

Evaluation of the Australian Men's Shed Association

PART 1

EVALUATION OF SERVICE PROVISION TO MEMBERS

Final Report

31 AUGUST, 2016



.SIGGINS MILLER

Contents

PART 1. AMSA SERVICE PROVISION TO MEMBERS	4
Executive Summary	4
Main messages	5
Recommendations	5
Findings	5
Identifying and responding to the needs of members.	5
Do the services offered by AMSA meet the needs of members? Are resources and support considered appropriate and utilised?	6
Are membership fees appropriate and affordable for members?	8
Establishing new Men’s Sheds	8
Providing advice to member Sheds to access required insurance and safety guidelines;	8
Providing advice to members on sources of potential funding for Shed development and activities	8
Providing advice and supporting Men’s Sheds to engage with vulnerable people	8
Supporting and promoting preventative health measures, promoting good health and health initiatives (e.g. Movember), and health initiatives conducted within Sheds/for Shed members	9
Developing and disseminating guidelines based on best practice and national standards; and	9
IT services – Shed locator	9

PART 1. AMSA SERVICE PROVISION TO MEMBERS

Executive Summary

The following evaluation questions were posed to Shed **Office Holders** (that is the representative of a Shed that is an AMSA Member) and to Shed **Members** (individuals who are members of a local Shed, 'Shedders') in different survey formats. Each AMSA Member Shed could submit one survey for their Shed. Office Holders were assumed to have direct contact with AMSA and were asked more specific questions about AMSA services. Shed members were assumed to have less direct contact with AMSA and were asked more general questions about their needs, their experience of AMSA resources and whether their needs are met.

In addition, the perspectives of AMSA Board members and staff were sought through interviews containing specific questions relating to Evaluation Question 1.

Evaluation Question 1

Does AMSA provide appropriate, effective and efficient support to Men's Sheds across Australia, including:

- identifying and responding to the needs of members;
 - do the services offered by AMSA meet the needs of members;
 - what is the experience of members with the NSDP and how could it be improved; *(this question is reported in Part 4 of the Evaluation Report)*
 - are resources and support considered appropriate and utilised; and
 - are membership fees appropriate and affordable for members?
- establishing new Men's Sheds;
- providing advice to member Sheds to access required insurance and safety guidelines;
- providing advice to members on sources of potential funding for Shed development and activities;
- providing advice and supporting Men's Sheds to engage with vulnerable people;
- supporting and promoting preventative health measures, promoting good health and health initiatives (e.g. Movember), and health initiatives conducted within Sheds/for Shed members;
- developing and disseminating guidelines based on best practice and national standards; and
- IT services – Shed locator, information resources

On all aspects surveyed, Office Holders indicated that overall, AMSA is meeting their needs. This is reflected in high levels of satisfaction with service and the types of resources provided. Shed members also responded positively, with 89% saying that Shed membership is meeting their needs.

Respondents were asked to identify where improvements or additional resources/activities may be required. Many respondents were happy with the status quo. Where improvements were suggested, these were in the areas of: increasing the amount of information provided (in the same topics or additional topics or modifying the format), increasing communication between AMSA and the Sheds (including on-site presence or local representatives) and communication between Sheds (information sharing, learning from other Sheds).

Main messages

- AMSA Members rated the ability of AMSA to identify and respond to the needs of members highly.
- AMSA Members rated the usefulness of the available resources highly.
- AMSA Members rated the responsiveness and quality of service from AMSA staff highly.
- AMSA's 'Spanner in the Works?' health activity and online resource is highly regarded by members and useful to them.
- Shedders have identified mental health information as a high priority. Following the recent closure of a partnership program, this is now may be a gap in the AMSA offerings.
- While AMSA Members' views on membership fees are positive, there are different views within the AMSA management about the sustainability of the current membership fee levels and model.
- There is evidence of a Membership need or preference for more local presence and support from AMSA.

Recommendations

1. AMSA to review its mental health activities and resources to ensure that it continues to meet the Shedders' top health priority
2. Explore new or increased partnership activity in men's mental health (including joint funding applications with partner organisations)
3. Expand the use of expos and cooperative activities between local networks of Sheds
4. Increase the local presence of AMSA, e.g. through zone representatives and/or staff involvement in regional events
5. Continue the use of multiple modes of communication to Sheds (hard copy as well as digital) to maximize the reach to all Shedders.

Findings

A detailed report of the consultation findings is provided in **Appendix 3**. The information below is a summary of the key findings.

Identifying and responding to the needs of members.

Seventy-seven percent of AMSA members (Shed Office Holders) who participated in the survey reported that AMSA identifies and responds to their needs. Ten percent reported that AMSA did not respond to their needs, and the remaining 12.5% were neutral on the subject.

Eighty-eight percent of members reported that they had contacted AMSA, or sought AMSA assistance in the past. Ninety-six percent of those who had contacted AMSA for assistance rated that contact as helpful or very helpful.

Do the services offered by AMSA meet the needs of members? Are resources and support considered appropriate and utilised?

AMSA Members' needs

Sixty-five percent of respondents reported that AMSA *provides resources and support that is appropriate for their local population groups* either well or very well. Nine percent reported that AMSA do not do this well; the remaining 25% of respondents were neutral on the subject.

AMSA is the primary contact for providing support to 79% of Sheds responding to the survey. The remaining 21% of Sheds reported that their primary contact for support is either a State Association, a cluster or local network of Sheds or a zone representative.

For the purposes of this study, the needs of members were gauged from (1) reported reasons for joining AMSA and (2) utilisation of the services and resources offered by AMSA. The three most common reasons for joining AMSA were (in order of frequency) (1) assistance in setting up a Men's Shed (33%) (2) advice on insurance (32%) and (3) resources (30%). This is consistent with data presented in Part 4 of this Report, demonstrating the rapid growth of AMSA membership between 2010 and 2014 and with the original emphasis of the NSDP grants program that focused on supporting the establishment of new Sheds.

The three most common purposes for contacting AMSA were reported as (1) insurance (29.5%) (2) advice and information (21%) and (3) Shed grants (19%).

Utilisation of AMSA resources and support

For the purpose of this study, AMSA resources were categorised as:

1. AMSA management resources and services
2. Health Improvement Activities
3. AMSA online health resources.

The ***AMSA management resources*** utilised by respondents corresponded with their reported reasons for joining and contacting AMSA. Most of the 254 respondents to this question had used the following management resources provided by AMSA: Shed safety information and advice (n=217), the AMSA Handbook (n=216), insurance policies (n= 214), information on starting and running a Men's Shed (n=209), insurance information (n=201), the Shed Locator (n=200), information about legal obligations (n=190) and information on funding sources (n=189). In terms of overall usefulness of all the management resources, 99% of Office Holders rated them useful or very useful. Similarly, when asked to rate the usefulness of each specific management resource, Office Holders attributed usefulness ratings of 90% +¹, with the lowest rating (for 'providing information on other sources of funding') of 87%. When asked whether additional management resources were needed, 71% of Office Holders felt that no additional resources were needed. The remaining 29% of Office Holders identified additional management resources that were needed. These were in the areas of: improving the SMART resource;² more insurance; health and safety guidelines; financial management resources.

¹ Usefulness rating being the responses of 'useful' or 'very useful' combined as a percentage of all responses.

² For this computer-based resource, the maintenance contract had lapsed and upgrades had been missed due to resource shortfalls (see IT Review).

The most common **AMSA Health Improvement Activities** that had been organised by Sheds in the past 3 years were: use of health resources, e.g. books, CDs, Guest speakers (n=151), followed by first aid and/or CPR training (n=145) and Men's Health Checks (n=123). The overall rating of the usefulness of AMSA Health Improvement Activities was 86%. When individual Health Improvement Activities were examined, the lowest take-up rates by Sheds were for 'Movember' activities and for nutrition and cooking classes. Where Sheds had organised their own additional Health Improvement Activities, these were in the areas of brain and/or heart health; mental health awareness and cancer-related screening. When asked about additional Health Improvement Activities that members would like to see AMSA run, the suggestions were in three areas: preventive health; increased involvement in local Shed activities (e.g. through zones or regions); and in defibrillator funding and training. Half of the respondents, however, indicated that they were satisfied with the activities that are already on offer.

In the **Shed members'** survey, 77% of respondents agreed with the statement 'My Shed organises health related activities.' This was the lowest response rate in this series of questions, which mostly scored 90+% agreement. It also confirms some qualitative statements provided in the Office Holders' surveys that some Sheds and their members are not interested in health activities or do not have a focus on health.

From a list of AMSA Health Improvement Activities, the activity that **Shed members** reported attending most was 'Expert Guest Speaker talking about health or health services' (n=95, 66%). The next most frequently reported was 'utilising health resources, e.g. books, CDs' at the Shed (n=62, 43%), followed by CPR/first aid training (n= 59, 41%). Most activities were rated as useful by 90+% of users. The least useful activities were cooking classes (85% found them useful) and Movember (83%). Where Shed members reported attending additional types of activities organised by their Shed, these were in the categories of health screening/testing; mental health; training/awareness and events (e.g. physical activity associated with fundraising).

Office Holders were asked whether they had accessed **AMSA online health resources** in the past 12 months. These resources are available on the AMSA website. The most accessed resource was 'Spanner in the Works?' (n=153, 67%). The Indigenous Men's Health Manual was the least accessed resource³ (n=17, 7%). The cook book resources also had lower reported rates of access (9%). Users' assessment of the usefulness of each of the resources, however, was consistently between 93% and 100%.

Shed members' surveys presented a list of AMSA health resources and questioned respondents about their awareness/access/use of these resources. The resources of which respondents were most aware were: (1) Spanner in the Works and (2) Shed Online. In the same order, these were the resources that Shed members reported accessing most and finding the most useful. Although fewer people accessed other resources, the majority of those who did access them found them useful.

In the **Shed members'** survey, 88% of respondents agreed with the statement 'My Shed provides me with information about health issues.' Although a high score, this was the second lowest agreement rate in this series of questions.

With the recent closure of the Shed Online (due to a change in the strategic direction of the partner organisation Beyond Blue), the provision of mental health resources and activities for men may now be a gap in the resources and services provided by AMSA.

³ The sample in the study has included only one respondent who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and one Office Holder of an Indigenous Men's Shed.

In the **Shed members'** surveys 95% of respondents (n=140) identified *keeping mentally healthy* as their top priority and *keeping physically healthy* (76%) as their second priority. Knowing *where to seek help* was the next important priority (52%), followed by *knowing the warning signs* of ill health (49%).

Are membership fees appropriate and affordable for members?

Most Office Holders (n=132, 89%) indicated that their AMSA membership fees are appropriate and reasonable. Eleven (7%) respondents were unsatisfied with the current membership fees. Eight (5%) indicated they were too expensive, especially for smaller Sheds.

AMSA Board members and staff expressed differing perspectives about the membership fees. Some suggested that the flat rate was either inequitable or too low; others were satisfied with the current rate. Suggested models were: charging Sheds on a per capita (membership) basis, rather than a flat fee; maintaining a flat fee and increasing the amount.

Establishing new Men's Sheds

One hundred and fifty-five respondents indicated their Sheds had joined AMSA for assistance with setting up a Men's Shed. Two hundred and nine (82%) stated that they used information on starting and running a Men's Shed that was provided by AMSA and 98% of respondents considered this information to be useful or very useful. Sixty-three percent of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with AMSA's assistance in setting up a new Shed; 29% were neutral⁴ and 9% were not satisfied. Areas of improvement identified by respondents were: increased funding, more on site assistance from AMSA and more information and resources.

Providing advice to member Sheds to access required insurance and safety guidelines;

Insurance advice, insurance policies and safety information were the three most utilised management resources available to members. Between 84% and 87% of respondents had utilised information provided by AMSA on insurance and safety issues. The majority of the respondents (98% for insurance matters; 95% for safety matters) found the information either useful or very useful.

In the **Shed members'** surveys, 90-95% agreed with the statement 'My Men's Shed is a safe place to work' and 95-100% agreed that 'My Men's Shed is a safe place to meet.'

Providing advice to members on sources of potential funding for Shed development and activities

Potential funding was the fourth most cited reason for joining AMSA (mentioned by 26% of respondents). Seventy-four percent of respondents (n=189) indicated they had used AMSA to obtain information on funding sources, such as grants available. Eighty-seven percent of respondents found the information on potential funding either useful or very useful.

In the **Shed members'** surveys, 95% of respondents agreed with the statement 'My Shed looks for funding and resources from different sources'.

Providing advice and supporting Men's Sheds to engage with vulnerable people

On this issue, respondents returned the largest 'neutral' response rate (29%). The overall satisfaction rating with the resources was 62%. The actual usage of these resources was not measured.

⁴ Some respondents had already established their Shed prior to AMSA's existence; others were not involved in the set up.

The interviews with AMSA Board members and staff indicated that the benefit of this advice and information has been to support Sheds to make an informed decision about whether or not to become involved with vulnerable people in a formal way, for example, working with local health or community services to involve vulnerable groups (e.g. youth) in Men's Sheds.

Supporting and promoting preventative health measures, promoting good health and health initiatives (e.g. Movember), and health initiatives conducted within Sheds/for Shed members

Eighty-two percent of Office Holders said that AMSA provides information on men's health issues either well or very well. Eighty-six percent of Office Holders found the AMSA-supported health activities either useful or very useful.

Developing and disseminating guidelines based on best practice and national standards

Seventy-eight percent of respondents reported that AMSA advises or informs Men's Sheds well or very well on how to operate as a safe, well-run organisation.

In **Shed members'** surveys, 90% of respondents agreed with the statement 'My Men's Shed is well managed'.

IT services – Shed locator

Seventy-nine percent of Office Holders had used the Shed Locator on the website. Ninety-seven percent of respondents found the Shed locator either useful or very useful. Three respondents suggested improvements to the Shed Locator, such as updating, improving user friendliness, and providing a profile for each Shed.

See **Appendix 3** for more detailed results from the consultations with members.