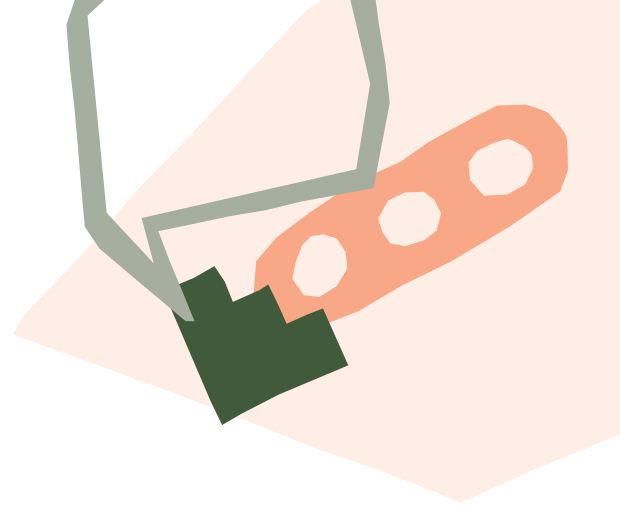


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# Measuring social inclusion to improve youth mental health

*AN EASY-TO-USE SELF-REPORT MEASURE*

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## **ISSUE**

Young people's mental health is shaped by experiences of social inclusion, including in education and employment. Understanding their experiences, as well as the potential benefits of support, can improve service delivery and mental health outcomes for young people.

## **SOLUTION**

An easy-to-use, 16-item self-report form is available to provide insight into four aspects of social inclusion for young people. The F-SIM16 is an evidence-based tool that can be readily implemented in youth mental health service settings.

## **ACTION**

Fund an 18-month trial and evaluation of the F-SIM16 in youth mental health services across two Primary Health Networks to evaluate service, clinician, and young people's experiences.

## **OUTCOME**

An evaluation of the suitability of the F-SIM16 in PHN-funded youth mental health services informs Department decision-making on a national rollout. This decision would be informed by service implementation, clinician experience and evidence of the acceptability and outcomes for young people.

## Measuring social inclusion

Poor mental health is linked with lower rates of social inclusion. Young people, between the ages of 12 and 25 years undergo considerable psychosocial development. The majority of lifetime experiences of mental ill-health begin during this period.(1, 2) Difficulty in one life domain can have knock-on effects across other domains of social inclusion, exacerbating the potential impact on young people's mental health.(3) The intersection of mental ill-health with domains, including education and employment, requires a holistic approach.

WHY

### Evidence

There is a two-way relationship between mental health and social inclusion.(4) The Folia Social Inclusion Measure (F-SIM16) is a brief, 16-item self-report measure of social inclusion. The F-SIM16 is suitable for clinical settings and can support young people and clinicians in planning treatment and monitoring functional outcomes. It has been tested and found to be a reliable measure across each domain: housing and neighbourhood, social relationships, employment and education, and finances.(5) In addition to identifying domains needing support, identifying strengths can also inform mental health support choices.(3) The measurement and monitoring of social inclusion with the F-SIM16 has the potential to improve treatment outcomes and access for young people experiencing social exclusion, benefiting their mental health and broader wellbeing.

IT WORKS

### Trial implementation

Measuring social inclusion and wellbeing is an opportunity to provide more holistic and person-centred care for young people. The F-SIM16 provides an accessible, easily implemented measurement tool for youth mental health clinicians and services. The ability to measure and monitor levels of social inclusion would provide additional practice and service information. PHNs and services would have a better understanding of social inclusion needs and the effectiveness of service responses. And young people and clinicians would be able to make informed decisions about psychosocial supports that meet their specific social inclusion needs. A funded trial of the F-SIM16 in youth mental health services across two PHNs would enable the evaluation of the usefulness of the measure for services, clinicians, and young people.

HOLISTIC CARE

## Policy solution

An 18-month trial and evaluation of the F-SIM16 across two Primary Health Networks would enable the tool to be tested by clinicians working in PHN funded youth mental health services (EPYS, YES and/or headspace centres). An evaluation of the trial will provide evidence to inform Department decision-making and national implementation.

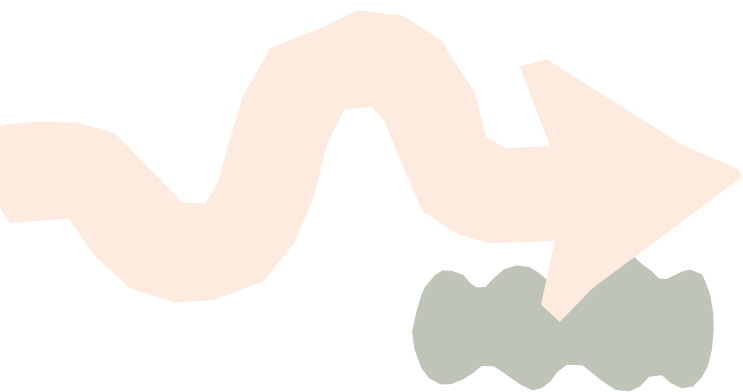
### Next steps

The F-SIM16 provides a ready-to-go, evidence-based measure of social inclusion for use in youth mental health services to enhance support for young people and help inform treatment decisions. A funded trial of the tool will provide implementation evidence to assess acceptability of the tool in practice and evidence for national roll-out.

- 1. Fund** an 18-month trial of the F-SIM16 in two PHNs to evaluate implementation and develop guidelines to support clinicians and services in its use.
- 2. Evaluate** service implementation of the F-SIM16 including clinician experience and young people's acceptance and outcomes.
- 3. Assess** the implementation evidence to inform a Department budget submission to scale up the F-SIM16 nationally across PHN-funded youth mental health services.



Policy solution	Rationale	Outcome
<b>Improving social inclusion for young people accessing youth mental health services</b>		
<p>Understanding of young people’s experience of social inclusion will improve the care youth mental health services can provide them.</p> <p>The F-SIM16 provides an accessible, evidence-based tool for measuring and monitoring young people’s social inclusion.</p> <p>Fund an 18-month trial of the F-SIM16 in two PHNs (regional, and urban) to evaluate implementation and develop guidelines to support clinicians and services in its use.</p> <p>The evaluation should include a recommendation on scaling up the F-SIM16 nationally across PHN-funded youth mental health services.</p>	<p>Poor mental health is linked with increased rates of lower wellbeing. For young people, social inclusion – including through education and employment – is an important support mechanism during a period of significant development and social transitions. This life period also coincides with the onset of the majority of lifetime experiences of mental ill-health.</p> <p>An ability to measure and monitor levels of social inclusion would bolster the delivery of mental health support and increase clinician understanding of the links between social inclusion and mental health.</p> <p>A targeted measure is needed to assess wellbeing due to the multiple, intersecting domains.</p> <p>The F-SIM16 is a brief, reliable social inclusion measure that has been tested in youth mental health service settings and offers a comprehensive option.</p>	<p>Evaluation of the usefulness of the F-SIM16 in PHN-funded youth mental health services informs Department decision-making. The funded trial would enable evaluation of service implementation, clinician experience and young people’s acceptance and outcomes.</p>



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