



Evaluation of the Triple I (Hub) Referral Service in SWSLHD

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This document presents an evaluation of the Triple I (Hub) program in South Western Sydney Local Health District. The Triple I (Hub) has been entirely designed by SWSLHD and the qualitative component that forms the bulk of the evaluation below was carried out by the LHD. The ACI would like to thank the efforts and assistance of their team. In particular:

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1. Executive Summary

The Clinical Innovation Program aims to identify innovative programs implemented in Local Health Districts (LHDs) that may be suitable for scaling-up across the State. Potential programs are then investigated and assessed to determine their suitability for broader implementation.

The Triple I (Hub) program of South West Sydney LHD (SWSLHD) was identified as a potentially suitable program for rollout across the State. The Triple I (Information, Intake and Intervention) Hub was implemented in November 2012 to streamline access and referral to services and to reduce duplication across the LHD. The service is organised around a single-phone number for clients and primary care providers to call to have patients referred to relevant non-acute, community and aged care services within the LHD.

This report presents the findings of a high level evaluation of the Triple I (Hub) service. The evaluation relied primarily on qualitative surveys of staff and consumers of the service. Surveys sought to gain insight into parts of the service that were operating successfully as well as potential areas of improvement. Basic activity information is also included in this report.

The key results reported below are that the Triple I (Hub):

- Has enabled SWSLHD to provide necessary services to the community in a coordinated manner
- Is broadly supported by staff and service providers and clients who use the Hub.
- For staff, 79% agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that 'I would refer the Triple I (Hub) to others' and 'Triple I (Hub) meets community needs.'
- Factors nominated as working well by staff included the efficiency of having a single access point for clients to contact as well as customer service and the ability for consumers to access staff expertise. Factors noted as not working so well included staff suggesting that the centre required more staff and delays of referrals in some situations, particularly for non-urgent cases.
- The consumer survey conducted in 2013 reported very high satisfaction with the Triple I (Hub). 35% of those surveyed reported that they were very satisfied with the service while 63% said they were satisfied. The positive feedback ranged across a number of areas particularly with regards to the ease (and speed) of access to the service, the confidentiality and understandability of the service and that the staff were concerned over consumers' needs and were able to address their specific needs.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) implemented the Triple I (Information, Intake and Intervention) Hub in November 2012 to streamline access and referral to services and to reduce duplication across the LHD. The service provides a single-

phone number for clients and primary care providers to call in order to have patients referred to relevant non-acute, community and aged care services within the LHD.

Initially the service included staff from the former referral service for Aged Care (the Referral Information Centre) and CHAIN (Community Health Nursing). Over time it has grown to include ComPacks, PEACH (palliative care home support packages), the Connecting Care Program and Child and Family Services.

The service was entered into the 2013 Healthcare Innovation Awards where it was selected by ACI staff as potentially suitable for rollout across the State as a part of the Clinical Innovation Program. The ACI's Clinical Innovation Program supports clinical innovation in the NSW health system through a focus on accelerating implementation of ACI Models of Care/Guidelines and supporting the spread of local innovations. As part of this process, Triple I (Hub) was subject to an evaluation to ensure suitability for rollout across NSW. The findings of the evaluation are presented here.

3. Method

Economic evaluation of health programs involves a comparison of the relative costs and benefits of the program as a means to assist in assessing the value for money of chosen programs. Ideally such an evaluation would establish the cost of obtaining the relevant health benefit so as to be able to compare this program with other potential uses of funds.

For a program such as Triple I (Hub) though, it is too early to assess the health impacts of the service. Such benefits may not accrue for many years and even then will be extremely difficult to measure as it is not simple to link the benefits of such an approach to health outcomes.

Given the above, the analysis below focuses on the experience of SWSLHD in establishing the centre as well as the impact on activity. Results of a de-identified staff survey are presented, along with previous surveys that have been carried out with consumers. Activity levels showing the numbers of calls and referrals that Triple I (Hub) is processing are also presented as a means to show the increasing demand facing the LHD and the Hub's ability to handle this demand pressure.

4. Results

Overall, in a context of increased demand for LHD services, Triple I (Hub) represents an approach that has enabled SWSLHD to provide necessary services to the community in a coordinated manner and, importantly, in a manner that has been demonstrated to have the support of the staff involved and service providers who use the Triple I (Hub) .

There has been a slight increase in the number of referrals over trend with the transition from a number of specialised call centre referral centres to the Triple I (Hub) at the start of 2013. Over the period commencing November 2012 to February 2014 a number of new services (RIC, CHAIN, ComPacks, PEACH, Connecting Care Program and Child & Family services) have been transitioned into the Triple I (Hub). The centre has been entirely staffed through the redeployment of staff previously working on the separate programs across the

LHD. The centre has been able to respond to a much higher level of call activity than was previously possible.

4.1 Experience in Establishing the Service - Staff Feedback Survey

Forty surveys were distributed in July 2014 (full survey included in Appendix 1) to staff from the different programs that have patients referred to them from Triple I (Hub). The surveys were distributed via staff email accounts and completed electronically using the SWSLHD Survey Tool. The survey:

- Asked staff to rate their degree of agreement to a number of statements regarding the impact and worth of the Triple I (Hub) program for the community, service providers and clinicians.
- Achieved a response rate of 60% (24 of 40 staff responded) which is relatively high compared to other similar studies carried out by the ACI.
- Reflected responses from mainly clinical staff along with a number of administrative staff and a number who identified as 'other' staff which could include positions such as Intake Officers or Customer Service Representatives. The staff worked in the areas of Community Health, Aged Care, Administration, Palliative Care, the Connecting Care Program, Child and Family Health Services and Aboriginal Health.

Who is using Triple I (Hub)?

Triple I (Hub) is being used by clients and service providers alike. Figure 1 below provides a snapshot of where the referrals for Community Nursing were coming from for January-July 2014.

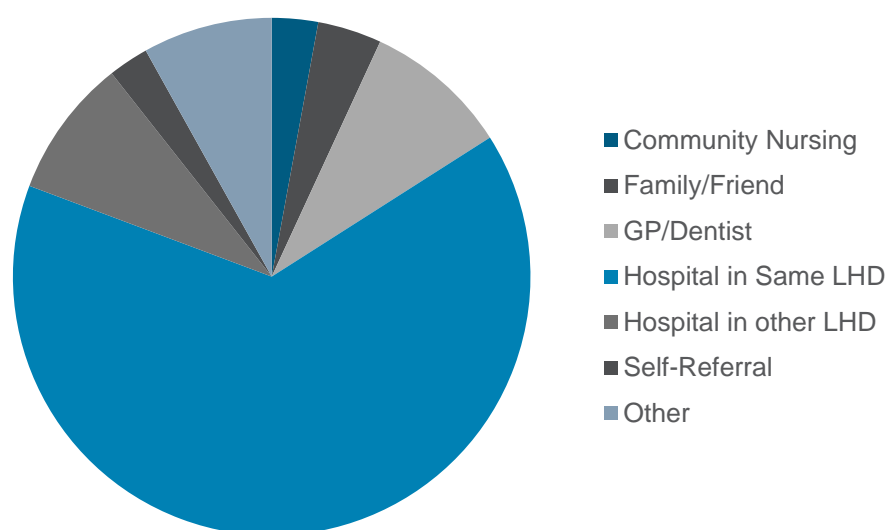
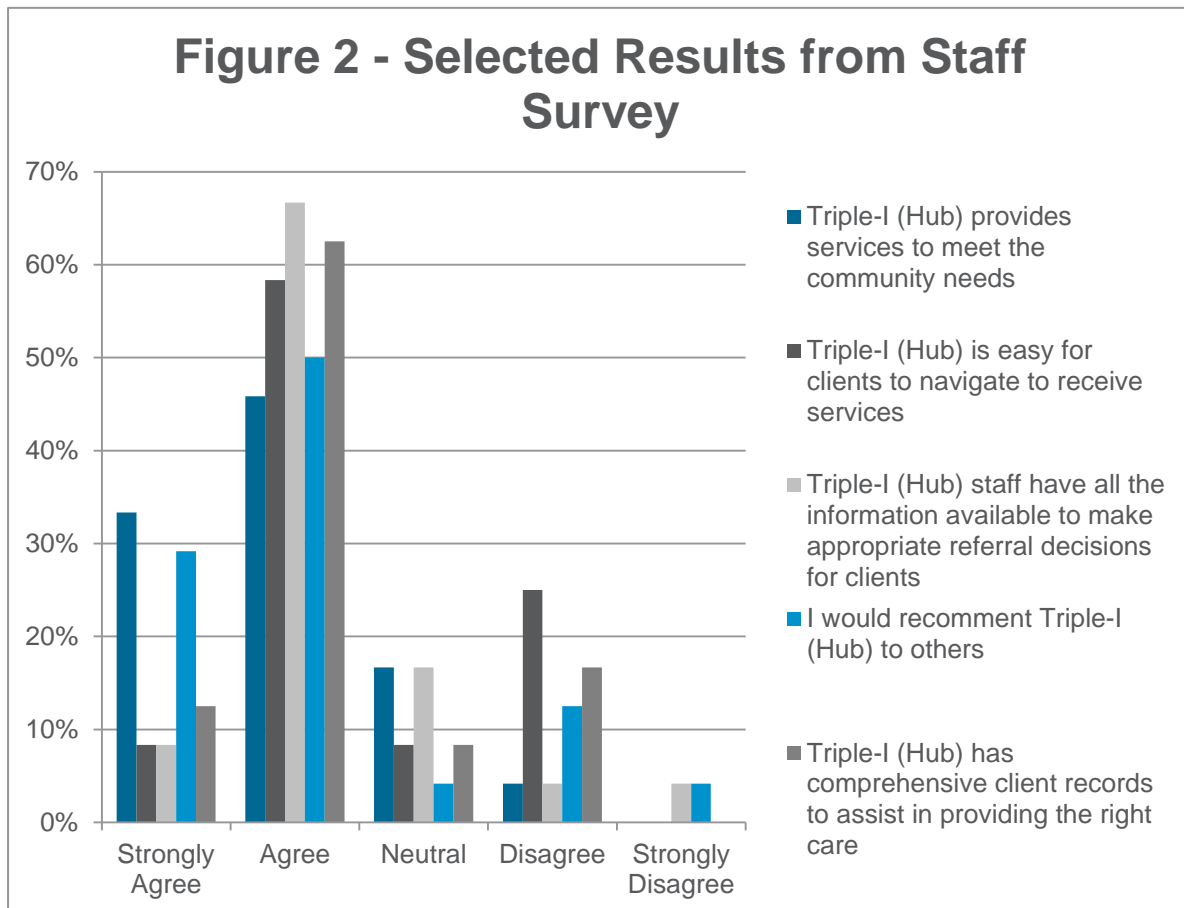


Figure 2 present selected findings of the survey (complete results presented in Appendix 2). Overall analysis of the staff surveys depicted a high level of support for the program:

- 79% of the staff surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they would refer the Triple I (Hub) to others.

- Similarly, the same percentage agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that Triple I (Hub) meets community needs with only one respondent disagreeing.
- The same number also agreed with the statement that the Triple I (Hub) allows greater access to services with 13% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing in this case.
- Very high levels of agreement were found to exist with regards to the comprehensiveness of the records held to assist in providing the right care.



Across all questions asked, negative responses represented a minority of staff involved with Triple I (Hub). To further examine the experiences of staff, open-ended questions were asked on their opinion of what was working well and not so well in Triple I (Hub) for patients, service-providers and clinicians. They were also asked to make suggestions on how to improve the service. Key results for clients identified by staff as:

- Working effectively included the efficiency of a single access point for clients to contact and customer service access to staff knowledge across a range of services.
- Not working so effectively were time delays in receiving a referral, the need to sometimes reconfirm details between staff receiving the calls and those providing the services and delays in taking calls, particularly relating to non-urgent cases.

Key results for clinicians and other staff identified by staff as:

- Working effectively included the idea of a 'one stop shop' for referrals, extended opening hours and the use of electronic communications.

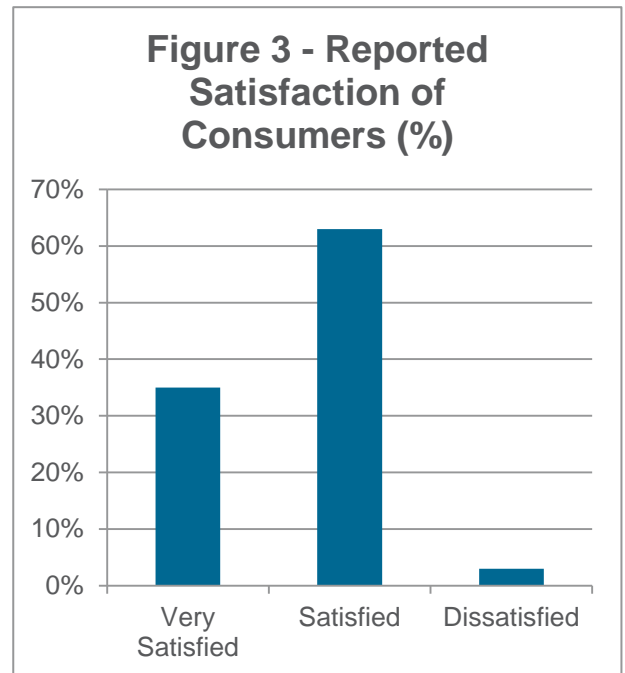
- Not working well included too few staff resulting in delayed processing and inappropriate referrals and issues with the referral process itself.

When asked for how they would improve the service, responses focused on improved systems and communication with clients, requests for more staff and further simplifying the referral process.

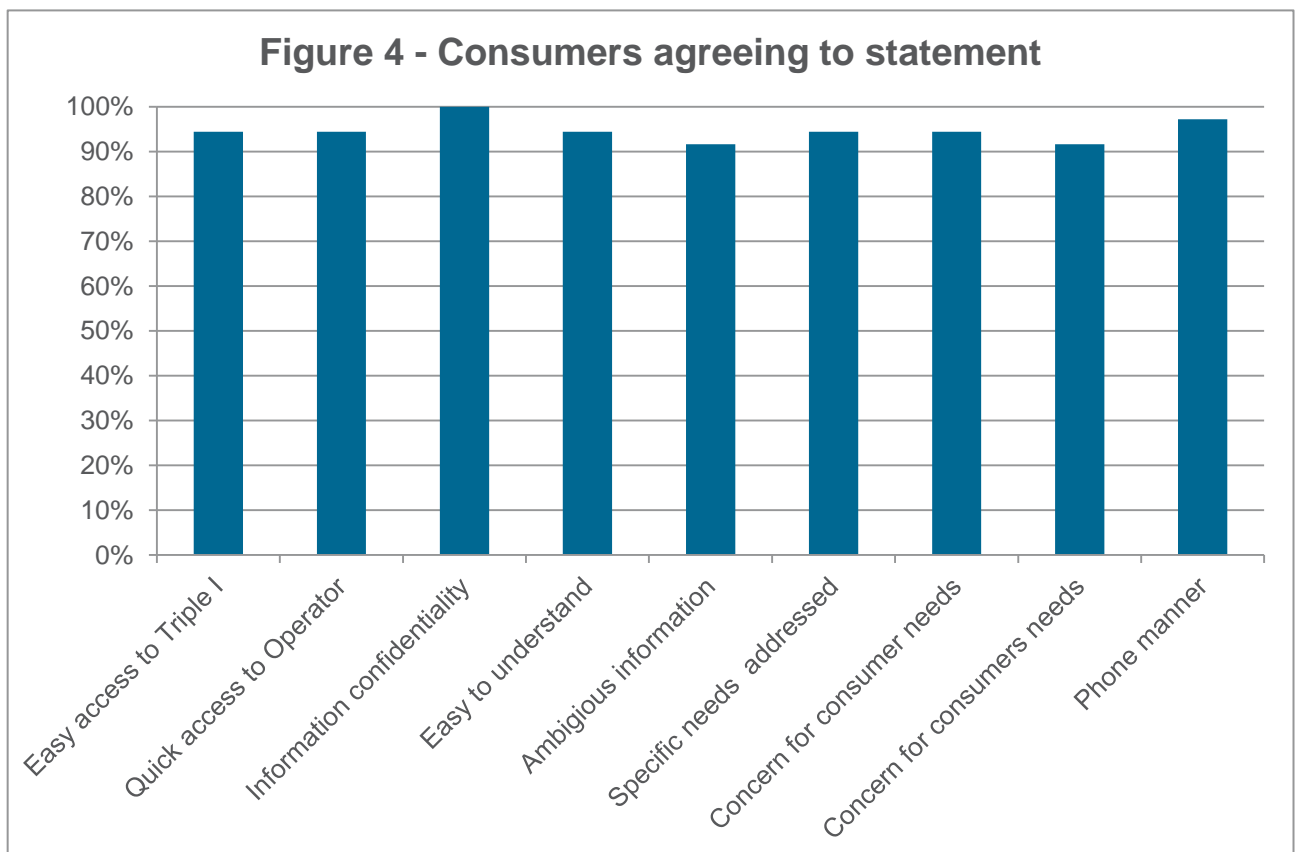
4.2 Experience in Using the Service – Consumer Feedback Survey

The SWSLHD conducted surveys with consumers of Triple I (Hub) in 2013. Clients of the service (and a few service providers) were asked on their level of agreement to a number of statements. The results are shown in Figures 3 and 4 (full results in Appendix 4) which depict high levels of user satisfaction for the service:

- 35% of those surveyed reported that they were very satisfied with the service while 63% said they were satisfied.
- Only 3% reported that they were dissatisfied with the service that they received.



Examining consumer feedback in more detail (see Figure 4) shows that there was reported satisfaction across a number of areas. In



particular responses showed high levels of agreement to statements about:

- Ease and speed of access to the service
- Confidentiality of the service
- The service is easy to understand with non-ambiguous information provided
- That staff were concerned over consumers' needs and were able to address their specific needs.

Overall the results of the survey demonstrate the success of the program in providing a valued and easy to navigate service to clients.

5. Conclusion

The Triple I (Hub) represents an innovative approach to streamlining the referral process for consumers and service providers. Staff and consumer feedback collected with relation to the program has been overwhelmingly positive. In the face of increasing demand pressures on the LHD, Triple I (Hub) has streamlined the referral process in a way that has been demonstrated to be welcomed by both service providers and consumers.

6. Appendix

6.1 Appendix 1 – Staff Survey



SWSLHD Triple I (Hub) Staff Survey

The South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) is looking to improve the way it delivers health services to our community. We are seeking your feedback through this survey to assist us in developing better ways to:

- Improve outcomes for community clients
- Improve systems and processes to support staff working in The Triple I (Hub) and community care
- Improve our service systems to better respond to the health needs of the community

Your feedback is appreciated and will remain confidential. The survey should take a few minutes to complete.

Please note, the survey is two sided. Please complete both sides.

Please tick the circle that best describes your view to each of the statements below.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. The Triple I (Hub) provides services to meet the community needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The Triple I (Hub) is easy for clients to navigate to receive services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Using the Triple I (Hub) allows people to have improved access to services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Clients are assessed and referred from the Triple I (Hub) to the right service in a timely manner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The Triple I (Hub) has comprehensive client records to assist in providing the right care to clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The Triple I (Hub) staff have all the information available to make appropriate referral decisions for clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. The Triple I (Hub) has good systems in place to identify the right services to refer clients to (internal referrals to other services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. The Triple I (Hub) has good systems in place to monitor overall client needs throughout their care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. The Triple I (Hub) responds effectively to the changing needs of clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. The Triple I (Hub) has effective processes in place to support staff to fulfil the health needs of clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. The Triple I (Hub) has comprehensive and user-friendly computer systems to support and organise client care management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I would recommend The Triple I (Hub) to others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Triple I (Hub) Staff Survey

What do you think is working effectively in the Triple I (Hub) for:

Clients?-----

Clinicians and other staff?-----

Other service providers?-----

What do you think is not working so well for:

Clients?-----

Clinicians and other staff?-----

Other service providers?-----

What would you suggest to improve the health services delivered by the Triple I (Hub)?

What Service/Team do you work in:

Aged Care

Administration

Aboriginal Health

Connecting Care Program

☐☒☐☐

Chronic Care Program

Child and Family Services

Community Health

Palliative Care

☐☐☐☐

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

6.2 Appendix 2 – Results of Staff Survey

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Triple I (Hub) provides services to meet the community needs	33%	46%	17%	4%	0%
Triple I (Hub) is easy for clients to navigate to receive services	8%	58%	8%	25%	0%
Triple I (Hub) allows for improved access to services	29%	50%	8%	8%	4%
Clients are assessed and referred from Triple I (Hub) in a timely manner	8%	54%	17%	13%	8%
Triple I (Hub) has comprehensive client records to assist in providing the right care	13%	63%	8%	17%	0%
Triple I (Hub) staff have all the information available to make appropriate referral decisions for clients	8%	67%	17%	4%	4%
Triple I (Hub) has good systems to identify the right services to refer clients to	21%	50%	13%	17%	0%
Triple I (Hub) has good systems to monitor client needs	8%	25%	46%	21%	0%
Triple I (Hub) responds effectively to the changing needs of clients	17%	42%	25%	17%	0%
Triple I (Hub) has effective processes in place to support staff to fulfil the health needs of clients	13%	38%	29%	13%	8%
Triple I (Hub) has comprehensive, user-friendly computer systems to support and organise client care management	13%	46%	25%	13%	4%
I would recommend Triple I (Hub) to others	29%	50%	4%	13%	4%

6.3 Appendix 3 – Consumer Survey



Surveys



TRIPLE I HUB CONSUMER SURVEY

* Mandatory Questions

TOPIC/QUESTION	ANSWERS				
Access					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unable to answer
1. It was easy to contact the Triple I (Hub).*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I was able to speak with someone in an acceptable timeframe.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I think the Triple I (Hub) could be contacted by everybody.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The service I received from the Triple I (Hub) was acceptable.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. My experience with the Triple I (Hub) was as good as, or better than I expected it would be. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Using the Triple I (Hub) allows people to have improved access to services.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of Information					
1. I believe my information will remain confidential within the health service.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The information was easy to understand *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The information was not biased in any way *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I was given an appropriate amount of information.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The information was relevant to my enquiry.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The information was provided to me in an organised way *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I believed that the information was correct *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The information was provided quickly and easily *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The information was not ambiguous.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of Service					
1. The Intake person understood my specific needs *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The Intake person was concerned about my needs *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The Intake person had enough knowledge to answer my questions *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. I received prompt service.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The Intake person had my best interests at heart.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The Intake person was polite.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer Satisfaction					
	Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	
1. How satisfied were you with your overall experience with the Triple I (hub)?*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Very unwilling	Unwilling	Willing	Very willing	
2. How willing are you to recommend the Triple I (Hub) to other people?*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.4 Appendix 4 – Results of Consumer Survey

Consumer Answers	% agreed	% disagreed	% unable to answer
Easy access to Triple I	94%	6%	0%
Quick access to Operator	94%	6%	0%
Could be contacted by everybody.	86%	4%	10%
Acceptable service	88%	3%	10%
Good Service or better service	85%	3%	13%
Improved Access to services	67%	3%	31%
Information confidentiality	100%	0%	0%
Easy to understand	94%	0%	6%
Unbiased information	85%	4%	11%
Appropriate information	83%	0%	17%
Relevant information	89%	0%	11%
Organised information	83%	3%	14%
Correct Information	75%	1%	24%
Quick/Easy information	86%	4%	10%
Unambiguous information	92%	0%	8%
Specific needs addressed	94%	3%	3%
Concern for consumer needs	94%	1%	4%
Subject matter knowledge	88%	4%	8%
Prompt service	89%	4%	7%
Concern for consumers needs	92%	3%	6%
Phone manner	97%	1%	1%