Improving human services

The State Government is working to improve Tasmania’s human services system in partnership with the community sector, clients and the broader community.

The current human services support system has many strengths, however some parts of the system are fragmented, uncoordinated and difficult to access. Some Tasmanians have several case workers across government and the community sector.

Information on what services are available can sometimes be difficult to find and some people do not have ready access to services.

We can do better.

The State Government has committed to testing a new Joined Up project. This will provide coordinated and streamlined support for vulnerable and disadvantaged Tasmanians and improved community access to information and services.

A new approach

We will test our new approach through:

- A shared assessment and referral process for government and community delivered services for people with multiple and complex needs.
- A lead worker to build networks of support around individuals and families with complex needs.
- A system with an outcomes based focus, working with families and individuals on their strengths and goals and getting results.
- Strategies to support greater coordination and communication by Government and community sector service providers.
- Community driven solutions to improve access to information and services at the local level.

The Joined Up project

To deliver the Joined Up project, the State Government has committed $600 000 per year for the next two years.

This funding will be used to trial five initiatives to see how we can build a user-friendly, sustainable and supportive person-centred system.

To begin with, we will test these ideas on a small scale. This will help us to see what works and what else needs to be done.

The Joined Up project team will work with local communities and service providers to learn how services can better focus on the people who need and use those services.
The aim is to give clients friendly, welcoming and well-coordinated services. It is also about delivering better outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

Joined Up will build on previous research and consultation. It will also look at other similar projects in Australia and overseas. By working together we will build a shared vision of what a more coordinated service system looks like.

**Five initiatives**

The five initiatives to be trialled by the Joined Up project team will support and test different aspects of a connected service system.

The initiatives are explained below.

**Place Based Initiative in the Huon Valley**

DHHS believes the community will have improved access to information and services through a strong, collaborative and cooperative service system.

We will work with service providers on strengthening their connections and improving how they collaborate. Service providers will be better informed about what services are available across the service system and where assistance for community and clients can be found. This increased knowledge of services will make it easier for the community to connect with services and access the right information.

We will join with interested organisations in the Huon Valley such as the Huon Valley Health and Wellbeing Network, wayrarattee Child and Family Centre, the Huon Valley Council, and others.

**Person Based Initiative**

This initiative will test a Lead Support Coordination Service for a minimum of 25 individuals and families with multiple and complex needs.

This service aims to improve outcomes and personal and network support for participating individuals. The service will be independently evaluated for its performance and outcome progress.

**Service Improvement Initiative**

This initiative will trial earlier intervention with five families who have children notified to child protection and where further involvement was assessed as not sufficient for action, however it is recognised that these families could benefit from case coordination. We will offer these families the opportunity to be referred to the Lead Support Coordination Service to assist with finding the right support to address concerns and prevent further notifications to child protection.

These five families will be included in the 25 cases in the Person Based initiative above.

**Systems Based Initiative**

This initiative will explore and test how an electronic information system can support a well-connected approach to client coordination and outcome monitoring. It will also look at how securely managed information can be safely used to plan for future service needs and meet reporting and evaluation requirements.

**Privacy Legislation Initiative**

This initiative will review how information is shared and identify barriers in sharing important client information between services. The project team will ensure that sharing information happens in ways that protects the rights of clients.

**Feedback**

All five initiatives will have input from government and non-government organisations. More importantly, the work will include the consultation and feedback of clients, families and carers who have experience of the human service support system.

**Further information**

Further project updates will be available through this link: [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/joinedup](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/joinedup)