Step 3: Collect data and deliver service

After the necessary preparations have been completed, data collection and service delivery may proceed as planned.

During this stage, programme managers are to ensure that all challenges are documented for review. Where possible, SSAs should address these concerns as early as possible to avoid the possibility of data issues (e.g., incomplete data, inaccurate data, etc.) from arising. This is because data issues would affect the data integrity and as a result, potential findings might be compromised.

For SEF onboarded programmes, programme managers may share challenges faced with the NCSS team. The NCSS team would brainstorm and share best practices on how such challenges can be overcome at the earliest possible juncture. Depending on the feedback from this step of the outcome evaluation, NCSS will review data collection processes periodically with individual SSAs to ensure that the processes remain as efficient as possible.

Some common challenges that SSAs may face and certain preventive steps taken by NCSS under the SEF include:

Service users not completing the survey in a timely manner

- NCSS will collaborate with SSAs to plan when the survey should be administered to ensure response rate is maximised and service users complete the survey (e.g., service users must complete the survey at the intake session, etc.).

- NCSS will also monitor data collection progress weekly to keep track of completion rates. Progress will be shared with SSAs to aid SSAs in identifying which service users have not completed the survey.

Service users losing interest mid-way through the survey

- One of the principles of selecting a metric to be included in the SEF repository of metrics is that it should have as few items as possible to avoid survey fatigue. This is the first step in preventing service users from ending the survey prematurely.

- Some programmes will have longer survey forms as multiple metrics are being used to track different outcomes. NCSS may recommend administering the metrics separately on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the data collected is accurate.
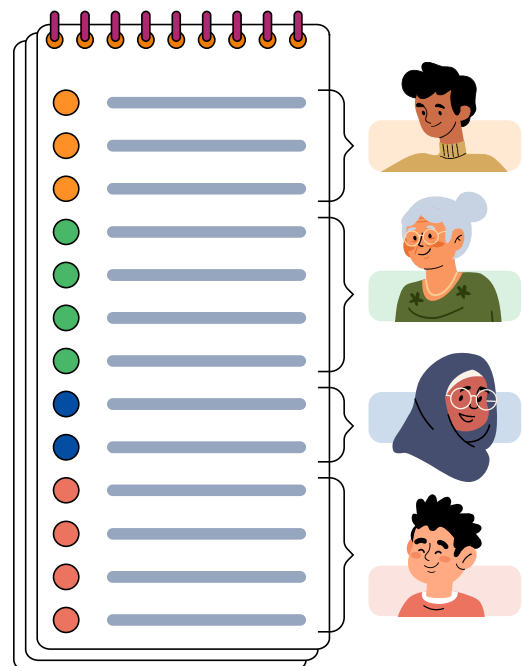
EXAMPLES:

Service users requiring more guidance in understanding the survey questions

- As some metrics may contain words that are difficult to understand, NCSS has a list of standardised examples and definitions to aid understanding.

Checkpoints:

☐ **Are your service users able to answer the survey questions independently?**

- If service users require prompts or examples to guide them through the questionnaires, please contact us at research@ncss.gov.sg and we are happy to provide further advice and assistance.

- If service users are unable to answer the survey questions, you may want to consider administering a proxy version to a caregiver or family member who is able to represent the service user.