

# Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey

## Home and Community Care for Younger People Program (HACC PYP)

### Questions and Answers

For Service Representatives and Service Upload Representatives

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## Background

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### What is the Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey (VHES)?

The Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey (VHES) collects data from consumers of Victorian public health services. The VHES has been conducted in acute, sub-acute and tertiary settings since 2014. The survey aims to understand the experience of care in Victorian public health services from consumers and where appropriate their carers.

The survey is conducted by Ipsos, an independent contractor, on behalf of the Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI), a division of the Department of Health (the department) The survey features specialised questionnaires for:

- adult and child inpatient services, including parents/guardians
- maternity services
- adult and child emergency department services, including parents/guardians
- adult and child specialist clinic services, including parents/guardians
- adult and child community health services, including parents/guardians
- ambulance services
- palliative care services
- HACC PYP services

The survey assists health services and the department to identify opportunities for service improvement in quality and safety by:

- Identifying areas for continuous improvement at the health service level
- Providing the department with data to inform policy and strategic direction at a state-wide level; and
- Strengthening the accountability of health services to the community.

The VHES will be conducted for HACC PYP Services in March – May 2023.

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### How were the VHES questionnaires developed?

The tailored survey questionnaires and methodologies have been designed based on advice from an expert advisory group comprising of representatives of HACC PYP services. Feedback from clients who have accessed HACC PYP services was also sought through qualitative interviews.

All HACC PYP services were invited to provide feedback on the questionnaire and survey methodology.

The questionnaires include a set of core questions, and questions specific to the HACC PYP.

The Core Question Set aligns with the [Partnering in Healthcare Framework](#) and applies to all settings where the VHES is undertaken.

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How long are the VHES questionnaires? Each questionnaire has approximately 40 questions.

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Where can I see the questionnaire? The questionnaire is available to preview on the VHES reporting portal at <https://results.vhes.com.au/resources>.  
More information on accessing the VHES results portal is available on page 8 of these FAQs.

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## Preparing for the survey

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How will clients receive their questionnaires? HACC PYP services will be required to provide a one-off upload of client details in March.  
The survey will be distributed via an electronic distribution model in 2023.  
Survey invitations will be sent directly to clients either via SMS, email, or postal invitation, depending on contact details available.  
Clients are able to complete the survey online or with assistance over the phone via a helpline.

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What can my service do to prepare for the survey? Review the data upload manual that will be provided prior to fieldwork and ensure you can provide all client information specified. If you are concerned about providing any of the data requested, please contact Ipsos (details below).

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What can my service do to increase our response rate? A higher response rate will ensure results are more representative of your client experiences. Suggestions to increase your service's response rates include:

- Letting clients know that they may receive a survey requesting feedback about their experience with your service
- Emphasise to clients that completing the questionnaire will help improve the services provided.

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## Conduct of the survey

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What is the survey collection period? Ipsos will be inviting clients who had an experience of care with your service between 1 January 2023 – 28 February 2023 to participate.  
You will be expected to provide records for all clients who had an experience of care with your service during this time period within a single file by the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

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Which clients are in scope?

Any clients that accessed a HACC-PYP funded service between January and February 2023.

**Age**

Ipsos will be inviting both adults (aged 16 and over) and parents/carers of children (aged under 16) to participate. The child survey includes a 'voice of the child' section for the child to complete if they are able.

The upload manual and template will include instructions on how to provide date of birth with each client record so that Ipsos can ensure the correct survey is sent.

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Do services need to provide details of participating sites? (Briefing session question)

No. Data collection will occur at service level only.

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How will the survey be conducted?

Invitations to complete surveys will be sent to clients following their experience of care with HACC PYP.

HACC PYP services will need to upload client details to Ipsos prior to Ipsos distributing the questionnaires.

The workflow is provided below.

1. Client has experience with service— e.g. an appointment in January.
2. Service identifies all clients who were seen in January and February 2023.
3. Service uploads all in-scope client details (e.g. those who had an appointment) during this period. A data upload manual will be provided to all upload contacts or can be requested by emailing [Samuel.Gardner@ipsos.com](mailto:Samuel.Gardner@ipsos.com).
4. Ipsos cleans these details of duplicates, and any clients who have been surveyed in the VHES program in the previous six months.
5. Ipsos sends surveys and reminders. Clients are invited to participate via different modes depending on the contact details they have available. They are invited/reminded either via:
  - Email invitation, inviting them to complete online
  - SMS invitation, inviting them to complete online
  - Postal invitation, inviting them to complete online. Those invited via postal invitation are also given the option to call a 1800 helpline to book an appointment to complete the survey via the phone.
6. Clients complete the survey online or via the 1800 helpline.

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What if a client begins but does not complete a questionnaire?

Clients are encouraged to complete as many questions as are relevant to them, or as many questions as they like. Even if a client only answers one question, this answer will still contribute to a report if the questionnaire is returned to Ipsos or the online survey is submitted.

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Is the survey available in languages other than English?

Yes, the survey is available in 28 languages other than English online. Clients will be invited in their preferred language (where this is known) and can also select their preferred language when they enter the online survey.

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Can a client contact Ipsos directly and get assistance to complete the questionnaire?

Yes. Ipsos can be contacted directly by a client via the toll-free Survey Helpline. Ipsos will also help the client complete the questionnaire over the telephone if required.

Ipsos can be contacted on:

Survey Hotline: 1800 356 928, 12pm – 8pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

Survey Helpdesk e-mail: [survey@vhes.com.au](mailto:survey@vhes.com.au)

If a person is hearing impaired they can contact Ipsos Australia via the National Relay Service on 1300 555 727 or the Survey Helpdesk e-mail: [survey@vhes.com.au](mailto:survey@vhes.com.au)

Helpline staff can also help clients complete the questionnaire over the phone if they would prefer.

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What response rate should my service expect (Briefing session question)

As this is the first time running this survey for HACC PYP, there is no expected response rate. Response rates for other VHES categories using this method range from 10-28%.

The best way to ensure a strong response rate is to provide digital contacts for your clients. The paper-based invitations have a much poorer response rate than SMS or email invitations.

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How will you ensure a person doesn't receive multiple surveys for multiple appointments? (Briefing session question)

There is a de-duplication process to ensure that a person does not receive more than one VHES survey in a six-month period.

If their details are provided multiple times within a fieldwork period (either at the same service, or across multiple services or VHES categories), the system will sample them against their most recent appointment.

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Will paper-based surveys or QR codes be available? (Briefing session question).

No. The out of service electronic method will be the only methodology available in 2023.

There will be no in-situ distribution of surveys in 2023.

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Can a client opt out? (Briefing session question).

Yes. The client can either ignore the invitation, or opt-out via the Helpline or by 'unsubscribe' from emails if they do not want to receive future invitations or reminders. Health services will not be informed of opt-outs and it will not impact their ability to access services in future.

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Is the electronic method representative? Will it exclude some people? (Briefing session question).

Our analysis of VHES data to date suggests that the sample of survey participants obtained via a digital only methodology is more representative than a paper-based surveys.

Both digital and paper-based surveys overrepresent older people who are more likely to participate in the survey. However, this effect is less pronounced for digital only methodologies where we see greater participation among younger people than we do for paper-based surveys.

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## Assisting a person to complete the VHES questionnaire

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Can I assist a client to complete the questionnaire?

The clients can complete the questionnaire themselves, or ask a friend, family member, carer or staff member to help them complete the questionnaire.

You may assist a client to complete the questionnaire if they request this assistance from you. You should not complete the questionnaire on their behalf.

**If you help a person complete the questionnaire, you must ensure the answers given are from their point of view.**

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Can a client's carer complete the survey on their behalf?

The individual can ask their carer or family member to help them complete the survey. The person's carer/family member should not complete the questionnaire on their behalf or influence their response to the questions.

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Who can clients/carers contact for more information?

Queries by clients or their carers regarding this survey, can be directed to Ipsos Australia's toll-free Survey Helpline on 1800 356 928, 12pm – 8pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

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What other assistance is available for clients (e.g. those with cognitive issues)? (Briefing session question)

Consumers can book a time to complete the interview with the assistance of a telephone interviewer by calling Ipsos Australia's toll-free Survey Helpline on 1800 356 928, 12pm – 8pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

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## Confidentiality and Privacy

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Will the answers to the questionnaire be confidential?

The VHES questionnaire does collect some personal information about clients, however name and full date of birth are not collected.

Personal information is only recorded and handled in a de-identified form. The answers to the questionnaire are not intended to be used to identify any participant.

Your service will receive combined anonymous feedback based on groups of people. Details such as age, gender or cultural background will not be attached to this information.

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## Results

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Why is the information collected through the survey valuable to my organisation?

The information gathered through the survey will help your service understand what they do well and areas for improvement, based on the experience of people who use your service. This will assist your health service to provide better services to your clients and their carers.

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How and when will my organisation receive information on the results of the survey?

The responses will be combined and reported on the VHES reporting portal. Further information will be provided to agencies about how to access the portal.

Services that receive fewer than 10 responses will not receive a report for their service, in order to protect anonymity of respondents.

Organisational level data is helpful for comparing your organisation with peer groups, and state wide measures. Organisations can also track their results over time.

It is anticipated this report will be available during in late May 2023, at [results.vhes.com.au](https://results.vhes.com.au).

HACC PYP staff will be able to sign up to access results on the website with your agency/health service email addresses from early March. Results will be provided in a similar format to the other survey results (e.g. adult inpatient) currently available on the results portal.

These results are only available to services, Department and VAHI staff.

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## Administration

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What is Ipsos Australia's role in administering the surveys?

Ipsos Australia, an independent research company, is conducting the survey on behalf of the Department and VAHI. Ipsos is responsible for:

- Sending invitations to clients
- Providing a telephone helpline function to help clients who need assistance to complete a questionnaire and/or answer any questions about the survey
- Collating, analysing and reporting information gathered by the project to the Department, VAHI and participating services.

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What is my role in administering the survey?

All services participating in the HACC PYP services will be expected to upload their population data for clients by the upload closure date. You will receive a reminder email when your upload is due.

Data uploading is to occur in accordance with the data upload manual – this will be sent to service representatives.

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What do I do if a person wants to make a complaint about my service or provide other feedback?

As the VHES questionnaire is anonymous, it is not a mechanism for providing a formal complaint.

If a person would like to provide feedback directly to your service you should explain how they can provide comments, consistent with established processes at your service.

If they would like to lodge a complaint about your service or raise a specific allegation with an independent body, they can contact:

- The Health Complaints Commissioner  
<https://hcc.vic.gov.au> or call 1300 582 113

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## Where to get more information

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If I have a question or feedback about the survey process, who should I contact?

If you have a question about the survey process or any feedback, please contact:

Samuel Gardner, Project Support, Ipsos  
Email: [Samuel.Gardner@ipsos.com](mailto:Samuel.Gardner@ipsos.com)  
Phone: 03 9946 0856

Any feedback on the process should be sent to [results@vhес.com.au](mailto:results@vhес.com.au). This will be used to inform the process used in future years.

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