

Emerging Minds Focus framework overview: Adult mental health services

[Emerging Minds Focus](#) takes organisations on a quality improvement journey in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of infants, children and their families.

This overview is intended to build your understanding of the key attributes for quality improvement within the Emerging Minds Focus tool. [A suite of resources](#) has also been developed to further your understanding of how Focus can support quality improvement and enhance mental health outcomes.

The following areas and attributes are used for the Change Team and Organisational surveys within Emerging Minds Focus, and are intended for **adult mental health inpatient and residential services**. Each attribute is reflected upon and rated based on whether it is:

- 'In place'
- 'Partially in place'
- 'Not in place'
- 'Unclear'; or
- 'Not relevant'.

The results of these surveys help to inform the next steps in your quality improvement journey. If an attribute is identified as a priority, you can consider the recommended actions provided or create your own, assign them to [Change Team members](#) and integrate them into your Focus action plan.

Organisation

This area contains attributes that foster favourable structures, policies, leadership practices and other systemic mechanisms across our organisation, to support parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.



Mission, values and strategic documents

Our organisation's mission, values and other strategic documents (i.e. models of care, strategic plans, etc.) state a commitment to supporting parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Policies and procedures

Our policies and procedures provide structure and guidance to help support parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Interagency collaboration

Our organisation has relationships with local child, parent and family organisations and services to support:

- information-sharing
- referral pathways
- shared care; and
- collaborative learning across services and knowledge sharing across services.

The voice of parents, children and families

The needs and experiences of parents, children and families inform our service design, delivery and evaluation.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families

Our organisation's policies and service design ensure cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, and are responsive to their unique needs and experiences.

Cultural safety for culturally diverse families

Our organisation's policies and service design ensure cultural safety for culturally diverse families and are responsive to their unique needs and experiences.

Audits for service planning and decision-making

Our organisation regularly audits service delivery data relating to parents and families to inform service planning and decision-making.

Services

This area contains attributes that support favourable service infrastructure, staffing and learning structures for family-focused practice and improve mental health outcomes for parents and families.

Recruitment and interview strategy

Our recruitment strategy and interviewing processes attract applicants who understand the need to support parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Staff induction

Staff induction includes mental health literacy and the skills and knowledge to support parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Supervision

Supervision is supportive, reflective and creates a space for learning, to build confidence in practice when working with parents to support infant and child mental health and development and family wellbeing.

Professional development

Professional development structures support and sustain learning to ensure parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing can be supported through evidence-based contemporary knowledge.

Collaborative learning

Practitioners are provided with learning opportunities to connect across child and family-focused services, to build understanding, knowledge and skills in engaging parents to support infant and child mental health and wellbeing.

Reflective practice

Practitioners are provided with time and space to reflect on:

- how the needs of children and families can remain central to their work
- how their values, biases and assumptions impact their engagement with parents and families; and
- their challenges and positive experiences in working with parents and families.

Practice champions

Child, parent and family-focused practice is supported by practice champions who act as conduits between families, practitioners and leadership to support the translation of learning and policies into practice.

Family-sensitive forms

Client-facing forms are accessible, non-threatening and consider parental status and infants and children within the family.

Parent-child relationships

Our services have a focus on supporting parent-child relationships.

Residential/inpatient services

Our residential/inpatient services have infrastructure to support parents in connecting with their children within the service and during periods of separation.

Practice

This area contains attributes that enable staff to effectively engage, support and respond to parents to promote parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Integrating parent, child and family-focused professional learning

All practitioners and front-of-house staff have received appropriate levels of professional development to build their knowledge and skills in supporting parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Engaging parents in the whole-of-family context

Practitioners engage in regular conversations with parents to consider parenting and other family/kin, to support infant and child mental health and development and family wellbeing.

Trauma-informed approach

Practitioners recognise the impact of trauma and other adversities on infant and child mental health and development and family wellbeing, and can respond to families in a trauma-informed way.

Pregnancy and early parenting

New and expecting parents are provided with appropriate information and referred to services to support their parenting, infant/parent connections and nurturing relationship in the perinatal period.

Culturally responsive practice

Practitioners are responsive to the needs and lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse families, to support parent, infant and child social and emotional wellbeing and development.

Intake and assessment

Practitioners feel supported and confident in identifying the following information through intake and assessment procedures:

- the family's strengths and vulnerabilities
- parenting goals and worries
- the impact of a parent's mental illness on their parenting and children
- concurrent stressors
- family support networks
- family mental health history.

Information-sharing and referrals

Practitioners share appropriate information and facilitate referrals to support the parent, infant and child.

Information and guidance resources

Practitioners are confident to provide parents with information and guidance to support parenting, infant and child mental health and development, and family wellbeing.

Family care plans

Practitioners work with parents and families to develop plans for other caregivers to support their child during periods of separation and uncertainty.

Discharge planning and shared care

Parents, children and family members are prepared and supported for discharge from the moment they enter our service.

Upon discharge, they are provided with documentation and informed about:

- their recovery progress
- plans for continued support
- their 'just in case'/crisis plans; and
- procedures for re-entry to our service, if needed.

Gathering feedback

Practitioners document feedback from parents and families about their service experience both directly and anonymously, to:

- strengthen the parent-practitioner relationship
- adapt the practice approach to meet the parent and family's needs; and
- inform broader improvements to service delivery.

**Learn more about
Emerging Minds
Focus**

