Co-designing with Providers

An Overview of Insights and Key Themes

Tēnā koutou,

Thank you for taking the time to engage with us. We wanted to listen to you so that we could gain a better understanding of what it is that needs to change. This will enable a better accreditation experience.

When we get our priorities right, change can happen.

We engaged with a broad range of providers across nine hui, from Dunedin to Kaikohe. Nearly fifty different providers met with us – with many more unable to attend – from national providers operating out of multiple regional sites, to smaller organisations and iwi providers.

All of you gave us valuable information as you spoke candidly about your experiences.

You told us that agencies haven’t got it right – that there is a lot of pressure to meet a broad range of needs without adequate support, resources or understanding.

You told us that you recognise streamlining happening across government.

But there is a lot of work to be done to develop an inter-agency solution that supports you to adequately deliver quality services to clients, families and whānau in your community.

You told us how you see the current state of social sector accreditation and that you understand how necessary it is as a quality assurance process.

You told us that you understand the need for compliance to provide stability, consistency and a benchmark against which you can evidence quality.

You told us what is important to you when contracting with government to deliver services.

We want to make the process easier.

We want to make the process respectful.

We want to make accreditation flexible, to account for the diverse range of communities you work with and the needs of your clients.

The insights that we gained by engaging with you have helped to identify some key themes.

What we learned has highlighted for us what needs to be done to make accreditation a better experience.

We want to improve the way that we do things rather than continuing to burden you with limitations, stress and frustration.

We want you to be empowered to deliver quality services.

We want you to feel rewarded and appreciated for the work that you do.

We want you to look forward to being accredited, and to be proud of your accreditation status as a trusted provider in your community.

We will continue to engage with you as we develop a better accreditation process.

Ngā mihi,

The Inter-Agency Accreditation Team

1. We recognise what you identified
	1. **Time and resources**
		1. Compliance is necessary
		2. Compliance costs are not always funded
		3. Administration is time consuming
		4. Information is not always easy to find – especially for smaller providers who don’t have a dedicated system
		5. Duplication drains resources
		6. Time and resources are limited
		7. Small NGOs don’t have the capacity to cope with demands
		8. Some areas don’t have available funding for services
		9. Providers are self-aware: they know their own limitations and capabilities
		10. Providers are trying to do their best within resource limitations
		11. Government lacks understanding of the real cost of services
		12. Competition can lock out smaller providers who are capable of delivering quality services
		13. Agencies put too much time and effort into things that don’t produce valuable results
	2. **Consistency**
		1. Different agencies have different views of information sharing
		2. There is no government-wide agreement on what constitutes quality services
		3. Agencies work within different review cycles and different risk appetites
		4. Not all agencies have a separate accreditation process
		5. Assessment outcomes can be dependent on assessor interpretation
		6. Agencies are affected by the political flavour of the day
		7. Government IT departments are too invested in their own systems
		8. Fighting over which departments should pay puts a greater burden on providers because things are not being done
	3. **Communication and relationship management**
		1. Streamlining could be better
		2. Communication and understanding of services could improve
		3. The right questions may not be getting asked
		4. Small things can stress providers out
		5. Relationship between assessor and provider can make a difference to results
		6. Building relationships can be difficult when there are too many accreditation activities
		7. Providers understand their communities and client-base
		8. Providers jump through hoops to appease assessors
		9. Sometimes, assessors look for problems to justify an assessment
	4. **Expectations and support**
		1. Accreditation is beneficial
		2. Agencies can be highly reliant on philanthropy and charity
		3. Providers have to do more than they are contracted to do because there is a need
		4. Only providers with the right capability are successful
		5. Not all services are government funded
		6. Providers can be very capable: they are the experts in their communities
		7. Voluntary work is not recognised or rewarded by government
		8. Agencies are only interested in services that they fund
		9. There are too many different procedures to follow
		10. Short-term numbers are valued over long-term results
		11. There is often a disconnect between government demands and the coal-face
		12. There are no solid support systems in place for meeting the Standards – especially for iwi providers
2. We heard what you asked
	1. **Why isn’t there an all of government accreditation function already?**
	2. What motivates government to try and develop one accreditation function?
	3. Hasn’t this all been attempted before?
	4. Is accreditation enough to provide a true picture of the entire service?
	5. Do you accredit the provider or the services?
	6. Is there a government-wide agreement on what constitutes delivery of *quality* services? Can quality be measured?
	7. Does a *snapshot* view actually catch enough that should or could be improved?
	8. What is the *actual* picture of one organisation using one set of Standards to assess all providers?
	9. If there are no red flags and no changes, why are you visiting us?
	10. Risk is a *daily* concern for providers: is accreditation the only way to cover off risks?
	11. Aren’t there existing tools you can utilise to make things easier? Why reinvent the wheel?
	12. Does being accredited mean anything to clients?
	13. What is the best form of evidence to show that client needs are being met?
	14. Is there provision for voluntary compliance?
	15. Is there a place for historical funding?
	16. If one service fails, how should that affect funding of the organisation as a whole?
	17. In terms of staff training, familiarity, replacing existing systems, etc. – what will be the cost to providers of a new system?
	18. Is adding another platform going to be further duplication? How will government mitigate or avoid this?
	19. In reality, what will a new system mean to frontline staff?
	20. How will existing information be accurately exported to another database?
	21. How will you streamline the transition so it doesn’t become time consuming and resource heavy?
3. We listened to what you want
	1. **Government**
		1. High level leadership, ownership and responsibility
		2. Agencies working together for a common purpose
		3. Collaboration that benefits providers
		4. Control over competition for services
		5. Take findings and use them to plan wisely
		6. Positive outcomes for clients should be at the centre of decision making
		7. Understand that complex issues take a long time to resolve
		8. Understand what happens at the frontline: the reality of the coal-face
	2. **Assessors**
		1. Flexible and an openness to negotiate
		2. Empathisers who care about the clients engaging with the services: authentic relationships
		3. Understand the provider and the services they deliver
		4. Professional and prepared
		5. Qualified and experienced
		6. Politically and culturally competent
		7. A multi-disciplinary team of experts able to assess every service arm at once
	3. **The accreditation process**
		1. A reduction in duplication
		2. One nationally aligned accreditation: a W.O.F. approach that is intuitive, efficient, consistent, comprehensive and transparent
		3. Consistent, evolving, fit-for-purpose Standards that reflect knowledge and learning within the sector
		4. Co-ownership of the Standards
		5. Re-evaluation of services that is sensible: no unnecessary monitoring
		6. Contract monitoring lines up with accreditation
		7. Clear communication, expectations and requirements
		8. Enough time to prepare
		9. Achievable outcomes
		10. A clear agenda and schedule of assessment events
		11. Full reports that truly capture the narrative of service delivery
		12. No surprises!
		13. Consideration for different business models: e.g. a Collective
	4. **Recognition**
		1. Equity in the sector
		2. Seen as leaders in their fields and experts in their communities
		3. Specialist services that meet specialist needs
		4. Two-way partnership between providers and government: consulted on changes and advances
		5. Seen as a trusted provider in their communities
		6. Appreciation and positives reflected in feedback
		7. Communities as safe places
		8. Community needs being fulfilled: equipping communities with skills
		9. Acknowledgement of the positives
	5. **Tools and resources**
		1. Innovative ways to capture client voice
		2. Innovative ways of gathering and recording evidence
		3. Innovative ways of articulating goals to clients
		4. Empowered to provide high quality services to families, whānau and communities
		5. Financial stability
		6. Better use and allocation of resources that includes funding to meet compliance costs
		7. Better ways of dealing with documentation and information
		8. A feedback loop that allows for improvement for providers, services, assessors, and the assessment process
	6. **Training and support**
		1. Clarity around expectations and outcomes
		2. Opportunity for reflection, growth and self-development
		3. Advice and the sharing of inter-sector knowledge: collaborative learning
		4. Mentoring and access to a guidance hub
		5. Plain language
4. We know what we want to implement
	1. **A system that works across government**
		1. Secure: RealMe; no identifiable client information
		2. A cloud-based repository of practices, learning and evidence
		3. A common platform that is intuitive, simple and efficient
		4. A modular approach: filtering by applicable Standards
		5. One accrediting tool that everyone accesses and uses
		6. Independent: sits within its own kaupapa
		7. Accountable: auditing the auditors
		8. Appropriate to communities and services (flexible and equitable)
		9. Holds consistent, up to date information (dynamic)
		10. Provides oversight of the tick boxes (transparent)
		11. Shows the complete picture: builds a narrative (engaging)
		12. Sits on an iwi values-based framework: recognises the principles of mana whenua and Tangata whenua
		13. Fluid: accounts for every type of provider
		14. Future proof
		15. Not collecting data for the sake of data (“black hole” issues)
	2. **A reciprocal partnership**
		1. Built on trust
		2. Based on mutual respect
		3. Culture of expertise
		4. Keep providers at the centre
		5. Show appreciation for their services
		6. Cultural competence and understanding
		7. Quality improvement: beyond quality assurance
		8. Partnered with the community: find meaningful community solutions
		9. Consulted on matters that affect whānau and communities
		10. No political bias
	3. **Inter-sector knowledge sharing**
		1. Freely discussed service gaps
		2. Development of better outcomes for clients
		3. Sharing of knowledge, advice and recommendations around how to do better
		4. Learning from mistakes and resolved issues: sharing how and what could help to avoid critical actions
		5. Support of each other, regardless of competition for service
		6. Success stories