that solely emanate from EMHSCA, but rather partnerships that exist within it.

Findings from the survey will provide EMHSCA members the opportunity to further reflect on the relationships they have established and how to improve and strengthen these partnerships for future collaborative work.

Target group EMHSCA members

Survey elements

- 6 questions aimed at seeking opinions and views about the role, function and impact of the EMHSCA partnership. The main questions included rating scales.
- Participants were asked for their advice regarding suitability of membership.

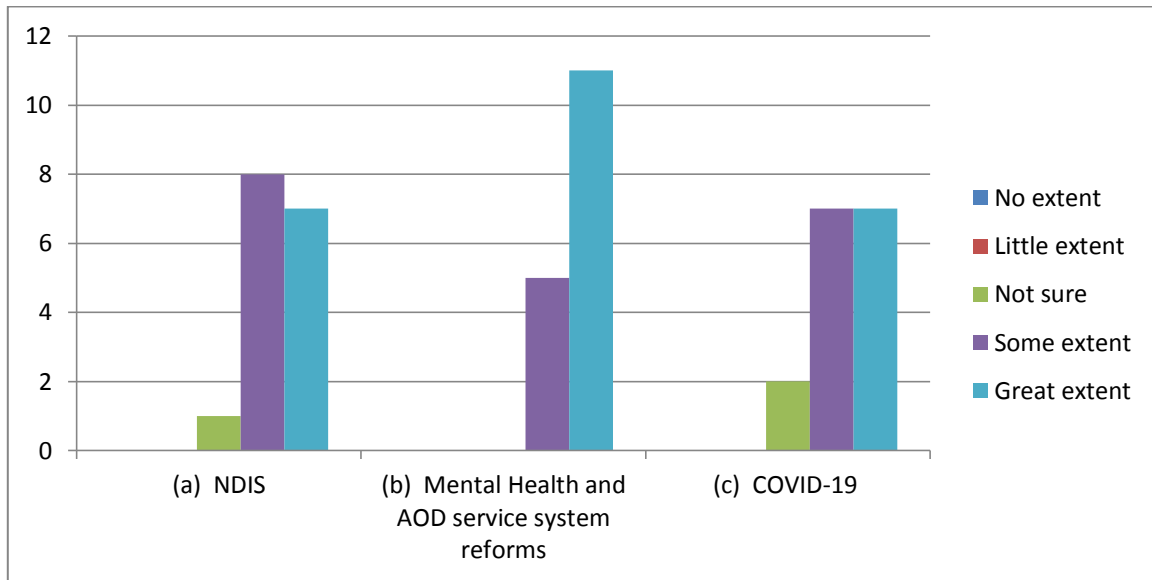
Results

The first question asked participants to identify which sector of supports they represented for the survey. In 2021, the following sectors were represented:

- Clinical Mental Health (3)
- Community Health Sector (1)
- Community Legal Services (1)
- Disability Employment Sector (1)
- Family Violence Sector (1)
- Homelessness/Housing (2)
- Lived experience workforce (1)
- Local Council (3)
- NDIS provider (2)
- Primary Care Partnerships (1)

Supporting system change

Fig a) Q 2. In your opinion, to what extent is EMHSCA assisting member organisations to understand and consider the service system implications of the following (n=16):



EMHSCA Impacts

Fig b) Q 3. In your opinion, to what extent has EMHSCA work contributed to the following (n=16):

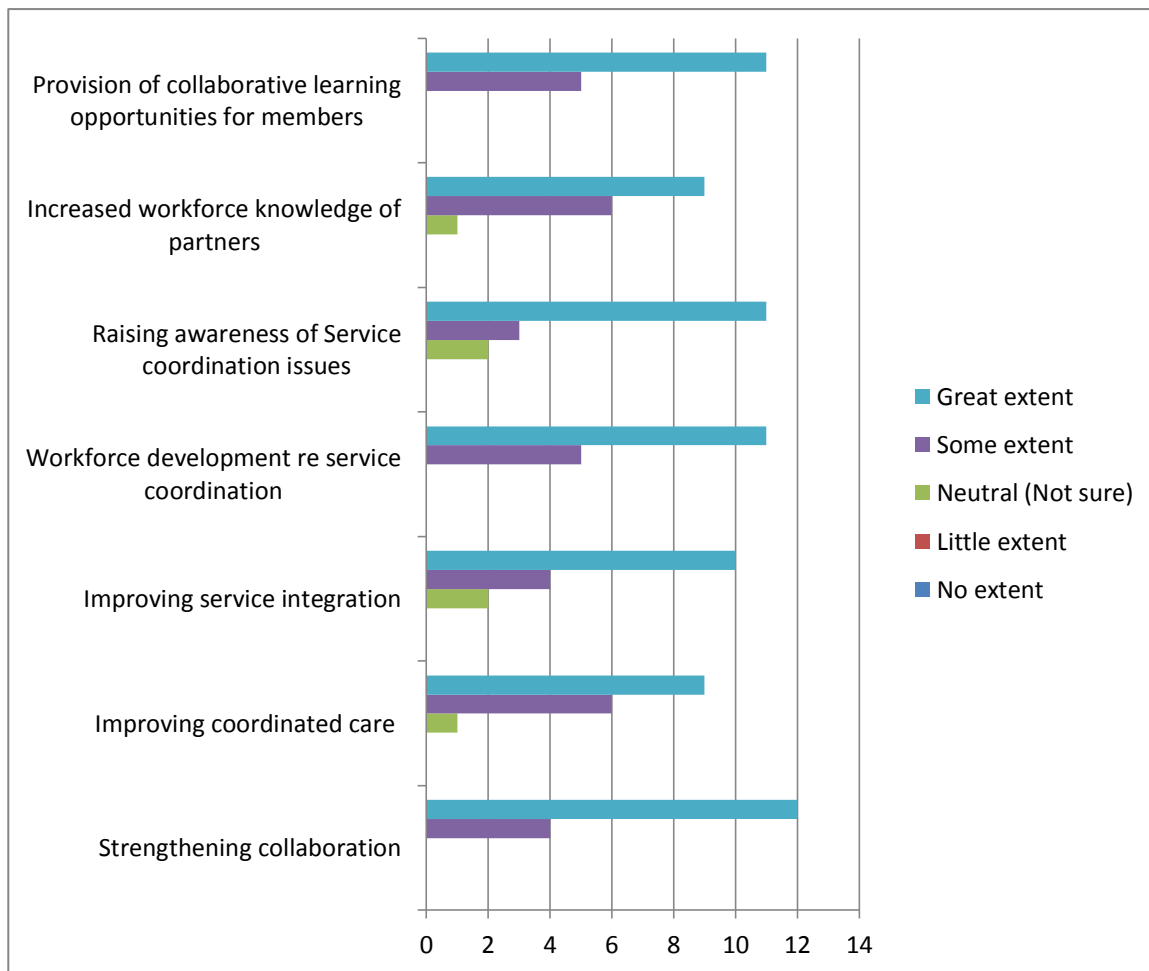


Fig c) Q 4. Please rate the level of agreement with each of the statements below (n=16)

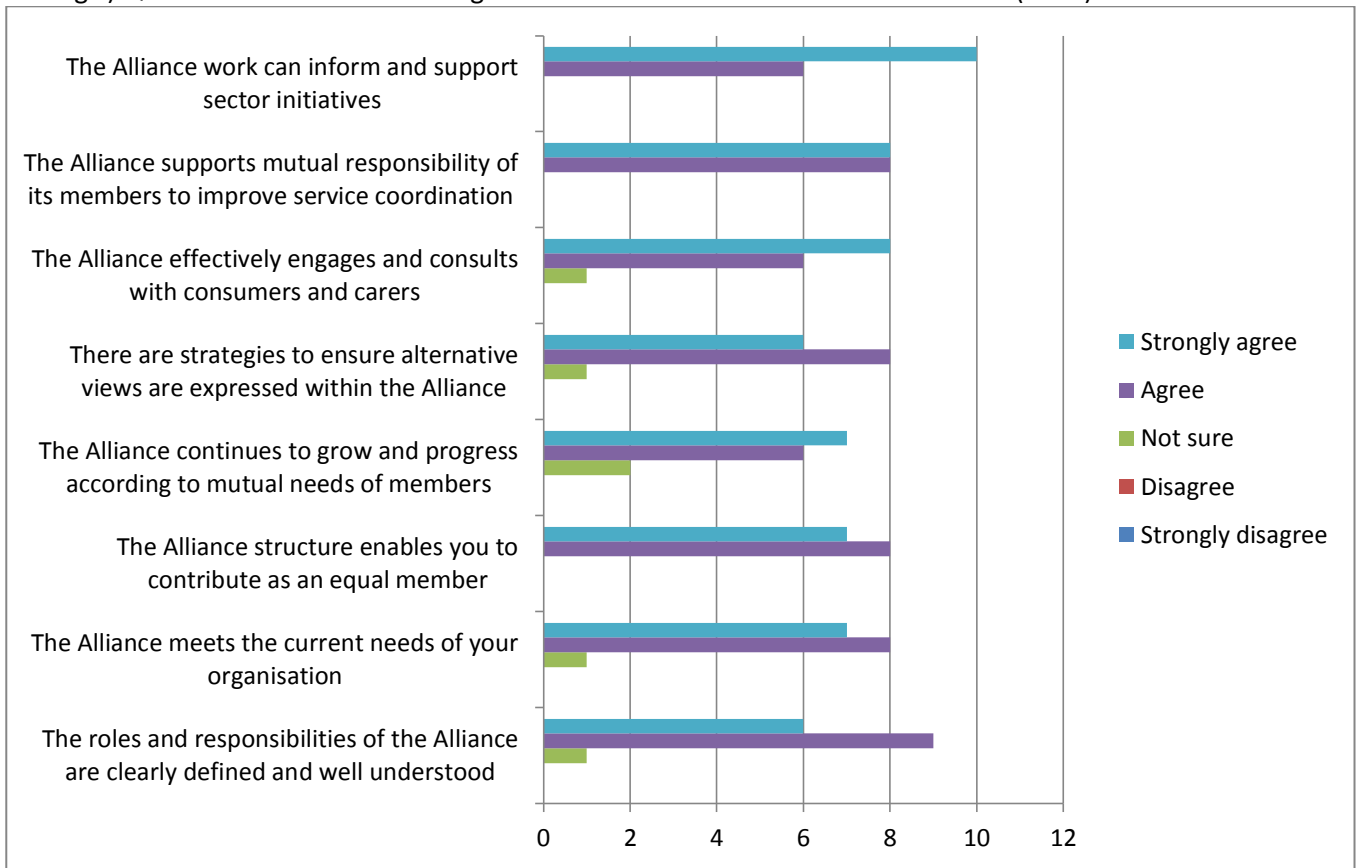
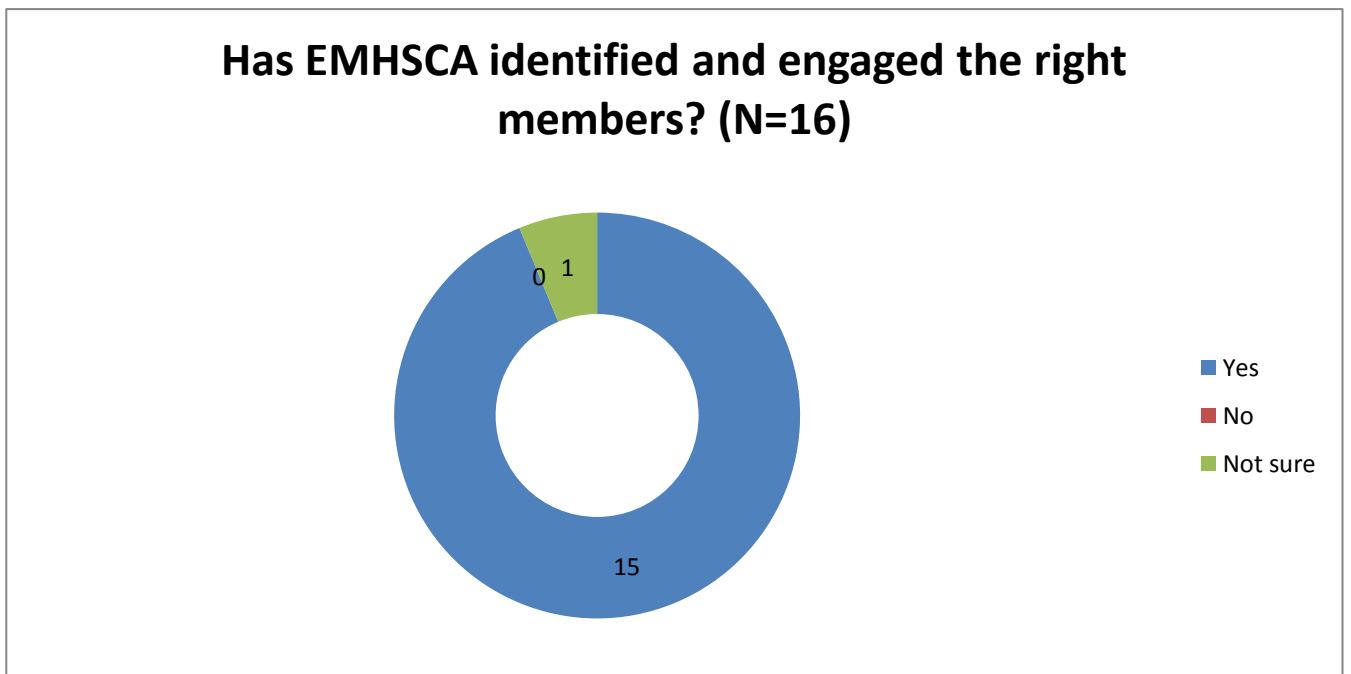


Fig d) Q 5. Has EMHSCA identified and engaged the right members to strengthen provision of collaborative and coordinated service delivery for the target cohort?



Analysis

Based on participant responses to the survey, it would appear that EMHSCA is providing assistance to member organisations to understand the Mental Health and AOD system reforms (100% agreement, compared with 82% in 2019) including NDIS (93.75% agreement, compared with 82% in 2019). Members commented that NDIS has been a core agenda item at EMHSCA meetings, and has improved member's understanding of the scheme and its processes. Appreciation was expressed for the cross-sector learning achieved through the work of the Alliance.

EMHSCA is viewed as an important source of information on the various reforms and service changes. EMHSCA is seen as a platform for information sharing regarding COVID-19 management strategies, and an opportunity to seek support from other member organisations, particularly in addressing the impacts COVID-19 on service users and their families.

Overall EMHSCA members agreed that the membership was appropriate (93.75%). One member expressed some uncertainty about the membership, and attributed this to the short time of engagement they have had with the Alliance. No suggestions were made for expanding the membership.

Areas of strength

All areas of EMHSCA's contribution to our region were seen as significant, with no less than 87.5% agreement, and as much as 100% agreement. No area of EMHSCA's work that was surveyed was seen as ineffective.

In 2021, EMHSCA's greatest area of strength according to members is its ability to strengthen Mental Health and AOD collaboration. This Dual Diagnosis agenda has been at EMHSCA's core since its inception. This is in contrast to the greatest area of strength for the Alliance in 2019 being bringing members together to look at issues facing services and the broader community. In 2015, the survey found that service coordination focussed workforce development; and the identification of EMHSCA's common agenda were the key strengths of the Alliance.

In the 2021 survey results, members commented that EMHSCA brings service providers together via workshops and forums to increase knowledge of other services, and form working relationships across the region. EMHSCA provides a foundation for partnership work across sectors, and works to fill the gaps in service provision for people with multiple support needs. The Shared care protocol was cited as a facilitator of coordinated service provision.

The use of the Mental Health Access and Pathways project and links to the EMHSCA work was appreciated.

Elements of the Alliance's function were also rated well with the majority of respondents agreeing that statements about the Alliance were true for every category. EMHSCA's strengths were evident in its ability to support the mutual responsibility of members to improve service provision across the Eastern region (100% agreement), supporting mutual responsibilities of members (100%), and informing and supporting sector initiatives (100% agreement). All members agreed that they have an equal opportunity to contribute to the Alliance.

Almost all members agreed that the roles and responsibilities of the Alliance are clearly understood and the Alliance structure meets the needs of their organisation (93.75%). Those respondents who were unsure had stated that they were new to the Alliance. An improvement in the Alliance members' perception of the adequacy of consumer and carer engagement was noted in 2021, with 93.75% of respondents agreeing compared with just 60% in 2019. Also, the perception of members that they have the opportunity to express alternative views has improved from 73% agreement in 2019, to 93.33% agreement in 2021.

Areas for further improvement

The Alliance's capacity to meet the mutual needs and expectations of its members could be explored further with 2 respondents reporting that they were unsure as to whether this was the case for them. With 19 health and community support sectors and 31 organisations, it is a continual challenge for EMHSCA to meet the needs of all of its members. It may be useful to conduct another EMHSCA Shared Agenda survey to ascertain the key priorities of the stakeholder group, as was last done in 2016.

Conclusion

As a final question in the EMHSCA Partnership Survey 2021, members were asked how EMHSCA could better meet their organisational needs. Moreover members encouraged EMHSCA to continue in a similar format and advised that their organisational needs in relation to the Alliance are currently being met. In summary, respondents advised EMHSCA to continue the work to 1. review and consider the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System report recommendations; and 2. to promote cross sector partnership opportunities. This advice is supportive of the current EMHSCA work plan elements.