



SSB

Statistical Services Branch
Queensland Health

Linkage for ongoing monitoring and reporting about Queensland COVID cases

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Introduction

- Why, what and how of COVID linkage
- Data sources
- Brief history
- Impact on regular work
- Nature of requests
- Future COVID-related requests

Why?

- Public health emergency -> global pandemic
- Requirement for rapid supply of linked data in evolving situation
- Need to allow for continuity of regular workload

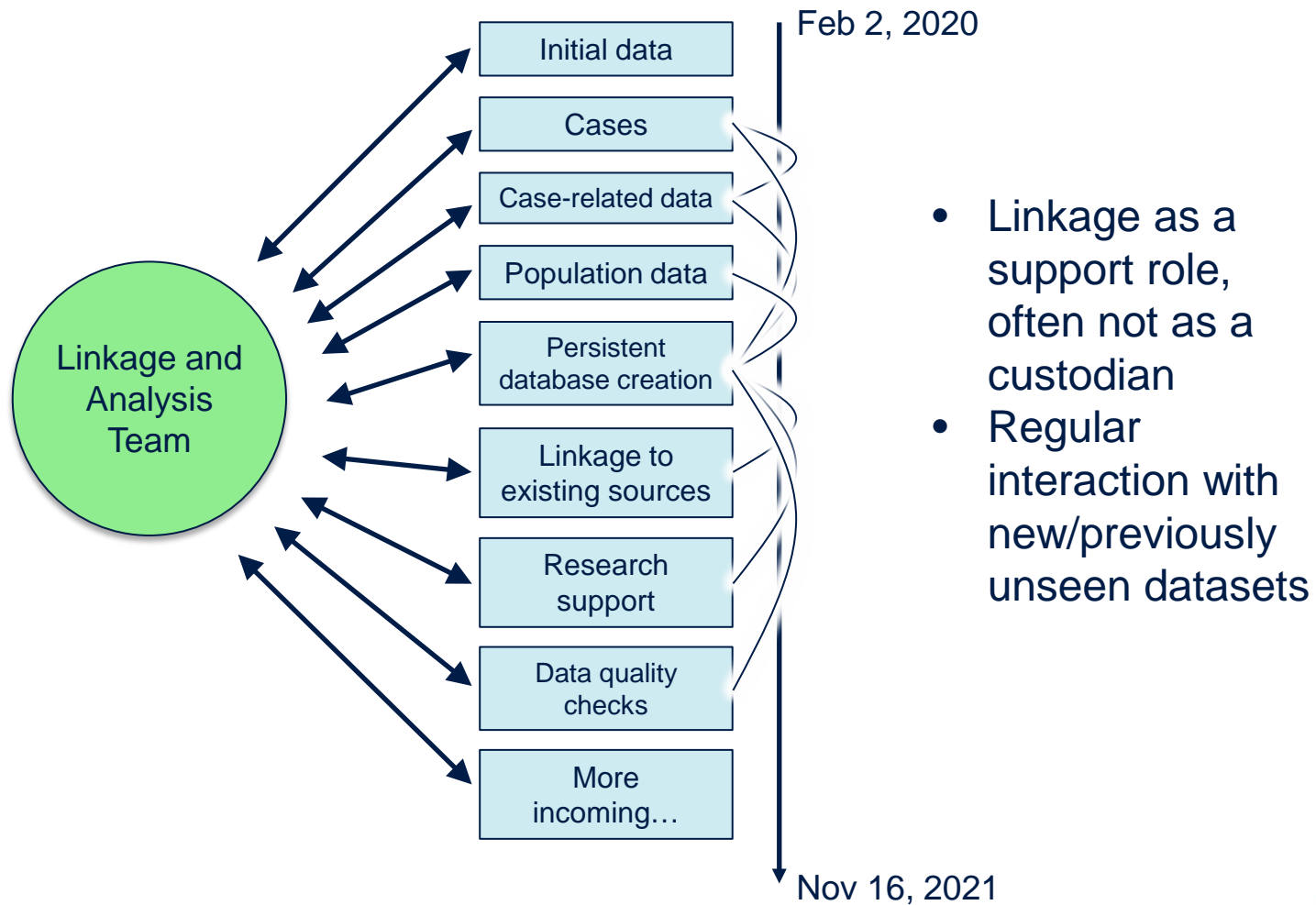
What?

- Large volume of urgent requests
- Developed a permanent, shareable COVID 'master linkage file' updated minimum twice weekly
- This has been used flexibly for many approved data requests in addition to long term monitoring

Routine but not routine

- New data
- Urgency = Responsiveness
- Developing routine processes while generating production data
 - Infrastructure takes time to develop, but results needed now!

Many sources, many tasks



How? 1

- First ad hoc requests ‘drop everything’, “Business as usual” on hold
- Decision to create optimized, re-useable ‘COVID master linkage file’
- Streamlined after weeks of development to allow quicker response
- Linkage in SAS, optimised for the data sources involved

How? 2

- Roughly copied format of Master Linkage File – sources, primary keys
- COVID notifications central to routine linkage
- Storage in Oracle DB – read permissions granted where approved
- “Business as usual” resumed

A brief history

- First COVID-related request 2 February 2020
- Travel-related until April 2020
- Late April 2020 first linkage of notifications to several other sources
- May 2020 start of daily/twice weekly routine linkage – weeks of development
- Various one-off and regular requests still ongoing

Nature of the requests 1

- Monitoring of comorbidities and outcomes
- Planning for vulnerable, CALD, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations
- Quality/safety monitoring
- Contacting (potential) patients for support
- Deduplication of various datasets

Nature of the requests 2

- Cost recovery for services funded by Commonwealth Government and other sources
- Questions on notice
- Research projects
- Minimal effect on project linkage KPIs, but queue is growing

The future?

- COVID is not going away, cases expected to rise
- Hospital use and mortality?
- Nature of requests will evolve, but routine monitoring will remain
- Further data sources
- More research requests?

The end! Thank you!

