

BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE

Accessibility of family services in a central Queensland mining town – SEGRA Oct. 2010

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Presentation outline

- **Study background**
- **Family service delivery policy**
- **Methods used in study**
- **Middlemount township**
- **Family services in Middlemount**
- **Recommendations**
- **Future research?**

Study Background

- **Bowen Basin region has been subjected to development pressures due to commodity boom – bust cycles (resource community cycles)**
- **Anecdotal evidence suggests an increase in families associated with the mining industry seeking support from NGO's and government organisations**
- **This has important implications for service delivery and employers in the mining sector**
- **Are existing models of family service delivery appropriate and adequate?**

Family services delivery policy

- **Sustainable development as a policy (Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development – MMSD 2002)**
- **Social licence to operate (MCA 2004)**
- **QRC adopts social policy (2006)**
- **Sustainable Futures Framework for Mining Towns (2006)**
- **Sustainable Resource Communities (2009)**
- **Social Impact Management Plans (2009)**

Department of Communities framework

- **Core human services (education, health and wellbeing)**
- **3D perspective (disadvantage, disease and disability)**
- **Needs based determined by social determinants (risk and protective factors)**
- **Triangulation (Service system, community need and capacity)**
- **Based on high quality, timely and accurate information**

DoC cont...

- **Evidence Based Management (EBM) framework defines core concepts:**
 - risk and protection factors,
 - indicators of disadvantage and
 - measures of appropriate, effective and efficient service to alleviate exclusion.
- The service delivery system should, in theory, align broad strategic goals with local operational activities.**

Issues specific to mining towns

- **Reliance on census data**
- **Concerns with population mobility**
- **Variable non-resident populations**
- **Unpredictable development – short time frames**
- **Considerable population churn**
- **Impacts on community cohesion and knowledge**
- **Identification of services available**
- **Visiting services and/or community based**
- **Unclear who is responsible for providing/funding services**

Research Methods

- **Desktop research – ABS, HILDA and AIFS**
- **Literature Review**
- **Survey of mining employees (148)**
- **Interviewed stakeholders (8)**
- **Interviewed families (8)**
- **Statistical and thematic analysis**

Middlemount township

- **Purpose built early 1980's**
- **SEAT (2008) report describes the township as 'tired and outdated' with housing and infrastructure in need of reinvigoration**
- **Liveability rating 5.73 (7.25 for region, 6.59 mining camps)**
- **Double Australian ave. income**
- **Younger workforce age – few retirees**
- **Less participation in community groups**
- **High population churn**

Middlemount township

- **Dominant single industry – mining**
- **Very limited opportunities for private enterprise – some small business home based**
- **Wealth (property) generally at ‘other location’**
- **Multiple reasons for being there – mostly a stepping stone to somewhere else**

Respondent snapshot

- **Mostly male – ave. age 38.5 years**
- **50% Anglo Coal – 50% contractors/gov't**
- **70% married/de facto**
- **65% Nuclear family, 9.7% single parents, 7.3% step families**
- **55.2% partner resided not in Middlemount**
- **42.45% main concern financial situation**
- **Anxiety/depression rated most frequently**
- **Employment security ranked highest**

Family services in Middlemount

- **33% aware of services that supported families**
- **Local GP, community health nurse and medical centre most recalled services**
- **Child support second most recalled service**
- **Only 11% sought assistance in Middlemount**
- **25% recommend services in Mackay - 20% in Rockhampton**
- **6.6% accessed employee assistance program**

Responsible for providing services

- **35% State government**
- **28% Local government**
- **26% mining company**
- **6.8% private sector**
- **3.6% church based organisation**

- **Consensus for shared responsibility – opportunity for competition in provision**

Future services

- **Priority for health service (prefer hospital)**
- **Long list of additional services**
 - **Specialist health services**
 - **Disability, youth support, single parent support**
 - **Emergency accommodation (policies to protect families in times of break up)**
 - **Financial literacy (as opposed to advisory services)**

Other concerns

- **Time for community participation (due to long shifts/commutes)**
- **Community building – disengagement**
- **Role of the company**
- **Isolation (geographical, social, from company)**
- **Parenting issues, community tolerance of bad behaviour, alcohol abuse all ages**

Take home message

- **Community building is the first requirement**
- **Community ownership of programs is essential (difficult though with the pop. churn)**
- **More on-the-ground resourcing required as mining impacts expected to increase with new projects and more mining companies**

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