

Funding Reform Update



January 2008

Welcome to the third edition of the Funding Reform Update, keeping you up to date on the progress of DoCS Funding Reform

2007 the year in review

During the course of 2007, significant progress was made in implementing funding reform initiatives within DoCS and throughout the community sector.

It was a challenging year, however the work has strengthened relationships between DoCS and the sector, and improved our understanding of the issues involved in developing an integrated service system for children, families and communities.

The reforms completed to date will provide a solid foundation for us to work from and meet the challenges that lie ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have worked with DoCS over the past twelve months, to ensure the successful implementation of these reforms.

I look forward to working with you all in 2008 in what promises to be another exciting year

Dr Gül Izmir

Deputy Director-General
Service System Development

Funding Reform Project updates

Progress with the Performance Management Framework (PMF) in SAAP

The PMF is the approach DoCS is using for performance monitoring of all funded services. This will assist with improving and enhancing service delivery, to achieve the best client outcomes with the available funding.

The PMF is being implemented in 2007/08 with all SAAP funded services. 2007/08 is a development year for the PMF with a focus on getting used to the steps in the performance monitoring cycle and testing the new service specifications and costings.

Risk Assessments were conducted for all services and completed by the 31st August 2007, and services selected for Service Monitoring and Review have been notified of this.

A key phase in the annual PMF cycle is the completion of a self-assessment by service providers, which are due to DoCS by the 31st January. DoCS Partnership and Planning staff will then be conducting audits with a randomly selected group of services in February and March.

A review of the SAAP 2007/08 service specification and costings has commenced, which will seek feedback from SAAP services and DoCS staff. The aim of the review is to revise and improve the SAAP service specification and develop more accurate costings for the next annual cycle in 2008/09.

Out Of Home Care (OOHC) Funding Rollout

During 2007, DoCS undertook a funding rollout for the OOHC program. The funding rollout was conducted in three streams:

Stream 1: agencies already receiving OOHC funding from DoCS developed *Service Plans*. The Service Plans enabled DoCS to assess how well the current OOHC is responding to demand.

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Stream 2: new and existing OOHC service providers were invited to submit EOI applications for new OOHC funding. The EOI applications covered all regions and all service types, and provided DoCS with an opportunity to identify services required to fill service system gaps and identify preferred providers.

Stream 3: direct funding negotiations, initiated by DoCS, were undertaken with some services.

EOI applications have now been assessed. In January 2008, a report will be submitted to the Minister's Office recommending OOHC service types and the mix of services to be provided. It is anticipated that the outcomes will be announced in early 2008.

DoCS will be entering into negotiations with both existing funded services and new services over the coming months. In early 2008, regional funding staff will be invited to attend training on undertaking the negotiations and developing the contracts.

Brighter Futures Early Intervention program

During 2007, the Brighter Futures program continued to gather momentum with the finalisation of contracts with all lead agencies. Almost all lead agencies are now operational and providing Brighter Futures services.

This past year was also significant in terms of linking up with the Aboriginal Maternal Infant Health Strategy, which is an important complementary strategy to the Brighter Futures program.

Two successful *Brighter Futures Partners' Seminars* were also held during 2007, attended by 21 non-government agencies. Further seminars are planned for 2008.

In addition, the implementation of *DoCS Connect* in December 2007 has established a more efficient process for lead agencies to manage referrals to the program.

Now that the Brighter Futures program is well underway in most areas, I look forward to seeing an increase in the referrals from DoCS to lead agencies for case management and the greater utilisation of Parenting Programs and Child Care.

Community Services Grants Program (CSGP) Review

Project Alignment Assessment

During 2007, DoCS undertook a major review of the CSGP, in order to develop a clearer policy framework for the program.

As part of the review process, a project alignment assessment was undertaken to identify the extent to which current CSGP projects align with DoCS' new Program vision.

The results of this assessment indicated that most CSGP services support child protection work by providing prevention and early intervention services and intensive support services such as counselling for children, young people and families, and crisis support.

The CSGP Review developed a Headline Result and set of Program Results to guide the future direction of CSGP.

The Headline Result was developed with the assistance of the CSGP Roundtable, which includes Peak organisations representing the funded services in the sector. The Headline Result for CSGP is:

Disadvantaged children, young people, families and disadvantaged communities are resilient and safe

The Program Results will provide a clear policy direction for CSGP service delivery across the community. The four main target groups for which CSGP services will be funded are:

- disadvantaged communities
- disadvantaged families and young people
- children and young people at risk
- children and young people in crisis.

The projects funded under the program will provide support through a range of activities which include enhancing local services and community capacity building. In this way, the local community will be able to plan responses to local needs.

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The DoCS Funding Manual

The DoCS Funding Manual is being developed as an online resource for all DoCS Partnership and Planning Team staff and other DoCS staff involved in funding non-government organisations.

The Manual will provide links to all current funding policies and procedures, as well as a range of templates, resources and support tools.

The Funding Manual will help to ensure that new funding policies and frameworks are implemented consistently by all DoCS staff throughout NSW.

The first five sections of the Manual have been drafted and published to the DoCS intranet in draft form. DoCS staff have the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Manual until March 2008.

Service Analysis & Business Development (SABD) for the Preschool Sector

The SABD project aims to develop the business planning and development capacity of the preschool sector by providing training and tools to over 300 community-based preschool services and long day care centres in NSW.

DoCS has worked closely with consultants to develop the SABD Resource Manual, which includes information on:

- understanding the business environment
- developing a business plan; and
- managing and sustaining a business.

An accompanying Workbook was also developed which provides practical exercises, tools and templates to assist services in using the Manual.

During 2007, a series of SABD training workshops were held with more than 300 eligible preschool services across metropolitan, rural and regional NSW.

Draft versions of the Manual and Workbook are currently available on the website of the SABD consultants, Matrix on Board: <http://www.mob.com.au>

The final version of the SABD Resource Manual and Workbook will be published on the DoCS website in early 2008.

Funding Reform Update will be posted out to DoCS funded services and uploaded onto the For Our Community Partners section of DoCS' website www.community.nsw.gov.au

If you have any suggestions for areas you would like to see covered in the information sheet or questions about DoCS funding reform, you can email us funding.reform@community.nsw.gov.au