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# Council on Economic Participation for Refugees

FOURTH MEETING  
Briefing Materials



# Participants

## Government

Benjamin Meagher	Assistant Secretary – Immigration, <b>Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</b>
Benedikte Jensen	First Assistant Secretary – Labour Market Strategy Division, <b>Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business</b>
Debbie Mitchell	General Manager – Participation and Disability Division, <b>Services Australia</b>
Donna Mosford	Assistant Director – Policy, Settlement & Briefings, <b>Multicultural NSW</b>
Jason Coutts	Assistant Secretary, Foundation Skills Branch – Apprenticeships & Workforce Skills Division, <b>Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business</b>
Jess Del Rio	Assistant Secretary – Settlement & AMEP Programs, <b>Department of Home Affairs</b>
Katrina Currie	Executive Director – Employment, <b>Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions</b>
Kriss McKie	Manager – Community Planning & Development, <b>Wyndham City Council</b>
Lill Healy	Deputy Secretary – Service Delivery and Place Based Reform, <b>Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria</b>
Lisa Tudehope	A/g Director, Settlement and AMEP Programs, <b>Department of Home Affairs</b>
Luke Mansfield	First Assistant Secretary – Refugee, Humanitarian and Settlement, <b>Department of Home Affairs</b>

## Service Providers/Employers

Kerrin Benson	CEO, <b>Multicultural Development Association</b>
Leigh Hardingham	Senior Manager – Inclusion and Diversity, <b>John Holland</b>
Paris Aristotle AO	CEO, <b>Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture</b> Chair, <b>Ministerial Advisory Council on Settlement Services</b>
Sonja Hood	CEO, <b>Community Hubs Australia</b>

## Secretariat

Frances Kitt	Policy Adviser, <b>Centre for Policy Development</b>
Henry Sherrell	Research Associate, <b>Centre for Policy Development</b>
Shivani Nadan	Engagement Manager, <b>Centre for Policy Development</b>

## Advisory

Annabel Brown	Program Director, <b>Centre for Policy Development</b>
Lisa Button	Senior Manager, <b>Centre for Policy Development</b>
Mark Watters	Partner & Managing Director, <b>Boston Consulting Group</b>
Travers McLeod	CEO, <b>Centre for Policy Development</b>
Trish Clancy	Partner, <b>Boston Consulting Group</b>

## Observers

Samantha Muir	Acting Director – Settlement Outcomes Section, <b>Department of Home Affairs</b>
Talia Stump	Principal Policy Officer Settlement, <b>Multicultural NSW</b>

# Meeting details

Thursday 8 August  
1pm – 5pm

Boston Consulting Group,  
Level 5, 16 Marcus Clarke St,  
Canberra, ACT 2601

1pm – 1.15pm

Welcome and introductions

- Welcome (Mark Watters, BCG and Travers McLeod, CPD)
- Introductions

1.15pm – 3.00pm

‘Community deals’ to boost economic participation for humanitarian migrants

- Opportunities to implement ‘community deals’ at local level to lift economic and social participation for humanitarian entrants, including:
  - Structure of deals
  - Outcomes and measurement
  - Necessary elements of a replicable service model
  - Funding model
  - Process for initiation

3.00 – 3.30pm

Coffee break

3.30 – 4.30pm

Integrating settlement, language and employment services

- Priorities and opportunities for improving the ‘service delivery system’ including:
- Picturing the ideal ‘service delivery system’ for 2022; what it looks like and the outcomes and objectives it would deliver on
  - Identifying the opportunities for the priority improvements to the service delivery system - now and at key milestones (e.g. service contract rollover dates)
  - Identifying the further governance and administrative changes needed at the local, state and national levels to deliver that improved ‘service delivery system’

4.30 – 5.00pm

Conclusion and next steps

**Contact:**

Shivani Nadan (citiesandsettlement@cpd.org.au or +61 409 010 818)

Lisa Button (lisa.button@cpd.org.au or +61 450 578 664)

# Session 1

## Community deals to boost economic participation for humanitarian migrants

1.15 - 3.00pm

*Context:* The concept of 'community deals' as a means by which to harness federal, state and local effort to improve the economic participation of refugees has considerable traction with a wide range of stakeholders but requires further conceptual development.

*Purpose of session:* Discussion of opportunities to implement 'community deals' at local level to lift economic and social participation for humanitarian entrants. Including:

- Structure of deals
- Outcomes and measurement
- Necessary elements of a replicable service model
- Process for initiation

# Recapping: The Case for Place-Based Interventions



## ▫Geographic concentration

▫of humanitarian migrants in a relatively small number of local government areas.



## ▫High unemployment

▫among humanitarian migrants, particularly among women and new arrivals.



## ▫Employment services failing

▫to deliver sustainable outcomes for refugees or employers, and poorly coordinated with other key services.



## ▫Proliferation of services

▫provided by federal, state and local actors. These well-meaning services are disconnected, have varying effectiveness and create client confusion.

## ▫Investment in place-based approaches via ‘community deals’ would offer a range of benefits:

- **For refugees:** A simple, integrated and effective local services ecosystem leading to sustainable employment or small business creation.
- **For employers:** A simple way of identifying jobseekers in the local community as an alternative to recruiting from further afield or relying on other solutions (e.g. labour-hire companies).
- **For service providers:** A way to develop and grow effective solutions for clients in collaboration with other local providers.
- **For government:** Savings in welfare spending and other services that address consequences of economic disadvantage, as well as a wide range of positive social and economic dividends associated with economic inclusion.
- **For regional communities/industry:** An opportunity to build communities and address local skills shortages.

# Proposed structure for 'Community Deals'

## 1. Community Deal Agreement

- Duration: Minimum four years contingency funding with drawdown every two years
- High level national objectives for all Community Deals
- Federal government staff imbedded in Local Backbone Organisation to learn and propagate success elsewhere (EL1 or EL2)
- High level identification of target cohort
- Annual reporting/review cycle with single reporting framework
- Outcomes/reporting/measurement framework engaging "Tight, Loose, Tight" model (see element 4 below)
- Funding to Local Backbone Organisation for coordination & local interventions, and related conditions (separate from service provider funding)

### Federal Departments

- One lead Department, plus other Commonwealth Departments
- Contributing funding and/or Commonwealth services
- Overseeing all Community Deals and convening stakeholders through a national community of practice

### State Government Funder

Contributing funding and/or state-funded services

## 2. Local Collective Impact MOU

### Local Backbone Organisation

- Employs Local Coordinator and team (for agreed tenure)
- Holds funding for coordination and local interventions
- Accountable to federal/state funders & Local Taskforce [TBD]
- Ability to direct service provision, consistent with local strategy
- Adaptation/prioritisation of overarching national objectives

### Local Taskforce

- Convened by Local Coordinator
- Members: Local Backbone, senior representatives of local service providers, employers, refugee community representatives, educational institutions, other funders of services (e.g., charitable or philanthropic)
- Responsibilities: Define local objectives within ambit of Community Deal Agreement and identify relevant services, develop and oversee implementation of strategy and service delivery model (including assessment tool) and budget and shared/streamlined approach to measurement & reporting
- Principles: Collective impact approach, human-centered design of services, holistic view of clients (individual, family, community)

## 3. Revised Contracts with Service Providers

Identify government service providers within Local Taskforce

- Revisit contracts to allow flexibility in local delivery/remuneration, consistent with local strategy
- Establish transitional funding arrangements if changes disrupt cashflow

## 4. 'Tight, Loose, Tight' Framework

- 'Tight' on high level objectives
- 'Loose' on donor requirements regarding local service delivery system (to encourage tailoring, collaboration and coordination)
- 'Tight' on measuring outcomes against agreed benchmarks/objectives

## 5. Funding for interventions and collaboration

Funding for effective interventions leading to appropriate and sustainable work and local collaboration, with feedback loop to ensure continuous identification of good practice and appropriate pricing.

# Questions for discussion

What is the focus of national objectives and benchmarks?

- Economic participation (employment and/or self-employment, any subgroup objectives eg women, youth)
- Social and economic participation
- Other (eg English language proficiency)

Who should be included in the target cohort (national)?

- Those arriving under the refugee and humanitarian program
- Others?

How could employment services be brought in to community deals?

- Combining community deals with employment service pilots
- Taking a Departmental Agency approach (e.g. like the New Zealand model)

What other services could be included?

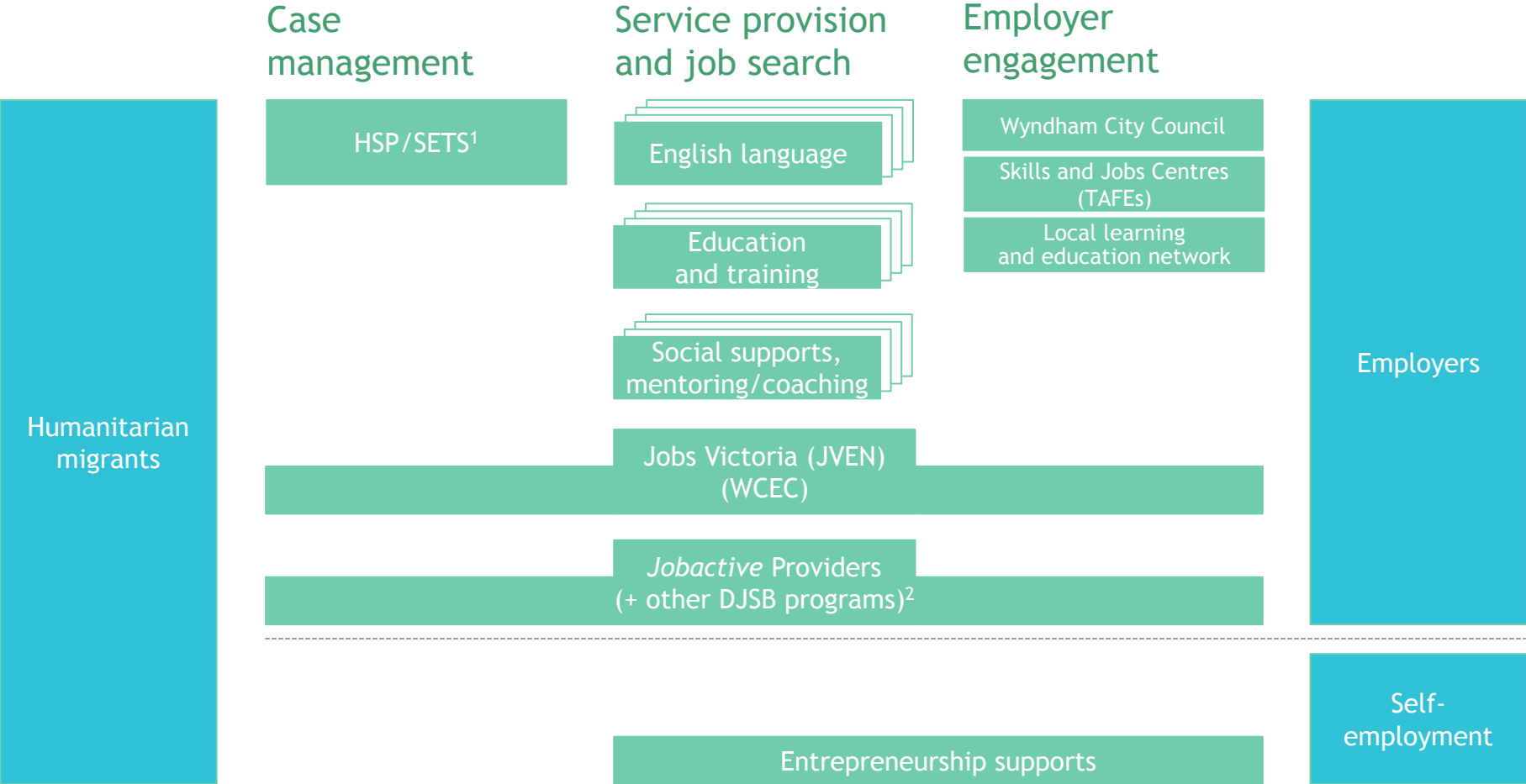
- For example Education, Centrelink, Health, Housing

Which elements need to be common to all deals and which are local adaptations?

- Target cohort for local interventions
- Community deals resources/interventions: service system coordinator, industry liaison, assessment and case management
- Degree of accountability of Local Backbone to Local Taskforce (a phased approach?)
- Funder representation on the Local Taskforce



# Community trial – Wyndham: Current state

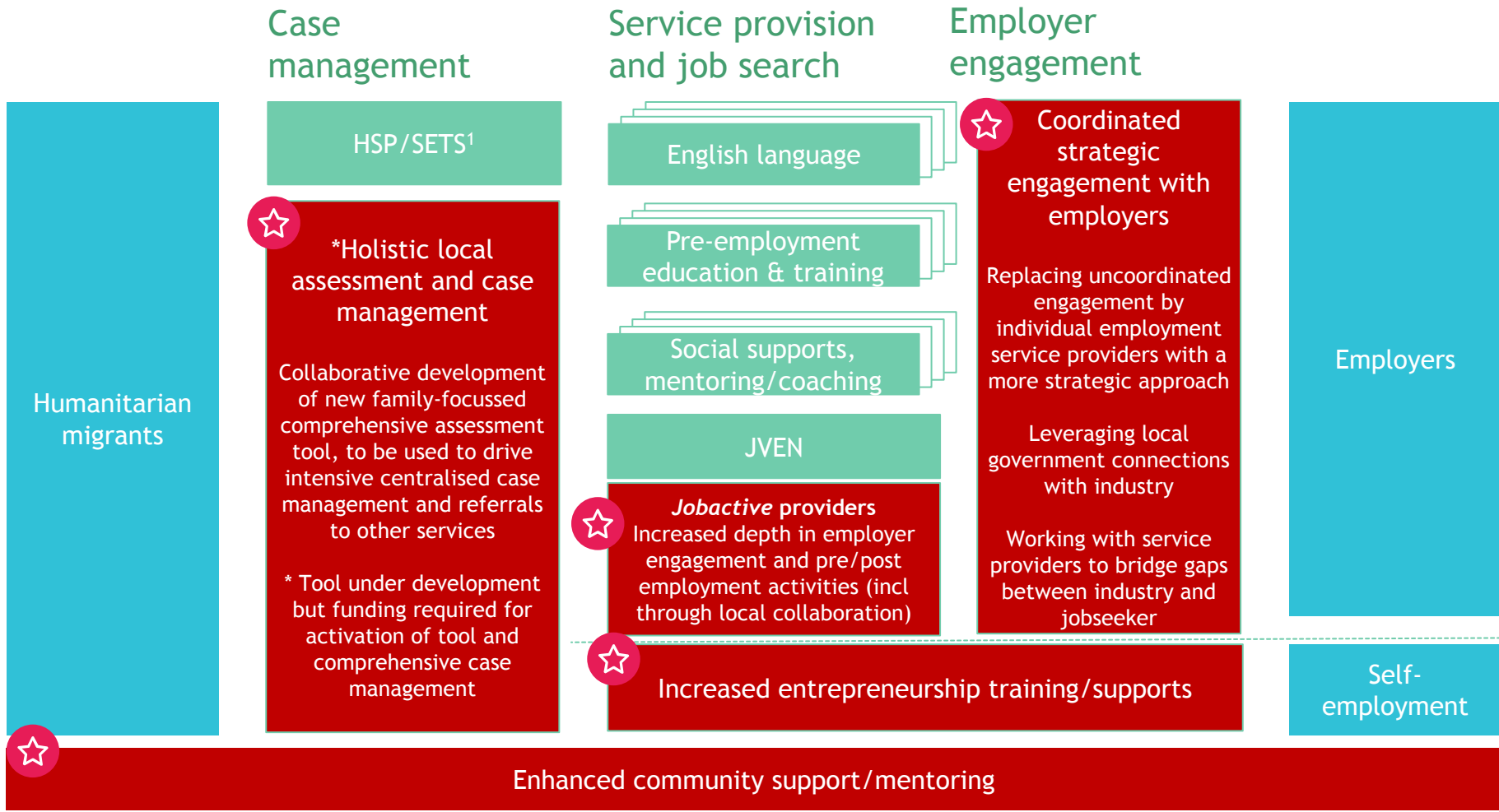


1. Humanitarian Support Program/Settlement Engagement and Transition Support 2. NEIS, Transition to Work, Parents Next



# Community trial – Wyndham: Trial overview

☆ • Key changes in trial



1. Humanitarian Support Program/Settlement Engagement and Transition Support 2. NEIS, Transition to Work, ParentsNext

# Wyndham Trial Benefits

Savings of \$2M per year in Newstart if jobs are found for 20% of the HM caseload in Wyndham (154 jobs)

25 jobs already filled by humanitarian migrants since trial development started in April 2019

## Humanitarian Migrant



- Individual/family gets comprehensive assessment (including career/life cycle), and dedicated bi-cultural case worker
- Wrap-around coordination of services (eg transport to work site, language training on-site)
- Faster start to employment journey and routine than via jobactive, with tailored support for non-employment needs
- Pre/post employment programs with bi-cultural worker for translation and cultural support

## Employers



- Matched with local consortium (job settlement and education providers), with industry support role to fill positions and build capacity
- Strategic employer engagement shapes service provision and ensures training is tailored to the local labour market (eg OH&S, horticulture)
- Employees get additional on-site services, including for non-employment matters
- Ongoing industry support post-placement with additional English language training

## Government



- Savings in the welfare system—jobs are found faster, and humanitarian migrants are more likely to stay in work
- Savings in jobactive and employment services through less time on the caseload, less duplication, and less frequent returns to unemployment
- Support for business growth, including in industries that typically need to import labour from overseas
- Stronger community cohesion given economic participation is a key indicator of successful integration

# Session 2.

## Integrating migrant services and employment services

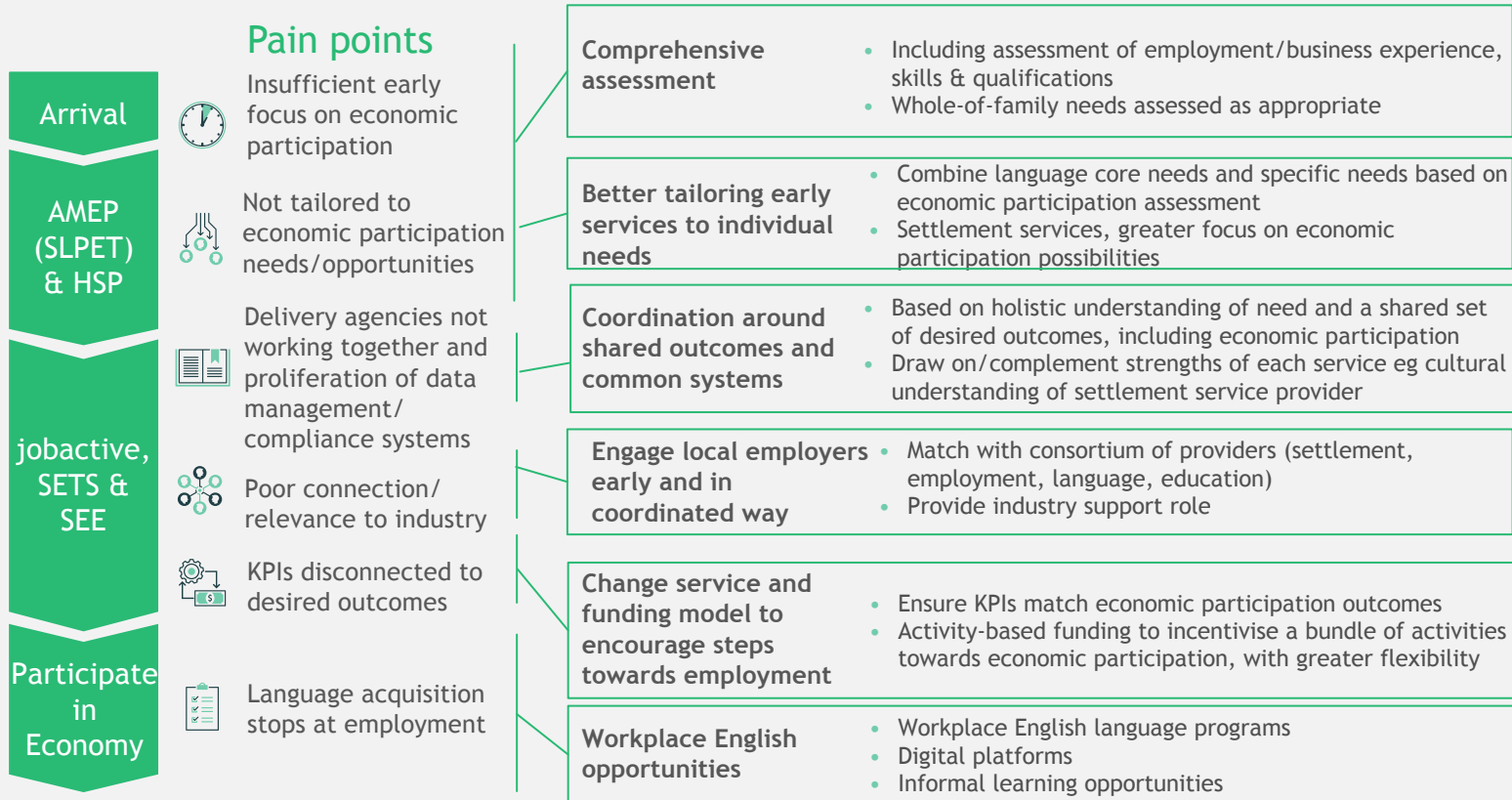
3.30-4.30pm

*Context:* There are opportunities over the next three to improve the service delivery system to boost economic participation for humanitarian migrants. These improvements can take place within services and also within the interaction or nexus between services.

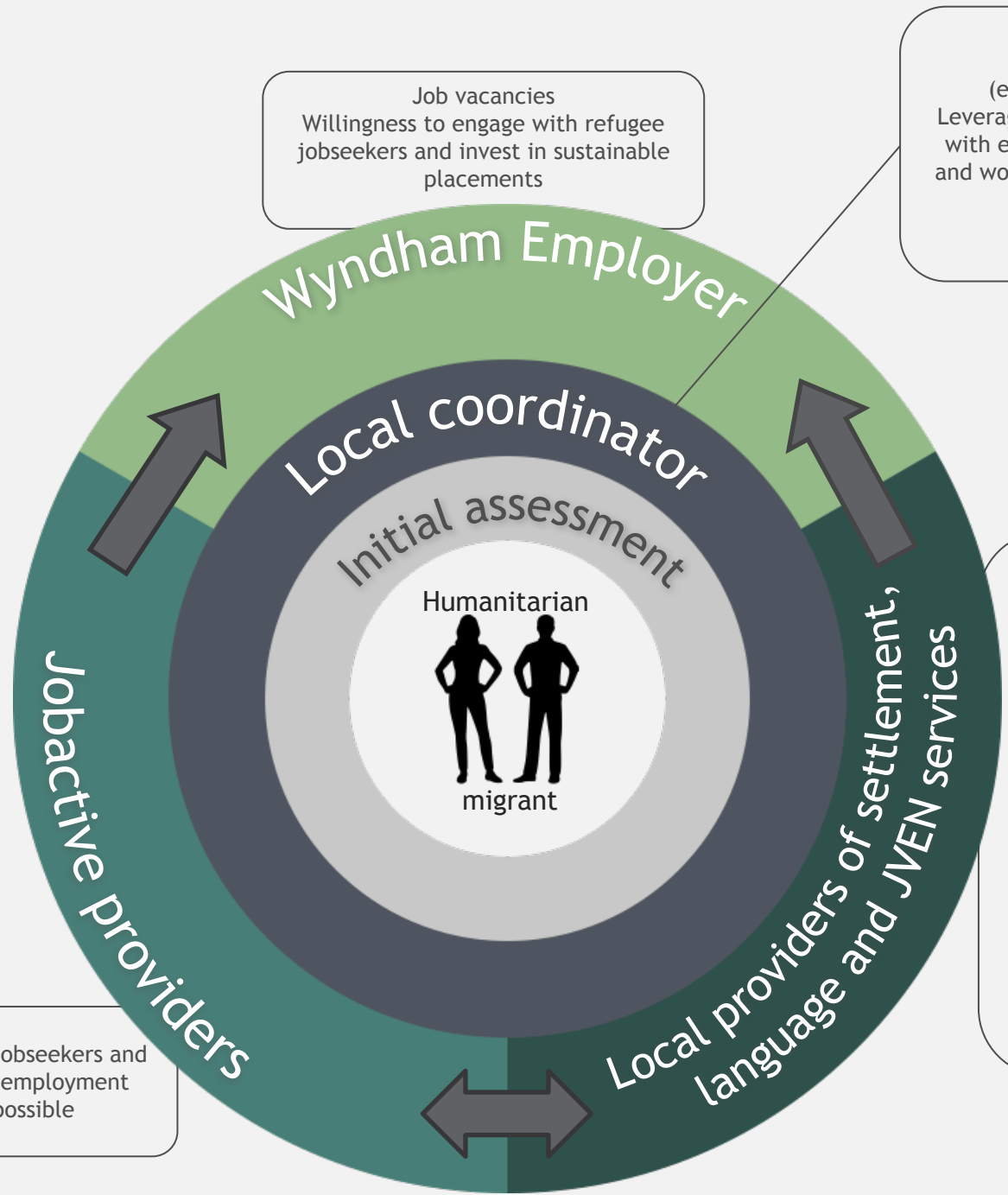
*Purpose of session:* Discussion of priorities and opportunities for improving the 'service delivery system' including:

- Picturing the ideal 'service delivery system' for 2022; what it looks like and the outcomes and objectives it would deliver on
- Identifying the opportunities for the priority improvements to the service delivery system - now and at key milestones (e.g. service contract rollover dates)
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# For discussion - Areas for improvement



Wyndham Model: Employer-focussed approach made possible by 1:1 assessment and local coordination



Job vacancies  
Willingness to engage with refugee jobseekers and invest in sustainable placements

(employed by local government)  
Leveraging local government relationships with employers to identify job vacancies and work with local service provider to fill these roles

- 1/Leveraging state government JVEN funding stream to provide pre- and post-employment support to employers and jobseekers.
- 2/Leveraging role as state 'Learn Local' pre-accredited training provider to provide English language training on-site post placement.
- 3/Successful interventions informed by work with same client base through delivery of settlement services and AMEP

Identifying suitable jobseekers and applying jobactive employment funds where possible



## Language education and work

- 27-30% of humanitarian students who leave English early do so for work related reasons (BNLA Waves 1-4).
- One in five humanitarian students studying English also work, and one in two are looking for work (BNLA Wave 3)
- What are the workplace needs and expectations of employers? The perception of employers is important:
  - 86% of employers who haven't hired refugees say language is a major barrier, compared to 63% of employers who have hired a refugee;
  - 63% of employers rate language as the single biggest challenge for employers who have hired refugees (CPD Employer Survey)
- 71% of businesses say they are highly or moderately affected by low levels of language, literacy and numeracy (AI Group, 2018 Workforce Development Needs survey)



## Questions for discussion

- 1. What parts of the Commonwealth service delivery system could be readily improved to deliver better outcomes for humanitarian migrants and government?
  
2. What opportunities are there to test new approaches?
  - Through community deals
  - Through pilots of enhanced employment services
  - Through new DHA programs/trials
  - Through existing AMEP processes?
  - Other mechanisms, such as the Department of Education's Foundation Skills for Youth program
  
3. What further research needs to be done to understand the current pain points experienced by refugees and service providers?
  - Who can help with this task - this Council, Ministerial Advisory Council, Settlement Council of Australia, others?



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# Appendices



# Guiding principles for a place-based approach<sup>1</sup>



## Locally led design, decision-making and accountability

- local bodies/initiatives decide their own priorities and approaches to service delivery in consultation with local stakeholders. High level of transparency and public scrutiny.



## Engagement with local stakeholders

- stakeholder engagement is crucial to identify local needs, processes and service capability (including what may need to be developed) and avoid duplication, fragmentation or service gaps.



## Coordinated/integrated service delivery with 1:1 case management for client and family unit

- local body/initiative takes a strong leadership position to align other stakeholders and service providers through **collective impact approach**<sup>2</sup>. Extends to securing clear commitments from community groups and leaders.



## Employer-focussed from the start

- employers active in designing and participating in measures to boost employment of refugee job seekers as well as championing workforce diversity and migrant success.



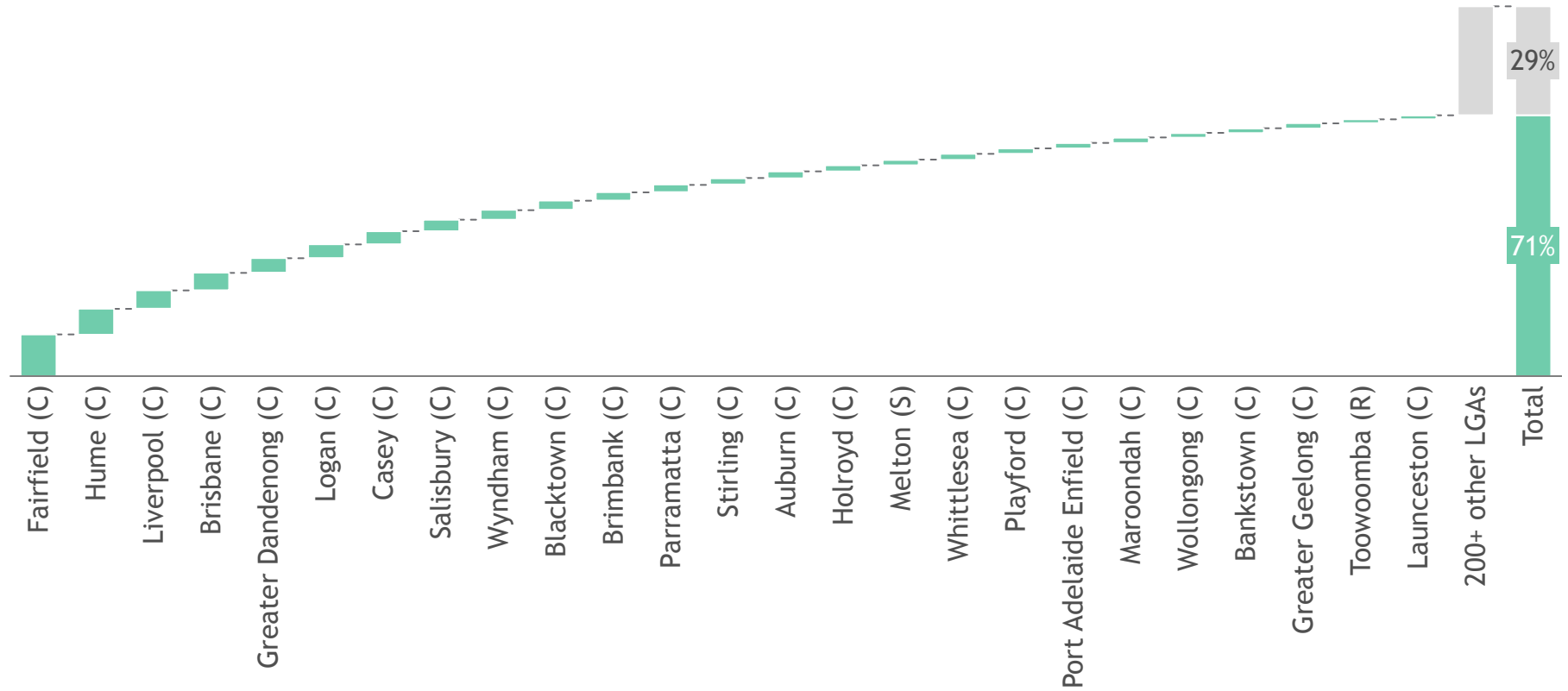
## Community involvement

- members of the broader community are engaged with disadvantaged job seekers in a variety of capacities to aid smooth integration, social cohesion and acquisition of social capital by refugees.

1. A merged set of principles from the work of CPD and the Settlement Services Advisory Council, taking into account Australian and international place-based approaches
2. **Collective impact approach** requires: common agenda/objectives, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, backbone support

# Humanitarian migrants are disproportionately settled in a few areas

Top 25 LGAs have settled over 70% in the last nine years



## Other examples to consider

- 1 **Proposed New Zealand approach:**  
Place-based initiative to address 'at risk' children
- 2 **Proposed Australian approach:**  
Reform of school-to-work transitions through local school clusters
- 3 **Proposed Australian approach:**  
Reform of Victorian mental health services through community partnerships

# NZ example: Proposed framework for place-based initiatives for ‘at risk’ children

## Context:

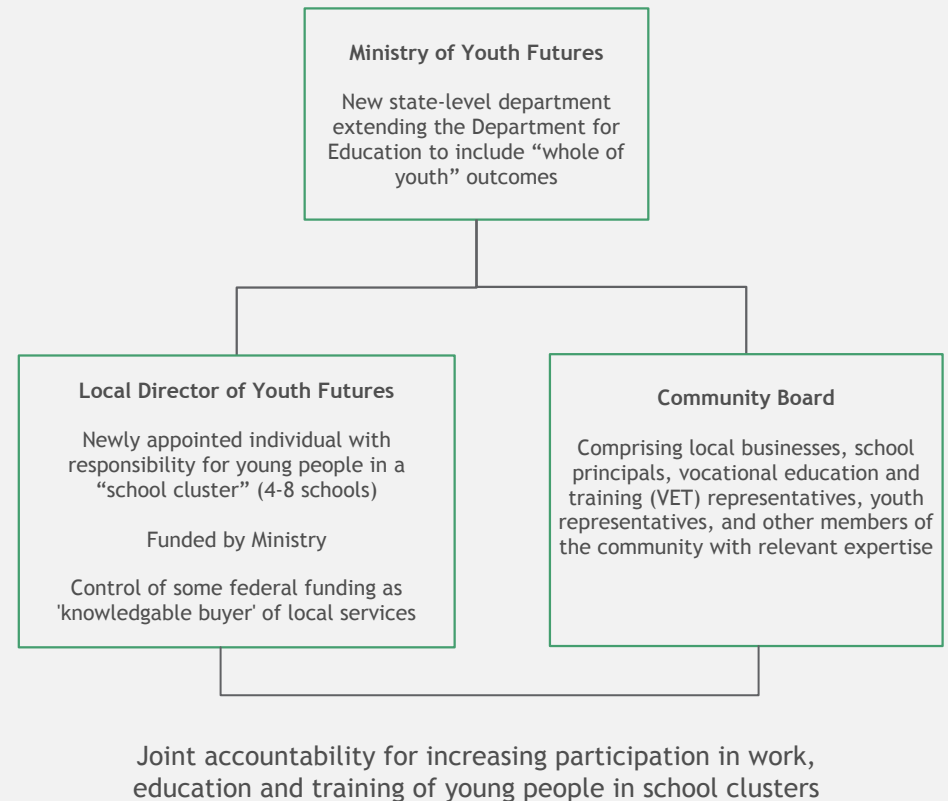
- Three separate place-based initiatives across New Zealand to improve outcomes for at risk children and their families
- Five years contingency funding
- Funding drawn down in two-year blocks subject to reporting/  
Cabinet review on a two-year cycle



# Proposed Australian model: Reform of school to work transitions

## Context

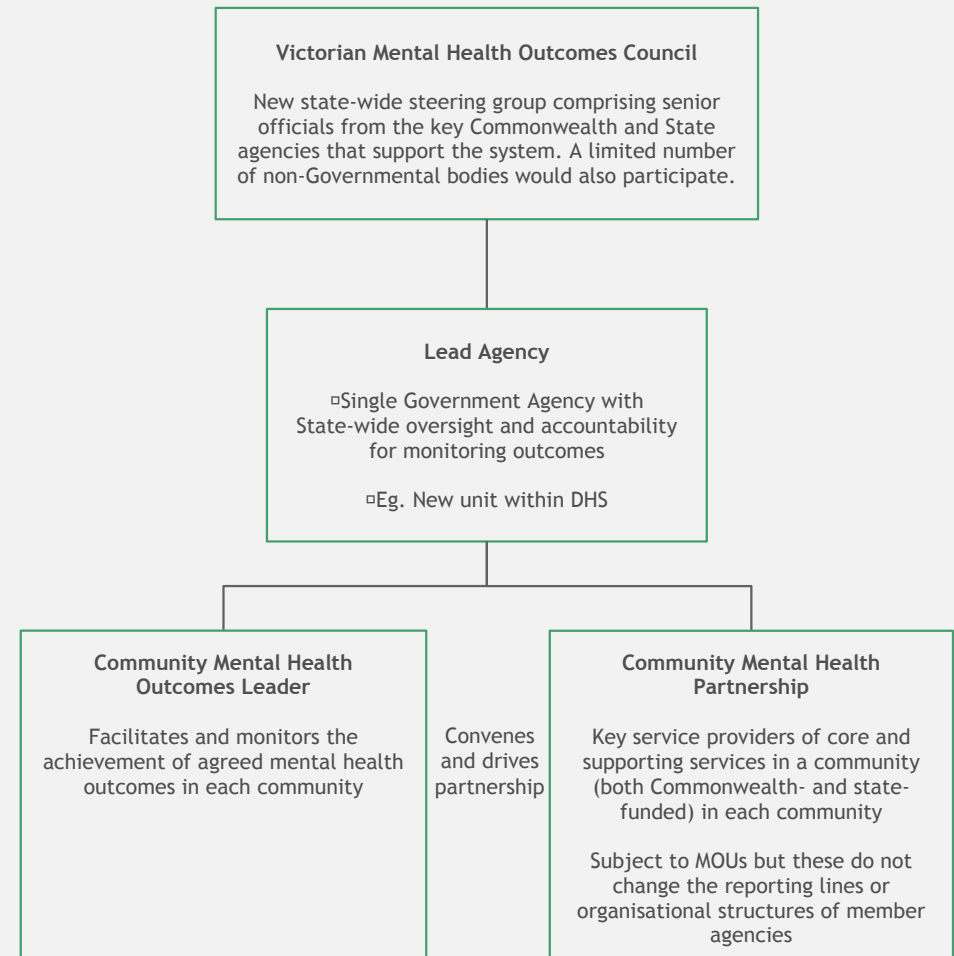
- Model for Department of Education to engage young people through network “school clusters” of 4–8 schools
- Centralised funding of local directors, plus discretionary funding
- (Further details on funding commitment, reporting, review)



# Proposed Australian model: Reform of Victorian mental health services

## Context

- Initiative to improve mental health outcomes by addressing lack of connectedness between mental health services and lack of early intervention
- Community partnerships and leaders (20-30 locations state-wide)
- Funding: (TBC)
- “Review/reporting” (TBC)





## Alternative funding model: Activity Based (Casemix) Funding

- Bundled funding for recognised pathways to successful settlement and economic participation.
- Not a tender-based model – payments made to licensed providers, with fixed efficient price, local authority and accountability.
- Standard efficient price and classification for relevant bundles and rules for licensing set by independent government agency
  - Bundled benchmark price for “employment readiness” might include relevant language training, work experience, connection to local networks etc.
  - Classification (or criteria) for benchmarked price might include performance indicators, rules on evaluation/data, preference for providers networked at the local level etc.
  - Price adjusted at known intervals (e.g. every two years) by comparison of cost-effectiveness across different locations.
- Long run benefits to transparency, equity and efficiency.

# AMEP, SEE and the workplace

## AMEP: “Pre-employment English stream”

- Meets mutual obligation requirement for income support payments, unlike the alternative social English stream.
  - 85% of AMEP clients are in pre-employment English stream.
  - Average 469 hours per humanitarian student (with 38% <200 hours)
- In general, limited engagement with workplaces and general employment needs, particularly in introductory level coursework
- Major barrier to work-based language: New humanitarian migrants on average have a low level of English proficiency, meaning post-language employment pathways can be difficult to access
- Large unknowns around why humanitarian students exit, with a fewer than half are because given hours fully utilised, reached legislative end date, or reached functional English

## Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET)

- Balances work-based language training (up to 150 hours) and work experience (up to 60 hours).
  - 10% of humanitarian AMEP clients undertake SLPET, averaging 146 hours

## Examples of gaps that could be addressed

- “Job interview” material for Home Tutor Resource is available at the “intermediate” level but there is no material in the pre-beginner (no English), beginner (basic English), or post-beginner (limited English). Given that only 4% of humanitarian students exit AMEP due to achieving functional English, it is unlikely the vast majority of humanitarian migrants will access these materials. Despite this, job interview skills are core to entering the workplace (noting this is a single example and other job interview relevant material will be covered in different settings)
- The core AMEP curriculum develops a greater work/employment focus in the “post-beginner” stream (From ACSF1; CSWE1; or equivalent). Prior to this, development is based around more basic needs which is where the vast majority of humanitarian students enter.
- There is a general lack of information on potential work/employment referral/placement for AMEP students.

## Skills for Education and Employment (SEE):

- Requires referral (cannot be from an AMEP provider, predominantly jobactive). Historical concern: humanitarian migrants who exit AMEP due to hours restriction (lessened with introduction of AMEP extend) are transitioned into the SEE program, built around job-seeker programming. However the core issue can often remain building basic language skills.



## WELL program (1991–2014)

### Workplace English Language Learning (WELL): 1991–2014

- Commonwealth Department of Education grant funding to support the integration of language, literacy and numeracy training in workplaces
- Co-funding model with federal government grants and employer contribution
- \$31.6M in final year (2013–2014)
- Positive impact (2012 evaluation)
  - Marked performance in workplaces
  - Reduction in OH&S incidents
  - Increased ability to use technology
  - Enabler for engagement in other workplace-related training
- Limitations
  - Lack of employer awareness
  - Not targeted on particular industries or integrated with other industry/skills initiatives
  - Red tape around application and IT

# Foundation Skills for Your Future program (commencing 2020)

- Department of Education Initiative (2019-2020 Budget)
  - An effort to pick up where the WELL program left off
  - Will support workers who are currently employed or recently unemployed to identify and address literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs
  - \$52.5M