

# Removal of Consent indicator in SHIP

August 2023



# Overview and background of changes

## Consent requirement removed from the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC)

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has an ongoing program of reviewing the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) to ensure that good quality data is collected and that privacy and confidentiality measures are correctly implemented. As a result of this review, in October 2022 the AIHW Ethics Committee determined that client consent was no longer required for any SHSC data items provided to the AIHW, as all information in this collection is de-identified.

Prior to August 2023, there were seven data items where a client could refuse to provide consent for their information to be sent to the AIHW. These data items were:

- Indigenous status
- Country of birth
- Care arrangements for children under a care and protection order
- Type of institution recently left
- Formally diagnosed mental health condition
- Timeframe for mental health services received
- Source of information on a mental health condition

The removal of consent for these seven data items in no way diminishes any of the privacy, confidentiality, and consent requirements each SHS agency must undertake with respect to their clients.

# Consent requirement removed from SHIP

As part of this change, the Consent indicator field within SHIP has been removed. The image below demonstrates where Consent used to be located in SHIP.



## What happens if a client refuses to provide responses to any of the seven impacted data items questions?

As with all questions that allow a 'Don't know' response, this can be used to indicate the client does not want to provide this information.

'Not applicable' is not to be used to indicate a client does not want to provide this information.

## What happens when you need to re-open a closed support period?

In this situation, you will need to check whether any of the seven data items have a 'Not applicable' response. If so, check whether this is still appropriate.

For the following items a 'Not applicable' response may still be appropriate, depending upon age and responses to other items.

- Care arrangements for children under a care and protection order
- Formally diagnosed mental health condition
- Timeframe for mental health services received
- Source of information on a mental health condition

For all other items, if you do not have the information to complete the item then record 'Don't know'.