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in Child and Family Welfare Inc.

Usability of Case Management Systems and Data:

The Future of I.T. systems in the Child and Family Services Sector

Joint Project

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The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare acknowledges:

- Our Member organisations and the Business and Operations Managers who participated to provide data and input.

- Strategy and Design Unit within the Information Management and Technology Branch of the Victorian Department of Human Services

Objectives

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- Identify, sector needs with regard to usability and relevance of Case Management Systems for both:
  - case management and
  - business management purposes
- Explore experiences of the usability and functionality of:
  - CRIS/SP
  - IRIS
- Documented evidence to represent sector experiences and needs

Methodology

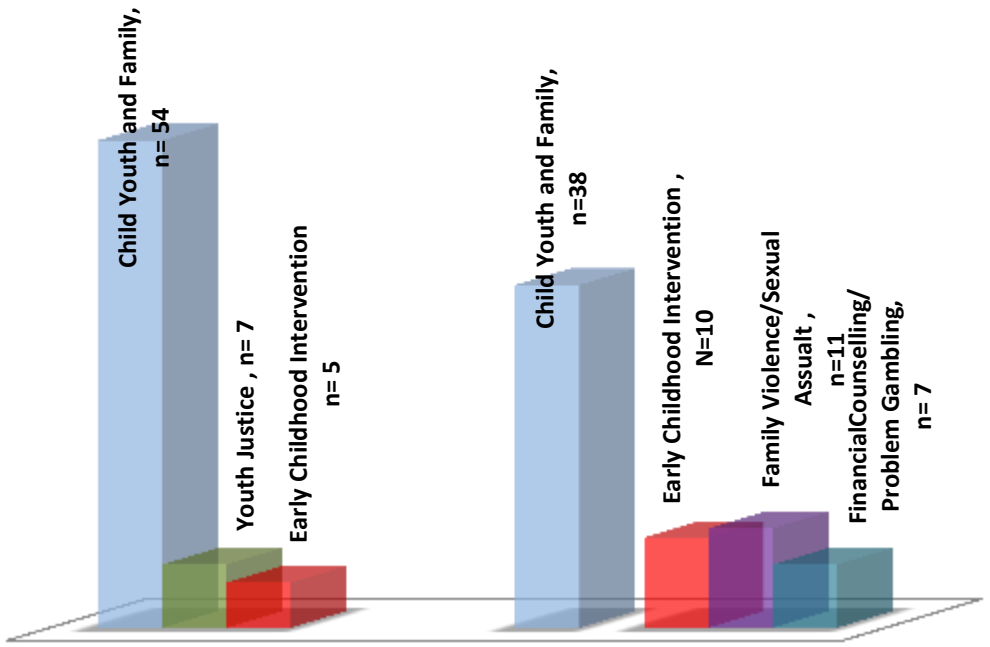
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- On-Line Pilot – Nov-Dec 2012
  - 16 Organisations
- More Extensive Survey March-April 2013
  - On-line
  - Included room for commentary
  - 70 Surveys – 35 Community Service Organisations
- Respondents:
  - Business/Operations Managers.
  - IT Managers
  - Front Line workers

Responding Organisations

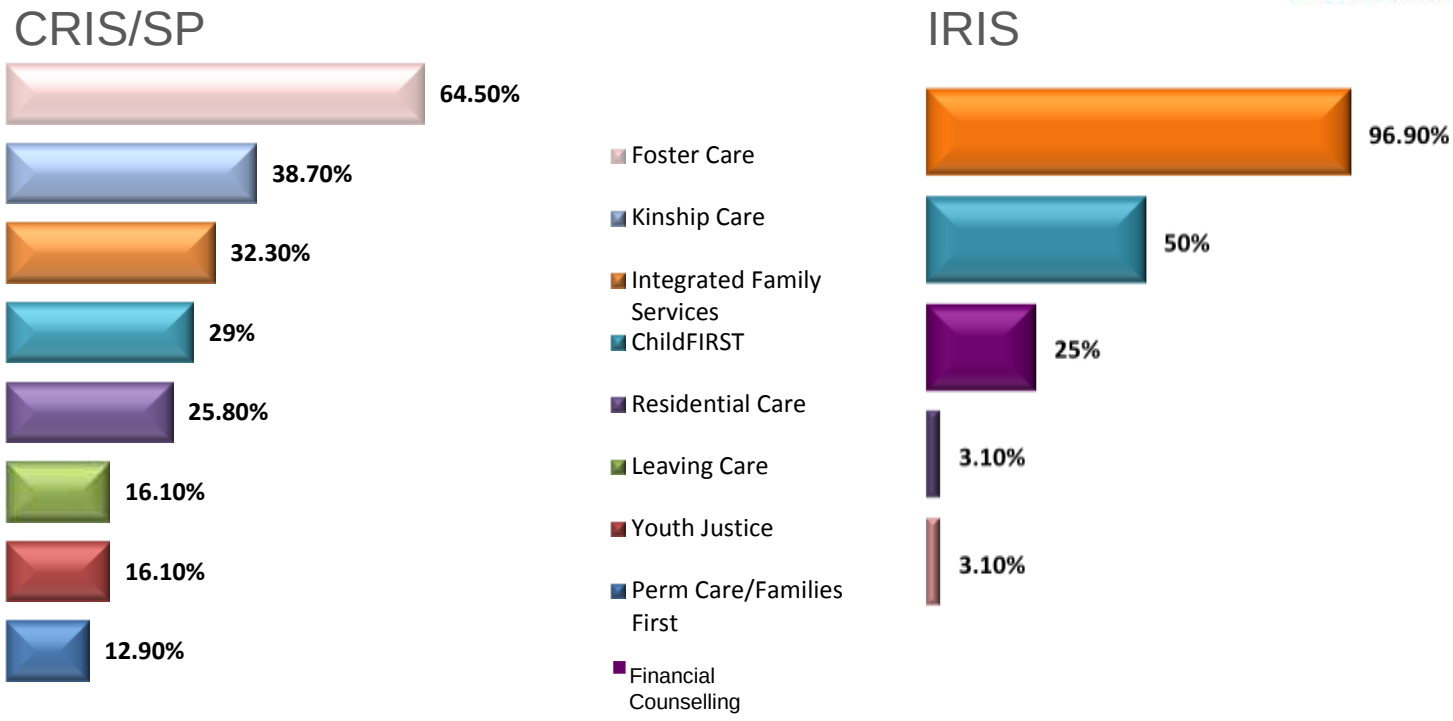
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- Wide annual IT spend
  - 38.2% < 100K pa
  - 61.8% > 100K pa
- Workforce
  - 44.2% < 100
  - 55.7% > 100
- 81% used CRIS/SP
- 54% used IRIS



Services/Uses & CRIS/SP or IRIS

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Case Mgt – 97%

Data Rptg – 85%

Case Mgt – 87%

Data Rptg – 100%

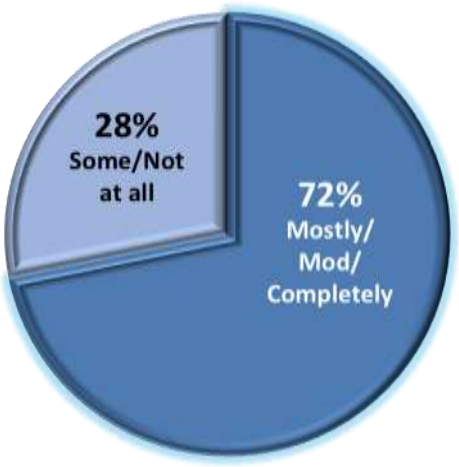
Adaptation of both tools to perform alternative functions.

CRIS/SP somewhat more often used for data management purposes than IRIS used for case management.

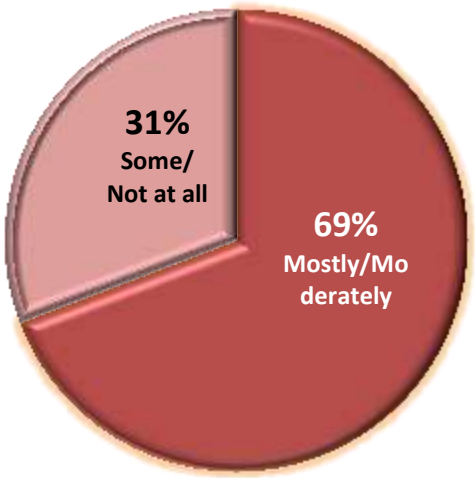
Capacity to meet Case Mgt Needs

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CRIS/SP



IRIS



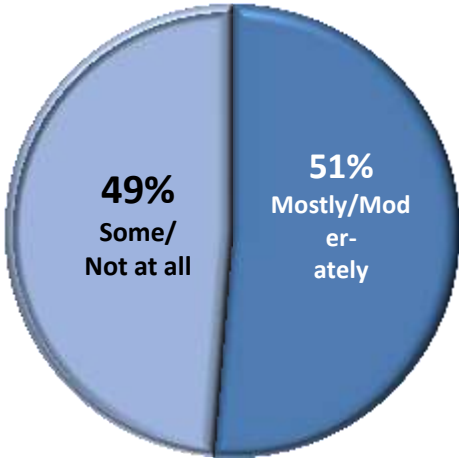
Neither database more effective than the other in meeting the case management needs of the Child and Family Services sector.

CRIS/SP failure to have better functionality for its designed purpose of case management, compared to IRIS, is a critically concerning issue

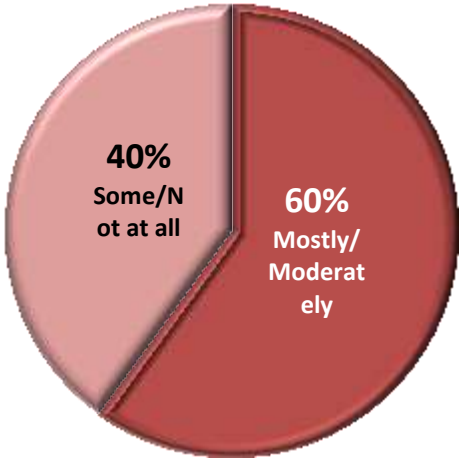
Capacity to meet Business Objs

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CRIS/SP



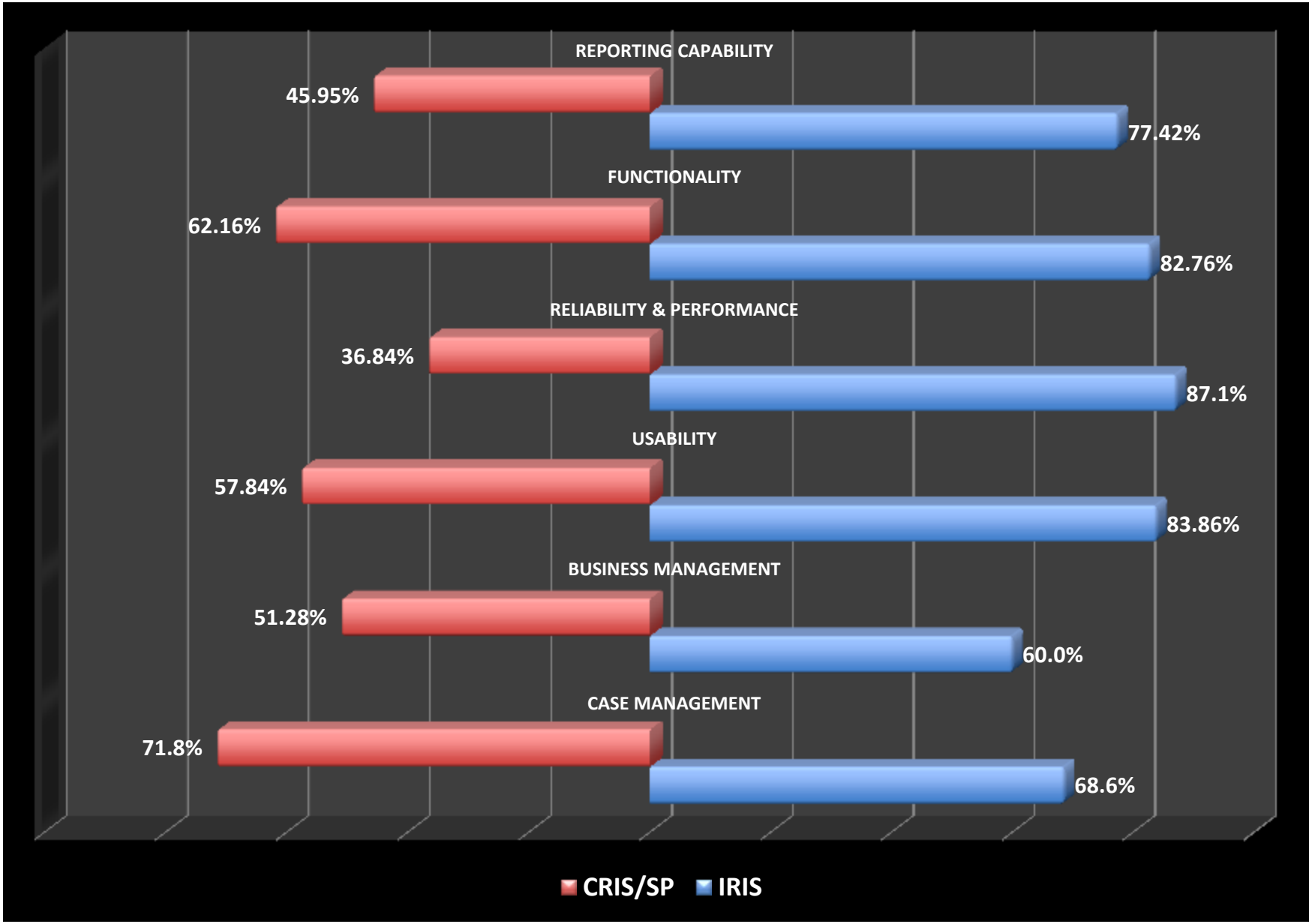
IRIS



Low functionality for meeting business objectives for both data bases - CRIS/SP being to some extent worse that IRIS

Again, IRIS failure to outperform CRIS/SP on it purposive function is a significant concern.

Usability, Performance and Functionality



Usability

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Usability of both data systems considered to be reasonable at best

IRIS is clearly perceived to be more functional and to out-perform CRIS/SP

Four central themes of complaint with CRIS/SP:

1. *Complexity and Rigidity of the system – the number of steps required to enter data and their interdependence*
2. *Lack of ease of interfacing – lack of 'user-friendly' functionality*
3. *Need for considerable training and use development*
4. *Performance against time pressures on the job*

Reflecting the generally higher ratings for IRIS, responses to the usability of IRIS were more positive.

Reliability and Performance

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IRIS greatly exceeds CRISP/SP for reliability and performance

CRIS/SP complaints:

1. *constant freezing and drop-outs*
2. *entering case notes is laborious and time-consuming.*
3. *data easily lost, especially during peak times.*

Respondents also mentioned a lack of perceived relevance – and hence – a lack of commitment to the system by workers

Unreliability for both systems at peak periods was noted

- Where IRIS was criticised for drop-outs related to its capacity to support multiple access the system at peak usage times.

Functionality

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Both rated poorly

- 4 in 5 (81%) rated functionality as limited and poor-reasonable.

IRIS perceived as having fewer problems.

CRISP/SP problems :

1. *Referrals – not supported*
2. *Integration – not compatible with other systems - difficult to incorporate into case planning*
3. *Reporting back for performance monitoring - severely limited*
4. *Court reports and Case management notes - not efficiently extracted.*

5. *The intention that CRIS/SP will support LAC data collection and ensure tracking of the client across programs has not been achieved*
6. *The aim of tracking through the 'common client layer' not supported.*

IRIS problems:

- *lack of utility as a case management tool – case notes and referrals.*

Reporting Capability

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IRIS has greater reporting capability - 'reasonable'

CRIS/SP was predominantly rated as having poor-very poor reporting functionality.

CRIS/SP complaints:

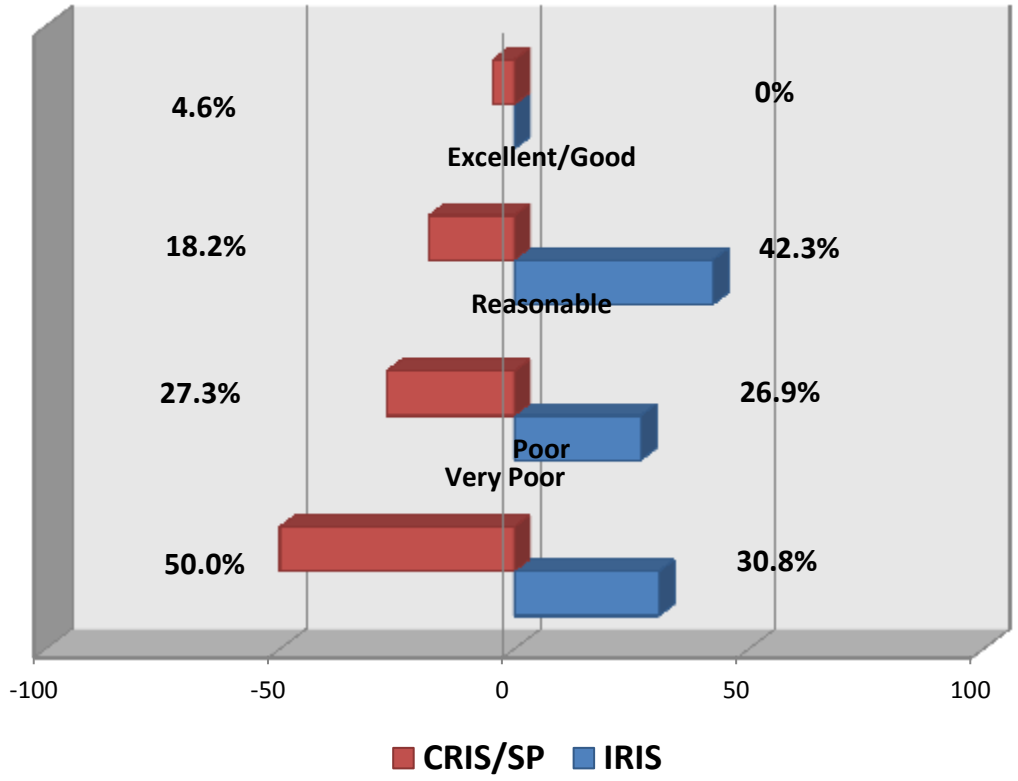
1. *Reports on specific data needs* – such *as client history - not supported.*
2. *Reports provided do not contain the information required or needed.*
3. *Requests for reports are usually not supported and unavailable*.

IRIS complaints:

1. *Limitations on the amount of detail allowed and*
2. *Adaptability to business needs*.

Use and Integration of Supplemental Systems

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3 in 5 (56.8%) CRIS/SP users have introduced supplemental systems for case management and/or data reporting (n=37)

4 in 5 (76.5%) of IRIS users have instituted supplemental systems.

Central Failing - Capacity to Integrate with Supplementary Systems low (n=37)

Critical impact on cost of business
- double (at minimum) data entry and handling.

In Summary

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The issues cascaded:

1. Lack capability to support the day to day functioning of organisations as stand-alone systems

2. Lack of capacity for data to be retrieved for management purposes

3. Limited to no ability to integrate - generate ‘doubling of work loads’ to support organisational needs

4. Unreliable Data – lack of capacity to retrieve data is compounded by the problem that what is retrievable is incomplete or inaccurate

5. Lack of consistency in the systems used across different services and programs militate against any accuracy in keeping track of clients and service delivery

In Summary

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Most critically:

necessitating the use of multiple systems, the failures of CRISP and IRIS impacted negatively on functions critical to effective service delivery and client outcomes such as:

1. Ability to share case notes with other workers.

2. Ability to do work in a timely and efficient manner - impacting service delivery to clients

3. Ability to plan services and service delivery

4 Increased cost of business – to both organisations and to clients

5. Increased staff and worker frustration.

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Way Forward:

Time Critical – Minimum fit for purpose

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1. More specific functions available – especially the capacity to produce custom/ad hoc reporting as needed.
2. One integrated database – thus preventing double entry
3. Eradication of freezes/dropouts/speed issues
4. Easier data entry – less steps required and easier navigation
5. Improved court report layouts
6. Capability to upload bigger documents
7. Removal of mandated software usage

'Time critical and immediate improvements required as a minimum to upgrade either IRIS or CRIS/SP to be fit for purpose for even current client service needs are extensive.'

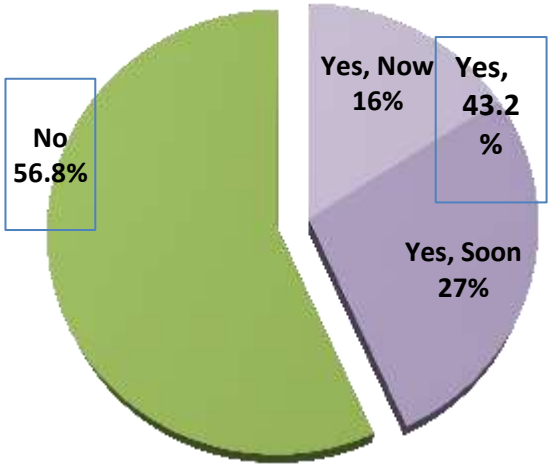
Self-Initiated Search for Data Solutions

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While many organisations in the sector have attempted to source and establish a fully functional solution:

- the cost as been prohibitive.

'The need for better systems, the inadequacies of current systems and the necessity of supplemental processes result in considerable increased costs to organisations. Moreover, finding a solution to this is cost-prohibitive for most Community Service Organisations'



Self-Initiated Search for Data Solutions

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Critical Needs:

1. **An affordable Client Management Information System (CMIS)**
2. **Promotion of optimal client service delivery**
3. **Front end CMIS which integrates with mandated database and avoids duplication**
4. Ease of reporting for management, monitoring and mandated reporting.
5. Flexible to support change
6. Ease of use across all staff
7. Reliability of performance

CMIS

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Integrates across all business functions, programs, service delivery and agencies

- Supports total solution Program/Service delivery and evaluation

  - monitors case management, program delivery and client throughput and history.
- Supports measurement (data collection) of:
  - inputs (targets and their characteristics, e.g. demography),
  - activities – touchpoints - through the systems
  - effectiveness of the programs and service delivery (quality management)
  - client outcomes

'Built from the perspective of providing mandated data to DHS, it is unlikely that either IRIS or CRIS/SP will be able to meet these needs. Moreover there is no indication that they have the flexibility to integrate with alternative data system solutions to achieve them.'

CMIS

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Promotion of optimal client service delivery

- Client focused – their experiences, service touchpoints, outcomes
- Total Solution Program/Service data collection will ensure ease of following client throughout and identifying client history and program touch points and client outcomes
- It must support measurement (data collection) of:
  - inputs (targets and their characteristics, e.g. demography),
  - activities – touchpoints - through the systems
  - effectiveness of the programs and service delivery (quality management)
  - Client outcomes

'neither IRIS nor CRIS/SP has the functionality as it currently stands to support the business and management needs, quality management and client responsiveness and monitoring client outcomes either currently or into the future. '

CMIS

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Front end CMIS which integrates with mandated database and avoids duplication/

- Unifies system across all programs
- Client-centred data base strategy (CMIS) that nevertheless also provides the data required by DHS

'a CMIS that is primarily designed for the needs of Service delivery organisations and client outcomes but which also allows for the provision of reported data to DHS uploaded in a form and frequency as mandated by FASA etc. agreements

Conclusions

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An ‘uploaded’, rather than DHS hosted approach,

- more potential to meet each organisation’s business and monitoring needs while still enabling data reporting and legislative compliance

Given current and future capacities and functionalities of data bases – such as ‘in the cloud’ and open source data systems,

- where a data system is hosted is likely to be less of an issue than the central requirement that it is critically client outcome and business focused and centred.

Devolution of data collection and management functions to CSOs is not recommended unless this is fully funded or subsidised by DHS.

A sector wide, government supported data system strategy, based on client outcomes and that enables tracking of client history and service touchpoints will be a critical part of NGO, CSO and an ‘all of government based’ strategy for re-developed child youth and family service and ‘all - of - program’ delivery

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Thank you

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