

Table 2. Subthemes and illustrative quotes of theme 2: Impact on service provision.

Subtheme	Illustrative quotes
Frequency of changes to guidelines	“Every day there was new kind of measures and there were new things to consider or worry about... you’re not allowed to sit in a park, and then the next day you can, or you must one metre distance, and suddenly you had to wear masks... So that was a bit of anxiety provoking.” – Provider M; female, clinical psychologist, private practice “I think within one week, certain instructions can change a few times, our work process can change a few times.” – Provider C; male, case manager, public hospital “because there were so many advisories and so many rules that were set in place, it was very confusing to follow through this whole thing.” – Provider D; female, social work associate, social service
Manpower difficulties	“I think we have arranged to be 50% onsite at any point of the time... 50% will be on site then the other 50% will be working from home... we wanted to do a permanent arrangement but then the onsite teams said it’s too heavy for them” – Provider C; male, case manager, public hospital “For staff, we will definitely have to reassure staff, we have to check in with them, and see whether, because if they are under split teams, they might be overworked, they might take in a bit more clients than they used to, so we have to check in on them.” – Provider E; female, social worker associate, social service “We cannot do anything, if you really need to push yourself right... it is going to be a problem, it can work for a certain period of time, but I will say definitely is not sustainable... Because it’s at the expense of the individual service provider. As a team, I think we can run. But as an individual, we are slowly exhausted. So then, is another question of I don’t know how long this team can run. – Provider L; female, psychologist, primary care
Innovation in the workplace	“COVID-19 has taught me to be more innovative... how to improve processes... I should do something to work on the processes, so lesser for them on the administrative work.” – Provider G; female, centre manager, social service “COVID-19 has taught caregivers to be more resourceful, you know like I said they were not able to do their usual activities and things like that. A lot of caregivers became more resourceful” – Provider H; female, psychologist, social service
Innovation in the online shift of services	“Online sessions are more convenient in the sense that you can do it at your own place and time, you know like, I guess it’s more convenient for them in that sense... it might be a bit more challenging for counsellors to do online counselling because you, like you can’t really know what they’re thinking and feeling because you’re not seeing them face-to-face and there might be other distractions around as well so it won’t be the same as face-to-face counselling when you’re in a, like you know we’re in a safe space and you know you can talk your feelings out.” – Provider B; female, caseworker, charity “if it’s on Zoom then a lot of restrictions because I cannot see beyond the screen—I cannot see the other body movements because all the postures, all the non-verbal cues are important in my line of work... and also some assessments like IQ you cannot do it online anyway because they have to do some non-verbal tasks.” – Provider P; female, psychologist, private practice “The inability to also connect, so a lot of loneliness experience because of that as well, given that your home is not the safest place... some people in the background now that we’ve had noise outside that’s picked up that they’re just very, very distracting, but there’s nothing that you can do technically” – Provider M; female, clinical psychologist, private practice