

# Evaluation of the Beenleigh/Logan Probation & Parole Social Capital Hubs Pilot

An initiative of Queensland Corrective Services Beenleigh  
Probation and Parole and Logan City Council.

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## Contents

<b>Figures and Tables</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Glossary</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>The Hubs Initiative</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>The Hubs Pilot – Methods</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Findings</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Key benefits</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Factors associated with successful outcomes of the Hubs initiative .....	7
<b>Evaluation of the Beenleigh/Logan Probation &amp; Parole Social Capital Hubs Pilot</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>9</b>
The Community Corrections Environment.....	9
Requirements of successful reintegration .....	10
Community focussed corrections approaches elsewhere .....	11
<b>The Social Capital Hubs initiative</b> .....	<b>12</b>
The origin and development of the Hubs initiative .....	12
The Hubs Pilot – Program Description .....	13
<b>Evaluation Purpose &amp; Method</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Observations.....	14
Interviews.....	15
Hub Tracking Data.....	18
<b>Findings</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Purpose of Hubs .....	19
Hub Processes .....	19
Hub Outcomes .....	31
<b>Discussion</b> .....	<b>43</b>
Key benefits .....	43
Factors associated with successful outcomes of the Hubs initiative .....	44
Future directions .....	47

## Figures and Tables

Table 1. Timing of Pilot Hubs .....	14
Figure 1. Pilot Study Hub Location – Beenleigh Town Square. ....	15
Figure 2. Beenleigh Town Square during Hub (left) and non-Hub day (right).....	15
Table 2. Description of Client Interview Participants .....	16
Table 3. Service Providers attending Study Hubs.....	17
Figure 3. Word cloud of responses about perceptions of the “vibe” of the Hubs. ....	24
Figure 4. What attracted community members to the Hubs (n=20 community members).....	26
Table 4. Hub attendance and attendee contact by service provider, based on Council post-Hub tracking....	32
Table 5. Service Providers in Attendance at Hubs and Reasons for Non-attendance. ....	33
Table 6. Hub Attendees contacts with service providers while at the Hubs (reported by providers). ....	36
Table 7. Client description of post-Hub follow-up.....	38
Figure 5. Client-reported post-Hub service provider connections .....	38

## Appendices

Appendix A	Hub Invitation
Appendix B	References

## Acknowledgements

The Social Capital Hubs themselves originated as an embryonic idea conceived of by Nina Viljamaa as she thought about ways to better reach and reintegrate the Community Corrections client caseload. Ms Viljamaa subsequently enlisted the help of the Logan City Council Community Safety Program team, and, in particular, Erin Simpson and Keely Larsen, to carry out early versions of the Hubs.

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## Glossary

<b>Client</b>	Offender receiving services through Community Corrections Person receiving services through a non-government organisation
<b>Community member</b>	Individual member living in the local community (in this case, not a client of Community Corrections)
<b>DHPW</b>	Department of Housing and Public Works
<b>DO</b>	District Office
<b>LCC</b>	Logan City Council
<b>Service provider (SP)</b>	Non-government, community organisation providing services to community Government department providing services to community
<b>Officers</b>	Employees of Community Corrections (Probation and Parole officers)
<b>University of Queensland</b>	UQ
<b>Queensland Corrective Services</b>	QCS

## Executive Summary

The Social Capital Hubs were a co-designed initiative of Beenleigh and Logan Community Corrections District Offices and the Logan City Council Community Safety Program team as an innovative way to enhance case management and connection to community and services.

It is the responsibility of all corrective services officers to manage persons who are released to the community subject to community based or parole orders (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2005; Queensland Corrective Services, 2019). A core purpose of community corrections is to achieve community safety through rehabilitation and reintegration, thereby reducing recidivism.

A key part of case management involves connecting clients to appropriate services to aid their rehabilitation and build their social capital. This study evaluates an innovative strategy for boosting offenders' social capital, access to community resources, and sense of belonging.

### The Hubs Initiative

The Beenleigh and Logan District Offices are two of the four offices that comprise the QCS South Coast Region (SCR). The SCR supervise the largest average number of offenders serving community corrections orders in Queensland on any given day. The Hubs initiative was designed as a mechanism to improve case management and referral pathways for clients and community members located in the Logan and Beenleigh jurisdiction.

The proposal was to hold events where service providers and offenders would be brought together in a community setting. The broad aims of the Hubs, as designated by the project team were:

- to encourage clients to develop pro-social, mainstream connections within the local community.
- to facilitate clients' access to service providers by:
  - increasing their awareness of services/opportunities; and
  - creating direct referral pathways and links with service providers.
- to support case management by providing a check-in point for clients and officers outside of the formal setting of District Offices.

The process for determining how the Hubs would be set up and operated for the purposes of the study was the result of consultation between the management team including Logan City Council Community Safety Program Team and Beenleigh and Logan District Offices.

### The Hubs Pilot – Methods

This mixed-methods design study relied on a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources including in-depth interviews with 98 participants across five stakeholder groups (including clients, service providers, Logan City Council staff, officers and community members), descriptive attendance tracking data collected as part of the Hubs procedures, and systematic observations conducted by researchers at each Hub.

### Findings

The results identify several clear benefits resulting from the Hubs. Of most significance is that Hubs provide the possibility of **direct referrals to services through a community-based event** in which clients and community members can be **introduced to a range of relevant services**. From comments received in the stakeholder interviews, there was evidence that the informal atmosphere of the Hub was comfortable to clients, their family members, and supporters who also attended. Officers commented that there were **positive effects of getting out of the office** and that the relaxed 'vibe' of the Hubs made effective

connections between officers and clients possible, but also made staff feel like they had a more collaborative working environment.

Through attendance at the Hubs, **both clients and staff were introduced to and learned about a range of services in their community**. In addition, there was evidence that as a result of making contact at the Hubs, many **clients made connections with relevant services** following the Hubs. Service providers stated that the format not only gave them **greater exposure to potential clients** but also allowed them to **connect with other services** with which they had not previously been familiar. In a similar manner, community members also found the Hubs to be a valuable resource to obtain information about services available in the area, highlighting that **the value of the Hubs extended beyond clients**. Furthermore, the open format where officers and clients mingled with community members was seen as **fostering a pro-social environment** where clients participated in a community rather than strictly a corrections-oriented event.

## Key benefits

**Productive 'co-design' approach.** The Hubs demonstrated the possibilities for co-designed and cooperative strategies that Community Corrections can develop with other agencies, like the local council and service providers, who are willing to develop partnerships and protocols to support clients. Community Corrections' contribution was underpinned by the goal of improving community safety by enhancing clients' social capital, achieved in part by increasing clients' access to needed services and by increasing their connectedness and sense of belonging to the community, while Logan City Council's goals were to increase public safety by encouraging service provider collaboration and engagement.

**Client connection to services.** Stakeholders recounted stories of client–service provider connections, both during and following the Hubs that resulted in positive changes for the clients. For some clients, the Hubs represented the first opportunity to front up to needed services. There was general agreement that the benefits accrued to clients through the Hubs should be viewed as part of a process that would create awareness, build relationships and help clients feel that they were part of the community.

**Informal atmosphere of the Hubs was beneficial.** Stakeholders described the Hubs as having a positive vibe with a friendly and sociable atmosphere where many clients and members of the public felt sufficiently at ease to converse with officers and service providers.

**Reintegration to the community.** Stakeholders felt the Hubs represented a strategy to increase clients' prosocial interaction with and reintegration to the community while serving an order. This occurred because the Hubs were held in an open public space where other members of the community were welcomed.

**District Office and service provider interaction and collaboration.** The Hubs allowed officers to create connections with service providers which assisted them in knowing where they might be better able to refer clients with different needs. In addition, the more personal connection led to a stronger collaboration to aid in connecting clients to the service.

**Interagency connections between service providers.** The Hubs helped to promote interaction among service providers that had not previously existed. The interaction had a direct effect on client outcomes when service providers were able to direct clients to other agencies that better addressed their needs.

**Positive community effects beyond Community Corrections.** Services at the Hubs were relevant for many members of the broader community and people passing by the Hubs were able to participate in the Hub and connect to a variety of needed services in the one place.

**Mechanism for case management and referral.** The Hubs initiative reflected a shift in the practice and culture of the work of community corrections. Both officers and clients commented that the less formal environment was productive. From this view, the Hubs could serve as an adjunct to the necessarily more

formalised engagement during supervision meetings by encouraging an alternate productive form of engagement that was more collaborative than directive.

**Place-based approach.** Whole of Government initiatives include a focused on place-based approaches to address social, health and criminal justice issues (Queensland Government, nd). The hubs is but one example of this and QCS may consider this evaluation as part of the government strategic priority “keeping communities safe” and/or the criminal justice reform framework. In the future, QCS can review whether a place based approach is a suitable and effective form of contact to be built into the case management model.

## Factors associated with successful outcomes of the Hubs initiative

**Consultation and coordination.** Stakeholders agreed that several processes needed to occur in the lead up, execution, and conclusion of Hubs. Many commented that the effective operation of the Hubs requires that both the officers and services providers have a clear understanding of Hub procedures and the benefits that can accrue to clients who attend. To this end, offices should continue to designate the coordination and operation of the Hubs as part of the role and responsibilities with the office. During the pilot, interview participants suggested that greater consultation and communication with all stakeholder groups would address many of the problem areas that were raised during the evaluation.

**Location and Transportation.** Results show that the choice of venue is important and having the events in an open and accessible location encouraged participation. Consideration of travel time, parking and accessibility via public transport in selecting locations was also deemed to be important. Some consideration could also be given to the geographic distribution of Hubs to reach clients located further away; though, stakeholders acknowledge that this would require more coordination and perhaps a distribution of organisational responsibility to different District Offices.

**Selection of Services.** The overall success of the Hubs initiative is dependent on matching client needs to relevant services. Through the course of the study the variety of services in attendance increased, however, stakeholders commented that continued attention to the type and mix of services in attendance at each Hubs was important. Among services to consider in the future were those targeting the different needs of men and women, those focussed on clients with children, and those focussed on Indigenous clients.

**Invitation of clients.** Some clients indicated that they only attended the Hubs because they were required, or thought they were required, to do so. Officers should consider and/or be clearer in their communication with clients whether attendance should be optional for those clients that would prefer to meet only in the office or who might be reluctant to engage in an open, public setting.

**Timing.** Stakeholders suggested that Hubs should be scheduled less frequently to avoid problems of lethargy and burnout amongst providers and staff. Further, using a strategy of staggered arrivals could help to alleviate bottlenecks during busy periods at each Hub.

**Guidance for Hub attendees.** Giving Hub attendees information about each service provider at the Hub in addition to a map indicating the location of the various service providers at the site would be advantageous during peak times when staff cannot accompany all clients through the event.

**Supervision of children.** For clients attending the Hubs and accompanied by children, it is suggested that a safe area with games etc. along with appropriate supervision is provided.

**Follow-up.** In order to allow for officers to effectively track their clients' connections to relevant services to aid in case management, as well as to allow a greater understanding of the broader effects of the Hubs, coordination among officers, clients and services regarding follow up to contacts made during the Hub event would be of benefit. This should include information that can be used to coordinate among officers and the various services with respect to any post-Hub communication with the client.

**Data collection.** During the pilot study, Hubs procedures for collecting information were continually developing. Given that one aim of the Hubs initiative is to increase referrals to services, developing a standard method for collecting information about client-service provider connections would be useful for gauging the extent to which the aim is met. While adding additional administrative layers to the work of officers and/or service providers may serve as a barrier to referring by increasing workload, better utilisation of existing data collection processes may be of benefit for ongoing monitoring of the program.



# Evaluation of the Beenleigh/Logan Probation & Parole Social Capital Hubs Pilot

The Social Capital Hubs (the 'Hubs') initiative was spearheaded by Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) Beenleigh and Logan District Offices and Logan City Council (LCC). The Hubs initiative was designed as a service provider expo located in community settings to expose clients to a range of service providers in their local community. This report details the results of an evaluation of the initiative based on a series of six Hubs operated in the second half of 2018. The evaluation assesses both processes and outcomes for the series of study Hubs and draws on a comprehensive set of data drawn from key stakeholder groups, descriptive tracking data, and QCS administrative data.

Before turning to an explanation of the Hubs initiative, the study methods and findings, we begin with a discussion of some key issues arising from the literature that explain the context for the study.

## Background

### The Community Corrections Environment

The management of offenders serving community based or parole orders is the core business of all corrective services agencies (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2005; Queensland Corrective Services, 2019). The rate of people subject to community corrections orders in Australian jurisdictions has been generally rising in the past decade (Australian Productivity Commission, 2019), and the administration of these orders comprises a significant proportion of corrective services work. In Queensland, an average of just over 20,000 people per day were serving community corrections orders in 2017-18 (Queensland Corrective Services, 2019).

A major aim of the management of community corrections orders, as is the case for all corrective sanctions, is to aid people in their rehabilitation and reduce recidivism. While research indicates that community based orders may be a more effective means of reducing recidivism than custodial orders alone (e.g., Ostermann & Hyatt, 2016; Stavrou et al., 2016; Wan et al., 2014), there are a variety of mechanisms through which this may take place.

Case management of clients by community corrections officers operates through treatment and control strategies (Skeem & Manchak, 2008, Schaefer & Williamson, 2017), whereby the treatment approach aims to address the underlying reasons for the offending behaviour by supporting clients through services and programs and control strategies aim to identify indicators of increasing risk.

Thus, in addition to monitoring compliance with order conditions, a key part of case management involves connecting clients to appropriate services. Contemporary community corrections officers in Australia and elsewhere have large caseloads and spend considerable time assessing risk and compiling reports which affects the time available to coordinate the service requirements of their clients (Schiraldi, 2018; Sofronoff, 2016).

Research suggests that to be maximally effective in reducing the likelihood of either reoffending or contraventions of community orders, attention needs to be paid to the identification of effective programs and services and strategies for connecting offenders to those programs and services (Maguire et al., 1998). These services are for the most part external to corrective services and operated by a large network of governmental and non-governmental agencies (Graham, 2011). As Porporino has recently argued, the way forward for establishing effective community corrections is

“by offering an enhanced scope of services that offenders can take up – obviously with some nudging and encouragement on [the part of corrective services] – but making the attractiveness of

the services the 'hook' for greater contact and for realizing greater pro-social involvements" (2018, p. 85).

In Queensland, as is the case elsewhere, the provision of post-release services is an important feature of community corrections. These services are commonly developed through formalised multi-agency partnerships that can take carriage of many aspects of service delivery for at least some portion of the order. Nonetheless, discussions on the provision of post-release services in Australian jurisdictions has highlighted that there may be gaps in this system, and that the provision of treatment, services and support for those serving orders in the community is necessary to reduce the risk of recidivism (Borzycki & Baldry, 2003).

## Requirements of successful reintegration

Which services are required to encourage successful reintegration of individuals into the community following the completion of a correctional order? A large body of Australian research has examined the barriers to integration (e.g., Baldry et al., 2018; Borzycki & Baldry, 2003; Dawe, 2007; Graffam et al., 2005; Heseltine et al., 2011; Victorian Ombudsman, 2015). Among these are factors such as disability, attitudes, psychological and physical health, education history, interpersonal skills, substance abuse, employability skills, discrimination, finance and housing, and the availability of formal and informal supports.

To overcome these barriers, researchers have pointed to the need for targeted services and interventions to assist offenders. While many of these services are aimed at primary needs of offenders including housing, health, parenting and protection from victimisation (Link et al., 2019; Trotter et al., 2012), others are aimed at building 'human capital', or individual capacities, for example enhanced cognitive skills or improved employability (Baldry et al., 2018). The development of these skills is the focus of many programs and services available to those serving community corrections orders and can assist in training and employment so that ex-prisoners can feel that they are functional members of the community.

While access to primary needs and the development of human capital are key components of successful reintegration, researchers have argued that there is an often overlooked third component, 'social capital', which also needs to be addressed (Farrall, 2004).

## Social capital

Desistance from offending behaviour has long been observed to be affected by wider social variables such as changes in social status and increasing exposure to social experiences (Laub et al., 2011). A key aspect of this social component of desistance from offending behaviour is 'social capital', or the value that we all derive from connections to others, social ties, trust, and engagement in society (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). Social capital provides individuals with the needed resources to solve problems and pursue specific goals and develops reciprocity and trust as mechanisms for encouraging pro-social conduct (Coleman, 1988). While most people derive social capital from relationships with families, friends, colleagues and neighbours from their surrounding communities and networks, those exiting prison or serving community orders can have reduced opportunities to create prosocial networks.

Social capital is necessary for desistance and successful reintegration because 'it is not enough to build capacities for change where the change depends on the opportunities to exercise capacities' (McNeill, 2006, p.50). That is, beyond individual shifts in thinking and behaviour, and the development hard skills and human capital, the nature and quality of our social networks can help or hinder the goal of desistance from offending behaviour (Best et al., 2008). While corrections practice and service delivery most often focusses on human capital there is evidence that greater consideration should be given to social capital and connections with pro-social others in the community (Farrall, 2002; Walker et al., 2014; Wilson, 2014).

This study enables us to evaluate an innovative strategy for boosting offenders' social capital, access to community resources, and sense of belonging, to assist with the reintegration process.

## Community focussed corrections approaches elsewhere

The Hubs initiative (described in the following section) is unique in its design and focus on linking probation and parole clients with services in a community setting. While the concept of integrating services into criminal justice processes has emerged recently in the courts sector with the advent of the neighbourhood courts (Richards, 2010), few similar initiatives exist at the corrections end of the criminal justice spectrum. However, two recent international programs provide points of comparison.

Since 2011, the NYC Department of Probation (DOP) has operated the *Neighborhood Opportunity Network* (NeON). NeONs were established as service provider resource hubs in seven New York communities with the highest rates of probation and parole clients and socioeconomic disadvantage (Westat & Metis Associates, 2018). These communities had not been well served by a previously centralised DOP such that there was limited or no community engagement on the part of DOP. After community stakeholder consultation, NeONs were established as permanent resource Hubs, bringing together probation officers, community-based service providers, and other community members. The aim was to target corrections clients and the broader community through services made available at the NeON. In addition to educational, employment and health programs, NeONs offered arts programming as a way of cultivating social connection and belonging among clients (Westat and Metis Associates, 2018). The program is described as an intentional shift away from a dedicated monitoring and compliance correctional approach, and instead aims to create a culture in which clients are viewed as “members of families and communities that are in need of investment and empowerment with skills, resources and opportunities (Susan Tucker senior official at NYC DOP in Brown et al., 2016, p.109).

Likewise, *Together Women*, a program in the United Kingdom, is another collaborative initiative that also aims to be a ‘one-stop-shop’ linking workers and community services to facilitate access for women in need, including those serving community orders (Hedderman et al., 2008). Services include but are not limited to training on issues such as parenting, managing mental health, life skills, thinking skills and offending behaviour. Together Women, however, differs from other models in that it operates as an independent agency that manages the identification and coordination of the various stakeholders and acts as the broker in matching their clients to the variety of services that participate in the program.

Each of these programs recognises the inherent value of collaboration among the participating stakeholders that puts an emphasis on an inclusive and integrated model of service engagement for community corrections clients. Moreover, in addition to increasing participants’ access to crucial services to build human capital through the development of hard skills and education, these programs also aim to boost social capital by building participants’ connections to prosocial networks and sense of belonging to the community.

# The Social Capital Hubs initiative

## The origin and development of the Hubs initiative

Community Corrections accounts for a significant proportion of Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) operations (QCS, 2019). The Beenleigh and Logan District Offices are two of four offices that comprise the QCS South Coast Region, which accounts for the largest average daily number of offenders serving community corrections orders in the Queensland (QCS, 2019). QCS has among the highest community corrections offender-to-staff ratios in the country, with an average ratio of about 29 clients to one operational staff member in 2017-18 (Australian Productivity Commission, 2019, see also Sofronoff, 2016). Officers are assisted in service delivery for some proportion of those serving parole orders through contracted re-entry services (MARA, Crest and Max Solutions). Nonetheless, given high caseloads and the needs of offenders who might fall outside of the domain of re-entry services, there is a necessity to consider alternative strategies for linking offenders to services. Against this backdrop, the idea for the Social Capital Hubs was formulated.

The initial purpose of the Hubs was to think differently about rising QCS community corrections caseloads, and about the relatively high levels of crime in the Logan City Council area (Queensland Police Service, 2019). The Hubs initiative, therefore, was designed as a mechanism to improve case management and referral pathways. This would entail a different case management strategy, increasing direct pathways to connect offenders to services, and a way of combining these processes within the community, where clients could gain a greater sense of belonging. The idea, first conceived of by District Manager Nina Viljamaa, was to “...start building resilience and connectedness in the right way at the community level, as opposed to being reactive. ... It’s got to happen at the ground level in [the] community...”.

To achieve this, the proposal was to hold events where service providers and clients would be brought together in a community setting. The project was the result of a collaboration between the Beenleigh and Logan District Offices and the Logan City Council Community Safety Program. The broad aims of the Hubs, as designated by the project team were:

- to encourage clients to develop pro-social, mainstream connections within the local community.
- to facilitate clients’ access to service providers by:
  - increasing their awareness of services/opportunities; and
  - creating direct referral pathways and links with service providers.
- to support case management by providing an opportunity for contact outside of the formal setting of District Offices.

Since their inception in 2017, the form and function of the Hubs have evolved. The first Hub held in Yarrabilba in June 2017 was aimed exclusively at female QCS clients and was organised as a presentation format in which a small number of service providers presented their services to attendees. Following the first event, six additional Hubs were run in 2017 (three for men and three for women) in suburbs Beenleigh, Eagleby and Woodridge. At this point the format shifted to an expo-style event in which service providers manned tables, with clients circulating around the room. The aim of the events in the first year was to reach areas that were further away from District Offices and perhaps not as well-served as a result. While there was some increase in attendance figures over the course of the first year, the events remained relatively small with, on average, seven service provider agencies and 19 clients in attendance.

Based on the success of the last set of 2017 Hubs held in Woodridge, attracting a total of 30 women and 50 men, the decision was made to continue the Hubs into 2018. A decision was made to evaluate the Hubs in 2018.

## The Hubs Pilot – Program Description

The process of determining how the Hubs would be set up and operated for the purposes of the study was the result of consultation between the management team including Logan City Council Community Safety Program team (Erin Simpson and Keeley Larsen) and Beenleigh District Office (Nina Viljamaa).

Prior to the pilot, the management team made the following design decisions:

**General event coordination:** Responsibility for event logistics would rest primarily with the Logan City Council Community Safety Program.

**Location:** Choice and hiring of venue was conducted by Logan City Council in consultation with District Offices.

**Timing:** For the purposes of the study, Hubs ran for 2 hours in the morning (10am-12pm) every 2 months, with gender specific days organised in the same week 2 days apart with slightly different services.

**Coordination of service providers:** Logan City Council invited service providers based on existing links and in consultation with District Offices relating to potential client needs.

**Setup:** Logan City Council were responsible for facilitating how and where service providers set up their stand at the Hub on the day.

**Open to the public:** All Hubs were designed to be open to all members of the public.

**Community Corrections staff coordination:** District Office managers were responsible for communicating Hub procedures before, during and after events to District Office staff.

**Attendee procedures:** Supervising District Office staff would invite clients on their caseload to the Hubs. Community members could attend the Hub should they notice the event, but no public announcement/advertising was made in advance of the Hub.

**Hub Day Procedures:** All Hub attendees were to be welcomed to the Hub by a District Office staff member, or Logan City Council staff at a Welcome Desk. All clients would be signed in by District Office staff, who would then accompany them through the Hub services. Community members would also be greeted in the same way and could be accompanied if they chose.

**Post Hub Procedures:** Following each Hub, Logan City Council collected information from all service providers regarding the number of contacts made during the Hub. Through the sign-in process, District Office staff determined which of their clients had attended the Hubs to be able to follow up with them in subsequent supervision meetings.

Procedures within District Office for follow-up after the Hubs evolved during the initial Hubs. Directions for case notes and engagement forms (clients' engagement with service providers at the Hub) were developed and put in place for the start of the pilot study.

## Evaluation Purpose & Method

We employed a mixed-methods research design, to evaluate processes and outcomes relating to the six study Hubs held in the Beenleigh Town Square between July 2018 and December 2018.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the program achieves the stated aims (see p. 13), but also to identify factors that can contribute to increasing the success of the Hubs initiative in the future.

The study relies on a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources including in-depth interviews with 98 participants across five stakeholder groups (including clients, service providers, Logan City Council staff, Community Corrections officers and community members), descriptive attendance tracking data collected as part of the Hubs procedures, and systematic observations conducted by researchers at each Hub. The mixed-methods design is intended to provide a comprehensive examination of the Hubs, incorporating a range of viewpoints while also neutralising the limitations of any one data source (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

**Future examination of recidivism.** The current evaluation does not include an examination of offender recidivism based on QCS administrative data. The reduction of recidivism was not one of the primary stated aims of the Hubs program (noted above). Rather, these aims focus on improving clients' connections to a range of services to assist them in navigating the social, economic, and personal challenges that they may face which may be barriers to reducing recidivism (Borzycki & Baldry, 2003).

Each phase of data collection included in the pilot study is detailed below

## Observations

All Hubs took place at the Beenleigh Town Square, a large outdoor area commonly used for community events, and situated in close proximity to the Beenleigh Courthouse and Beenleigh District Office (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). While prior to the pilot study Hubs had been held at locations in Logan, the decision was made by the project team to limit the Hub locations to Beenleigh Town Square in order to reduce the potentially confounding effect of location on the evaluation outcomes. The decision to use the Beenleigh Town Square was made because of its easy access to the Beenleigh District Office and transport options of clients, proximity to other major Beenleigh landmarks such as the Beenleigh Courthouse, and the fact that it provided a partially covered outdoor public space at a relatively low cost (covered by the Logan City Council team).

Observations were collected for each of the Hubs during the Pilot phase. This included three Men's and three Women's Hubs (see Table 1). Observations included notes on the environment of the Hubs, the set-up of the Hubs and the service providers in attendance, the ratios of District Office staff to participants (including both clients and community members), and the flow of participants through the Hubs.

*Table 1. Timing of Pilot Hubs*

	Women's Hubs	Men's Hubs
Time 1	Hub 1: Tuesday, 31 July 2018	Hub 2: Thursday, 2 August 2018
Time 2	Hub 3: Tuesday, 2 October 2018	Hub 4: Thursday, 4 October 2018
Time 3	Hub 5: Tuesday, 27 November 2018	Hub 6: Thursday, 29 November 2018



Source: Google Maps.

Figure 1. Pilot Study Hub Location – Beenleigh Town Square.



Source: (L) Authors' photo; (R) Google Maps.

Figure 2. Beenleigh Town Square during Hub (left) and non-Hub day (right).

## Interviews

Interviews were conducted with multiple groups of participants involved with the Hubs process. The interviews for each group (with the exception of the community members) were loosely structured around key themes surrounding the Hub purpose, processes, and perceived impacts on different aspects of Community Corrections case management, connections with and amongst service providers, and re-entry processes.

## Community Members

Interviews were conducted with 20 randomly selected community members (10 male, 10 female) attending the second and third Hubs (men's and women's). Community members were approached by the researcher/s as they exited the Hub and invited to participate in a short interview. The interview covered four key questions: (1) what brought them to the Hub; (2) what services they visited and what they got out of their visit; (3) what they thought was the purpose of the event and general opinions of the event; and (4) their opinions on the location and frequency of this type of event.

## Clients

Interviews with clients were conducted following each of the study Hubs. Recruitment of clients was initiated by staff at Beenleigh and Logan District Offices. Officers extended an invitation to their clients to participate in an interview, at the time of a first post-Hub supervision meeting (approximately one month following the Hub).

We conducted 31 interviews with 30 clients who had attended at least one Hub engaged with either Beenleigh or Logan District Offices (one client from Beenleigh volunteered to be interviewed after Hubs at both Times 2 and 3). Originally, the intention was to also interview clients who had not attended the Hubs, however, no clients of this type could be recruited. Table 2 provides a description of the client interviewees. Overall, a greater proportion of clients from the Beenleigh District Office was able to be recruited.

Table 2. Description of Client Interview Participants

	Beenleigh DO	Logan DO	Total		Beenleigh DO	Logan DO	Total
<i>Client Gender</i>				<i>Children</i>			
Male	17	8	25	Primary Caregiver	5	3	8
Female	4	1	5	Not Primary Caregiver	9	3	12
<i>ATSI Status</i>				No children	7	2	9
ATSI	6	2	8	<i>Type of Order</i>			
Non-ATSI	15	6	21	Probation	6	2	8
<i>Age, in years (average)</i>	30.35	35.43	31.66	Board Ordered Parole	5	3	8
<i>Education</i>				Court Ordered Parole	9	3	12
Year 12 or more completed	6	2	8	Intensive Correctional Order	1	1	2
Year 11 or less completed	13	6	19	<i>Order length</i>			
<i>Employment</i>				>1 year	9	2	11
Working	3	1	4	1-2 years	6	3	9
Looking for work	14	5	19	2 years +	5	3	8
Not working/looking for work	4	3	7	Unsure	1	1	2
<i>Relationship Status</i>				<i>Hub Time Attended</i>			
Single	12	5	17	1 (August)	6	4	10
Partner	8	3	11	2 (October)	9	5	14
				3 (November)	7	0	7
<b>Total N Participants</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>30</b>				



## Officers

We also conducted 16 interviews with District Office staff (from Case Manager to District Manager level) across Beenleigh and Logan offices to assess staff perceptions of the Hubs processes, as well as client and case management outcomes. Recruitment was organised through District Managers and took place at the convenience of the office to minimise impost.

Six interviews were conducted in the Logan office, and 10 interviews in the Beenleigh office, with one male officer in each office (the remaining participants were female).

## Service Providers and Logan City Council Staff

Seventeen different organisations providing services attended one or more of the Hubs that were evaluated (including the Logan City Council which provided 3 different types of services – making the full total 19 services). The range of support services are indicated in Table 3.

In order to assess perspectives of the service providers, council organisers provided contacts for service provider staff in attendance at the Hubs, from which 28 individuals (three of whom work in programs provided by city council) agreed to be interviewed (see Table 3). In addition, members of the Logan City Council Community Safety Program team and their managers, as organisers of the Hubs, were invited to participate in interviews, with three and project staff agreeing to be interviewed. In total, there were nine men and 22 women interviewed from both the Logan City Council and other service provider organisations.

Table 3. Service Providers attending Study Hubs.

Type of service	Number of providers attending Hubs	Number of Interviewees from provider type
Business start-up support	1	1
Counselling and support services (individual)	1	1
Court-related services	2	2
Domestic violence/sexual assault services	2	3
Employment/training services	3	9
Financial counselling	1	1
Housing support services	1	2
City Council	1	3
Library services*	1	1
Lifestyle/recreation* services	1	2
Oral health services	1	3
Re-entry services	1	2
Social security services	1	0
Women's health and wellbeing	1	0
Youth services	1	1

\* Library and Lifestyle/recreation services were sub-divisions of the City Council.

## Hub Tracking Data

Following each Hub, the research team were provided non-identifiable aggregated data collected by Logan City Council and District Office staff and through observations as a matter of course, for each Hub, since the initiation of the project in 2017. These data included:

- Hub attendance
  - Counts of client participant invitees
  - Counts of client participant attendance
  - Counts of service providers in attendance
  - Counts of community members in attendance
- Hub participation
  - Counts of participant (both District Office client and community members) interactions with each service provider.

## Findings

The following section details findings from observations, interviews, tracking data relating to the Hubs programs' purpose, processes, and outcomes.

### Purpose of Hubs

From a QCS staff perspective, the initial aim of the Hubs was to *"...start building resilience and connectedness in the right way at the community level, as opposed to being reactive... it's got to happen at that ground level in community..."* (Officer 013).

At the frontline, officers described the purpose and development of the Hubs as operating at two levels. At the most basic level, they referred to Hubs as a *"one-stop-shop"* (Officer 010) providing opportunities to *"get them the support they need"* (Officer 015). This one-stop-shop venue allowed access to information that was both new and more detailed than they had previously had access to, along with the possibility of learning about a wider range of services available to them. Clients reported they were unlikely to have previously accessed many of the services present, and the Hubs provided access to them in the one place: *"... it gives you access to everything, whereas like I wouldn't have gone and accessed these things"* (Client 009).

However, at another level, the Hubs initiative reflected a shift in the practice and culture of the usual work of community corrections. For some, the Hubs represented a way to *"think outside the box" and shift toward a form of "collaborative case management"* (Officer 001), but also to help *"make lasting change"* and to better address the *"underlying factors of why people offend in the first place"* (Officer 016).

From the perspective of the Logan City Council, establishing the Hubs was primarily about connecting people in need to the services available in the Council area (LCC 01) and *"providing [clients] another avenue to be engaging in community"* (LCC 03).

Service providers described a variety of purposes of the Hubs. For some, Hubs were a means of providing information, which they could provide to clients through the Hubs with the aim it would encourage clients to move forward positively in their lives. Others saw Hubs as a way of facilitating re-entry given barriers faced by many clients coming out of prison. Some service providers reported that the Hubs as were a possible strategy for building the capacity of the community services sector to understand and respond to clients. Finally, some service providers' saw the Hubs as a way to build client numbers and help more people to access to their services.

Various stakeholders also commented that Hubs provided opportunities with respect to the wider community allowing both services and community members to learn more about each other and giving both a chance to engage in a setting that was far less sterile than an office. One community member noted that, *"This is the first time I've ever seen services all together giving out information like this. I think it's really, really good"* (CM 003). Community members identified key services and supports about which they received information at the Hubs and with which they could follow up for assistance.

### Hub Processes

The following section describes the Hub processes during the evaluation period. Included are successes and challenges of each of the intended Hub processes.

#### Event Logistics

Responsibility for the logistics of the Hubs, as a joint initiative between Beenleigh and Logan District Offices and Logan City Council, rested largely outside of QCS with the Logan City Council's Community Safety Program team. Logan City Council staff were responsible for all elements of event logistics, with the exception of officer and client coordination and procedures.

### Choice of venue and location

Study participants' comments regarding the relationship between the Hub location and overall Hub quality and experience are important for future planning, especially if Hubs were to be initiated in locations other than the Beenleigh pilot study location in future.

While Hubs prior to the pilot study had been held in locations across the Logan City Council area, as described in the Evaluation Purpose & Method section above, the decision to use one site (Beenleigh Town Square) for the duration of the study was made to limit possible location influences on Hub outcomes.

**Outdoor venue:** For the most part, participants from all groups stated that an outdoor, open venue was an asset for a variety of reasons. The setting encouraged a different kind of working relationship between officers and clients that helped build rapport and “connect [clients] back to the community” (Officer 009), or from the perspective of many clients, provided a change from the more typical office meeting. Service providers also commented that the outdoor venue provided a more informal setting that seemed to be more welcoming and allowed potential clients to feel more at ease. Finally, the outdoor location provided an opportunity for community members to easily attend since they could observe the activity and were then encouraged to ask questions and explore opportunities to link with the service providers that were present.

Despite the positive comments about the outdoor venue, several participants also noted the need for better availability of shelter as protection from inclement weather or avoidance of direct sun (both of which were issues at some point during the study Hubs).

**Location:** Many participants commented on the importance of choosing a location for the Hubs that was convenient to public transportation. This was not only for clients, particularly those attached to the Logan District Office, but also service providers. Several service providers also noted the need for suitable parking.

To allow for maximum exposure to community members, a venue that was in an area where people tend to congregate was viewed by all participant groups as desirable, especially if the space was easily visible or apparent to members of the community who might have the need to access the services present at the Hubs. In the study, the Beenleigh Town Square was often described as such as space – known to the community as a place for public gatherings.

Having the pilot study Hubs located near justice facilities such as the court and/or police station was noted by some participants to be a possible detriment that might deter some community members and possibly even make some clients uncomfortable. However, most client participants indicated that this was not a problem in their own case, and the proximity to the Beenleigh Courthouse made it possible to encourage individuals not connected to Community Corrections, but otherwise in need of services, to attend the Hubs.

There was support for holding future Hubs in different locations but, if possible, to also locate them close to District Offices to increase convenience for both officers and clients. Study participants did comment that holding Hubs in multiple locations across the Logan area might present some logistical problems (i.e., relating to finding appropriate space) and increase the organisational burden on staff.

### Frequency and Timing

**Frequency:** As noted in the method section above, for the purposes of the study, a total of six Hubs (three for women and three for men) were conducted in three time periods, held at intervals approximately two months apart (see Table 2 above). For each time period, women's Hubs (Tuesdays) and men's Hubs (Thursdays) were held in the same week. There were some differences in service provider attendance for men's and women's Hubs (see the following section 'Gender-specific Hubs' for more detail).

The bi-monthly timing of the Hubs, driven largely by the pilot study design (to allow for multiple Hubs to be observed), proved to be burdensome for several reasons.

Officers had most to say about the frequency of the Hubs as they had to plan supervision meetings around the Hubs, arrange referrals to the Hubs, and follow up with clients after the Hubs as part of the broader case management plans with which they operated. For those officers who believed that the Hubs created additional workload pressures, their preference was for the Hubs to be held less frequently. Some officers suggested, for example, holding the Hubs every “*three months*” (Officer 009) or “*four months*” (Officer 006) would capture clients with varying reporting requirements, give officers “*that time to work with people*” (Officer 006), and help to prevent staff burnout.

Related to this was the question of how frequently a client should be referred to a Hub. Some officers thought that this depended on two factors: first, whether the Hub services would vary enough for clients to experience a new range of services, and second, whether only newer clients needed to attend. On this latter point there were divergent views. Some officers saw the benefit of limiting Hubs to clients “*first starting their orders*” (Officer 005), and others felt that clients might benefit from coming back more than once where there were different services or their circumstances had changed, for example, where “*they’ve lost their job or something like that*” (Officer 011).

**Timing:** The start time for Hubs (i.e., 10am) was noted by some officers as problematic and potentially too early for some clients. A staggered start time (the final pilot study Hub trialled this approach with success) reduced bottlenecks at check-in and popular services.

At least one service provider (SP 019) suggested that the men’s and women’s Hubs could be run on the same day, at different times to make it more efficient for service provider participation, in those cases for those services and staff attending both men’s and women’s Hubs.

### Gender-specific Hubs

There was broad agreement among participants that Hubs should be gender-specific; however, many participants commented on the need to better tailor the events for men and for women.

It was highlighted that the women’s Hub needed to be a place where women could feel comfortable to discuss matters that were potentially sensitive in nature (e.g., domestic violence). Officers and service providers also commented on the need to ensure that the Hub created a space where women could feel safe since some female community members came to the Hubs following their attendance to the Domestic and Family Violence Court in the Beenleigh Courthouse.

The need for greater cultural awareness and Hubs offerings for women was also noted by participants. One Indigenous service provider commented on the need to introduce more culturally appropriate ways of engaging with women, commenting: “*our women love to sit and just bead. It’s good therapy for them...something to keep them there and engaged...it shows a safe environment for these women and it gives them an opportunity to build relationships*” (SP 027).

An issue raised in relation to the women’s Hub was how mothers could be supported to participate if they chose to or had no other option but to bring their children with them to the Hub. While most of attendees who brought children were women, some men also brought their children along. In both cases, several participants thought about the effect of children on clients’ ability to fully participate. As one officer stated, “*The women are not necessarily going to want to speak about something in front of the children*” (Officer 001). Several service providers also acknowledged this issue, with some making suggestions for activities that could be held within the Hub to safely occupy young children while their parents spoke with service providers. During the study Hubs, the researchers observed that service providers and Logan City Council staff sometimes brought along small activities (e.g., an apple spiralizer, giant Jenga) to entertain children. The possibility of providing organised activities for children raised a further need to consider appropriate screening through the Queensland Blue Card System.

### Selection, Invitation and Fit of Service Providers

During the pilot, the Hubs included service providers identified and invited by both Logan City Council and District Offices as services considered to be of benefit to clients. Most of the service providers were identified through Logan City Council's existing provider networks across the region. Over the course of the study, the Hubs organising team made some decisions to increase the number and salience of service providers in attendance. This was noted as an improvement by those clients who had been to pre-pilot and pilot study Hubs. While most service providers were identified and invited by the organising team, the number of service providers in attendance also grew through word of mouth within the service providers networks. As a Logan City Council staff member noted:

*"I think we are at the stage now where the service providers just contact us. So, they just turned around and said, 'we've heard about these hubs, can we come?' And we don't turn anyone away because we just don't know who is going to need their support." (LCC 001)*

While conscious of not wanting to make the Hub too large and overwhelming for clients attending the Hubs, stakeholders offered suggestions about other service providers that would make a valuable contribution to future Hubs because they could offer valuable support options. Suggestions were also made to change the service providers at different Hubs, perhaps inviting them on a rotational basis, to reduce impost and introduce variety for clients who attended more than one Hub.

**Fit of services at the Hubs.** When asked what they thought about the types of services available at the Hub, study participants most often described the importance of clients' primary needs including health, employment, and housing. However, they also communicated the need to involve services not strictly focussed on primary needs that would assist clients to develop 'social capital'. For example, services that were described as encouraging community-oriented activities were viewed as helpful in creating connections to the community. As one officer put it, linking in with these services provided "a sense of connection". They explained, "... I know it seems like such a minor thing, but it's actually quite a big thing because they get their sense of belonging to mainstream society. And I think that's a conceptual change [for clients]" (Officer 013).

Thus, while some participating services like lifestyle/recreation services or the libraries did not aim to address basic needs of clients, they were considered important for the Hubs as they served other purposes in helping clients to feel part of the community and expanding social networks, thereby increasing social capital.

Officers and service providers also had suggestions of additional services that might have been missing from the Hubs during the study. Suggestions were put forward for men's support services (e.g. legal services, but also community groups like Men's Sheds), parenting support services, mental health and drug and alcohol support services, healthy lifestyle support services (e.g. recreational and cooking activities), and the participation of local Indigenous community groups.

In some cases, a mismatch between the service provider and the circumstances and needs of some of the clients was reported. As one service provider explained:

*"From what I experienced just at the two [Hubs] that I went to, was that a lot of the people that were presenting were actually looking for housing in private rental; they weren't actually housed in public housing or they were homeless or couch surfing or, you know, staying with family. So, they're not really [eligible for our housing services] if they're not public housing tenants." (SP 009)*

Similarly, some providers commented that service fit could have been improved if they had been given more information about clients' needs as well as information about the other services that were attending the event which could result in greater collaboration. Fit could also have been improved, according to some service providers, if officers and Logan City Council were more fully apprised of the precise nature of what a service could offer clients as part of the initial decision to invite services. Finally, there were comments that the range of services invited could be expanded to include other relevant community-based organisations.

## Setup

Logan City Council was responsible for facilitating how and where service providers set up their exhibitor tables at each Hub. In planning and organising Hubs, efforts were made to strategically place similar or complementary services, e.g., education and training services, next to each other so that they would exchange information, make valuable connections and be able to assist visitors to the Hub by cross referrals.

In setting up for the Hubs, services were asked to provide their own tables (though Logan City Council did bring a spare), signage and brochures. At the men's Hubs, one of the service providers offered a sausage sizzle and cordial drinks as well as playing music. This became an important part of the men's Hub set-up and proved so successful that another service provider subsequently offered to put on food at future women's Hubs where similar food and music had not been available: *"We're already talking to the council about...setting up a barbecue for the women's one"* (SP 006). Some small snacks (biscuits, tea/coffee) had been available at the Time 2 women's Hub for participants to help themselves to, however, there was limited take up of this.

However, the arrangement of tables at the Hub was not considered to be favourable by all. One provider felt that having tables positioned quite closely together was problematic (making it difficult to have private conversations). However, most service providers did not identify this as a problem as it was in some ways unavoidable in the open-air venue, regardless of the table arrangement. Service providers also commented that the close setup made it possible for Hubs providers to more easily chat among themselves when they were not talking to clients, leading to a greater sense of collegiality and the development on inter-service connections. This is discussed further in the Hub Outcomes section below.

## Visibility

Interviewees from all stakeholder groups noted that, to the passer-by, the Hub looked like a community market, with stalls and refreshments available. For the most part, participants noted that there was no signage that indicated it was an activity sponsored by community corrections. It was only when nearing the Hub that community members may have noticed the group of officers with identification badges, and the signage of the individual organisations participating at the Hub. Officers made efforts to dress down for their attendance at the Hubs as part of their desire to reflect a less formal look.

The outdoor location of the Hub meant that it attracted community members walking past the public square or exiting the Beenleigh Courthouse. However, the community members who participated in the study suggested that better signage may have attracted more people to the Hubs. Likewise, some clients recommended making the Hubs more visible to the broader community. Hub attendees', particularly clients', first impressions of the Hubs were positive because it did not appear as a formal corrections-operated space, but rather a welcoming community event or market.

When interviewed, service providers noted how they felt their signage affected the participation of clients visiting the Hubs. Service providers noted that some Hub attendees made their decision as to whether to stop and talk to a service provider based on the signage and/or their own understanding of what could possibly be provided by that service provider. Some service providers noted that they were taking this into account by considering clearer signage to encourage more Hub attendees to visit their stands, as described by the following interviewee: *"I was thinking, like, just changing my approach. Maybe make up signs. Because I think people were skipping [services] if they didn't really know what they were"* (SP 024).

## The "vibe"

All participant groups, but particularly clients, described the Hubs as having a positive vibe with a friendly and sociable atmosphere where many felt sufficiently at ease to converse with officers and with service providers. The feelings of inclusivity at the Hubs were reflected by one client, who described, *"I was welcome. Anyone was welcome, actually. No one was not good enough for the place"* (Client 017).





Feedback from service providers also illustrated that many providers were initially unsure about what to expect from the Hub. While many noted that they had been provided some general information, they also expressed a lack of understanding of how the Hub itself would operate (e.g., how clients would filter through) or what their and others' roles at the Hub would be. However, as some service providers acknowledged, the concept of a community Hub is familiar to many service providers in the Logan area who participate regularly in community market-type events.

Officers who had attended multiple Hubs unsurprisingly noted that they had clearer expectations and understanding of the purpose of the Hubs than members of other participant groups, and that their understanding of their role in relation to the Hubs had grown over time. Officers noted that with their own understanding increased as the Hubs proceeded, they were better able to explain the Hubs to their clients. However, it appears that staff turnover and variable communication lines left some officers who had not attended Hubs unable to clearly explain the Hubs to their clients. Officers' initial knowledge and understanding of what each of the participating service providers could offer was limited but improved as information was circulated prior to the Hubs and as they began to participate at the Hubs and interact with service providers.

### Open to the public

All Hubs were open to members of the public; however, no general community invitations or advertisements were issued. Instead, organisers relied on the location (a highly visible public space) to attract passers-by on Hub days. During the events, officers also played an active role in encouraging curious on-lookers and those exiting the Beenleigh Courthouse to come and check out what the Hub had to offer.

Many of the community members in attendance were family members or supporters of the clients themselves. Clients were told by officers in advance of the Hub that they were welcome to bring supporters with them.

Despite the lack of deliberate advertising, a significant number of community members did come through the Hubs (see Table 4). Community members who participated in the study were asked what it was that brought them to the Hubs, and for the most part, their responses reflected a degree of chance in happening upon the Hubs since they were in the area for other reasons (see Figure 4).

Comments from community members indicated that they felt welcomed because the Hubs were out in the open: *"people don't feel as threatened to come out into an open environment"* (CM 008). Community members also tended to agree that the Hubs could be a good way of bringing the community together and they found the information provided and the service connections were valuable for all different kinds of people within their community, not just clients.

Members of all study participant groups saw value in having the Hubs open to the public. This was both as a means to better connect community members to services that they may need, and to help clients feel more integrated in the community. As one community member who attended as a support to a client stated, *"... this is a good idea which brings the community together a little bit and it gets the boys out in the public a bit better"* (CM 006). Another community member noted that the public openness could also have the effect of educating the public:

*"[The Hub] gives everyday people a chance to see what people on parole look like. To not judge a book by its cover [...] They're just people that are doing it hard. They're not necessarily drug addicted or... Everybody has a backstory. It's good that people get amongst it and see other people."* (CM 003)

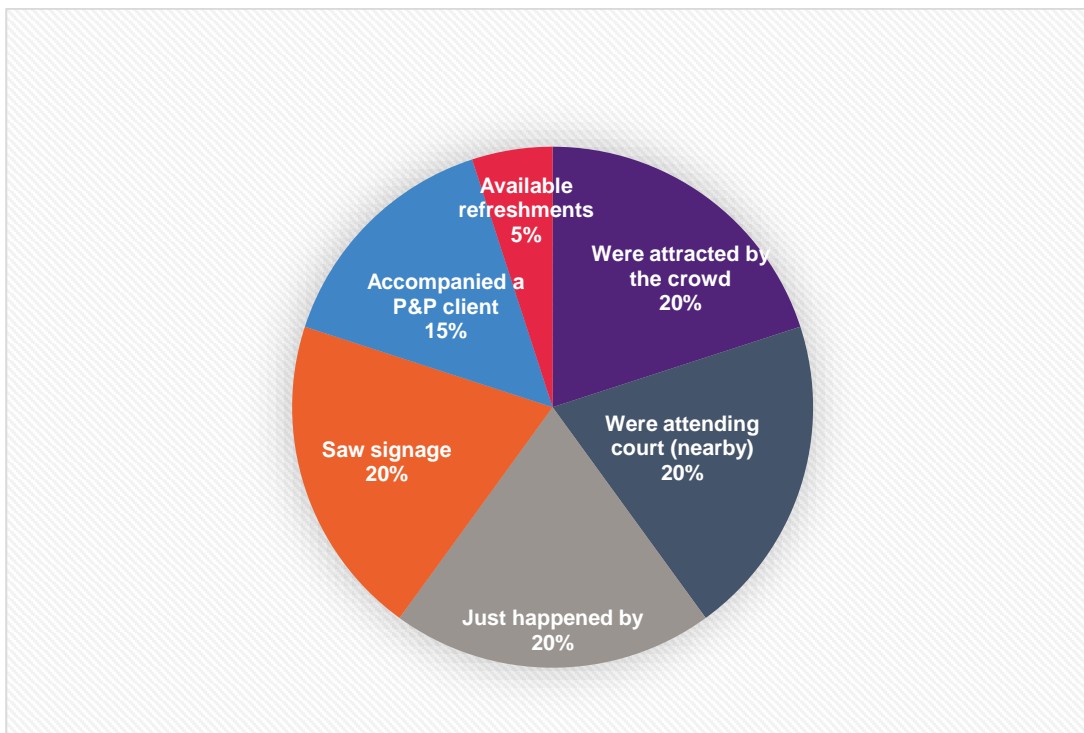


Figure 4. What attracted community members to the Hubs (n=20 community members)

Logan City Council study participants described the Hubs as integral to the Council’s community safety program since the events could facilitate clients’ positive reintegration to the community after serving an order. For example, one Logan City Council staff member noted, “We adopt a holistic approach to community safety. The [Hub] is working with offenders to try and reintegrate them back into society” (LCC 003). More broadly, Logan City Council staff noted that they envisaged that an event such as the Hub would “not be labelled as a particular service just labelling it in a way that the community would feel welcome, and that would activate the space for the community to come in” (LCC 002).

Clients also supported the idea that the Hubs were open to the public, stating that there was significant need in the community for a range of people to benefit from the information provided at the Hub; that it was better to include the general population to avoid segregating clients from the rest of the community, thereby draw attention to themselves as clients; and that it was good to be able to bring friends and family to the Hub because they too would value the information and products given out at the Hub.

Officers agreed that making the Hubs open to the community not only served to lessen the sense of separation that clients felt from others in the community, but also connected clients to the community through a ‘normalisation’ process in which both members of the community and clients could begin to view themselves as belonging to the same community. As one officer noted, there was more that could be done to increase the “normalisation potential” of the Hub (Officer 001).

### Officer Coordination

Responsibility for communication of Hub procedures to officer before, during, and after individual Hubs was initially at the District Office manager level, though this was later allocated to senior staff members in each office. When the study Hubs began, managers typically communicated to staff via an email with details of the date of the upcoming Hub. This practice varied somewhat across offices and over time, with a Beenleigh staff member noting that “initially with the hubs when they came out, we got a lot of information during staff meetings what they’re about and then emails” (Officer 008). Beenleigh staff members also frequently commented that their District Office manager would actively encourage staff to refer their clients to the Hubs.

Alternatively, Logan staff members noted that they received *“a printout of all of the services providers that are going to be attending the hub and a little blurb about what they could offer”* (Officer 001). Officers’ initial knowledge and understanding of what each of the participating service providers could offer was limited but this appears to have improved as information was circulated prior to the Hubs and as they began to participate at the Hubs and interact with service providers.

Towards the end of the study, this coordination began to be taken up by supervisors or senior case managers in each office. This was described similarly by both Beenleigh and Logan staff:

*“when it became bigger and bigger and people started seeing the benefits of it, I took it on as a portfolio. So, once I did that, I started pushing for referrals, I started chasing people for referrals. You know, a lot more writing was going on.”* (Officer 001 – Logan).

*“[Staff responsible for the Hubs] have been very organised, and they were able to actually take the time to sit down with staff and say this is what the process is going to be, making sure that the spreadsheets were ready, making sure the referral process was in place. So, that was really effective.”* (Officer 012 – Beenleigh)

The introduction of the Hub initiative triggered a shift in practices described by some officers as a ‘cultural change’ in the office. Several officers who participated in the study described the Hubs as a different way of working with clients. While this different way of working may have created some additional administrative tasks, new systems for managing the change appeared to be emerging. Officers noted, *“we’ve got a bit of a process; a bit of a system now”* (Officer 010) and *“I just see it as part of our practice now”* (Officer 012). Outcomes of this change process are detailed further in the Outcomes section, *Hub Effects on District Office Functions*.

The procedures for documenting engagement at the Hub by clients and officers following the Hubs were not prepared prior to the commencement of the study Hubs. Officers had been made aware that case notes were to be placed on clients’ files following the Hubs, but a simple procedure for recording engagement of clients with service providers had not been developed for use by all officers. These procedures were developed in late 2018 when senior officers took over the responsibility for the Hubs portfolio.

The language used by officers in interviews indicated that communications and coordination of activities in relation to the Hubs improved over time.

## Client Procedures

The following section details decisions about the process of client management through the Hubs, including decisions about the invitation process, Hub interaction, and subsequent follow up.

### Selection Processes

Although there were no specific criteria in place for clients to attend the Hubs, some officers noted that they were at times selective in which clients they referred to the Hubs. One officer noted they would not refer a client to the Hubs if the client’s circumstances would make it difficult to engage them with the services on offer, such as:

*“Employment [already employed] or people who were at crisis point where they’re probably not in the mind frame where they could go and do something like that. So, they’re really my only two reasons for not referring. Because anybody else can go.”* (Officer 001)

Officers also acknowledged that readiness for engagement was not automatic (for example, upon the start of a community order, not all clients were seen to be at a stage where they would be willing/able to engage with the Hubs), though some officers still invited these clients to the Hubs. Officers endeavoured to work around the individual needs of their clients when deciding who to refer to the Hubs. Officers were sensitive to the

family responsibilities of their clients and their clients appreciated and responded well to this. Though, as the following client reflected, officers would often encourage these clients to come along with their families:

*“I told her [officer] that on that day I had my kids and then she said, it’s up to you if you want to come down. There’ll be some food there for you and your children, there’s a lot of nice people to meet, a lot of things that we can look at to help you get a job. And have a think about it, there’s no pressure. And I didn’t really need to think about it, I just was like yes, I’ll come down.”* (Client 017)

In some cases, clients were given a more general impression by their officer that there would be a range of services that could help them. Some officers and their clients, however, spoke about officers enticing clients to attend the Hub by identifying the services on offer that might meet that client’s specific needs. As one officer described, *“I specifically target employment, if they’re not employed. [Or] I say, ‘come along to the Hubs and we’ll get you linked in with the housing’ where there are any issues with that”* (Officer 010).

However, a couple of officers explained that for some of their clients, if the specific services which they needed were not available at the Hubs, then they saw no point in referring clients despite the general connections that might be made.

### Invitation Processes

Clients were invited to attend a Hub by their case officer during a supervision meeting or call preceding the Hub. Officers typically invited clients on their own caseloads; some made the invitation as soon as the Hub dates were set and provided reminders (via SMS or phone call, Officer 010), while other officers would invite clients that they saw in the few weeks preceding the Hubs.

Based on officers’ and clients’ assessments of the invitation process there were several common elements evident across both District Offices.

**Voluntary:** First, Hub attendance was most often communicated to clients as voluntary. Most clients noted that they felt that it was their choice to attend the Hub, however, almost all said that attending the Hub replaced one of their regular supervision meetings (see *Replacing community-based order and parole supervision meetings with Hub attendance* in Hub Outcomes). A small number of clients (n=3) indicated that they had attended the Hub even though it did not replace a regular meeting. Although the Hubs often replaced supervision meetings, clients typically did not report feeling as though they were forced to attend the Hub. However, for some, the ‘choice’ to attend the Hubs was confused by the need to attend a supervision appointment, which was not a choice. Here, the interviews with clients suggested that while they had to meet with their officer, it was optional for them to meet the officer at the Hub, as illustrated by this client: *“She just said that I had to go, but then I didn’t have to go here [the District Office for a supervision meeting], so it was like good anyway”* (Client 011).

**Replacement:** Second, that Hubs were often presented to clients as a replacement for normally scheduled supervision meetings or check-ins was seen by some officers as an inducement that helped convince clients to attend in the first instance (the impact of replacement is further discussed in *Replacing community-based order and parole supervision meetings with Hub attendance* in Hub Outcomes). For example, one officer noted that this was a strategy that officers used to help to motivate change:

*“... we’re trying to get them there... it is essentially voluntary, but we can motivate attendance as an alternative to the office. Much the same as we would motivate them to attend a psychologist in lieu of coming and seeing us. So, it’s still got that benefit with being an alternative intervention.”* (Officer 016)

**Focus on services:** Third, officers emphasised the services on offer and deemphasised QCS involvement. Officers accomplished this verbally and using Hub-specific flyers that were handed out and posted in District offices. The Hubs were intentionally badged as Logan City Council events. For example, flyers said: “Join Logan City Council and have a chat with the following service providers...” (see Appendix A Example Hub Invitation). As one officer explained:

*“It’s never been identified as offender-specific or something from Corrective Services. We’ve never promoted it in that way. It’s always been explained that ...it’s a community project where everyone can attend. All the services providers are in the one spot for you. It makes it easier to attend. So, it’s never been marketed as a QCS-specific thing.”* (Officer 001)

**Tailored to need:** Finally, officers were relatively consistent in noting that decisions regarding whether and how to invite clients were necessarily tailored to the clients and had to be based on a good understanding of the client and his or her motivations: *“It’s totally individual. I either like sell it as there is an event going on, all these service providers are going to be there, I think you’d really benefit from it. How about you do this instead of me seeing you?”* (Officer 003).

### Hub Day Procedures

On the day of the Hub, the organisers’ intention was for clients to be signed in at the welcome desk and to meet with their supervising officer who would join them as they visited service provider tables. Community members would be greeted at the welcome desk, told that they were welcome to attend, and that it was a ‘community event’ open to all. The following section examines interviewees’ perspectives on these processes.

**Check-in processes.** The procedures at the Hubs were designed to connect each client with his/her officer and then with service providers. Upon arrival, clients were directed to a table at the centre front where their details were noted, and they met up with someone to guide them through the Hub. Clients noted this favourably: *“There was always someone to help you and get you started”* (Client 011).

Descriptions of the procedures for entering the Hubs as provided by all interview groups were consistent, though observations of the Hubs indicated that this check-in process was continuing to be refined throughout the study Hubs. Generally, officers and service providers were very positive about the check-in procedures at the Hub, although some reported that the procedures were improved by staggering appointment times for clients to avoid bottlenecks around the Hub; a process that was introduced in the final study Hubs. Officers reflected on this process: *“We were trying to fine-tune that process because it did get a bit crazy when everyone was reporting at once”* (Officer 001).

**Client support at Hubs.** Officers were encouraged to accompany clients as they moved through the Hubs and visited the various service provider tables. In some cases, clients were able to meet with the same officer that they regularly met with. In other cases, the officer had referred their client to Hub, but that officer did not attend. In other cases, clients’ officers were there but too busy to accompany all of their clients around the Hub. However, many clients reported that they did not mind that they were linked up with someone other than their own officer to accompany them around the Hub. The value of meeting up with their own/familiar officer is further discussed in *Client-officer contact at the Hub* in the Hub Outcomes.

There were some differing views among officers and service providers regarding whether officers should accompany clients to all the service provider tables in the Hubs, or just to the ones that the officer and the client believed would meet the client’s most pressing needs or interests at that time. For those officers who had discussed with their clients prior to the Hub what they might like to seek out at the Hub, the strategy was less of a browsing expedition and more of a targeted engagement with a few key services. The desire by several officers to plan a more meaningful engagement with service providers for their clients was also echoed by some service providers.

Service providers spoke positively of the value of having the client’s officer with them, as they witnessed the way that officers who demonstrated knowledge of the client’s individual needs facilitated some level of engagement between the client and service provider, offering a “warm” referral to the service. As one service provider explained, *“I think, having the structure of the parole officer with them was beneficial to some. There were others that were more than capable of engaging directly by themselves. They just needed the initial, ‘here you go”* (SP 018).

Some service providers felt that in a few cases officers were making the choice of which service provider the client would benefit from engagement with. While some service providers acknowledged that officers may have good reason to guide the client to just a few of the available service providers at the Hub, others grappled with this notion of selected or targeted visits at the Hub, believing that both officers and clients may be unaware of what a service provider can offer and how it may be of benefit.

## Post Hub Procedures

In this section, we detail post-Hub tracking and follow up procedures that the organisers instituted for the study Hubs.

### Hub attendance and engagement tracking

The importance of reporting attendance and engagement by visitors to the Hub is a significant performance indicator. Attendance was intended to be tracked in two ways. First, an estimate of the total number of visitors to each Hub was made based on a headcount undertaken by Logan City Council staff and including separate counts for clients and community members. Second, through the check-in procedure, officers captured attendance for each client. This information was subsequently collated and lists of attending Logan and Beenleigh clients were distributed to each office.

The quality of the information available through these tracking procedures was variable. All tracking relied on individuals to monitor visitors, and at times the nature of the outdoor space and the large volume of individuals arriving, circulating through the Hub, and having informal discussions after visiting the Hub made this challenging.

To track engagement at the Hub, Logan City Council implemented procedures for each service provider to collect visitor count information using a form. The forms were collected by Council staff following the Hub, summarised and subsequently passed on to District Offices. In this tracking, service providers did not differentiate between community members and clients since all possible clients were treated the same.

Here again, there was some variability in the type and quality of information collected on engagement. The collection of these data was reliant upon service providers to complete forms at each of the Hubs. The nature of the contact that different service providers had with clients made the information that they collected variable. For example, some service providers produced a simple count of the number of visitors who stopped by to ask questions, while others produced counts of the numbers of people who enrolled (e.g., obtained a library card) or engaged in an activity at the Hub (e.g., making essential oils).

The extent to which more detailed information about clients' engagement with specific services would be possible to collect via the service providers themselves is unclear. For reasons of confidentiality, some services indicated that they would not capture and pass on names and contact details. Similarly, issues of safety may be raised for some clients if they felt compelled to provide contact details to service providers with whom they were not familiar.

### Post-Hub processes for monitoring engagement

**Service providers.** There was some variability in the extent to which service providers were able to identify and follow up with clients who they had engaged with at the Hubs.

For some providers, engagement involved bringing the client into their services, or checking in that those they had met at the Hub were progressing up waiting lists for services. However, not all service providers chose or were able to initiate follow-ups with people they had met at the Hubs. At interview, one education and training service provider indicated that he required those he connected with at the Hubs to follow up with him, rather than the other way around. He explained that there were a few reasons for this, including his belief that due to the motivation required to complete a training course, clients needed to be the one to take the first step by contacting his office. Additionally, he described this as partially a time-saving strategy, as in

the past when he did attempt to initiate follow-ups, he found it difficult to get in contact with those who had indicated they wanted to be contacted.

Other service providers also spoke of the difficulties in engaging with clients after the Hub and indicated that they felt there was scope for officers to get involved to help with this post-Hub engagement:

*“I really do think that when we get to that third phone call and that third appointment and they’ve still not attended that there needs to be Probation and Parole who step in and go ‘okay, well at the next appointment...that they book, we will be there’” (SP 007).*

For this service provider, the connection between service provider and client required the commitment of District Offices to follow through after the Hub connection is made.

For clients, however, some noted that these follow-ups were important for demonstrating that the Hubs were not simply for show, as this client described:

*“He called me back, so it shows that they actually show an interest in trying to help rather than just saying, ‘oh, you can call me, because you’re just another number, and you can come in and do the forms’. But he takes the time to call me and it actually shows that he’d obviously remembered me; he remembers what I want to do.” (Client 007)*

**Officers.** Officers were aware that they needed to play a role in assessing post-Hub client engagement with services. The assessment would likely have to occur through supervision meetings after the Hubs, however, in some cases officers noted their connections to some service providers, suggesting that some follow-up could be possible. In any case, officers described their role in this regard as follows:

*“[We are] always trying to make sure that they [clients] are engaged, and they are doing what they need to do—even if it means making that phone call in that office visit saying, well, let’s touch base with them [service providers] again.” (Officer 010)*

*“...there should be follow-up with service providers in terms of who did engage and what has been the follow through.” (Officer 014)*

When asked if and how they followed up as officers with clients following the Hubs, some officers indicated that this had been challenging for them.

## Hub Outcomes

### Hub Attendance

Logan City Council captured tracking data for each Hub. Despite limitations, discussed above (see *Hub attendance and engagement tracking*), these data show general attendance and engagement patterns for clients and community members and service provider organisations for each of the study Hubs. Table 5 below summarises these data.

#### Clients: Invited versus Attended

We calculated the rate of participation as the number of clients who attended as a proportion of all clients who were invited to attend. The average participation rate across all Hubs was just over one-half (51%) of those invited. However, women had a lower average participation rate (47%) than men (56%).

#### Client and community members: Total attendance

A total of 539 clients and community members attended the six study Hubs. Men’s Hubs attracted a greater proportion of the total attendees (66%, n = 353) than women’s Hubs (35%, n = 186). On average, 62 individuals attended the women’s Hubs, relative to an average of 118 individuals at the men’s Hubs. Even though for District Office purposes Hubs were gender specific, this was not the case for community

members. Due to the open nature of the program, at any Hub community members using the facility might have been either men or women.

On average, community members – comprised of family members and supporters who came along with clients, as well as individuals from the community who attended the Hub out of their own interest – accounted for a larger proportion (56%) of all Hub attendees than clients (44%).

Among all community members who attended Hubs (n = 307), a greater proportion attended men’s Hubs (67% of community members) than women’s Hubs (33% of community members). In part, this difference might be explained by the larger total volume of men’s Hub attendees in combination with the availability of food (sausage sizzle) and music, creating a more enticing atmosphere to passers-by (see *The “vibe”* for further detail).

For both men’s and women’s Hubs, there was an increase in attendance at Time 2, which was driven in part by increases in the number of clients in this time period compared to the others. It is not possible to determine the precise cause of the increase; however, in the future a number of factors could be monitored, including: the length of time from the previous Hub (see Table 4), variation in the invitation procedures and shifts in the enthusiasm of the staff, as well as external factors such as weather, school holidays, and the impending summer break.

*Table 4. Hub attendance and attendee contact by service provider, based on Council post-Hub tracking*

	Time 1		Time 2		Time 3							
	Women's		Men's		Women's		Men's					
	Hub 1 31/7/18	Hub 2 2/8/18	Hub 3 2/10/18	Hub 4 4/10/18	Hub 5 27/11/18	Hub 6 29/11/18						
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Total clients invited	51	100	73	100	68	100	102	100	60	100	89	100
Attended	22	43	38	52	34	50	62	61	28	47	48	54
Did not attend	29	57	35	48	34	50	40	39	32	53	41	46
Total Hub-participant attendance <sup>1</sup>	65	100	101	100	69	100	146	100	52	100	106	100
Clients attended	22	34	38	38	34	49	62	43	28	54	48	45
Community members attended	43	67	63	62	35	51	84	58	24	46	58	55
Number of Service Providers at each Hub	9		9		11		10		10		10	
Hub context and environment												
Days since last Hub of same gender	56		56		63		63		56		56	
Food available	No		Yes		Yes		Yes		No		Yes	
Music	No		Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes	
Weather (approx. apparent temp in °Celsius)	20		22		15		25		25		32	

<sup>1</sup> Participants include all clients, community members, and interested observers.

### Service provider organisations in attendance

The number of service provider organisations represented at each Hub during the study ranged from nine to 11. The service provider organisations in attendance at each of the Hubs varied. Reasons for not attending all Hubs are presented in Table 5.



Table 5. Service Providers in Attendance at Hubs and Reasons for Non-attendance.

Service	Attended Time Points	# of Hubs Attended	Reason for Non-attendance
Business start-up support	2	2	Unknown
Counselling and support service (individual)	2,3	4	Not invited until latter Hubs
Court-related service	1,2,3	6	n/a
Court-related service	3	2	Provider requested to attend latter Hubs
Domestic violence/Sexual assault service	2,3	2	Not invited until latter Hubs; Only attended 1 Hub per time period
Domestic violence/Sexual assault service	2	1	Unknown
Employment/training service	1,2,3	5	Staff had other commitments at time of Hub
Employment/training service	1,3	4	Staff had other commitments at time of Hub
Employment/training service	2,3	4	Not invited until latter Hubs
Financial counselling	1,2,3	4	Staff had other commitments at time of Hub
Housing support service	1,2,3	5	Staff had other commitments at time of Hub
Library service	1,2,3	6	n/a
Lifestyle/recreation service	1,2	4	LCC organisers took over distribution of program information in later Hubs
Oral health service	1,2,3	5	Staff had other commitments at time of Hub
Re-entry service	3	1	Provider requested to attend latter Hubs
Social security service	1	2	Unknown
Women's health and wellbeing service	1	1	Organisation no longer willing to attend
Youth service	1,2,3	3	Only able to attend 1 Hub per time period

### Barriers to Hub Attendance

There were several factors noted by members of participant groups that affected their ability to attend the Hubs.

**Access:** There were several factors related to access that posed potential barriers to attendance, including travel distance, availability of public transportation, and the time required to reach the Hub. The availability of parking was also an important consideration. For clients without access to transportation, the offer of free transportation through the Logan District Office may not have been desirable (given very few clients took up this offer). For officers and service providers, travel time reduced the time they had available to perform other office related functions.

**Children:** For clients that were parents with small children, attendance at the Hubs posed a problem of coordinating child supervision while attempting to connect with services and obtain the needed information.

**Disability:** Unless facilities were fully accessible, it would be difficult for potential attendees to take advantage of the opportunity that the Hubs offered.

**Absence from office:** For both the officers and service providers, the time needed to access the site plus the time actively participating in the Hubs reduced the time to fulfil other responsibilities. Some services could be a valuable resource but only for a limited number of clients, so attendance at the Hub for the entire period resulted in a great deal of idle time.

**Workload:** For officers, the Hubs were an addition to their normal workload. Attendance was much easier for Beenleigh officers because of the proximity of the District Office to the Hub site (i.e., across the road). However, for some officers from both District Offices, taking the time to attend the six Hubs over the pilot period was described as something that cut into their ability to complete required duties.

**Personal:** Some clients may have mental health issues and/or high levels of anxiety, or they may have lacked the motivation or capacity to travel to Beenleigh.

## Hub Effects on District Office Functions

Hubs appeared to have a variety of effects on District Office functions, ranging from client-officer interactions at the Hubs and beyond, to collaborations within the District Office.

### Client-officer contact at the Hub

The value of meeting up with their own officer at the Hub was acknowledged by several clients who noted that it was beneficial where their own officer was familiar with their needs. As one client explained, *“They [officers] try and push you in the right direction, and you know they try and get to know you, and they ask you; what are you interested in, what do you need help with?”* (Client 004).

The relatively informal setting was a pleasant change from the usual office setting for meetings, with officers commenting that it provided a chance to engage with their clients in a less structured and authoritarian way: *“So, we get more results. We get better results when we’re going out and doing those different things outside of the office, you know. They’re more willing to talk to you. They’re more willing to engage”* (Officer 010). It also sometimes gave staff an opportunity to meet the family members of clients.

### Replacing community-based order and parole supervision meetings with Hub attendance

To several officers, the Hub signified an opportunity to advance their case management role and practice, and to use the Hub as an alternate contact and as an opportunity to make meaningful referrals for their clients to services and supports. Generally, clients and officers were positive about replacing supervision meetings with Hub attendance. The reasons that they gave included that it encouraged engagement where the connection with a service may not otherwise have been followed up individually by the client of their own accord; that it was a casual atmosphere where refreshments were on offer; and that it was better to attend a Hub than sitting and waiting for appointments in the District Office, with one client noting: *“At least you’d get to go and just have a free sausage and some feed, and talk to some people”* (Client 021).

Clients and officers also reported that the more casual atmosphere at the Hubs encouraged an improved connection between officers and their clients making the communication easier than in the office environment. As one officer noted about officer-client interaction at the Hubs:

*“And I’ve also found that clients are more open to having a conversation. For myself I spoke to someone, I didn’t know him from a bar of soap, that he was saying that he found it a lot easier to speak to someone in that environment than he does in the office because he doesn’t have that concern about police coming in and putting him away. Or he doesn’t have the concern that something’s being written on the computer that he doesn’t know that’s being said. So, and he was able then to talk about the barriers that he’s facing in terms of addressing his drug use and not committing further offences. And we got a far better idea about who he was than we would have done in the room.”* (Officer 012)

To one client, the experience of the Hub reinforced the potential value of the Hub as an effective way for officers to take a more active role in linking clients to services in the community. He noted, *“If your parole manager took you out into the community, and got you active in doing something, it [would be] better than doing this [supervision meeting in the District Office]. Nothing happens [in the Office]”* (Client 004).

Any concern that going to the Hub would put clients back in touch with criminal associates did not emerge as a significant issue in discussions about replacing supervision meetings with Hub attendance. One client reported that while he had a concern about bumping into old associates, he focussed on the fact that his officer had invited him to attend. As he explained, *“There’s going to be those people there but it’s okay because I’m not going there for them. I’m going there for myself, for other reasons”* (Client 020).

While most clients indicated that they were happy to replace supervision meetings with Hub attendance, a small number of clients indicated that they preferred one-on-one supervision meetings because they felt they

needed the privacy of the meetings to discuss personal issues in and around their orders and any difficulties they were experiencing.

### Officer collaboration

Officers further commented that the Hubs tended to increase collaboration among themselves and increase communication regarding clients and services: *“And it’s just... it’s amazing because, like, we’re all working together”* (Officer 010). As a result, some staff commented that by sharing information with colleagues they had increased their knowledge and awareness of services that could be of benefit to their clients. Service providers also indicated that the Hubs were a good place to network with other providers as well as with officers and to become better acquainted with the community and possible opportunities to meet community needs. This, they felt, was a valuable form of outreach and allowed them to offer their services to vulnerable clients who they might previously not been able to identify: *“[W]e try to build up a bit of a relationship with the other organisations and that’s the way we find that we get to network with different groups and link in with them”* (SP21).

### Service Provider Connections

Client-provider connections following Hubs varied in form and intensity. Study participants from the different stakeholder groups also had varying views about what constituted a connection and had varying abilities to track whether in fact connections had occurred. As a result of these differences, below we present views about post-Hub connections separately for clients and service providers and officers.

#### Attendees’ contact with service providers at the Hub

Tracking of attendees’ contact with service providers at the Hubs proved to be challenging. The contact was tracked by service providers themselves, and the definition of this contact varied across service provider organisations. In some cases, the count included information exchange only and in others was defined by enrolment for example, being added to a list for oral health or housing or obtaining a library card. These data were further limited in that service providers did not distinguish between clients and community members in their collection.

Given these caveats, Table 6 presents the figures provided by providers following each Hub. Although it is not possible to discern how many contacts were made by each attendee, the data suggest that at least some participants may not have engaged to the point of enquiry with many service providers, instead perhaps attending as a perfunctory obligation (however, see also *Providers reported connections to clients after the Hub* below describing the benefits of Hub attendance beyond immediate engagement with services).

Table 6. Hub Attendees contacts with service providers while at the Hubs (reported by providers).

	Time 1		Time 2		Time 3	
	Women's Hub 1	Men's Hub 2	Women's Hub 3	Men's Hub 4	Women's Hub 5	Men's Hub 6
	31/07/2018	2/08/2018	2/10/2018	4/10/2018	27/11/2018	29/11/2018
<b>Total participant enquiries<sup>2</sup></b>	141	195	126	191	77	135
<b>Attendees' contact with Service Providers<sup>1</sup></b>						
Library service (New Memberships)	21	22	18	14	15	10
Oral Health service (Info/enrolment on waitlist)	29	15	20	...	20	21
Employment/training service (#1)	14	18	...	9	13	8
Lifestyle/recreation service	16	45	14	36	...	...
Financial counselling	23	...	17	10	11	...
Business start-up support	...	...	1	...	...	...
Employment/training service (#2)	12	0	...	...	7	...
Social security service	0	0	...	...	...	...
Court-related service (#1)	0	6	0	2	2	2
Women's health & wellbeing service (Oils made)	26	...	...	...	...	...
Housing support service	...	9	6	14	...	1
Youth service (sausages served)	...	80	...	80	...	80
Domestic violence/sexual assault service (#1)	...	...	3	...	0	...
Employment/training service (#3)	...	...	11	21	7	12
Domestic violence/sexual assault service (#2)	...	...	30	0	...	...
Counselling and support service	...	...	6	5	2	0
Court-related service (#2)	...	...	...	...	0	1
Re-entry service	...	...	...	...	...	0

<sup>1</sup> Initial contact refers to attendees' interaction with service providers at the Hub and is variable across service provider organisations. In the broadest sense this refers to discussion/information exchange, and in the narrowest sense, enrolment (e.g., adding attendees name to a list for oral health, or housing, or obtaining a library card).

...service provider did not attend the Hub.

0, service provider attended Hub, but did not record or did not have engagement with Hub participants.

### Client connections to services at the Hubs

As the service providers in attendance were, for the most part, frontline service staff, this afforded clients a more direct connection to services in contrast to contacting the agency through the more common reception route. These valuable connections with services were highlighted by Client 001 (see Box 1). By connecting with services at the Hubs, clients were also able to obtain contact information of a specific individual and choose to engage later which provided additional flexibility. As one provider reflected, *“Hopefully, they walk away with more knowledge about what help is out there. And they mightn’t engage straight-away, but they might come back later”* (SP 004).

For some clients who expressed a reluctance to form new relationships, the Hubs were viewed as providing a pro-social environment in which they could more safely engage with community activity. As one officer explained, *“Doing those prosocial things. [H]e [the client] leaves feeling good and motivated and just seeing everyone engaging. Because it is about that engagement”* (Officer 016).

#### Box 1. Valuable connections with services

*“So, I come to [the Hub] and I met [the Housing representative], and I was talking to her about my situation, and she’s like; okay, I’ll go back to the office and I’ll have a read through your file, and everything, and I’ll give you a call. But over about three weeks we kept, I kept missing her calls, and then she was sick and not in work, so we didn’t get to catch up straightaway. But probably a couple of weeks later, we finally got hold of each other, and she said to me; okay, come in tomorrow, this was like a Thursday. She goes; come in on Friday and bring as much ID as you can, and we’ll sort everything out. And I went in there, I had an appointment with her for about half an hour, and we went through everything, and she decided that I would be a very high priority. And by Monday I was offered a house. [...] On Wednesday they got the keys and said I could go have a look at it. And then on Friday I signed the lease and picked up the keys. [That is my first time for] a house that I can afford by myself, without having to worry about.”*

(Client 001)

### Client connections to services after the Hub

**How many?** Nearly one-half (47%) of clients in the interview sample described some form of post-Hub connection to one or more of the service providers attending Hubs. The extent of these connections varied from leaving a telephone message with the provider that may or may not have been followed up by either party to face-to-face interactions with the provider. These connections were roughly equally divided among service provider-initiated and client-initiated connections.

Men (52%) were more likely to report any post-Hub connection than women (20%) – though the sample of participating women was small (n = 5) (see Table 7). There were also some inter-District Office differences, with a greater proportion of clients reporting to Beenleigh (52%) than Logan (33%) describing a post-Hub connection.

Table 7. Client description of post-Hub follow-up

	Gender						DO Location			
	Total		Women		Men		Beenleigh		Logan	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total clients interviewed	30	100	5	100	25	100	21	100	9	100
No post-Hub connection	16	53	4	80	12	48	10	48	6	67
Any post-Hub connection	14	47	1	20	13	52	11	52	3	33
Type of post-Hub connection										
Service Provider-initiated <sup>1</sup>	9	64	1	100	8	62	9	82	0	0
Client-initiated <sup>1</sup>	8	57	0	0	8	62	5	45	3	100

<sup>1</sup> Some clients described both service provider and client-initiated connections.

**Which services?** For many clients, sorting out income support and stable accommodation was an immediate and critical need and it was difficult for them to progress a consideration of other needs without first addressing this more fundamental need. Clients described connections with six main providers following the Hubs (see Figure 5). Two of the employment and training providers accounted for the largest proportion of these reported connections (47%). Other key agencies were oral health, housing, counselling, and library services.

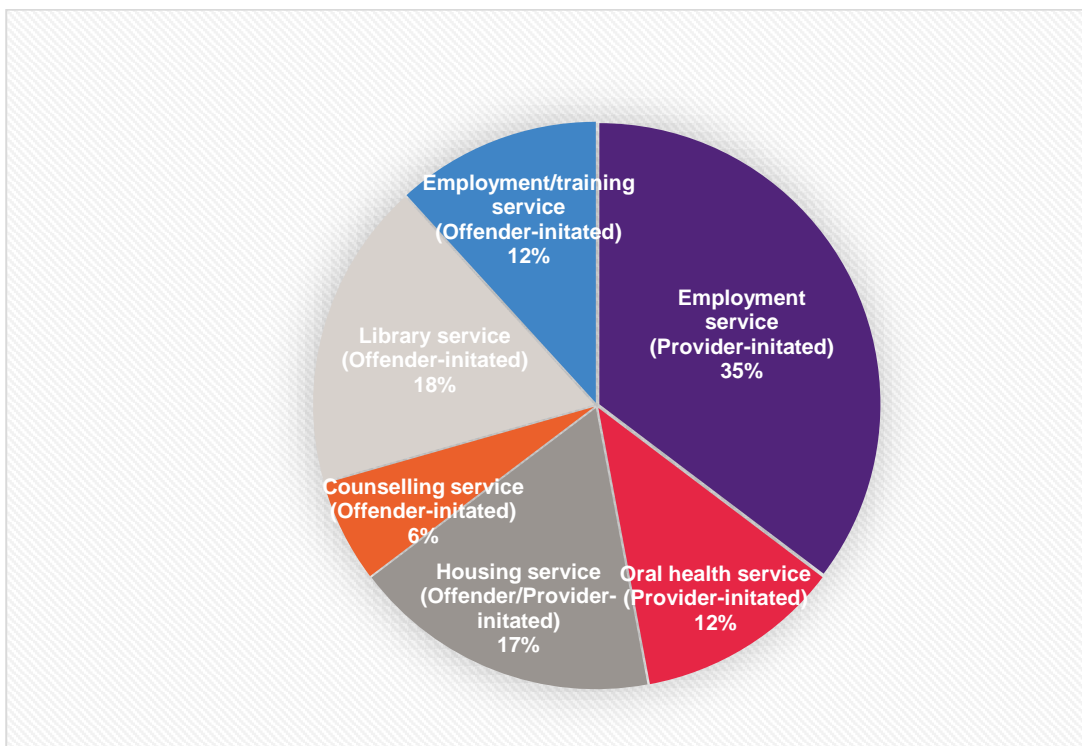


Figure 5. Client-reported post-Hub service provider connections

**Why clients connected to providers after the Hub.** There were different reasons that clients gave for their connections with the service providers after the Hub. In some cases, the service provider’s caring attitude and receptive approach encouraged clients to connect. In describing the result of a successful connection with one service provider, a client said, “She was great hey, I can’t even thank her enough” (Client 001).

In other cases, clients connected to a service provider following the Hub because they felt they had real needs that could be met by the provider. As one client explained, “To someone else it might not be what they

are interested in, but to me ...it helped me. And these people are going to give me a chance to link up with them and stuff, so it really did [help]" (Client 017). Another client said he followed up because he had specific needs related to employment: "I spoke to them, because I want to do a concreting course, I want to start my own business" (Client 003).

**Why clients did not connect to providers after the Hub.** Many clients indicated that they did not follow-up with service providers following the Hubs. From the interviews, it became apparent that there were a few reasons for this lack of connection.

Some clients, including those who had been out of prison for some time, did not feel that support through the Hub was necessary: "I've been out for about a year now, I had everything out here already, I didn't necessarily need the help" (Client 031). Others described having a low level of interest in the Hubs in general: "I don't feel like I need it, but I'm just doing it because I have to" (Client 031).

In some cases, clients indicated that they did not follow up because of their own lack of understanding of the service providers' role and function. For instance, some interviewees reported that they did not understand what was available to them from service providers: "They explained to me, but I didn't really quite understand at all" (Client 012). Other clients did not fully comprehend their own need to follow-up post Hub or had mistakenly assumed that they could book services at the Hub. For example, one client stated, "I think it's quite a good idea. But the only thing I would say is bad is that they didn't book that appointment. They didn't really try and help me as much as they probably could have" (Client 021).

Some clients reported that their own anxiety inhibited engagement at the Hub and any possible contact following the Hub. One service provider acknowledged that follow-up after the Hub by the clients was going to prove difficult for those that experienced mental health problems and the stress of their circumstances: "And that's something that we see in general across our service is that, you know, we may talk to someone one day and they're positive, wanting to change the situation, really want our information, and then yes, they just, oh no, I'll just keep doing what I'm doing or they just, you know, choose not to attend for whatever reason" (SP 003).

Another group of clients fell into the "not yet" category, meaning that they had not yet followed up, even though they may have indicated an interest in what the service provider had offered. Reasons for not yet getting around to following up included lack of time, lack of identification, transportation issues, child and family arrangement, and practical issues like "my phone went flat on the way, so I couldn't find the place" (Client 003). Some clients, however, acknowledged that they just had not gotten around to it: "Yes, I took their contact details. I've got the paperwork sitting in the bag in my cupboard" (Client 002). It is unclear whether these reasons are genuine, or merely excuses as clients do not yet feel motivated or ready to engage with these services.

When expressing this intention to follow-up, clients often indicated that they felt it was their own responsibility to do so, for example, "I know I have to contact them" (Client 009). In cases where clients indicated they knew the onus was on them, follow-up seemed less likely. For example, despite the open invitation this client did not follow up: "[T]hey actually told me, like, do you know where the office is located, and I was, like, yes, I do know. They were, like, well, you're welcome there any time and obviously we're looking forward for you to come, so you can" (Client 013).

## Providers reported connections to clients after the Hub

### *Provider initiated follow-up*

Several interviewees recounted examples of active follow-up with clients initiated by service providers. This was particularly the case for disability employment services, employment and training services, housing services, and oral health services, each of which brought forms to the Hubs and subsequently used them to follow-up with interested clients. The nature and extent of this follow-up varied, for some organisations, by the needs of the client. For instance, one provider indicated that all names gathered at the Hub were followed-up with by the service, but the type of engagement varied:

*“So, it depends what they need from me. Yes, it depends. If [an appointment] is something that we decide would be the right option for them, definitely. Or sometimes it’s just a discussion at the [Hub] – like, a very basic discussion.” (SP 024)*

Where a service, such as housing, had a wait list, the providers indicated that they would monitor the progress of the client who had attended the Hub. On some occasions the providers indicated that they would coordinate with the District Office with respect to any follow up regarding a client’s involvement with that service.

In some cases, the follow-up described by interviewees effected a positive change for the client. This was sometimes described as the result of a relatively routine process or practice for the service, that the client had previously not been aware of (e.g., completing a bond form, see Box 2), but in other cases there was evidence that an individual service provider had gone out of his or her way to assist the client. This was the case for a disability employment service that was described by officers and clients as going out of their way to help.

### *When follow-up did not occur*

Some service providers indicated that they did not have procedures in place to monitor whether a Hub participant later attended the service. In some cases, this was because asking clients ‘how they heard about the service’ was not part of the organisation’s business model, and in fact could raise privacy issues. However, at least one provider commented that their normal registration process, a form, could be amended to capture whether incoming participants had first ‘heard about the program’ through the Hub in order to track client follow through (SP 001).

Although most agencies agreed that being able to monitor Hub participants who expressed interest was useful, the task would require resources that, for the most part, are not available. For several service providers, using the names of persons who indicated interest in their services to check who had subscribed at the Hub (for example, taking out library membership card) would require a huge task, part manual and

### **Box 2. Positive client outcomes as a result of post-Hub provider follow-up**

#### ***Routine processes can help a great deal.***

*“I had [a client] say to me ... I found a property, I can’t afford the bond, I don’t know what to do, I’m so stressed. I’m like, well, you know, don’t fear, we can do a bond loan for you. So that person has then just come into the office – we have the bond loan... blank bond loan forms out in the waiting room – picked up a bond loan form, completed it, dropped it in at reception. We’ve sent it to the bond loan processing team, it’s been processed and it’s... they haven’t even needed to see me. But it was just that little bit of information to let them know that existed” (SP 024).*

#### ***Service providers who have gone out of their way to help.***

*“For one of my men, unemployed, didn’t have any support, had mental health [problems]. [At the Hub] we linked him in with the [disability employment service]. And they helped him out. He filled in all the paperwork with them [at the Hub]. They contacted him. He went down to their office down the road; filled out all the applications. They went to Centrelink with him. They helped him get a job” (Officer 010).*



part systems-based. Another service provider commented, *“We try and monitor. We don’t have the time to spend much time monitoring, but it’s something we possibly could look back on”* (SP 003).

Several the larger service providers indicated an interest in putting some type of system in place to measure the number of clients from the Hubs progressing through their programs. However, even this it appeared would need some manual searching to find the targeted names on program lists: *“We would have to dredge through everyone”* (SP 013). Generally, most service providers admitted that the task of capturing follow-up from the Hub would require further thinking about their own information systems and until the need for this to occur is identified and prioritised by the organisation or its funding body, the information in relation to the Hub may remain a manual exercise and reliant upon the memory of the individual worker involved.

#### *Immediate post-Hub connection not the only indication of success*

Some participants commented that an assessment of Hub performance should not be based solely on the number of immediate post-Hub connections between clients and service providers. From this view, the Hubs were one part of a process to encourage clients to engage both with needed services and the community itself. For example, as one service provider put it:

*“Creating the awareness, building the relationships, getting to know the community, connecting to the community. Getting out there and letting them know this service is available, is much more worthy, because people can then decide on their journey and if they want to engage or not.”* (SP 010)

Thus, where Hubs did not result in an immediate connection following the event, service providers felt they may have *“planted a little seed”* for future engagements (SP 015).

## Hub Effects on Interagency Relationships

Many noted that interagency relationships that developed as a result of the Hubs was a significant benefit. This included connections forged between service providers that would support cross referrals of clients and thus further benefit the community, and between officers and service providers that would support improved client access to and engagement with services.

### **Interagency relationships between District Offices and service providers**

Officers commented that the Hubs had allowed them to create connections with service providers which assisted them in knowing where they might be better able to refer clients with different needs. In addition, the more personal connection led to a stronger collaboration to aid in connecting clients to the service. The Hubs, therefore, appeared to encourage greater interaction/collaboration between officers and service providers:

*“I feel like I can confidently call them and ask how things are going or what’s going on, where previously... Now I’ve got a face to a name, and we’ve met each other in person, so I think that helps.”* (Officer 009)

*“...you’re building that relationship with that person at a professional level, and you can pick up that phone at any time and that person knows who you are... who they’re talking to, you know who you’re talking to, they’ve got the face, they see you at these Hubs, they... it breaks down... Like, collaboration, a big part of collaboration is trust. Without trust, you’re not going to have that collaboration.”* (SP 020)

These connections also extended to funded re-entry service providers.

*“I never used that service, and it wasn’t until I was actually at the Hubs, where I got to meet, [name], the coordinator, and the team. If they need anything, they know that they can call on you, and you can all help each other. And now I speak to them all the time. I’m referring people all the time.”* (Officer 010)

*“It sounds horrible but [it’s] kind of like an us against them type of thing because they didn’t know what we did” ... [and it’s] Not so much the referrals but just the awareness and the collaboration between us because now parole officers will pick up the phone and call my caseworkers and say ‘hey I have a problem with this guy, can you help’, whereas we were working in silos there for a while trying to get the same goal but not working together very well.” (SP 025)*

However, despite these increased connections, some officers were still confused about what some service providers at the Hub offered, suggesting that those communication lines were still developing. As one officer explained, *“It would probably be helpful to have a bit more information about what they do, what services they provide”* (Officer 005). Some service providers likewise indicated that they would appreciate being able to spend some time with officers describing more about what they and their service does, and how they could assist their clients.

### **Interagency relationships between service providers**

Logan City Council organisers commented that the services in the community were somewhat “siloesd” and did not always work together, particularly if they were competing for funding. However, the increased interaction of service providers at the Hubs was an unintended, but significantly positive, outcome of the events. In the later Hubs, Logan City Council organisers reported that they had begun deliberately placing providers with complementary services close together to facilitate connections between the providers. This arrangement would also benefit Hub attendees who could be more easily directed to the appropriate service if one service did not precisely meet their needs. To the council, this was a clear advantage that fit well with the strategic aims of their Community Service Support Branch (of which the Community Safety Program was one arm): *“Making service providers work together and linking them in order to help the community, that’s our core business”* (LCC 001).

Although several service providers were already aware of what other providers could offer, many had not met all of the other service providers and sought to use the opportunity at the Hub to get to know about the range of services that each provided: *“I tried to go around and meet people. Most of the networking happened in the beginning or towards the end when there weren’t quite as many people coming through”* (SP 002).

However, service providers also indicated that while they could go around and see what the other providers offered, it would have been helpful to have had a group chat or orientation at the beginning of each Hub to get to know who everyone else was and what they offered, and what to expect at the Hub. They often reported saying they felt like they were *“going in a bit blind”* (SP 013). As one provider commented:

*“I think if we did a half an hour session beforehand, where everybody just let the other services know what we do so that... yes, so if I have got a client there or somebody approaches me there, I could send them straight across to [them].”* (SP 027)

## Discussion

The Social Capital Hubs originated as an idea. The Beenleigh District Manager surmised that holding events in the community would be a better way of connecting clients to needed services while at the same time helping them to connect to the broader community. The resulting Hubs program represents another tool that can be used by all the parties to facilitate client case management and the interaction among officers, service providers and clients, as well as the broader community. There was broad agreement among the stakeholders interviewed in this study that the Hubs initiative presented an innovative opportunity to better connect clients to services, which benefits each of the stakeholder groups and the broader community.

We used a mixed-methods research strategy to evaluate the processes and outcomes of the Hubs, drawing on interviews with 98 participants from six stakeholder groups, observations of each of the six study Hubs, and descriptive Hubs tracking data.

The results identify several clear benefits resulting from the Hubs. Of most significance is that Hubs provide the possibility of direct referrals to services through a community-based event in which clients and others from the community can be introduced to a range of relevant services. From comments received in the stakeholder interviews, there was evidence that the informal atmosphere of the Hub was comfortable to clients, their family members, and supporters who also attended. Officers commented that there were positive effects of getting out of the office and that the relaxed 'vibe' of the Hubs made effective connections between officers and clients possible, but also made staff feel like they had a more collaborative working environment.

Through attendance at the Hubs, both clients and officers were introduced to and learned about a range of services in their community. In addition, there was evidence that as a result of making contact at the Hubs, many clients made connections with relevant services following the Hubs. Service providers stated that the format not only gave them greater exposure to potential clients but also allowed them to connect with other services with which they had not previously been familiar. In a similar manner, community members also found the Hubs to be a valuable resource to obtain information about services available in the area, highlighting that the value of the Hubs extended beyond clients. Furthermore, the open format where officers and clients mingled with community members was seen as fostering a pro-social environment where clients participated in a community rather than strictly a corrections-oriented event.

The information resulting from the evaluation indicates factors both in the organisation and operation of the Hubs that are associated with successful outcomes.

We begin with a brief summary of key benefits before turning to considerations for change.

### Key benefits

***Productive 'co-design' approach.*** The Hubs demonstrated the possibilities for co-designed and cooperative strategies to be developed between Community Corrections and other agencies, like the local council, and service providers who are willing to develop partnerships and protocols to support clients. The design and execution of the Hubs was the result of a productive collaboration between Logan City Council and the Beenleigh and Logan District Offices, each of which made creative contributions to the design based on the exigencies of their agencies. Community Corrections' contribution was underpinned by the goal of improving community safety by enhancing clients' social capital, achieved in part by increasing clients' access to needed services and by increasing their connectedness and sense of belonging to the community, while Logan City Council's goals were to increase public safety by encouraging service provider collaboration and engagement.

**Client connection to services.** Stakeholders recounted stories of client–service provider connections, both during and following the Hubs that resulted in positive changes for the clients. For some clients, the Hubs represented the first opportunity to front up to needed services. There was general agreement that the benefits accrued to clients through the Hubs should be viewed as part of a process that would create awareness, build relationships and help clients feel that they were part of the community.

**Informal atmosphere of the Hubs was beneficial.** Stakeholders described the Hubs as having a positive vibe with a friendly and sociable atmosphere where many clients and members of the public felt sufficiently at ease to converse with officers and service providers.

**Reintegration to the community.** Stakeholders felt the Hubs represented a strategy to increase clients' prosocial interaction with and reintegration to the community while serving an order. This occurred because the Hubs were held in an open public space where other members of the community were welcomed.

**District Office and Service Provider interaction and collaboration.** The Hubs allowed officers to create connections with service providers which assisted them in knowing where they might be better able to refer clients with different needs. In addition, the more personal connection led to a stronger collaboration to aid in connecting clients to the service.

**Interagency connections between service providers.** The Hubs helped to promote interaction among service providers that had not previously existed. The interaction had a direct effect on client outcomes when service providers were able to direct clients to other agencies that better addressed their needs. Improved interagency connections met with the strategic aims of the Logan City Council Community Safety Program team.

**Positive community effects beyond Community Corrections.** There was evidence that community members also found the Hubs to be useful. Services at the Hubs were relevant for many members of the broader community and people passing by the Hubs were able to participate in the Hub and connect to a variety of needed services in the one place.

**Mechanism for case management and referral.** The Hubs initiative reflected a shift in the practice and culture of the work of community corrections. Both officers and clients commented that the less formal environment was productive. From this view, the Hubs could serve as an adjunct to the necessarily more formalised engagement during supervision meetings by encouraging an alternate productive form of engagement that was more collaborative than directive.

**Place-based approach.** Whole of Government initiatives include a focused on place-based approaches to address social, health and criminal justice issues (Queensland Government, nd). The hubs is but one example of this and QCS may consider this evaluation as part of the government strategic priority "keeping communities safe" and/or the criminal justice reform framework. In the future, QCS can review whether a place based approach is a suitable and effective form of contact to be built into the case management model.

## Factors associated with successful outcomes of the Hubs initiative

### Event Planning

Planning for a Hub requires several factors to be taken into consideration.

#### Coordination and consultation

Stakeholders agreed that several processes needed to occur in the lead up, execution, and conclusion of Hubs. Many commented that the effective operation of the Hubs requires that both the officers and services providers have a clear understanding of Hub procedures and the benefits that can accrue to clients who attend.

During the pilot phase of the program, interview participants suggested that ongoing consultation and communication with all stakeholder groups would address many of the problem areas that were raised during the evaluation. These include consultation with officers to inform them how a Hub may be integrated with their regular office work practice, and with relevant government and community-based service providers to invite their support for and potential participation in the Hubs. To this end it might be useful to prepare user guides to be distributed to all stakeholders that describes the purpose of the Hubs and the procedures that are followed at the Hub events.

While current QCS Operation Practice Guidelines support staff in exercising their professional discretion, increased knowledge regarding the function and purpose of the Hubs could increase confidence in knowing when and whom to refer to the events. District offices participating in Hubs could be provided with an induction on the purpose of the Hubs and the procedures in relation to client participation and follow-up; and that District Offices continue to designate key functions for the coordination and operation of the Hubs as part of role responsibilities within the office.

Finally, following each Hub, officers should be asked to identify issues related to a specific Hub. The information obtained in the review will assist with planning future events.

### **Location and Transportation**

As the pilot Hubs have demonstrated, the choice of venue is important, and having the events in an open and accessible location encouraged participation by community members with the pro-social benefits that accrue with that involvement. For all participants, travel time to the Hub is a major consideration. Accessibility is extremely important for all stakeholders and consideration needs to be given to available, convenient transport as well as parking.

The single location used in the study was an asset for the Hubs initiative given proximity to the Beenleigh District Office and the Courthouse. However, in future, locating Hubs in different settings, for example as pop-up events in different suburbs, could reduce travel time for clients who may live further away, as well as be more convenient for some service providers, and officers. Locating Hubs in different locations, however, requires more coordination and perhaps a distribution of organisational responsibility to different District Offices.

### **Selection of Services**

The overall success of the Hubs initiative is dependent on matching client needs to relevant services. Through the course of the study, the variety of services in attendance increased, however, stakeholders commented that continued attention to the type and mix of services in attendance at each Hubs was important.

It was an objective of the Hub organisers to create gender-specific Hubs, and there was broad agreement that this helped to attract services that better targeted men and women. The feedback indicates that maintaining these separate events was strongly supported by stakeholders. Some planning and consultation within the community could assist in the further development of these events to target service agencies able to respond to the specific needs of men and of women.

Stakeholders also commented that some consideration should be given to engaging with services that might help create an inclusive environment for children, given that many clients brought their children. Creating a child safe area within the Hub would enable clients with children to relax and stay longer at the Hub to build rapport with service providers.

Stakeholders also recommended the further inclusion of Indigenous organisations at future Hubs. Using the Hubs as a means to link clients to community elders was also recommended by Indigenous informants, acknowledging the importance of cultural healing processes in this population.

In planning any Hub, it will be essential to identify and invite services that are most relevant to the identified needs of the clients that will be attending. As part of the pre-Hub planning, officers could identify the types of services that would be of benefit to their clients. Services should also be identified that are suitable with respect to both gender and cultural background.

### **Invitation of clients**

Some clients indicated that they only attended the Hubs because they were required, or thought they were required, to do so. Clear communication with clients regarding whether attendance is optional is useful for those clients that would prefer to meet only in the office or who might be reluctant to engage in an open, public setting. In addition, the data available through this study does not permit us to comment on the possible benefits of whether attendance at more than one hub would be of benefit to clients.

### **Timing**

Stakeholders suggested that Hubs scheduling Hubs less frequently avoids problems of lethargy and burnout amongst providers and staff. Although service providers were very supportive of the Hubs initiative, some did express concern about the amount of time required to attend male-specific and female-specific Hubs on different days. Unless it would result in reduced effectiveness, consideration could be given to having both Hubs on the same day – one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. This option would reduce the time demands on both the service providers and officers.

Further, having multiple clients arrive at the same time posed a problem for the initial Hubs and it was suggested that it would be preferable to avoid too much overlap of clients attending at once, if feasible. If the Hubs are to be seen as an extension of community-based order or parole supervision and case management, there may need to be better planning around the staggered times for arrival of clients to the Hubs and the need to clarify that officers referring clients to the Hubs would need to be there to support their clients, or pass along key information about their clients to a colleague who could attend. However, if a strategy of staggered arrivals requires more than a half day to accommodate all the invited clients, it might negate the possibility of having both male and female Hubs on the same day

## **Event Operation**

### **Guidance for Hub attendees**

During the Hubs there were times when clients were either unaware or did not understand what a particular service could offer. Although for the most part it is anticipated that clients would be accompanied by officers who could ideally explain the relevance of particular service providers, it would be useful to have a brief description of each of the services that are attending any particular Hub. In addition, having a map that indicates the location of the various service providers at the site would be advantageous. The map and descriptions would also be of benefit to community members who come into the Hub area.

Although for the most part it is anticipated that clients will be accompanied by officers who could ideally explain the relevance of service providers, it would be useful to have a brief description of each of the services that are attending any particular Hub. In addition, having a map that indicates the location of the various service providers at the Hub site would be advantageous. The map and descriptions would also be of benefit to community members who come into the Hub area.

### **Supervision of children**

Because clients who bring children may not wish to discuss their situation in front of those children, for clients accompanied by children, it is suggested that a safe area with games etc. along with appropriate supervision is provided.

## Data collection

During the pilot study, Hubs procedures for collecting information were continually developing. Given that one aim of the Hubs initiative is to increase referrals to services, developing a standard method for collecting information about client-service provider connections would be useful for gauging the extent to which the aim is met. While adding additional administrative layers to the work of officers and/or service providers may serve as a barrier to referring by increasing workload, better utilisation existing data collection processes may be of benefit. Within Community Corrections, future emphasis could be placed on building the collection of performance measures to gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of the Hubs into the Hubs procedures.

## Post Event

### Follow up

In order to allow for officers to effectively track their clients' connections to relevant services to aid in case management, as well as to allow a greater understanding of the broader effects of the Hubs, coordination among officers, clients, and services regarding follow up to contacts made during the Hub event would be worthwhile. The documentation strategy suggested above (see *Data collection*) should include information that can be used to coordinate among officers and the various services with respect to any post-Hub communication with the client.

## Future directions

This research has highlighted the important role of officers and the potential for them to augment engagement with clients and connections with Council and service providers through the Hubs. The introduction of the Hubs signalled a change in office culture and practice, directly impacting the role of officers. The potential significance of changes of this nature cannot be underestimated, and in the event that Hubs were to continue, there is a need to develop a performance data framework at an early stage, guided by head office and regional staff. This would help to translate the potential impacts of the new initiative for local staff who would be responsible for its implementation. Where the development of performance measures and planning for data collection can be included as part of the blueprint for new Hubs initiatives, the sustainability of those initiatives is more likely. This evaluation has drawn together considerable data that can also help to inform future planning and implementation of Hubs across other offices and such data would contribute strongly to QCS's measures of efficiency and effectiveness in re-entry programs.

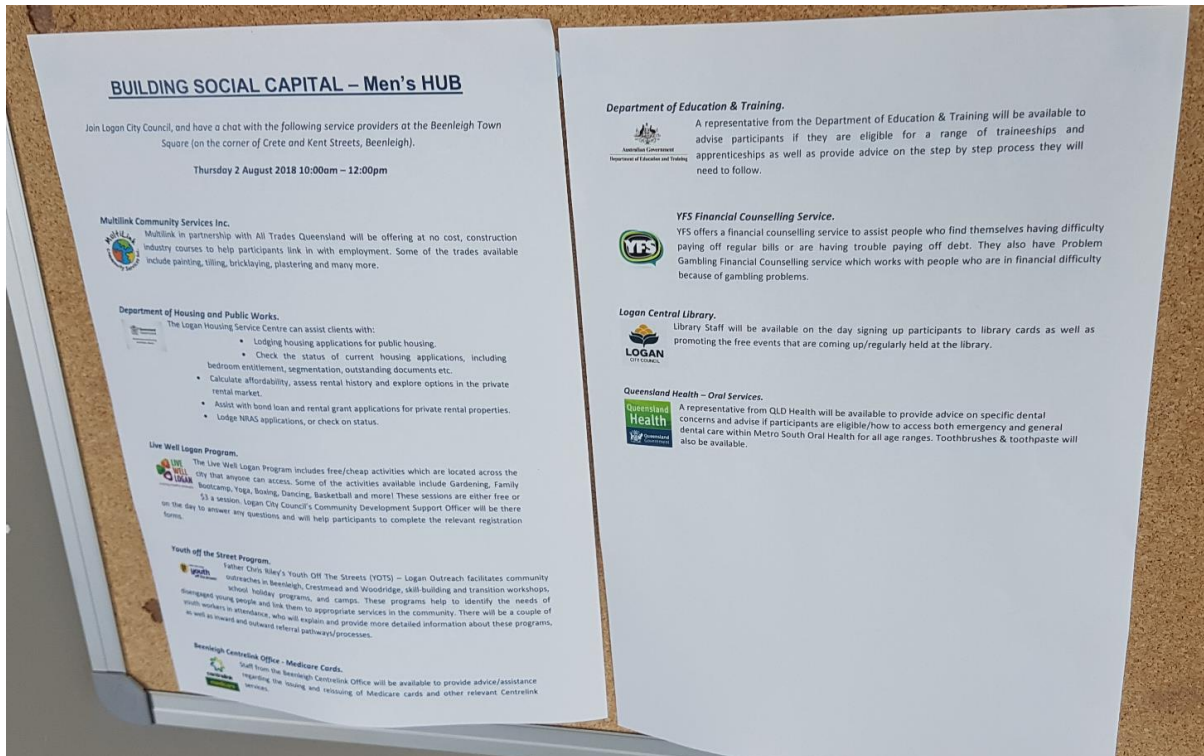
A greater understanding of what motivates offenders to desist from offending in the context of their engagement or lack of engagement with the Hubs can help to shape future Hubs and how they might best operate. This kind of analysis requires longitudinal data that can track offenders' progression and attitudes over a longer period. This was not the focus or intent of this study; however, a longitudinal research design should be considered in conjunction with any future Hubs initiatives.

For many offenders, motivation to complete orders and/or stay out of jail was driven by their responsibilities to their children and their hopes for their children's health and well-being. Many offenders spoke about the future in terms of how they saw themselves achieving in terms of a family, children, a job and a house. Fundamental to their visions and dreams for the future was being able to care for themselves and their families. Planning social capital Hubs, and deciding who should become involved and how, should take account of the significance of families and children in the lives of offenders in re-entry. The social capital Hubs endeavoured to do this in many, very practical ways, a key objective to be considered for any future Hubs.





# Appendix A Example Hub Invitation



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