

This Response is the collective view of the 31 LLENS in Victoria,

Submitted by Jennifer Hipsley, Chair, LLEN Executive Officer Network, Victoria, on behalf of the LLEN State Network

Should LLENS be provided some flexibility to facilitate and broker service provision to young people 20 and over, in line with the flexibility in Youth Connections service provision?

Most LLENS could easily identify young people, aged 20 and over, that have both directly and indirectly benefited from the activities and involvement of the LLEN.

The extreme nature of barriers as well as the number of barriers facing some of the 'at risk' young people who the LLENS deal with are not easily overcome. This being the case, they often need ongoing support to stay connected to education and training, as well as gaining and maintaining employment, well beyond the age of 19 in order to successfully transition into adulthood.

The current Enhanced LLEN contracts clearly reflect the current policy drive that recognises that earlier intervention is required for young people. To add to the identified young person cohort of 10-19 year olds for LLEN's, there is a real danger that LLENS will have to:

- become experts on the needs of a larger range of already very diverse young people
- deliver on outcomes that they are not funded for under their contracts
- again undertake significant governance changes, and
- also be expected to become everything to everyone in a climate when we are still coming to terms with the changes that have occurred in 2010.

With current resources already spread thinly across the state, to formally broaden the age range would simply create more of a strain and lack of capacity to carry out the core work of the LLENS. Even where additional resources were made available to assist in servicing another age range there are significant differences across the state that would make this difficult.