Embedding Evidence-informed Practice in the Victorian Child and Family Service System

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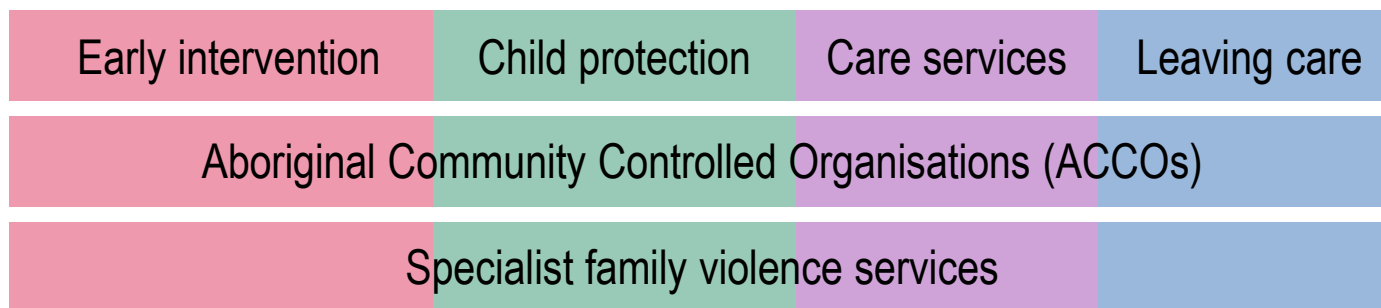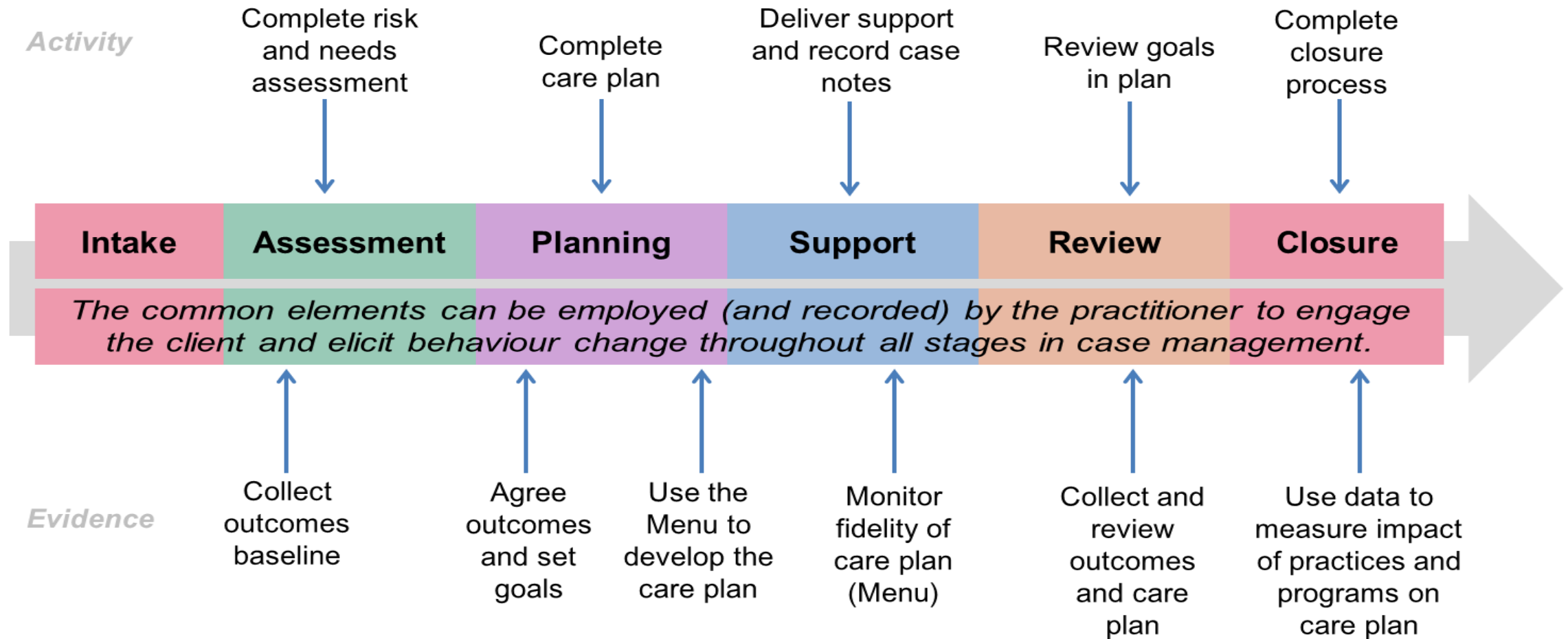
In Victoria, the child and family service system is being redesigned to be more effective in improving outcomes for children, young people and families.
The redesign aims to provide a more integrated service system that is informed by the best research evidence.

Define the outcomes	Access and understand the evidence	Use the evidence to improve outcomes
Develop a Children & Families Outcomes Framework	Build the evidence base, make it accessible and improve capability	Embed evidence in practice and services

Early intervention	Child protection	Care services	Leaving care
Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)			
Specialist family violence services			

The 'Common Elements Approach' will support the delivery of evidence-informed and integrated practice across the child and family service system.

Activity

Complete risk and needs assessment

Complete care plan

Deliver support and record case notes

Review goals in plan

Complete closure process

Intake	Assessment	Planning	Support	Review	Closure

The common elements can be employed (and recorded) by the practitioner to engage the client and elicit behaviour change throughout all stages in case management.

Evidence

Collect outcomes baseline

Agree outcomes and set goals

Use the Menu to develop the care plan

Monitor fidelity of care plan (Menu)

Collect and review outcomes and care plan

Use data to measure impact of practices and programs on care plan

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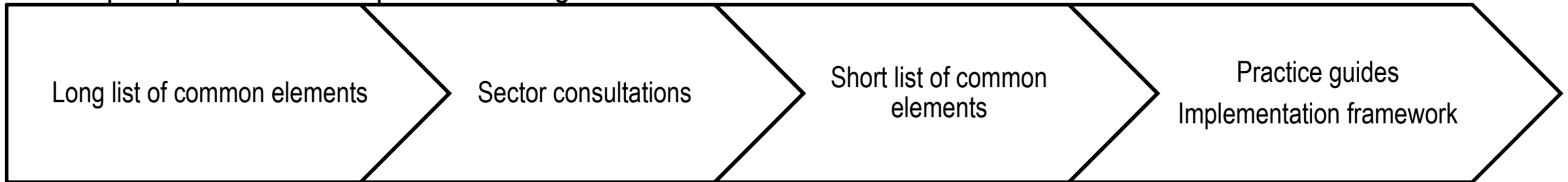
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Benefits of the Common Elements Approach

- The Common Elements Approach is complementary to evidence-based programs and will build on and support good practice across the sector.

- The purpose of this approach is to:

  – promote a **shared understanding** of good practice

  – provide the right **implementation supports**

  – focus on *how* services are delivered to support the effectiveness of *what* is currently delivered.

- It will feed into the review of the Best Interests Case Practice Model and provides an opportunity to effectively implement practice approaches to support the delivery of the model.
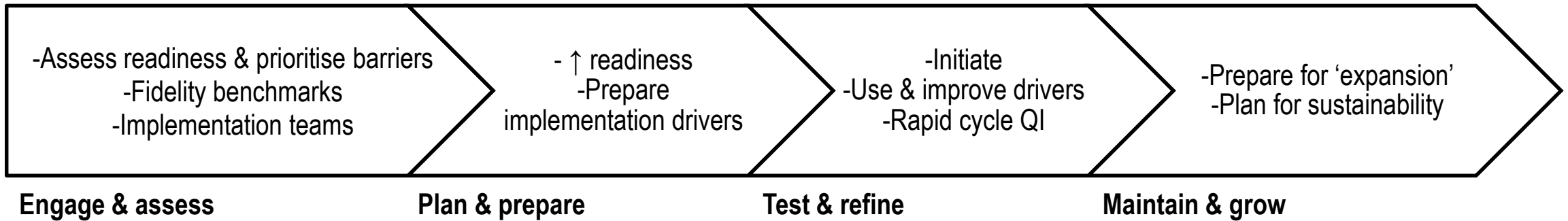
Project Overview

Stage 1:

- Identify, prioritise and describe common elements
- Prepare practice and implementation guidance

| Long list of common elements | Sector consultations | Short list of common elements | Practice guides Implementation framework |

Stage 2:

- Trial implementation of common elements in 5 sites (to be selected)

| -Assess readiness & prioritise barriers -Fidelity benchmarks -Implementation teams | - ↑ readiness -Prepare implementation drivers | -Initiate -Use & improve drivers -Rapid cycle QI | -Prepare for 'expansion' -Plan for sustainability |

Engage & assess   **Plan & prepare**   **Test & refine**   **Maintain & grow**

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STAGE 1:
What common elements support a more consistent, integrated, and evidence-informed approach to practice in the human services system?
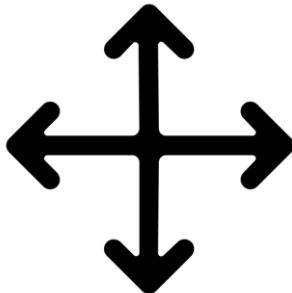
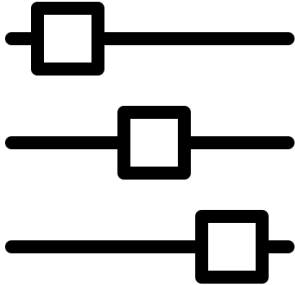# Selecting the common elements
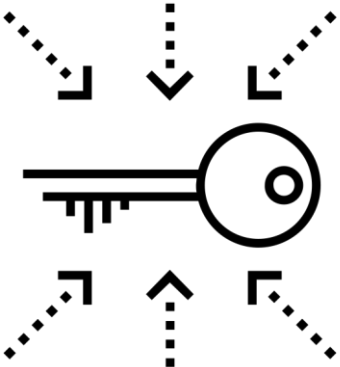
Consistent evidence
of effectiveness

Alignment with Best
Interests Principles

Widely applicable,
able to be tailored

Operationalisable,
measurable

Endorsed in
consultation

STAGE 2:
What does it take to implement common elements well and sustainably in the human services system?

The implementation model

Anticipated nature & level of support/guidance

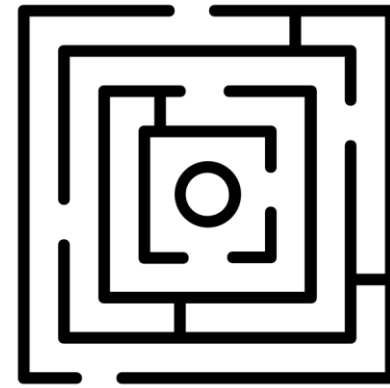Emphasises purposeful, active, integrated implementation efforts

Capabilities, expertise and workforce requirements

Framework to be tailored in site-specific implementation plans

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Challenges ahead

- Diversity of trial sites

- How to support a good practitioner decision-making about when to use what element, with whom, and in what order or combination?

- What strategies or approaches to best assess common elements use? e.g. baseline frequency, competency

- Defining and measuring fidelity indicators for common elements

Our opportunities
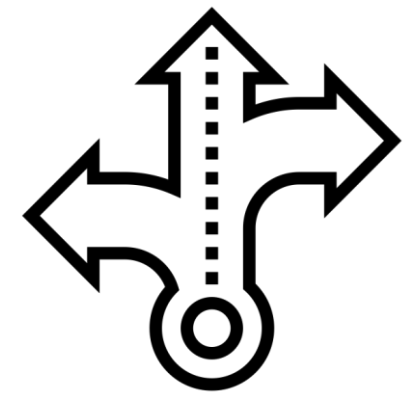
- First government-funded foray into common elements in Australia
    - Huge opportunities for systems-level learning
- Facilitate & support embedding of evidence-informed practice in a range of sectors
    - Including those with limited evidence-base guiding their practice
- Contribute to the implementation evidence-base for common elements across a range of settings
- Possible identification of 'common' common elements

For further information:

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Common Elements for engagement		Description
1	Authentic engagement	Engagement that is sincerely felt and meant. This constitutes building and maintaining a relationship with a carer/individual that they experience as supportive and genuine - by becoming attuned and responsive to the family's circumstances, values and priorities.
2	Partnership relationship	Explicitly seeking a collaborative relationship with carer/individual based on mutual sharing of information, decision-making, and responsibilities. The partnership relationship is about the practitioner and carer/individual working together as equal partners in a mutually agreed upon and respected way.
3	Strength-based practice	Focusing on the strengths of a carer/individual and seeking to identify and openly acknowledge what they do well or are able to do for themselves.
4	Responding to family priorities	Understanding what the carer/individual values most and what issues are most important to them, and then using these as a basis for providing services to help address priorities and other needs that have been identified.
5	Cultural responsiveness - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Focusing on culturally respectful engagement with Aboriginal children/young people/families to ensure they feel their culture is respected and that they are able to engage effectively with practitioners.
	Cultural responsiveness - CALD	Focusing on culturally respectful engagement with children/young people/families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), refugee and newly arrived communities to ensure they feel their culture is respected and that they are able to engage effectively with practitioners.
6	Seeking feedback	Regularly checking how carers/individuals have experienced the service and whether the practitioner who is delivering the service is meeting their expectations and needs.
Common Elements for behaviour change		Description
7	Goal setting	This practice guide focuses on how to facilitate identification and development of realistic goals that help motivate and guide behaviour change.
8	Problem solving	Modelling and demonstrating techniques designed to problem solve which are generalisable and used throughout life. These include defining a problem, brainstorming, choosing a solution, evaluating results.
9	Family communication skills	Training for the carer/individual in skills and behaviours to facilitate more positive interpersonal communication between family members.
10	Motivational interviewing	Set of techniques to build motivation, readiness and commitment for change.