

Monash Volunteer 'Crimcheck' Network

Partners

The Monash Volunteer 'Crimcheck EMR' Network initially consisted of five community organisations from the South Eastern suburbs of Melbourne: Monash Volunteer Resource Centre (MVRC), Knox Community Volunteers, DONCARE, Eastern Volunteer Resource Centre and the City of Boorondara (through the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre).

The collaboration story so far...

The five community organisations first collaborated in 2001 when they developed effective procedures to recruit and retain volunteers. All organisations voiced frustration with the lengthy time taken for police checks and the impact this had on recruiting volunteers. They sought, and successfully obtained funding from the Department of Human Services to create a web-based electronic police checking process that would be most user-friendly and more cost-effective than the existing process. The organisations' combined demand for criminal record checks was sufficient to meet the minimum annual requirement for electronic lodgement with CrimTrac - an agency of the Federal Attorney General's Department, that administers the National Crime History Record Check database and is responsible for processing police checks for all State services.

The system was trialled by the five members. A Project Officer was employed to manage the process from planning through to evaluation. This included: appointing of a consultant to develop interagency protocols and agreements, including a Memorandum of Understanding, liaising with CrimTrac and obtaining endorsement from Victoria Police. The Project Officer was also responsible for including seven new partners in the pilot project and after the successful pilot, inviting other community organisations to participate.

Achievements

- E-lodgement system up and running and generating cost savings
- Bank fees, postage and staff time are reduced as members pay a lump sum in advance (equal to average monthly usage).
- Much faster response time (down from 20-30 days to around 3 working days for around 88% of checks). As a result within a week of expressing interest a volunteer can be signed up.
- Around 60 organisations are currently using the service.

Success factors

- Pre-established trust relationships
- Shared need to streamline police check application process

Challenges

- Unexpected delays in project implementation meant project funding ran out before the pilot phase was complete. To sustain the project

participating organisations are charged a rate of \$12.50 per volunteer police check to cover administration and maintenance costs as well as the cost of the check. (This is still less than the cost of submitting police checks manually.) Paid staff police checks are \$34.00.

- One police jurisdiction opposed the original Crimcheck proposal. It took some months to negotiate a workable solution acceptable to both parties.
- To be sustainable 15,000 police check requests need to be submitted annually.

Future / sustainability

- CrimCheck has now processed in excess of 2,500 police checks and is well on the way to achieving financial self-sustainability. Access to CrimCheck is now being rolled out beyond the Eastern Metropolitan area of Melbourne in manageable stages.
- Enhancements continue to be completed as feedback is gained from the ever-expanding user group.

Further information

Email: info@crimcheck.org.au Visit www.crimcheck.org.au