



# **KEEP THEM SAFE**

## **Child Protection Advisory Group**

### **Minutes**

	<b>Meeting Date:</b>
	17 December 2010
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Meeting Time:</b>
Meetings Room G1 & G2 , Community Services Head Office, Ashfield	10:00 am – 1:00 pm

**Attending Members:**  
 Gillian Calvert ( Deputy Chair), Judy Cashmore (Assoc Professor, University of Sydney), Maria Cirillo representing Steve Turner (PSA), Danielle Domanski (CREATE), Emeritus Professor Jacqueline Goodnow (Macquarie University), Andrew McCallum (ACWA), Sue O’Conner (FPSN), Alison Peters (NCOSS), Bill Pritchard (AbSec), Rey Reodica (YAPA), Sue Richards (Family Services), Brian Smith (LCSA), Jennifer Mason (Human Services), Annette Gallard (Community Services), Elizabeth Callister (DET), Joanne Young representing Cathrine Lynch (NSW Health), Kerryn Boland (NSW Children’s Guardian).

**Also in attendance:**  
 Rita Fenech (Connecting Carers), Anthony Mitchell and Michelle Lin (Bendelta), Leigh McLaughlin and Julie Minion (Office of the Minister for Community Services), Nazli Munir (Department of Premier and Cabinet), Jenny Marshall (NSW Health), Anne Campbell, Linda Mallett and Lyn Manitta (Community Services), Toni Allan and Kathy Karatasas (Secretariat).

**Apologies:**  
 NSW Minister for Community Services Linda Burney, Vicki D’Adam (Department of Premier and Cabinet), Steve Turner (PSA), Natalie Lang (ASU), Dr Roberta Ryan (Urbis), Cathrine Lynch (NSW Health), Anne-Marie Elias (COTA NSW).

**Minutes:**

Agenda #	Item discussed	Action by
1	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b></p> <p>The meeting was opened by Community Services Chief Executive Annette Gallard, standing in as Deputy Chair for Gillian Calvert who has been delayed.</p> <p>Apologies and representatives were accepted for Steve Turner (PSA), Cathrine Lynch (NSW Health) and Vicki D’Adam (Department of Premier and Cabinet).</p> <p>The appointment of Ian Day as the new CEO of COTA was reported, and his apology (along with representative Anne-Marie Elias) accepted.</p> <p>An apology was also accepted for consultant Dr Roberta Ryan of Urbis, who had been scheduled to present the KTS Evaluation Implementation Plan.</p> <p>Attendees welcomed to the meeting included consultants Anthony Mitchell and Michelle Lyn (Bendelta), Rita Fenech (Connecting Carers), Jenny Marshall and Joanne Young (NSW Health) and Maria Cirillo (PSA).</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes and actions from previous meeting</b></p> <p>The <a href="#">minutes from the 13 October meeting</a> had been circulated to members, endorsed and posted on the Community Services website.</p> <p>Bill Pritchard commended Department of Human Services agencies for their funding and practical commitment to the Aboriginal Employment Partnership.</p> <p>Action items still in progress included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The finalisation of the Report from the Contract Redesign</li> </ul>	

	<p>Project, and a subsequent meeting between Community Services, NCOSS and ACWA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Guardian consideration of whether OOHC standards can commit agencies to partner with Aboriginal services</li> <li>• Crown Solicitor's advice regarding the implications for human services of the <i>Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009</i> required further clarification, and would be provided to members at a later date</li> <li>• Members were urged to provide feedback on strategies to facilitate improvements in providing better services and supports to Aboriginal children, families and services.</li> </ul> <p>Members were advised Community Services had written to AbSec, Connecting Carers and CREATE with advice relating to the information exchange with peak organisations, and had met with Connecting Carers on 27 October. Rita Fenech of Connecting Carers expected to hear back from Rod Best of Community Services in the new year, following the Agency's discussions with AbSec and CREATE. Annette Gallard (Community Services) said the relevant correspondence would be followed up.</p>	<p><b>Rod Best (Community Services) to respond to Rita Fenech (Connecting Carers) on information exchange, following discussions with AbSec and CREATE.</b></p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>KTS Change Management Plan</b></p> <p><a href="#">A brief presentation summarising the draft <i>Keep Them Safe Change Management Plan</i></a> was delivered by Anthony Mitchell of Bendelta. The draft plan was developed after a series of workshops and focus groups, and will be submitted to the Justice and Human Services CEO Forum once comments from CPAG members had been incorporated.</p> <p>Mr Mitchell said the culture of the sector had already started to change, through the work of groups like the CPAG. However there was a long way to go, with the complexity of the change management project increased by the size, disparity and geographical spread of the sector. The solution required must be concerted and comprehensive, and could not be approached as a task-based project.</p> <p>Issues raised by members of CPAG included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The timing of the strategy. It was noted that it was now 12 months since proclamation and almost two years since the announcement of <i>Keep Them Safe</i>, which meant that initial enthusiasm had potentially been lost. Mr Mitchell said the sheer scope of the change introduced very quickly meant there may not have been fertile ground for a change management strategy focused on collaboration.</li> </ul> <p>Similarly, the Department of Human Services change management program was underway, and concerns were raised that the two projects could be confused, or that various road shows or proposed summit meetings could clash. Mr Mitchell suggested that delivery was a key component of the strategy, and that better ways of delivering that strategy may become evident. If so, it should be open for local or regional groups to adopt these alternative delivery mechanisms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategies time frame. Mr Mitchell said it was difficult to put parameters around a change management project of such size and complexity, although material progress year-on-year should be expected. By the end of the strategy's third year clear results should have begun to be observed.</li> <li>• Suggestions that regional governance could be provided by existing government structures did not consider NGO alignment.</li> </ul>	

	<p>Nazli Munir (DPC) advised that some of the existing regional implementation Groups already involved NGOs, but not all. In areas where there was not yet NGO involvement, Regional Managers were currently working on how best to bring NGOs on board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leigh McLaughlin (Minister Burney's Office) asked how the sector would know if and when the culture had changed. She also asked whether the general community should be involved in the cultural change plan. Mr Mitchell said that ideally measures of cultural change should be incorporated into the KTS Evaluation Framework. A series of markers and progress indicators had been identified. He confirmed that any stakeholder in a child's wellbeing should be part of the change management strategy in some way, although it may need to be a stepwise process in which the agencies and service providers were upskilled and engaged before the program was extended to the general community.</li> <li>Children's Guardian Kerry Boland said it was important to see cultural change as an iterative process, because substantial and extensive change had already been achieved. She advocated a strengths-based approach.</li> <li>The resourcing of the plan was questioned, with Nazli Munir of the Department of Premier and Cabinet advising that funding had been provided through the <i>Keep Them Safe</i> budget.</li> </ul> <p>Ms Munir asked for members to forward any comments on the draft plan within a week, to allow the draft document to be presented for the consideration of the Justice and Human Services CEO forum for consideration.</p>	<p><b>Members to forward comments on the Change Management Plan to DPC.</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>KTS Evaluation Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>Apologies from Dr Roberta Ryan of Urbis prevented the planned presentation on the <a href="#">KTS Evaluation Implementation Plan</a>.</p> <p>It was agreed that an out-of-session meeting may be held early in mid- to late- January to enable Urbis to deliver the presentation to CPAG members. Dates and timing had yet to be confirmed.</p>	<p><b>Urbis to present on KTS Evaluation Implementation plan at out-of-session meeting in mid-late January</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Keeping It Together Update report</b></p> <p>Rey Reodica (YAPA) advised members the agenda papers had included the ACWA <a href="#">report on the Keeping It Together (KIT) project</a>, but did not include an <a href="#">additional report drafted by FaMS and YAPA</a>. The Secretariat undertook to obtain a copy of this second report and circulate to members.</p> <p>KIT achievements included a transitional pack in development to guide service providers on the appropriate use of transitional service system realignment funding, and work by ACWA and NGOs to create a resource bank of <i>Keep Them Safe</i> policies that can be adapted for use across the non-government sector.</p> <p>Mr Reodica advised that the vast majority of the KIT worked since the last CPAG meeting related to the reform of CSGP and the realignment of the service system. YAPA and FaMS were seeking additional funding to boost capacity for the project.</p> <p>Proposed next steps included local planning, which linked to the Change Management Strategy by breaking down existing barriers to good, collaborative practice across the sector.</p> <p>Sue Richards (FaMS) advised that current staff capacity was one officer at the Policy and Practice level, working three days per week. An administrative</p>	<p><b>Secretariat to obtain copy of YAPA/FaMS report on the KIT project and circulate to members.</b></p>

	<p>assistant was available one day per week. Prior to the emergence of the need for work around CSGP reform they had conducted 40 forums around the state.</p> <p>Mr Reodica said some funds remained unspent and would be used to fund another position once the CSGP reform transition period commenced.</p>	
6	<p><b>Cross-Agency Implementation Update</b></p> <p>The <a href="#">update</a> was accepted by members without exception.</p>	
7	<p><b>A New Way of Working - Community Services five-year Culture Change Plan</b></p> <p>Deputy Chair Gillian Calvert said she would like to see more alignment between the language used in the sector-wide Change Management Plan and the <a href="#">Community Services cultural change strategy</a>. She commended the guiding principles of the Community Services strategy, and highlighted the focus on achieving the best outcome for the child (contained within principle three of the Community Services plan). Ms Calvert said it was important for the sector to understand the changes underway within Community Services, because they would have external impact. She did not think the Departments of Health, or Education and Training, were undergoing the same degree of change.</p> <p>Anne Campbell (Community Services) reminded members that all Keep Them Safe government agencies were required to develop a five-year culture change plan, while Sue Richards advised that the non-government sector needed to do the same.</p> <p>Brian Smith (LCSA) said it would be useful for CPAG to hear how the CWU were going in each of the KTS government agencies: how they were functioning, their staff turnover and morale levels. Nazli Munir (DPC) advised that a review of the CWU would be put out for tender in late January, early February, and it may be appropriate to report on this at the next CPAG meeting. Jenny Mason (DHS) proposed that a CWU director present to the next CPAG meeting.</p> <p>Maria Cirillo (PSA) asked for an update on one of the programs identified in the Cultural Change Program – the pilot program in the Metro Central region to transfer out-of-home care to the non-government sector. Anne Campbell (CS) advised that this project was being managed by Deputy Chief Executive Helen Freeland. She would follow up this project pilot and obtain a report.</p>	<p><b>Depts of Health and Education reps will table their agencies change plans when available.</b></p> <p><b>CWU Director to present to next CPAG meeting on functioning, turnover and morale.</b></p> <p><b>Community Services to follow up Metro Central pilot to transition OOH to the non-government sector and report back to members.</b></p>
8	<p><b>Special Discussion Item: <a href="#">CPAG Annual Review</a></b></p> <p>Members considered the agreed criteria during a one-hour reflection and discussion on the progress and success of CPAG in 2010. Members said the February 2010 reform of the Advisory Group had allowed members to focus on specific issues and have meaningful discussion, rather than be “reported at”. Rey Reodica (YAPA) said the old structure of CPAG, SSAG and CCAG meant the agendas of each group overlapped leading to frustration for all.</p> <p>Leigh McLaughlin of the Minister’s Office said the feedback obtained from CPAG meetings had informed the Minister’s position and helped her manage her portfolio, with the income management discussion at the CSDMAC meeting a case in point.</p> <p>Bill Pritchard (AbSec) said the meetings had helped broaden his knowledge</p>	

of *Keep Them Safe* beyond Aboriginal issues.

However members agreed that the Advisory Pool structure had not worked as well, particularly in terms of information feeding back from that Pool to the Group. Sue Richards (FaMS) acknowledged the importance of informing the rest of the sector and ensuring the Advisory pool was engaged and involved. It was agreed that this was something the NGO peak organisations would work to address.

Gillian Calvert (Deputy Chair) advised members that their discussion would inform the brief for any incoming Minister, and was supported by Jenny Mason (DHS), who recommended all members consider constructively what had worked about the CPAG and what hadn't.

Ms Calvert sought comment on how best to bring NSW Health and the Department of Education and Training further into the group. Jenny Marshall (NSW Health) said the group had been valuable to NSW Health in its work on the Family Referral Services. Elizabeth Callister (Department of Education and Training) said she had initially perceived her role as a peripheral one, with DET involved in CPAG to provide advice on any issues arising with specific relevance to the education sector however she welcomed a broadening of her role within the group.

Nazli Munir (DPC) advised that the independent school sector had expressed an interest in joining CPAG. Anne Campbell (Community Services) advised that the Women's Refuge Working Group had also consistently expressed their wish to be included on the CPAG. Ms Calvert said the extension of the KTS Senior Officers Group (SOG) may offer a potential solution, as recommended by the Change Management Plan. Critical linkages between the two groups should be facilitated and strengthened.

Alison Peters (NCOSS) said CPAG's membership was quite large, and she would not want to see it expand further. Brian Smith (LCSA) agreed with this position, adding that the membership was currently right and had allowed the formation of a corporate identity. He suggested the key issues were how the CPAG could better interact with the KTS SOG, and how to improve two-way communication with the sector. Ms Peters said that the governance arrangements proposed in the change management plan outlined in Item 3 could facilitate the provision of advice from service providers and other stakeholders such as Catholic and Independent Schools. Rey Reodica (YAPA) warned that it was important not to try to make CPAG "all things to all people".

Ms Richards supported meaningful and robust discussion on policy issues, but expressed concern about time limitations on discussion. Anne Campbell (Community Services) said it would be good if time could be made available for discussion on a range of issues in 2011. Jacqueline Goodwin (Emeritus professor) said she would like the coordination of program and project evaluations to be discussed in 2011, along with how *Keep Them Safe* aligned with existing strategies to tackle homelessness and domestic violence.

Joanne Young (representing NSW Health) asked whether a communiqué should be issued to Advisory Pool members after each meeting. Ms Munir advised that the *Keep Them Safe* newsletter would be revamped in 2011 and may serve as an appropriate channel to communicate CPAG work more broadly.

Ms Calvert summarised the discussion in the following points:

- The operation of CPAG in 2010 was better than in 2009
- The structure and membership suited the current stage of *Keep Them Safe*
- CPAG had facilitated the development of trust, and had maintained a focus on the best outcomes for children and young people
- The current membership was appropriate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration should be given on how to better integrate CPAG with the SOG</li> <li>• Members needed to “step up” to engage the broader sector and the Advisory Pool</li> <li>• Members would welcome the opportunity to engage in more broad based policy discussions.</li> </ul> <p>Also see <a href="#">CPAG activity: April – December 2010</a>.</p>	
<p><b>9.1</b></p>	<p><b>Other Business: Establishment of Brighter Futures Council</b></p> <p>The NSW Government announced on 3 December that the early intervention Brighter Futures program would continue with changes to some program settings. They included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 60:40 ratio of case management, in which lead agencies are responsible for 60 per cent of Brighter Futures case management and Community Services for 40 per cent. This amends the original 50:50 split.</li> <li>• More effective targeting of services to families with complex needs</li> <li>• Improved referral pathways</li> <li>• targeting of issues to enhance services relating to domestic violence and drug and alcohol issues;</li> <li>• improved consistency of service delivery between Lead Agencies and Community Services;</li> <li>• comparable caseloads across service providers</li> <li>• establishment of a state level interagency Brighter Futures Council, comprising senior executives from key non-government and government stakeholders under the Child Protection Advisory Group (CPAG).</li> </ul> <p>Linda Mallett (Community Services) advised members that the new <a href="#">Brighter Futures Council</a> would meet for the first time on 21 January 2011 to discuss Terms of Reference and future meeting dates. The Council would report to the CPAG.</p> <p>Danielle Domanski (CREATE) asked if the new 60:40 ratio was transitional, and whether the lead agency share of cases would continue to increase in line with recommendations of the Wood Special Commission of Inquiry. Ms Mallett advised that Commissioner Wood made his recommendation based on interim reports on the Brighter Futures program, while the Government had access to the final comprehensive report in making their decision. Further monitoring and evaluation due to take place would provide the type of information for consideration prior to any further amendment of program settings.</p> <p>Bill Pritchard (AbSec) asked whether there had been any progress on the development of the Vulnerable 9-15s Project. Ms Mallett said the Enhancement of Effort funding bid was still with Treasury and Community Services was awaiting advice.</p>	
<p><b>9.2</b></p>	<p><b>Other Business: MRG Update</b></p> <p>Linda Mallett (Community Services) advised members that the online Mandatory Reporter Guide had been amended following feedback from users and CWU Directors.</p> <p>Amendments were tabled at the meeting, with changes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specifying “other household members” in the Physical Abuse decision tree</li> <li>• addition of “fluids” to the Neglect: Food decision tree</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarifying an advisory table that helped users select the most appropriate decision tree to use.</li> </ul> <p>A new Decision Tree entitled "Neglect: Hygiene" would commence in early 2011 following feedback received during the year.</p> <p>See: <a href="#">Amendments to the NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide</a></p>	
<p><b>9.3</b></p>	<p><b>Other Business: WA Income Management Evaluation</b></p> <p>Linda Mallett (Community Services) told members the evaluation of the <a href="#">WA Income Management program</a> reported some positive aspects but had some methodological flaws and should be read with a critical eye.</p> <p>Jenny Mason (DHS) said the Minister had placed these concerns on the record at the recent meeting of Community Services and Disability Ministers. While it was clear West Australia was passionate about the evaluation the Minister had made it clear that the evaluation had used subjective rather than objective measurements, such as program's impact on the number of new notifications.</p> <p>Judy Cashmore (Sydney University) advised that the evaluation had been based on 80 interviews so had a very small sample size. She felt the reworked longitudinal study would provide more useful data. Gillian Calvert (Deputy Chair) asked her to prepare a critique of the evaluation, which might then be published in the ACWA or NCOSS newsletter to provide the necessary tools for the sector to advocate their position on income management to the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Ms Calvert also noted that Commonwealth had foreshadowed the establishment of a Ministerial Working Group to progress options for the further use of welfare reform initiatives, including income management, targeted at vulnerable children and families. Ms Mason confirmed that NSW would be represented on the Working Group, and she would seek to provide the communiqué to members.</p> <p>Alison Peters (NCOSS) said her organisations West Australian counterpart WACOSS had raised significant concerns about the research, including the Government's failure to involve the NGO sector.</p>	<p><b>Judy Cashmore to prepare critique of WA Evaluation, for possible publication in ACWA or NCOSS newsletter.</b></p> <p><b>DHS to obtain income management communiqué from CSDMAC meeting and circulate to members.</b></p>
	<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>22 February 2011 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm)</b></p> <p>A special meeting to discuss the KTS Evaluation implementation plan has been proposed for mid-late January. Members will be advised once the date and time has been confirmed.</p>	<p><b>DPC to advise members of date and time for proposed special meeting of CPAG to discuss KTS Evaluation Implementation Plan.</b></p>