

Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Program Description

July 2023



Statewide Ed-LinQ Program - Program Description

Published by the State of Queensland (Queensland Health), June 2023

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An electronic version of this document is available at

<https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/service-statewide-ed-linq-program/>

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Contents

Contents	3
1. Preamble	4
2. What is the Ed-LinQ Program?	4
2.1 Who is Ed-LinQ for?	4
3. Ed-LinQ Services	5
3.1 Service delivery?	5
4. Program governance	6
5. Ed-LinQ Workforce	7
5.1 Recruitment	7
5.2 Orientation	7
5.3 Workforce development	7
6. Data Management and Evaluation	8
7. Program Communication	8
7.1 Communication - Ed-LinQ coordinator workforce	8
7.2 Communication - Service partners / stakeholders	8
8. Related documents	9
Appendices	10
Attachments	10
A: Ed-LinQ Program Visual Model	10
B: Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Workplan Outline	10
C: Ed-LinQ Program Orientation Checklist	10
D: Ed-LinQ Evaluation Framework	110
E: Ed-LinQ Evaluation Framework Logic	11

Document Control

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
1	July 2023	MHAOD SPB/CHQ	FINAL
1.1	November 2024	Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Coordinator	Reviewed and updated links

Ed-LinQ aims to “improve linkages and service integration between the education sector, primary care, community and mental health sectors to support the early detection and collaborative care of school-aged children and young people at risk of – or experiencing – mental health problems or mental illness.”

1. Preamble

The [Statewide Ed-LinQ Program](#) works to ensure all school-aged children and young people will receive the evidence-informed mental health care they require to optimise education, social and emotional outcomes.

This Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Description outlines the program delivery elements to support consistent service delivery across Queensland.

Initially established as the *Ed-LinQ Initiative* under the Queensland Plan for Mental Health 2007-2017, the Ed-LinQ Program underwent an extensive process of review, renewal, and expansion supported under *Connecting Care to Recovery 2016-2021: A plan for Queensland's mental health, alcohol, and other drugs services*. This new iteration included establishment of statewide coordination, processes to support strategic program planning, evaluation and service delivery by a coordinated and skilled workforce across Queensland Health.

2. What is the Ed-LinQ Program?

The Statewide Ed-LinQ Program (Ed-LinQ¹) aims to strengthen connections, service integration, and capacity between mental health, education, primary care, and community sectors to support school aged children and young people experiencing, or at-risk of mental illness.

2.1 Who is Ed-LinQ for?

Ed-LinQ works directly with service providers and stakeholders to support the early detection and collaborative care of school-aged children and young people at risk of, or experiencing, mental health problems or mental illness². In particular, Ed-LinQ works collaboratively with stakeholders of health and education sectors to establish and facilitate referral and access pathways to appropriate and timely care for students requiring mental health intervention.

Ed-LinQ complements the continuum of mental health services responding to the needs of school-aged children and young people in Queensland. It is an early intervention program offered as a component of the mental health, alcohol and other drug service (MHAOD) continuum.

Ed-LinQ aims to:

- improve service cohesion and integration between education, primary care, and mental health sectors
- enhance timely mental health referral/access pathways; and
- build capacity within services working directly with children and young people with mental health concerns.

The [Ed-LinQ Program Visual Model](#) provides a summary of the Program's vision, aim and service focus and is available to support the program's promotion and understanding with services, (**Attachment A**).

¹ Ed-LinQ refers to the Statewide Ed-LinQ Program delivered across the State. Hospital and Health Service (HHS)-level Ed LinQ coordinators are employed to facilitate delivery of Ed-LinQ in HHSs. The Statewide Ed-LinQ coordinator role hosted in Children's Health Queensland (CHQ) HHS supports the Statewide Ed-LinQ Program and coordinators.

² This allows HHS flexibility to incorporate Ed-LinQ program functions appropriately for the local context while also maintaining important secondary prevention/ early mental health intervention of the program. Generally, Ed-LinQ does not provide direct clinical interventions to individual students.

3. Ed-LinQ Services

3.1 Service delivery

The Ed-LinQ Program aims to ensure that children and young people in the education sector who experience, or at-risk of mental illness, have earlier access to appropriate mental health support. The Program achieves this by offering the following services:

- **Consultation Liaison:** mental health advice and services to education staff, including being available for consultation about children and young people managing mental health and educational needs. Ed-LinQ coordinators can facilitate referral pathways into mental health supports, including coordination of services following crisis and critical mental health incidents.
- **Enhancing Capacity:** working collaboratively with stakeholders to build knowledge and skills regarding the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** statewide and local-level collaboration and partnership initiatives between health, education (Department of Education, Catholic Education, and Independent Schools), primary care, and community stakeholders to ensure coordinated and integrated mental health service access and care is provided to children and young people.

The Ed-LinQ Program is offered across Queensland, delivered by local coordinators based in Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMHS) teams at local Hospital Health Service (HHS). Services are delivered using a variety of modalities for engagement including technology, for consultation liaison, training, and stakeholder collaboration.

Service delivery planning is guided by the Ed-LinQ Workplan Outline (Workplan Outline) using Ed-LinQ evidence and other broad strategic directions as relevant (**Appendix B**). Annual Workplans are developed and implemented at Statewide and local level to guide activity priorities under four key domains of focus for service delivery:

1. Strategic partnerships, planning, and development
2. Ed-LinQ initiatives including consultation liaison
3. Enhancing capacity through workforce development
4. Evaluation and research.

Workplan objectives are to:

- Ensure coordinated and consistent development of initiatives to maintain program integrity and support
- Encourage proactive planning and review of service delivery to align with Statewide directions.
- Provide strategic goals to guide program activity development
- Provide scope for developing local level HHS Ed-LinQ activity plans

The Statewide Workplan and HHS local Activity Plans will be developed and actioned annually, using evidence from Ed-LinQ data and other local and broader relevant system influences to guide activity planning. Specifically, these plans are described as:

- **Annual Ed-LinQ Workplans:** These outline Ed-LinQ priorities and activities at a Statewide and HHS-level across the service delivery areas: consultation/liaison, enhancing capacity, and forming strategic partnerships.
- **Annual Ed-LinQ Activity Plans:** These outline Ed-LinQ priorities and activities at HHS- level across the service delivery areas: consultation/liaison, enhancing capacity, and forming strategic partnerships.

4. Program governance

The Ed-LinQ Program governance is for both strategic and operational oversight, as outlined in **Figure 1**. Specifically, the MHAOD Strategy and Planning Branch (SPB) provides Statewide strategic oversight of the program, with HHSs providing operational guidance and support to ensure the Program’s purpose and functions to complement the continuum of services in the health service delivery system.

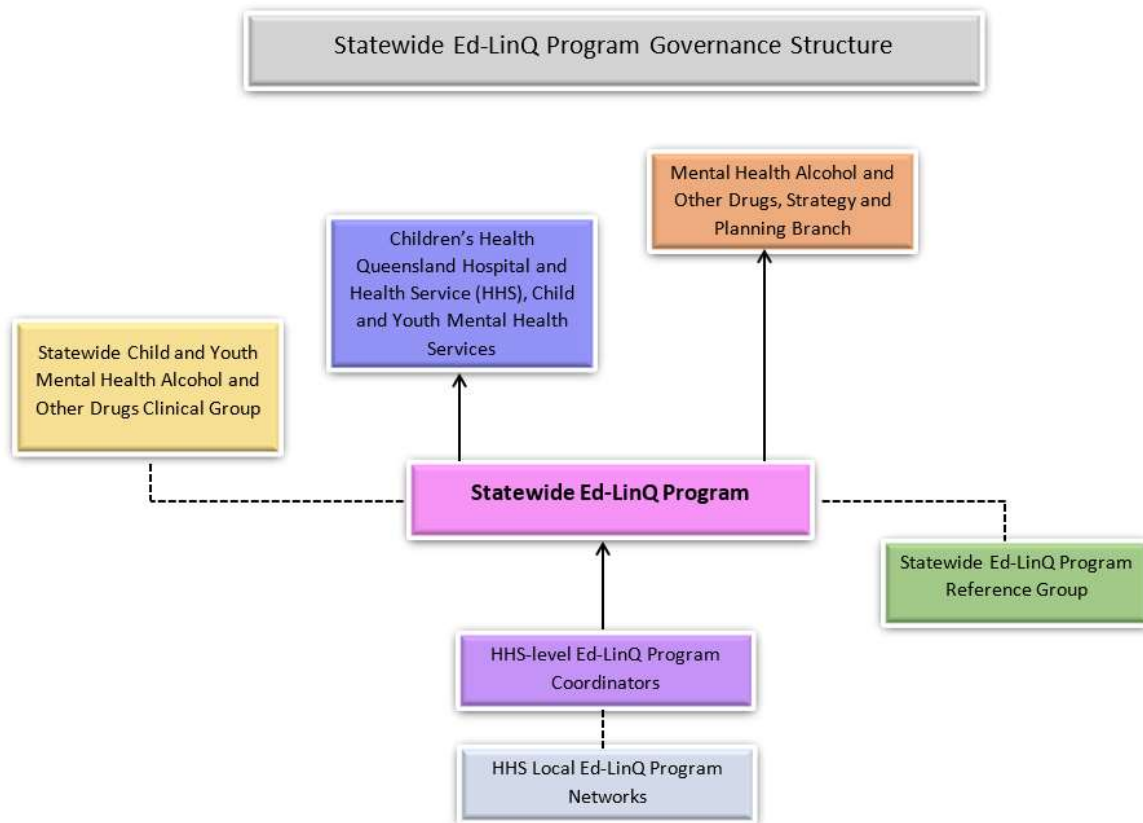


Figure 1: Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Governance Structure

The Statewide Ed-LinQ Coordinator role, hosted by Children’s Health Queensland (CHQ) HHS CYMHS, provides operational coordination, delivery, evaluation, and reporting of Ed-LinQ activities. This includes coordination and delivery of the Annual Workplan and reporting, the Statewide Forums, and supporting local program delivery.

Annual Statewide and Local Activity reporting, using Program data is summarised in mid and annual Program reports. These are submitted to MHAOD SPB for endorsement and tabled for noting at the Statewide Child and Youth MHAOD Clinical Group.

The Statewide Ed-LinQ Reference Group (SERG) is a stakeholder network group, coordinated by the Statewide Coordinator and chaired by CHQ HHS CYMHS. This group was established to support and promote cross-sector collaboration and delivery of broader system Ed-LinQ activities. SERG membership reflects the importance of cross-sector communication and planning between Queensland Health, Department of Education, Catholic Education, Independent Schools, carer and consumer representatives, and government and non-government organisations supporting the mental well-being of school-aged children and young people in Queensland. The reciprocal exchange of resources and ideas between the Ed-LinQ Program and SERG members enables priorities and

activities to align with strategic initiatives within and between sectors. Similarly, HHS-level Ed-LinQ Reference groups guide local implementation of the Program in partnership with key stakeholders.

As the operational host for the Statewide position, CHQ also connects with HHS CYMHS management quarterly to share HHS specific quarterly activity data and to ensure program delivery consistency.

All coordinators are involved in local level networks to engage in opportunities for service integration and collaboration with stakeholders and to inform service activity planning.

5. Ed-LinQ Workforce

5.1 Recruitment

To facilitate recruitment of experienced clinicians with child and youth mental health experiences, the HHS local Ed-LinQ coordinator role description outlines the purpose and duties that are consistent across Queensland. Ed-LinQ coordinators are recruited through local HHS processes with the Statewide Ed-LinQ Coordinator being available to support HHS recruitment and selection processes.

5.2 Orientation

Ed-LinQ coordinators are operationally managed by CYMHS team leaders who provide local area onboarding to HHS policies, procedures, including orientation to CYMHS.

The Statewide Ed-LinQ coordinator is responsible for orienting new coordinators to ensure key Program elements delivered consistently. An Orientation Checklist - Brief guides this process (**Attachment C**), which includes:

- Orientation to the three key service delivery areas as complemented by key Ed-LinQ documentation (Visual Model, Evaluation Framework, Annual Report and Workplans).
- Provision of training in the use of the REDCap platform and data collection and reporting processes.
- Supporting HHS Ed-LinQ Coordinators to develop local level Ed-LinQ Activity Plans that align with the Annual Ed-LinQ Workplan.
- Communication support systems within the Ed-LinQ coordinator workforce (including the six-weekly statewide Ed-LinQ teleconferences).
- Enabling access to the Ed-LinQ SharePoint page and shared drive, the REDCap data collection platform, and appropriate relevant training (e.g., undertaking Youth Mental Health First Aid training).

5.3 Workforce development

Ongoing workforce development supports the delivery of effective, high-quality Ed-LinQ activities. Relevant Ed-LinQ workforce skill development is guided and aligned to data as collected through REDCap consistent with the Evaluation Framework. For example, leading topics requested for consultation and support from service providers can indicate an area of focus for skills/knowledge enhancement.

The Statewide Ed-LinQ coordinator supports local coordinators to deliver services consistent with the Ed-LinQ vision and purpose which includes providing:

- Support with recruitment, orientation and joint workforce information-sharing and development, through activities such as: Ed-LinQ Annual Forum; six-weekly coordinator

connections (via teleconferences); co-plan training opportunities, see Orientation Checklist **Attachment c.**

- strategic direction, relevant information and data for HHS level Activity planning.
- Identifying opportunities for program delivery collaboration.

6. Data Management and Evaluation

An Ed-LinQ Evaluation Framework is available to guide program evaluation, standardised data collection (from an Ed-LinQ collection platform to support quality assurance) and evaluation activities **Attachment D.** The Evaluation Framework and a visual summary of the Evaluation Framework Logic is noted in **Attachment E.**

The Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) platform is a secure electronic data collection platform, established to enable robust Ed-LinQ data collection. REDCap data guides quality service delivery, accountability, evaluation, to ensure model fidelity. Analysis of REDCap Ed-LinQ data enables identification of activity trends, gaps, to support with evidence the projection of work planning priorities and evaluation purposes. A REDCAP Data Dictionary is also available to support REDCap usage, accessible via the Sharepoint and managed by the Statewide Coordinator.

The REDCap platform is used by all coordinators. Monthly, quarterly, and annual summaries of relevant data are compiled and disseminated by the Statewide Coordinator, inclusive of summary of data evidenced noted in Ed-LinQ Reports.

7. Program Communication

Established processes of communication within the Ed-LinQ coordinator workforce, within and across HHSs, and with service partners and the community are sustained through avenues outlined below.

7.1 Communication - Ed-LinQ coordinator workforce

Communication within the Ed-LinQ workforce is maintained through a variety of mechanisms including:

- The Annual Ed-LinQ Forum enables Ed-LinQ coordinators to connect across Ed-LinQ activity development, planning and training.
- Six-weekly Ed-LinQ coordinator statewide tele-conferences support connections and information and resource sharing between coordinators.
- Email bulletins distributed by the Statewide Ed-LinQ coordinator to the Ed-LinQ coordinator workforce to provide information about resources, research, and professional development events.
- Statewide shared drive and SharePoint page facilitate resource sharing and collaboration between HHS Ed-LinQ coordinators, (inclusive of REDCap Data Dictionary, located on SharePoint/shared drives).

7.2 Communication - Service partners / stakeholders

Communication between Ed-LinQ and key stakeholders (inclusive of service partners) occurs in the following contexts:

- Statewide and local HHS reference groups and networks identify opportunities for service

- integration and collaboration between Ed-LinQ and stakeholders.
- Ed-LinQ coordinators create and distribute HHS-level newsletters for partner agencies and stakeholders about resources, research, and professional development events.
 - Ed-LinQ webpage informs service partners and community about Ed-LinQ.
 - Ed-LinQ coordinators provide training, workshops, resources to educators on mental health and wellbeing, guided by priority areas identified through REDCap data, using different mediums. Training and resources developed for use are evidence based and complimentary to existing resources, minimising duplication.
 - Ed-LinQ coordinators support referral pathways and facilitate information-sharing between schools and CYMHS for children and young people requiring mental health intervention, including involvement in case discussions about students of concern.

8. Related documents

This Ed-LinQ Program Description should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Evaluation Framework
- Current and past Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Annual Reports.
- Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Orientation Guides
- Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Work Plan template
- Statewide Ed-LinQ Activity Plan Template
- Ed-LinQ REDCap Data Dictionary
- Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Reference Group (SERG) Terms of Reference.

Appendices

Attachments

A: Ed-LinQ Program Visual Model



Statewide Ed-LinQ
Program Visual Mod

B: Statewide Ed-LinQ Program Workplan Outline



Workplan Outline
FINAL .pdf

C: Statewide Orientation Checklist



Att C - Coordinator
Orientation Checklis

D: Ed-LinQ Evaluation Framework



Ed-LinQ Evaluation
Framework_FINAL AP

E: Ed-LinQ Evaluation Framework Logic

