

Evaluation priorities

Examine the continuing role of FinCap in supporting the sector through communities of practice, regional hui and other networking. Data to be collected through the next workforce survey.

2.4. Workforce and capability

2.4.1. The BFC workforce

The workforce survey provided an opportunity to understand the workforce delivering BFC services. BFC staff responses to the workforce survey showed:

- One-third (37%) were volunteers
- The workforce was aging with three-quarters (73%) over 50, though the volunteer component of the workforce was older with 86% over 50 compared to 66% for the paid workforce
- One-fifth (22%) of the total workforce and nearly one-third (29%) of the paid workforce were Māori
- The workforce was largely female – three-quarters (75%) of volunteers and most (92%) of the paid staff
- Staff thought their workloads were just right (50%) or high (34%)
- Two-thirds (67%) were satisfied with their everyday work and most (79%) were likely to stay with their employer for the next year.

2.4.2. Changing practice with the transition to BFC

The shift from providing budget advice to building financial capability was a major change for some providers whereas others were already delivering strengths-based approaches with a focus on building client financial capability.

The communities in the case studies were working at different speeds in fully understanding the goals of BFC and embedding local systems. Discussions with BFC providers as part of the evaluation of Financial Mentors and MoneyMates also demonstrated variation in what was being provided.

Variation in providers responses to the change to financial capability was also evident in responses to the workforce survey: service providers thought most (76%) staff understood the purpose of BFC though a smaller proportion (50%) were confident the transition had strengthened the sector. Less than half (43%) had changed how they worked with their clients since the transition to BFC.

2.4.3. Developing workforce capability

Two-thirds of providers who responded to the workforce survey identified training as a high priority for FinCap. While more than two-thirds of staff had participated in some form of financial capability training. Providers commented on both training for new staff entering BFC roles and training for existing staff to strengthen their ability to deliver BFC services. Training should be available for:

- The core financial capability aspects of BFC services
- Mentoring and facilitation skills for Financial Mentors and MoneyMates facilitators
- Working with people with other needs (mental health issues, family violence, addiction)
- Cultural competency – Māori, Pacific, refugee and migrant populations.

There is an important and ongoing role for FinCap to build provider capability and consistency in delivering BFC services. However, some parts of the workforce, particularly volunteers, may be reluctant to change the way they have always supported clients.

From what I can also see from the BFC provider side of the world. They still are trying to work out what it is that they are meant to be doing, some of them still seem to be operating as just a budget service, without. So the training and that, they're still developing it, it's not going to be ready until December, this many years on and it's still in development. (BFC stakeholder)

Evaluation priority

Collect data on progress with training through the next iteration of the workforce survey.

Continue to explore and describe providers' understandings of how building financial capability differs from budgeting advice and how they have changed their practice.

2.5. Enabling policies and tools

The Work and Income regional advisors have been effective in promoting understanding of BFC. BFC champions will complement their role. Earlier evaluation (2017-18) found consistent feedback that work was needed to support Work and Income staff through:

- Building Work and Income frontline staff understanding of BFC services and of the need to frame BFC services positively in conversations with clients to move away from perceptions of referral to BFC services as a punitive response or a box-ticking exercise.

- Strengthening Work and Income policies and tools such as a standardised referral process and a way of recording who has been referred.
- Providing clarity about the number of different BFC products and services as uncertainty may also be contributing to confusion about BFC services

Work and Income has since implemented a range of systemic and practice changes to improve the way it works with BFC providers. The next deployment of the workforce survey and future initiative evaluations will provide opportunities to measure change in providers' views of their relationship with Work and Income following the implementation of those changes.

Evaluation priorities

Evaluate the effectiveness of changes to Work and Income practices through the workforce survey and evaluation targeting Work and Income clients and referrals.

2.6. Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement has been an integral part of the development of rollout of BFC services. The Ministry's BFC team and FinCap consider and respond to evaluation findings. Summaries of key messages and learnings are provided to the evaluation leadership group and the implications discussed.

Data collection infrastructure is an essential aspect of delivery as it provides the foundation for monitoring and evaluation and continuous improvement. FinCap is re-developing Client Voices with the new version due to arrive in December 2019.

Discussions with FinCap and providers have helped develop provider results dashboards on an ongoing basis to more accurately reflect providers' use of Client Voices. Summary dashboards continue to be well received and consistency of data collection is improving as providers understanding of the Client Voices system improves.

Evaluation priority

Continue to distribute the provider dashboards. Collect feedback from providers about the ways the dashboards can be used to inform continuous improvement and the value of the questions Malatest provided to guide their feedback.

Re-develop the dashboards following the implementation of the new version of Client Voices.

3. BFC products and services

3.1. Work and Income practices

Work and Income is a key referral point for BFC services. In response to feedback from the sector, Work and Income has made changes to its referral processes and invested in improving relationships with BFC services. Long-standing requirements for clients to be referred after six hardship grants within a twelve-month period have been removed in favour of earlier referral as need is identified. A focus on budgeting to get hardship grant approval is not consistent with the BFC approach of providing holistic support.

Nationally, Work and Income referrals account for 26% of new clients for BFC services. The survey of provider staff and management found relationships with Work and Income were often seen as challenging. Two-thirds of providers had a good working relationship with Work and Income but less than half thought clients referred to them from Work and Income understood why they had been referred to a BFC service and less than one-quarter wanted to meaningfully participate in BFC. Analysis of Client Voices data showed clients referred from Work and Income were less likely to engage (attend 3+ sessions) than other clients (see section 5).

Clients appeared more likely to access BFC services when they were given details about what BFC services were and how they could access one. They also appeared more likely to engage with BFC where they saw the Work and Income staff they had encountered as friendly, compassionate, and non-judgemental. It was important for clients to feel that Work and Income staff had empathy for their situations and a good understanding of their wider financial and societal context.

Evaluation priorities

Evaluate the effectiveness of the changes to Work and Income policies and practices through the workforce survey and evaluation.

Continue to use Client Voices data on engagement by client referral source to monitor engagement of clients referred by Work and Income.

3.2. Financial mentors

The focus of BFC providers has been on financial mentoring. The one-on-one approach is most familiar for providers and is seen as the core of the BFC project. The evaluation found the four-step model developed to describe BFC Plus also described financial mentoring:

- **Stage 1: Listening:** Financial mentors earn the trust of clients before they can begin working with them by showing they understand the clients' situations, empathising with the challenges they face and being non-judgemental and supportive.
- **Stage 2: Planning:** Clients work with providers to resolve immediate crises, assess needs and form a plan that can be revised on an ongoing basis.
- **Stage 3: Building:** Financial mentors meet semi-regularly to build client confidence and capability, working towards positive outcomes and to make sure their budgets are still working and that clients remain on track.
- **Stage 4: Exiting:** Once clients have achieved their goals their financial mentors evaluate the need for ongoing service under the assumption that clients are welcome to return if they find themselves experiencing hardship again.

The model of building trust and rapport through resolving initial crises, moving to a longer-term focus through planning, building capability then exiting was consistent for financial mentoring and BFC Plus. Financial mentoring was intended to reach lower-need clients and overall the clients tended to be less complex and have a lower level of need for financial capability. However, providers without BFC Plus contracts still saw themselves as delivering services to high-need clients, even where that meant working with them intensively.

Analysis of Client Voices data highlighted the high proportion of clients who had a one-off or short-term engagement with client voices. In describing their services, providers focus on the clients they successfully engage longer-term financial capability building. However, they described other clients who either needed budget to meet Work and Income's requirements or only wanted to resolve a crisis situation.

Evaluation priorities

Building understanding of the reasons for one-off or short-term engagements and the approaches providers can take to successfully transition clients into longer-term financial capability building.

3.3. MoneyMates

MoneyMates is based on the concept of learning, sharing and applying financial capability skills together as a group. The aim of MoneyMates is to allow participants to learn from one another by talking about money and their finances. Facilitators take participants through a series of practical financial modules that are intended to be catered to the group and their specific needs. MoneyMates aims to bring people together to remove the stigma around talking about financial hardship.

MoneyMates currently represents only a small part of the work of BFC providers. In 2018 one in ten (11%) clients in Client Voices had at least one MoneyMates session. The proportion of clients who had at least one MoneyMates session varied significantly from provider to provider. The number of clients closed in 2018 who had at least one MoneyMates session remained relatively constant in each quarter of the year (Figure 5).

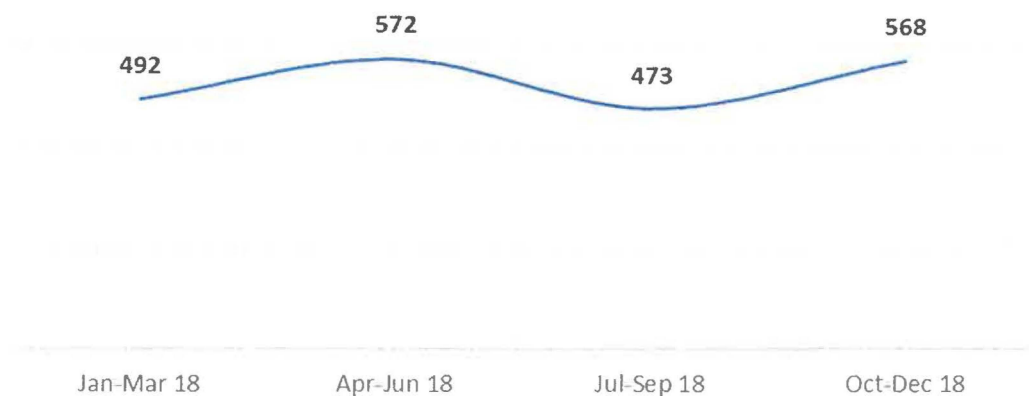


Figure 1. Number of closed clients who had at least one MoneyMates sessions as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 19,762).

Most providers were either ambivalent about MoneyMates or had not been successful in forming groups. A small number of the MoneyMates providers interviewed were very positive and had been successful in running MoneyMates groups. A small number were very negative and did not see MoneyMates as an approach that could be successful, often due to objections about the appropriateness of discussing financial matters in a group setting.

BFC service providers found delivering MoneyMates was more challenging than Financial Mentoring. As a new approach to service delivery in the sector, MoneyMates required more preparation, staff training and promotional activities. Training was slow-going due to internal capacity restraints, client caseloads and providers' slow transitions from a budgeting mindset towards understanding MoneyMates. Additionally, providers found it difficult to form MoneyMates groups, because there were more barriers to participation and the service was less well known.

Providers saw group formation as the principle challenge in delivering the service. They also report challenges in forming groups. Some challenges were related to stigma and people's reluctance to discuss financial issues in front of other people. However, the main issues were logistical. Getting people together as a group for a regular session sustained over time was very difficult. Where they were successful, providers offered support such as transport, childcare or food to reduce barriers to

attendance. The administration cost in managing groups and providing these additional incentives were not covered by the MoneyMates funding.

Successful providers most often worked with groups of people from a single source (for example, all the mothers at a teen parent unit or staff from a single employer) rather than forming a new group of people from varied sources.

At entry to BFC, people often wanted to address crisis situations, which was more suited for Financial Mentoring than MoneyMates. Where groups were formed, participants achieved positive outcomes in financial capability and other aspects of wellbeing. The group setting meant the service was not the best fit for all clients, but the peer support was valuable for others.

The development and evaluation of the Sorted Whānau pilot demonstrated the strengths of group financial capability building but in the context of naturally formed groups of people already being supported by a provider. A wider focus on whakawhanaungatanga and understanding financial behaviours before discussing personal budgets and challenges was important in developing a group. The groups continued to support each other after the 'formal' programme ended.

Evaluation priorities

Continue the evaluation of MoneyMates if further training for providers is implemented and/or there are substantial changes to the programme.

3.4. MoneyMates Fund/ BFC Fund

The MoneyMates Fund (MMF) targeted groups, organisations or collaborations who were working in communities with an identified need for improved financial wellbeing. Providers submitted applications for initiatives focused on generating community conversation or delivering innovative projects to build financial capability. A total of 45 providers delivered MMF initiatives across three funding rounds that ran from 2016 to 2018. We received 43 provider return reports from the Ministry for analysis.

Most (34 of 43) of the providers delivered initiatives based on MoneyMates. These initiatives typically targeted people living in hardship and sought to reduce known client barriers to engaging in MoneyMates. Many provided incentives to attend or changed the core MoneyMates content or delivery approach to better suit the clients. Some (9 of 43) providers developed and implemented initiatives that were not based on the core MoneyMates programme.

As with core MoneyMates development and delivery, engaging and retaining clients was a significant challenge. Initiatives addressed barriers to participation, for example transport, timing, concerns about privacy and the stigma attached to

talking about money. They also emphasised the importance of modifying the content or delivery approaches so that they would be relevant for the groups they sought to reach. Providers had more success working with clients if they had strong community networks and support in place.

Clients achieved outcomes including improved financial knowledge and habits, greater confidence and feelings of empowerment and strong relationships and bonds with others in their MoneyMates groups.

The transition to the BFC Fund and improvements in the application process are expected to strengthen the initiatives and make it easier for the Ministry to identify learnings from Fund initiatives and share them with the sector.

Evaluation priorities

Review the next round of Fund initiatives to identify learnings to inform development of the BFC system. Include review of the MMF process and opportunities to strengthen it from the provider and Ministry points of view.

3.5. BFC Plus

BFC Plus is an intensive product designed for people with the highest levels of financial hardship and other social and health challenges. The interface with other services such as social workers is particularly important for the BFC Plus clients.

BFC Plus required a workforce with empathy, a non-judgemental attitude, ability to identify a range of client issues and financial expertise. Clients were often in crisis situations financially while also dealing with multiple other health and social issues. The stress of financial difficulties exacerbated other issues, and vice versa. Self-referred clients were easiest to engage, while those coming from Work and Income could be more challenging.

The client pathway through BFC Plus followed a similar process across providers:

- Stage one: Listening to clients, building trust and addressing crisis issues
- Stage two: Planning financial capability building activity and addressing wider wellbeing issues
- Stage three: Setting goals, monitoring progress and celebrating achievements
- Stage four: Exiting, continuing through low-intensity monitoring period or transitioning to other services.

Client outcomes included improvements in financial situations and financial capability as well as improvement in wider wellbeing.

The BFC Plus model has been re-designed and will be more distinct from Financial Mentoring. Instead of having a high number of providers providing the more

intensive BFC Plus services, a smaller number of providers will employ kahukura who will deliver BFC Plus to high-need clients referred from other BFC providers in their areas as well as work to build the capacity of their financial mentors.

Evaluation priorities

Develop an evaluation plan for the new version of BFC Plus currently being implemented.

3.5.1. Hard to reach workstream

Ngāti Kahungunu ki Poneke Whānau Services (KWS) has been the focus of work for this part of the project. The KWS evaluation charts the journey of a kaupapa Māori organisation approaching BFC from Te Ao Māori, using Mātauranga to achieve Whānau Ora outcomes. KWS operate their service to reach whānau who have many and complex needs. These whānau are often labelled 'hard to reach' but KWS reach them by recognising the potential in whānau and supporting them to strengthen their mana. Whānau often hear about KWS through word of mouth.

KWS have developed a kaupapa Māori BFC tool, Mauri Oho. Mauri Oho is a journal that charts whānau aspirations and achievements and enables financial capability planning. It was important that the evaluation positioned the mahi KWS undertook within the bigger picture of BFC, but even more important to position the project within Te Ao Māori. The evaluation was informed by:

- Observation and interviews with staff and whānau throughout the development workshops
- Focus groups and interviews with 13 kaimahi at development, training and rollout stages
- Six whānau interviews
- Whānau narratives.

Key elements of Mauri Oho development, staff training, and rollout are listed below:

Developing the tool

- Whānau participation in refining the Mauri Oho tool was critical in its relevance. Other BFC providers wanting to develop their own tool in the future should consider whānau involvement from the outset, as KWS did.
- Relationships between KWS and whānau were paramount in both developing and rolling out the journal.
- Tikanga played a vital role in ensuring the process of developing the journal was done properly and safely.
- The journal questions are strengths-based and mana enhancing. Whānau decide what wealth means to them and how they might achieve it.

Staff training

- Kaimahi require ongoing training to build confidence in using the tool. To be effective in introducing and using it, kaimahi must *live and breathe* Mauri Oho.
- New staff and major changes across KWS over the last six months have limited the ability for staff to be trained in using the tool. This has resulted in a small number of whānau being introduced to the tool but this will increase over time.

Rolling out Mauri Oho

- Mauri Oho is embedded in KWS. It is used '*from the top down*' to articulate and translate Māori concepts to other agencies and organisations.
- A longer evaluation timeframe would enable more whānau feedback on Mauri Oho.
- Six whānau shared their experiences of using Mauri Oho. The journal prompted them to think about wealth for the first time, and they were motivated to connect with positive whānau supports, plan and achieve goals.
- Practical support from kaimahi is in place to assist whānau with day to day challenges as they identify and achieve their aspirations.
- The printed journal form has limitations as it is not easily changed. Mauri Oho is dynamic and should be in a format that can be modified.

Mauri Oho took the kaupapa of KWS and crafted it into a tool that delivers a road map to Whānau Ora, incorporating sustainable financial capability. The kaimahi who work alongside whānau to use the tool are critical to its success. Ongoing training for staff, alongside the compassion and commitment that they bring to their work with whānau is an important part of delivering Mauri Oho to whānau.

Evaluation priorities

The approach to financial capability developed by KWS contributes a unique and powerful component to the overall BFC project and provides tangible examples of how BFC fits within the Whānau Ora framework and Māori models of health and wellbeing in practice.

3.6. MoneyTalks

MoneyTalks is a financial mentoring helpline which provides advice on financial issues and referrals to BFC providers. Evaluation of MoneyTalks is currently underway, with staff interviews complete and client and stakeholder interviews in progress.

MoneyTalks has roles in:

- Quick intervention – providing remote advice and information to people with questions that can be quickly addressed. This may reduce the number of clients who contact BFC providers but do not want a longer-term building financial capability engagement, freeing up their resource to focus on higher need clients.
- Reaching clients – extending the reach of BFC services to clients who may not otherwise have been reached. For example, clients distant from a physical BFC service or who have barriers to attending a face to face appointment such as anxiety or a preference for talking over the phone or by text.
- Connecting – being an easy, national, single point of contact gateway into BFC services which banks or other organisations involved in financial matters can refer clients. Once clients connect with MoneyTalks they can be connected with appropriate BFC services.

Evaluation priorities

Complete the current evaluation work. Move on to future work focused on understanding providers' views on whether MoneyTalks is strengthening their service through referrals, reaching clients who might not otherwise have been reached and quick interventions with clients who do not want a longer-term financial mentoring service.

3.7. The Generator

The Generator has been contracted to Vaka Tautua and Emerge Aotearoa. The work is in the development phase. The Generator projects have the potential to build opportunities to support financial resilience. Evaluation of the Generator projects will track the impact they have on communities. The evaluation will take a formative process through 2019 with the first reporting in 2020.

Evaluation priorities

The Generator is important in providing the 'opportunities' component of the COM-B model. The evaluation will examine the implementation of the Generator, the range of initiatives implemented, and the outcomes achieved. Like the MoneyMates Fund, learnings from individual initiatives and the overall process should inform development of other services.

4. BFC Clients

4.1. BFC client caseload

Information about who is being reached and outcomes for BFC clients is sourced from administrative data from 147 providers using Client Voices. Additionally, qualitative information is included from BFC service providers and community case studies including interviews with BFC service users.

The number of active clients in Client Voices remained relatively static across all providers in 2018 (Figure 2) with around one-third of the total caseload being opened and one-third closing in each quarter.



Figure 2. New, closed and active clients by quarter as recorded in the Client Voices.

4.2. Referral trends

Although referrals to BFC are a small part of Work and Income's responsibilities, they are key referrers and an important part of local networks. In 2018, 23,460 clients were opened in the Client Voices system with just over a quarter (27%) of the referrals coming from Work and Income (Figure 3). Self-referrals were the most common type of referral (37%), but also included a high proportion of clients from Work and Income (57%).

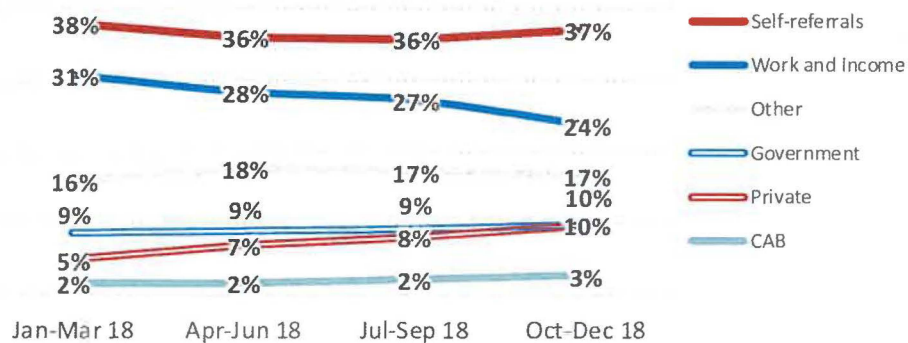


Figure 3. Clients referral source by opening quarter as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 23,460).

4.3. Who is being reached

BFC services supported a range of clients. Some received one-off support, some received multiple sessions and a few were part of MoneyMates groups. Client needs differed, some engaged because they anticipated a change in income as a result of employment or life changes. Some were referred because they were in debt or had applied for six hardship grants from Work and Income. Others required intensive ongoing support that could include total money management.

The two main reasons for client engagement was recorded through Client Voices (Figure 4) although just over half (55%) of clients opened in 2018 did not have a reason for engagement recorded. Amongst those with a reason recorded, the impact of life changes on finance were common reasons for engagement – work instability, partnership breakdown, loss of job or increased living costs. Credit and loans were identified for one in five clients.

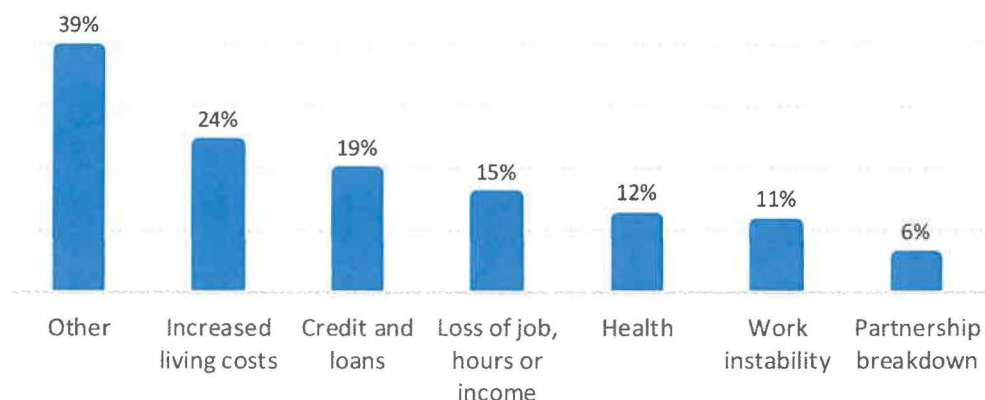


Figure 4. Main reasons for client engagement for clients opened in 2018 as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 13,029). There were two reasons for engagement entered by some clients and no further details on the Other category were available.

Feedback from providers and analysis of Client Voices data from 147 providers for 2018 shows most active clients were concentrated in the 26 to 65 age groups (from 23% to 30% in each age band).

Clients demographics are compared against the national population distribution and nation distribution for the deprived population (NZDep score quintiles 3-5). The oldest age groups were represented at lower levels than their population proportion living in economically deprived localities (Figure 5). Clients were also more likely to be female (66%) than male (34%).

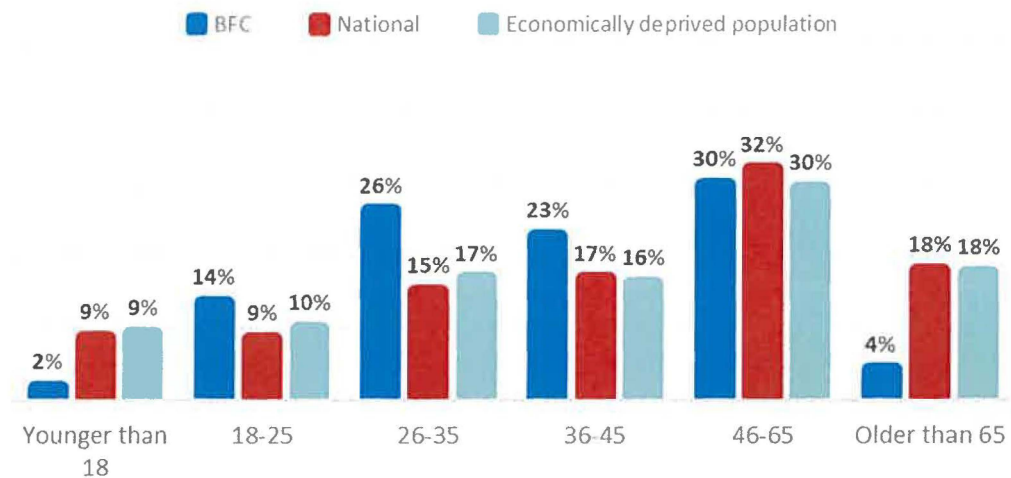


Figure 5. Age of clients active in 2018 as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 34,573).

Many clients were beneficiaries (71%) but 23% of clients received income from salaries and wages. Of the clients that had income items present in their budget sessions information under two-thirds (61%) earned less than \$30,000 a year. A large proportion of the remaining clients earned between \$30,001-\$50,000 (28%) with the remaining 10% earning more than \$50,000.

Loans were the main type of client debt and accounted for just under two-thirds (64%) of the total debt from clients who were opened in 2018 (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Debt held by clients opened in 2018 by debt type as recorded by debt schedules in the Client Voices (n = 15,505).

Service providers recorded the source of client debt in the Client Voices system (Figure 7). Finance companies accounted for the largest share of client debt recorded (35%), more than double the proportion of bank loans and credit cards (15%).

Clients had a median debt of \$9,200. The average was much higher, showing the effect of some high value debts such as mortgages for a smaller proportion of clients.

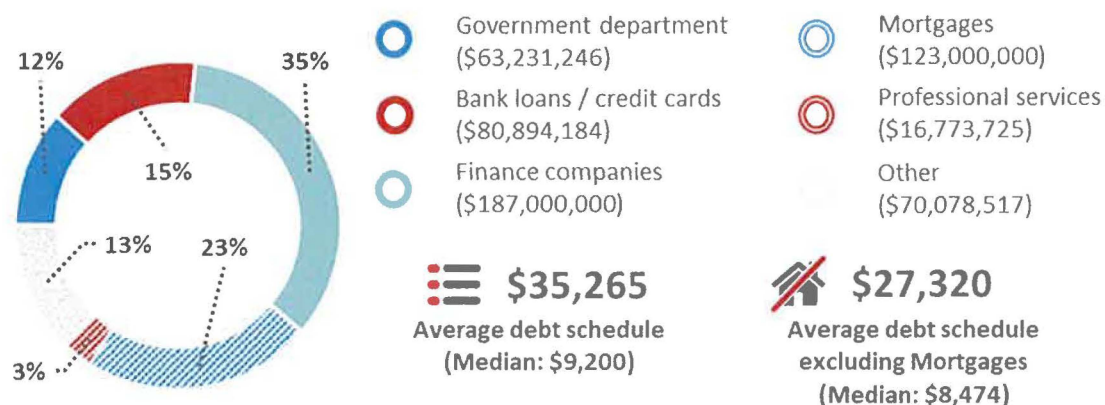


Figure 7. Debt sources from debt held by clients opened in 2018 as recorded by debt schedules in the Client Voices (n = 15,505).

4.4. Ethnicity of BFC clients

Clients who identify as New Zealand European or Asian were under-represented in BFC services compared to their national or economically deprived population proportions (Figure 8). Māori engagement was the opposite, with Māori clients over-represented (42%). Pacific peoples are being reached at a slightly higher rate than in

the economically deprived population with 12% of clients from Client Voices identifying as a Pacific ethnicity.

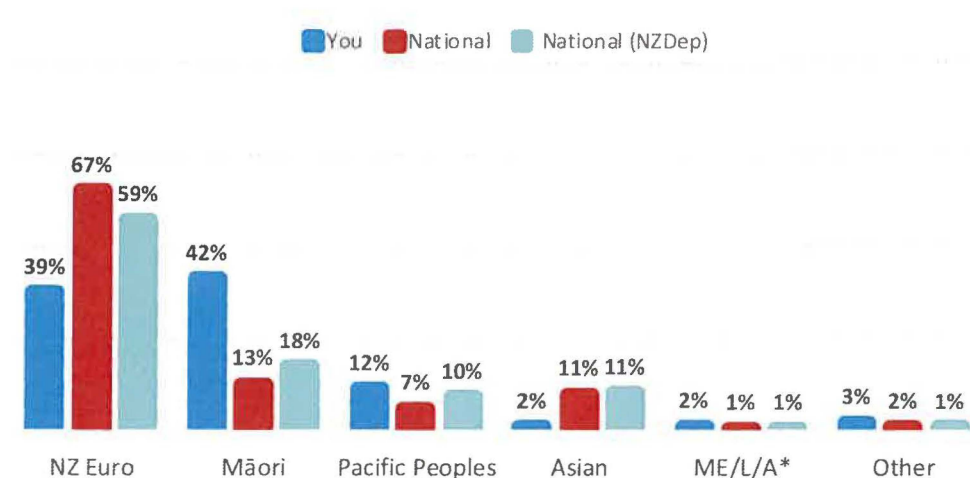


Figure 8. Clients ethnicity as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 34,573). ME/L/A is the shortened form of Middle Eastern/Latin/African.

4.5. Reaching Māori

The importance of kaupapa Māori services for Māori clients is well established across the health and social sectors. Kaupapa Māori services generally provide holistic and whānau focussed support. In collective communities and to address the complex needs of many BFC clients, holistic and whānau focussed support is essential to achieve positive outcomes for clients. Kaupapa Māori providers with the potential to build financial capability may therefore be NGO services that do not specifically focus on building financial capability. For example, iwi health providers, services that support people with addiction issues, family violence and sexual violence crisis support providers.

A Ministry of Health funded pilot study demonstrated the effectiveness of Sorted Whānau, a MoneyMates type programme developed by Māori and Pacific providers to support people affected by harmful gambling. Sorted Whānau used a train the trainer approach to upskill providers to facilitate financial capability programmes that were developed to fit with the kaupapa of the provider. Providers were supported by expert financial mentors. The train the trainer approach was able to reach 'hard to reach' whānau by working with a provider that whānau were already engaged with and trusted. Another important difference between MoneyMates and Sorted Whānau was the inclusion of whakawhanaungatanga, and a focus on the cultural context of money.

BFC providers interviewed for the community case studies identified the benefits of kaupapa Māori services but also a shortage of services.

The majority of our clients are Māori and Pacific, so therefore that should be our starting base.

Evaluation priorities

Describe the features of kaupapa Māori services and other services working effectively with Māori clients identified through higher rates of long-term engagement and improved outcomes.

Explore the differences in outcomes between Māori clients of kaupapa Māori BFC services and mainstream BFC services.

5. Factors affecting client engagement

Building clients' financial capability depends on a longer engagement than one session. The first session may be used to address crisis situations and resolve immediate issues but more time is needed to develop client capability to improve financial management and avoid future crises.

Length of client engagement can be extracted from Client voices by examining the number of sessions delivered to each client. In 2018, quarter of the closed BFC clients (25%) had three or more sessions recorded, which we have defined as the threshold for being engaged. Over half (52%) of clients who were closed in 2018 were recorded as attending only one session.

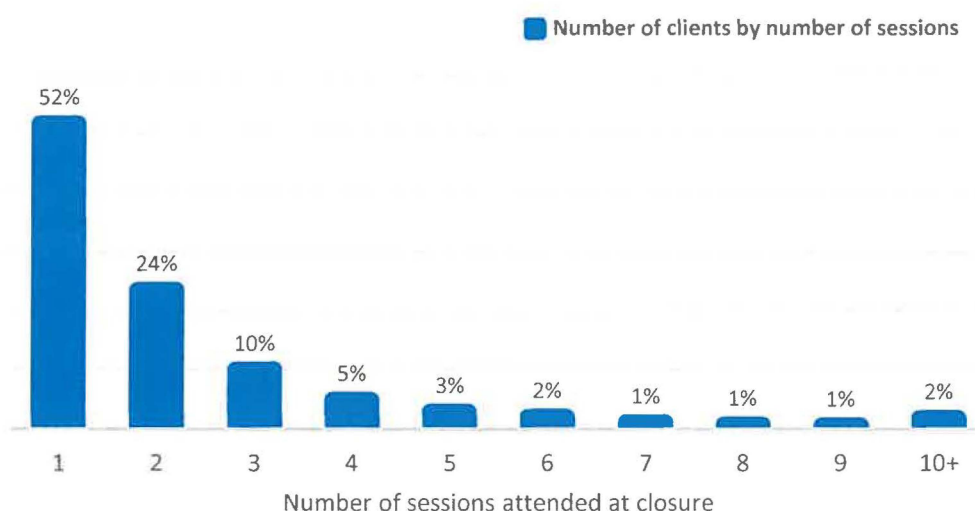


Figure 9. Number of sessions attended and percentage with needs met at closure as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 13,496).

5.1. Referral source

Looking across the calendar year, the proportion of clients who completed three or more sessions was highest for clients recorded as private referrals (31%), CAB referrals (30%) or self-referred (29%). The engagement rate was lower for clients referred by Work and Income (20%) or other government sources (15%).

Figure 10 shows the proportion of clients who go on to become engaged (attend 3+ sessions) by referral source for each quarter of the 2018 calendar year. Causes of fluctuations are unclear and could be seasonal. As more data are received, we may see a pattern to these changes.

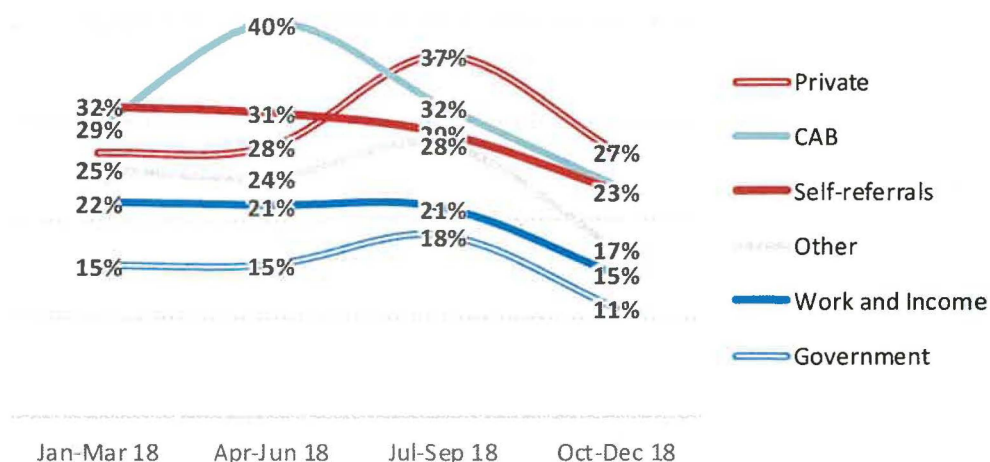


Figure 10. Clients engagement by opening quarter and referral pathway as recorded in the Client Voices (n = 23,460).

5.2. Ethnicity

Providers record client ethnicity in Client Voices. Comparison between the average number of sessions attended by clients in each ethnic group showed some differences.

The underlying reasons for differences across ethnicities are unclear and require further exploration. They could be connected to differences in location, socioeconomic status, effectiveness of providers in general or in providing culturally appropriate services.

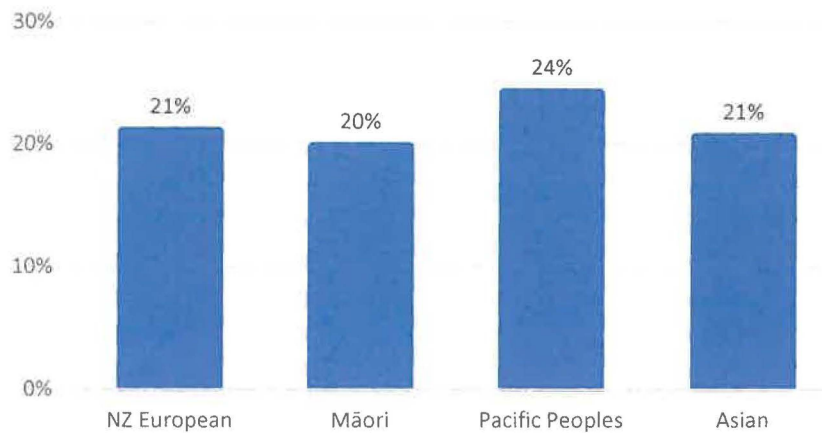


Figure 11. Proportion of closed clients in each ethnic group who attended 3+ sessions (excludes those with no recorded worklog sessions).

5.3. Age

Higher proportions of the older clients (46+) remained engaged for three or more sessions and they had a higher number of sessions attended on average (Figure 12). People aged 65 and over averaged 2.2 sessions, double the average of those aged 18-25 years (1.1).

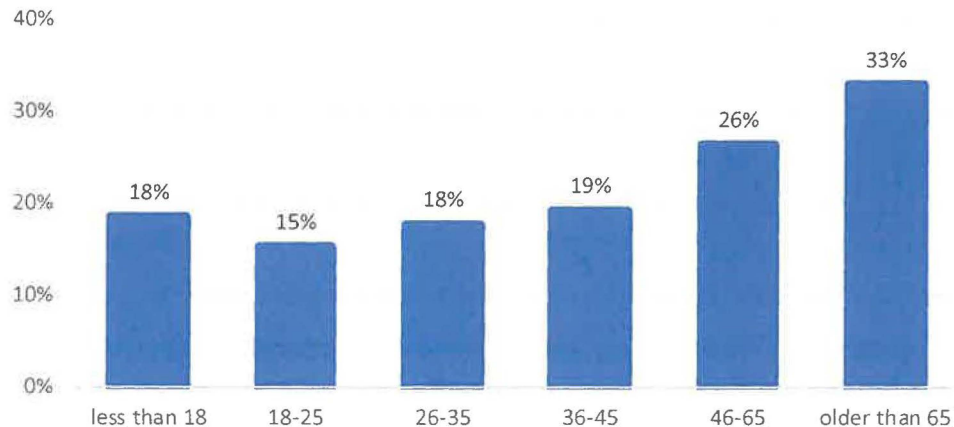


Figure 12. Proportion of closed clients in each age group who attended 3+ sessions (excludes those with no recorded worklog sessions).

The difference by age may arise from differences in how people of different ages prefer to engage with the services or in the services ability to work with different clients. For example, some or all BFC services may be best suited to older clients. The workforce survey showed many BFC services were delivered by older staff. The older workforce may be most effective in engaging clients of similar ages. On the other hand, differences may reflect differences in how people of different ages want to

work with services. Younger clients may be less interested in a longer-term engagement.

5.4. Income

The Client Voices records generally showed a trend towards higher proportions of clients engaging in 3+ sessions as income increased (Figure 13).

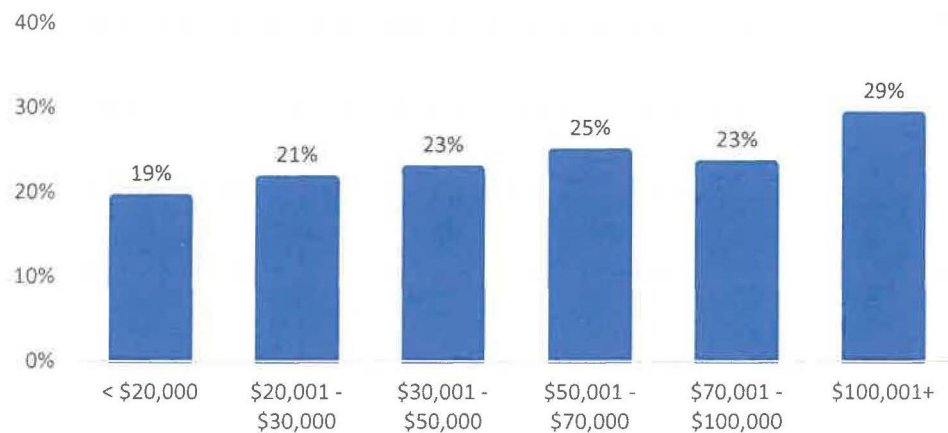


Figure 13. Proportion of closed clients in each income group who attended 3+ sessions (excludes those with no recorded worklog sessions).

5.4.1. Source of income

Participants with different income sources recorded also had different rates of engagement (Figure 14). One-fifth of beneficiaries engaged compared to one-quarter of salary and wage earners. Beneficiaries were also more likely to have zero sessions recorded (11% compared to 8% of salary/wage earners). The result is consistent with the lower rates of engagement observed for Work and Income clients.

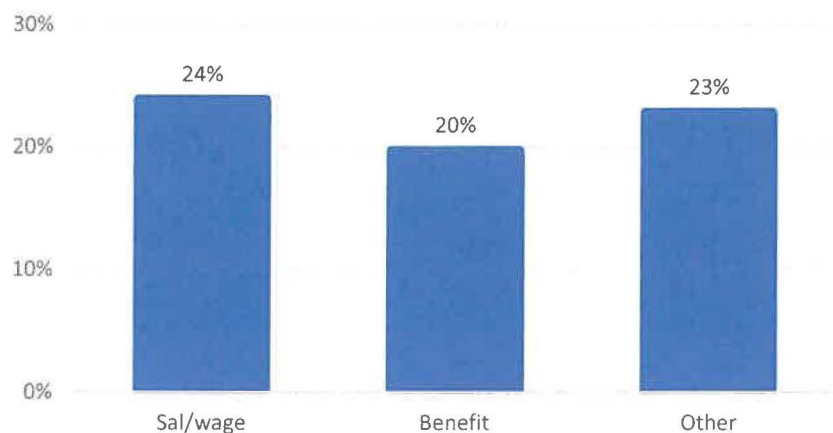


Figure 14. Proportion of closed clients with each income type who attended 3+ sessions (excludes those with no recorded worklog sessions).

5.5. Modelling engagement

We modelled engagement using the factors described in this section and also included location. The model highlighted income, referral source and location (Auckland compared to the rest of the country) as significant in improving the probability of clients becoming attending three or more sessions (Table 1). Being a beneficiary was not significant, while recording Work and Income as the referral source was.

Table 1. Estimated linear probability models for engagement controlling for the different characteristics recorded in Client Voices. Only closed clients with at least one worklog entry are included (n = 7,943)

Reference category	Category	Coefficient (standard error)
New Zealand European	Māori	-0.02 (0.01)
	Pacific Peoples	0.02 (0.02)
	Asian	0.01 (0.05)
	M/E/L/A	0.05 (0.05)
Salary/wage earner	Beneficiary	0.02 (0.01)
	Other	0.05 (0.03)
	\$30-50k	0.03** (0.01)
Income <\$30k	\$50-\$70k	0.03 (0.02)
	\$70k+	0.02 (0.03)
Not in Auckland	In Auckland	0.05** (0.01)
One dependent	Two	-0.01 (0.02)

Reference category	Category	Coefficient (standard error)
	Three	-0.03 (0.02)
	Four or more	0.00 (0.02)
	None	0.03* (0.01)
	Self-referral	0.09*** (0.01)
	CAB referral	0.10** (0.04)
Work and Income referral	Government referral	0.10*** (0.03)
	Private referral	0.07** (0.02)
	Other referral	0.07*** (0.02)
Constant		0.12*** (0.02)
Adjusted r²		0.02
N		7,940

*p < 0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Evaluation priorities

In-depth interviews with clients and BFC services, as well as the workforce surveys will explore why different factors influence engagement. Longer-term engagement is a core part of the BFC intervention so understanding the factors that influence engagement (provider, client, system) is important to the overall BFC evaluation.

6. Differences BFC has made for people, families, whānau experiencing hardship

Summary of findings from COMT analysis

- Results were very consistent across the four COMT questions
- All questions showed a consistent improvement on average for closed clients
- More than half of the clients improved for each question
- Overall, high-need clients improved more than other clients and engaged high-need clients improved most
- Approximately three-quarters of high-need clients (those rated as 0-4 in the extent they could meet their basic needs on entry to the BFC service) improved from 0-4 to 5+ out of 10
- Improvements for Māori and NZ European clients were lower than average but improvements for Pacific and Asian clients were higher than average
- Engaged clients (those who attended 3+ sessions) improved more than other clients
- One-off clients improved less on average

Qualitative data from the community case studies and initiative evaluations showed BFC providers, Work and Income staff, providers of other financial and social services and community leaders considered building clients' financial capability and resilience was a more effective approach than budget advice alone. Initiative evaluations found BFC had enabled providers to implement and/or strengthen a holistic, client-centred approach to support clients.

Interviews with clients as part of the community case studies, the BFC Plus evaluation and the Work and Income evaluation showed clients were very positive about the support they received from BFC services. They talked about the differences improved financial capability made to their lives.

Providers varied in the extent they thought BFC had changed the way they practiced. Some reported the BFC approach was consistent with the services they were already delivering. Duration of engagement for clients also varied, with many only having short-term engagement.

Client outcomes measurement tool (COMT)[†] data from the 147 providers from 2018 evidenced improvements from baseline assessments to final assessments for clients. However, only 23% of closed clients have baseline and final COMT assessments

[†] Comparisons between pre- and post- measures 2018.

recorded. Analysis of the COMT data provides an opportunity to understand how much change clients experience through their time with BFC, how important the long-term engagement is to improving outcomes and what other factors influence change.

6.1. Meeting basic needs and obligations

The first COMT question asks clients how they rate their ability to meet their basic needs and obligations on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is the most positive score. Around half (47%) of clients had ratings of 4 or below at entry, suggesting a high level of need.

Results for all closed clients with at least two completed assessments showed improvement from 4.7 to 6.6 across the 2018 calendar year. Overall, 2,491 clients (60%) improved, 1,141 (27%) stayed the same and 546 (13%) decreased.

The size of the average improvement was consistent quarter to quarter though there was some fluctuation in baseline and final ratings (Figure 15).

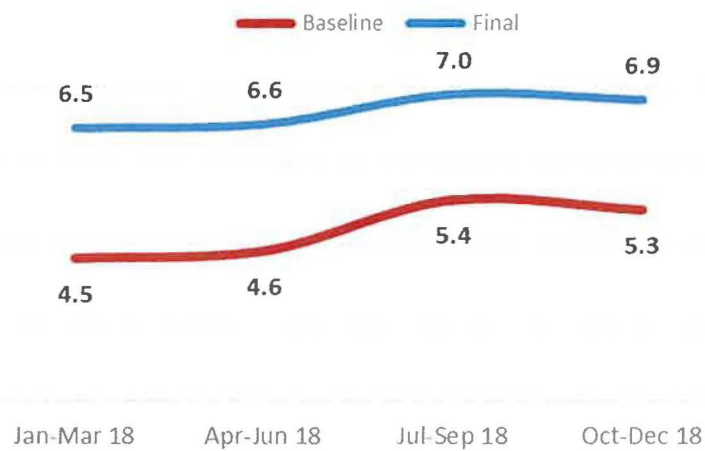


Figure 15. Clients scores for their ability to meet their basic needs and obligations from their COMT ratings (n = 4,178)

Close to three-quarters (72%) of the high-need clients had improved their rating to five or higher out of ten by the time their cases were closed (Figure 16).

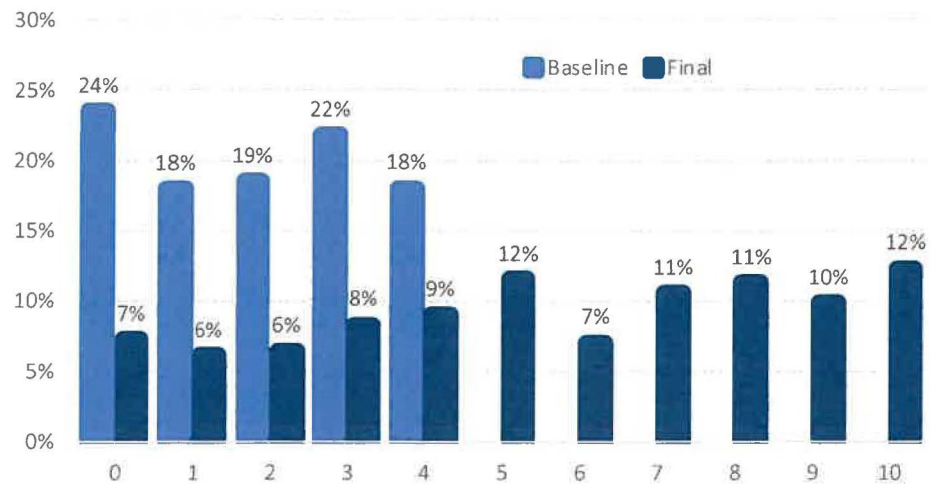


Figure 16. Baseline and final ratings for clients with a low COMT rating (0-4) at the time of their baseline assessment.

Comparison of results across different groups of clients highlighted some differences (