

COMMUNITY SERVICES GRANTS PROGRAM

# service framework

CSGP

February 2002



## **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Community Services has developed a new Service Framework for the Community Services Grants Program (CSGP). This framework has been finalised with the assistance of our community partners who have provided comments and/or trialed various earlier draft versions of this framework during its development phase in 2001.

The new framework is intended to support the continued delivery of high quality services to clients by all community partners resourced by CSGP. The framework will provide government with better information about the benefits to individuals, families and communities of CSGP services. The framework provides community partners with a description of the aim and objectives of CSGP, and the performance measures that apply to the program.

This document has been developed by the CSGP Round Table to provide an overview of the Service Framework.

The Round Table group formed in early 2000. The members of the Round Table are:

DoCS Community Partners Directorate and NSW Council of Social Services (co-chairs),  
DoCS Strategic Policy & Planning Directorate  
Local Community Services Association,  
Family Support Services Association,  
Youth Action & Policy Association,  
Local Government & Shires Associations,  
The Cabinet Office,  
NSW Treasury,  
Premier's Department  
Department of Planning.

### **1.2 WHY A NEW SERVICE FRAMEWORK FOR CSGP?**

The diversity of services in the CSGP presents challenges to DoCS and the community sector, in promoting the value of the program. We need a framework that helps us to assess the strengths of the program, and identify the areas of improvement to the CSGP response.

The Round Table has developed the Service Framework for CSGP that describes clearly and unambiguously the objectives of CSGP, and positions CSGP in terms of its impact on individuals, families and communities.

The work of the Round Table to develop their framework has been based on extensive consultative processes:

August 2000	The CSGP Draft Program Framework was circulated by participating peak organisations on the Round Table to various communities partners for comment
May 2001	The first draft of the CSGP Service framework was distributed to all CSGP services for comment.
June to Aug 2001	The CSGP Round Table conducted 25 consultations across the state with CSGP community partners regarding this first draft.
Sep-Oct 2001	Feedback from the consultations was analysed and the draft revised.
Nov - Dec 2001	Revised framework released for trialing with 51 Participating CSGP projects
Jan 2002	Feedback for trial evaluated and final CSGP service framework developed
February 2002	Ministerial endorsement of the framework obtained

### **1.3 PARAMETERS**

The following ‘givens’ were agreed as the basis for developing and implementing this Service Framework until it is in place:

1. The Minister cannot argue for additional funds to CSGP until effective performance measures can inform Government what services are being purchased and what the benefits are for individuals, families and communities. The intention of the service framework is to make this possible.
2. Services that are funded by CSGP are integral DoCS’ legal obligations under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Community Welfare Act 1987. The Service Framework will maintain the link between CSGP and DoCS’ legal obligations.
3. During the development and implementation process, negotiations will be based on maintenance of current funding levels for each project provided services are operating in line with the Service Framework.

4. Clients will generally continue to have access to the same CSGP services as they do now, when the CSGP Service Framework is implemented. The Service Framework will be used by DoCS to fund services that are currently funded by CSGP where they are meeting agreed client needs. As government priorities, local and state needs change over time, the Service Framework will be used to negotiate a changed service response that best meets newly emerging needs.
5. When the Service Framework is put into operation, adequate time and support will be provided to community partners to make the required transition.

#### **1.4 IN WHAT CONTEXT DOES CSGP OPERATE?**

The Community Services Grants Program is one of DoCS' four major grants programs. The other three programs are the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, the Out-of-Home Care Program and the Children's Services Program.

#### **DoCS funding programs 1999/2000: Actual Expenditures**

<b>Program</b>	<b>\$ recurrent</b>	<b>Projects</b>
Community Services Grants Program	\$53,962,778	1001
Supported Accommodation Assistance Program	\$77,756,642	386
Out-of-home Care Program	\$27,785,724	105
Children's Services Program	\$86,486,625	1773

#### **1.4.1 The legislative basis of CSGP**

DoCS has particular responsibilities for child protection and community well-being. These are outlined in legislation including the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Community Welfare Act 1987.

The objects of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 include the requirement that 'appropriate assistance is rendered to parents and other persons responsible for children and young persons in

the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities in order to promote a safe and nurturing environment.’

The objects of the Community Welfare Act 1987 include the following:

- ‘(a) to promote, protect, develop, maintain and improve the well-being of the people of NSW to the maximum extent possible;
- (e) to encourage the establishment of community welfare and other services necessary to promote, protect, develop, maintain and improve the well-being of persons,
- (f) to assist and encourage collaboration among persons and organisations engaged in the promotion of community welfare or the provision of community welfare services; and
- (i) to promote the involvement of the community in the provision of community welfare services and the social development of the community.’

In light of DoCS’ responsibilities under these and other Acts, and in order to meet general principles of social justice, the Department provides a range of services directly to individuals and families. DoCS funds non-profit community groups and local government to provide community-based services. Peak and regional organisations strengthen and support the service infrastructure through their contribution to policy development, and their advocacy on behalf of the sector.

Funding is provided to non-profit bodies that cover a range of organisation types. These include:

- Community-based organisations;
- Traditional charities and church organisations;
- Small local community organisations; and
- Local Government authorities.

It is recognised that in delivering their services these organisations use the funding provided by DoCS and also mobilise financial resources and local human resources.

As is the case for most auspice organisations, it is recognised that Local Government Authorities use varying amounts of general revenue to augment salary, on-cost and program costs for the CSGP services they manage. Councils make a significant contribution from general revenue to all costs for positions supported by the CSGP Local Government Salary Subsidy Scheme. Councils also provide physical infrastructure and managerial support to both types of projects.

## 1.5 PURCHASING SERVICES

The NSW government has a broad policy requiring its Departments to change the way non-government organisations are assisted to provide services. In line with this policy, DoCS is changing its current practices from *funding* community services, to a *purchasing* model.

The concept of purchasing is found throughout this consultation paper but has not been formally introduced into DoCS funding processes applying to the community sector. DoCS realises that this topic is of great interest and has developed a paper to inform people about the process. This paper can be found on the DoCS web-site at [community.nsw.gov.au](http://community.nsw.gov.au) or by contacting your local DoCS Area office.

The NSW Government also needs better information about the benefits which clients and the broader community gain from non-government services which DoCS purchases.

*This means* that human services programs, such as CSGP, must have a better description of their objectives, key groupings of activities and appropriate performance measures. This will allow government to gauge the success of the program in meeting its objectives.

*This does not mean* that market based mechanisms, such as competitive tendering, are to be used to allocate funds under the DoCS' service purchasing framework.

Service agreements will also change. Currently, non-government organisations are funded on the basis of an annual service and performance agreement. DoCS is moving to change service agreements so that they become three year contracts, which are negotiated between the Area Office and the non-government organisation.

These service contracts will be negotiated around the type of services to be provided, relevant performance measures, such as outputs and outcomes, and the cost of providing such services.

The services provided by the organisations will also need to meet mutually identified community needs, which are to be identified through DoCS Area based integrated community services planning (ICSP), involving DoCS funded, non government community organisations.

In summary, this CSGP Service Framework is designed to describe the essential elements for DoCS and the funded non-government community sector, to move to a service purchasing framework. These elements are:

- agreed objectives for the CSGP;
- agreed key activities that funded organisations undertake to provide the services which clients and local communities need;
- service output and outcome (performance) measures;
- data collection systems, which are realistic in their level and complexity, and which allow both DoCS and funded non government organisations to know what clients and local communities are getting from CSGP activities.

Following consultation with CSGP funded services on these elements, and agreement with the peak NGO members of the CSGP Round Table, a further phase of establishing this CSGP Service Framework will commence.

Consultation with CSGP funded services and negotiations with the peak NGOs will subsequently take place around:

- service standards which promote high quality service provision in all CSGP funded services; and
- benchmarks which provide indicators of effective, high quality and efficient CSGP services.

## **2. THE COMMUNITY SERVICES GRANTS PROGRAM**

The Community Services Grants Program (CSGP) is planned and funded by the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS). The program aims to assist all people in NSW to live in a just society and to participate in strong communities that effectively cope with change and promote safety, welfare and well-being. CSGP provides a mechanism for government to improve the capacity of communities to be resilient in adapting to change, and to provide programs that enable the more vulnerable in the community to be provided with support services when they need them.

### **2.1 THE CSGP SERVICE FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1.1 What results does the CSGP seek to achieve?**

The CSGP provides a mechanism for the government to fund services which will:

- Strengthen the capacity of communities to protect and promote the well-being of their members;
- Provide opportunities for all families and individuals to access support to solve problems early before they become entrenched;
- Support families and individuals during vulnerable times in their life cycle in order to prevent crisis and promote a safe and nurturing environment;
- Improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal people and other disadvantaged groups and increase their participation in and access to services;
- Provide social infrastructure to respond to community needs and deliver quality services; and
- Support the role of peak organisations in coordination, consultation, representation and policy development and industry development.

## 2.1.2 CSGP OBJECTIVES

**The key objectives within CSGP are:**

- **Supporting children, young people individuals and families** so that they can enhance their independence, safety, self-esteem and/or quality of life within the community.
- **Building strong communities and social capital/ undertaking community development**, so that communities are well informed, resourced and connected and equity and diversity are embraced.
- **Building and sustaining the capacity of the community services sector at a state or regional level** to deliver responsive services through sector development, policy and advocacy.

## 2.1.3 What's different?

The new Service Framework moves away from defining CSGP services in terms of their service type (i.e. Youth Centres, Family Support Services, Neighbourhood Centres, Peaks, etc.), and focuses on what services clients receive. For example, a client seeking parenting assistance might approach any of a number of traditional CSGP service types such as Neighbourhood Centres, Family Resource Centres, Family Support Services, or supported playgroups. Whether the client participates in a parenting support group, or receives practical assistance, or receives counselling, the Service Framework moves the focus to the outputs involved in providing the service, rather than what service type the client uses.

All CSGP services will be required to meet at least one of the above key objectives, although many services will undertake activities across 2 or even all 3. The key activities and performance measures that sit beneath the objectives were arrived at through a working party process. The working party for each objective took as a starting point the comprehensive activities listed in the 1997 National Classifications of Community Services (a classification system developed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) and grouped those that best fitted their objective into broad key activity areas.

As one example, the broad key activity of information, advice and referral encompasses the more specific activities of interpretation/translation; consumer and legal information, advice and referral; financial information advice and referral; housing, tenancy advice information and referral etc. Rather than attempt to develop specific performance measures for all of these activities, the broader categorisation allows for more generic performance measures to be developed which can be used to meet the different needs of different organisations while ensuring a common approach across the program.

#### **2.1.4 CSGP Performance Measures**

##### **DEFINITION OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

###### **Key Activities**

The main services that the organisation provides.

###### **Output**

The final product or service that is used by the client or community.

###### **Outcome**

The impact(s) of the service on the client or community.

**Table 1** provides a menu of activities, with associated performance measures that are appropriate for CSGP. DoCS Areas and our community partners will use these performance measures to negotiate individual service specifications from selected measures.

Initially, service specifications will reflect current key activities, outputs and outcomes for CSGP funded projects. The negotiations between DoCS Areas and community partners will aim to achieve agreement on the most relevant objective(s), key activities, outputs and outcomes for each project. The documentation of agreed activities does not mean that the service cannot undertake additional activities which aim to meet the agreed service outcomes.

Future service specifications will be linked with Area service planning. Areas use consultative processes to plan service responses to community need. The priorities that are agreed through Area integrated service planning will be reflected in the service specifications that are negotiated when Areas fund CSGP services to meet specific community needs.

## **2.1.5**

### **Service standards and data collection**

Both DoCS and our community partners are interested in looking at measures of effectiveness and efficiency in CSGP.

The CSGP Round Table has acknowledged the importance of service standards and data collection to assist services to continue to provide services clients need, using the proposed new Service Framework. The first priority for the Round Table has been the development of objectives, key activities, outputs and outcomes. *The Round Table has not yet held detailed discussions on service standards or data collection but will begin to do so now that the service framework has been finalised.*

#### **2.1.5(i) Service standards**

Service standards will be developed for CSGP services, in consultation with CSGP service providers and peaks. Standards will guide agencies in ensuring services continue to be provided in a manner which contributes to:

- Equity of access to services
- Community empowerment and participation
- Individual choice and decision-making
- Efficient and effective service management
- Integration with local service networks
- Continuous improvement

The expertise of the community sector will be sought to develop service standards that maintain current service quality and extend good practice throughout the sector.

The diversity of CSGP presents challenges in developing service standards that contribute to effective client service. Further dialogue will be necessary to determine the approach to be taken.

Once implemented, the CSGP Service Standards will apply to service specifications. Projects will be monitored on the basis of compliance with the service specifications and the CSGP Service Standards.

### **2.1.5(ii) Data Collection**

An easy to use data collection system is critical to successful service planning, monitoring and evaluation. CSGP services currently collect and hold a wide variety of data on clients and communities. Some service types currently provide an annual data collection to their Peak organisation.

With the cooperation of our community partners, DoCS will lead the development of an electronic data collection system for CSGP services which will assist services to collect the data they require which is meaningful to their work, and which will assist performance monitoring against contracted performance indicators. Data systems will be developed in close cooperation with sector representatives.

Methods of data collection might include periodic collection of data; continuous collection; surveys, etc., depending on the key activity and performance measures that apply. Current good practice in data collection and use in CSGP will be enhanced by the development of a more comprehensive and more broadly useful data system.

Therefore, services will be collecting data within their service that reflects the outputs and outcomes relevant to their service in accordance with the service framework and identified in the project's service specifications. However, the development of a CSGP data collection system will ensure that this data will be collected in a consistent manner and able to be collated to inform program planning and evaluation.

**TABLE 1**

**CSGP SERVICE FRAMEWORK**

**OBJECTIVE 1: Supporting children, young people, individuals and families so that they can enhance their independence, safety, self-esteem and/or quality of life within the community**

Key Activity	Output specific to activity	Outcome measure
1.1 Provide information, options and referrals	1.1.1a No. of occasions of service 1.1.2a No. of clients assisted 1.1.3a No. of requests not able to be met 1.1.4a No. of referrals made by service type 1.1.5a No. of referrals received by service type	1.1.1b Percentage of clients who are requesting information that are referred to services or the service system
1.2 Provide counselling / intensive or crisis casework or support/ therapeutic intervention/ group work to individuals and families	1.2.1a No. of clients /cases by average number of sessions 1.2.2a No. of groups by sessions and by average clients number where applicable 1.2.3a No. of service /referral requests not able to be met 1.2.4a No. of referrals made by service type 1.2.5a No. of referrals received by service type 1.2.6a No. of children/ cases with child protection issues 1.2.7a No. of DV related cases 1.2.8a Ratio of clients visited at home to clients attending centre 1.2.9a No. of case closures 1.2.10a Average waiting time for a new client	1.2.1b Percentage of cases where the risk of crisis is reduced or prevented according to staff assessment 1.2.2b Percentage of families or individuals with improved self-esteem, independence, safety and/or quality of life according to staff assessment 1.2.3b Percentage of child protection cases where the level of safety and well being of children and young people has increased according to staff assessment.

Key Activity	➤ Output specific to activity	➤ Outcome measure
1.3 Provide practical physical/material assistance or related support	1.3.1a No. of instances where support or assistance is provided by main support types . Choose from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> material,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> court support,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> form filling,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> D&amp;A</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> emergency /disaster recovery,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> accommodation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> transporting clients</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> other (please state )</li> </ul> 1.3.2a No. of requests met versus not able to be met (Please list main types of requests)	1.3.1b Percentage of clients where circumstances improved according to staff assessment
1.4 Provide recreation/ vocational or related support activities, including drop in	1.4.1a No. of activities organised by type and by average number attending per activity	1.4.1b Percentage of participants/clients satisfied with the activity or service
1.5 Coordinate casework and /or advocate access to services for individuals and families	1.5.1a Total number of clients/ cases/ instances of advocacy 1.5.2a No. of clients for whom the service was the case manager 1.5.3a No. of children/ cases with child protection issues	1.5.1b Percentage of cases of where the risk of crisis is reduced or prevented according to staff assessment

## CSGP SERVICE FRAMEWORK

**OBJECTIVE 2. *Building strong communities and social capital/ undertaking community development, so that communities are well informed, resourced and connected and equity and diversity are embraced.***

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
2.1 Provide community information or education to raise awareness of issues, services and activities	2.1.1a No. of sessions/meetings 2.1.2a No. of participants 2.1.3a No. and types of communication strategies / products developed (eg newsletters / publications / fliers / press releases/ other resources)	2.1.1b Extent to which information has an impact on the client / communities are better informed (*) <sup>1</sup> 2.1.2b Extent to which there is an increased level of community participation/interest in social issues(*)
2.2 Build and maintain community service system networks, brief other services and related activities to promote best practice, improve the level of information exchange and service coordination and enhance the effectiveness and utilisation of services.	2.2.1a No. of network / interagency meetings/ activities attended 2.2.2a No. of network / interagency meetings /activities developed or maintained 2.2.3a No. of joint projects /activities which are undertaken as a partnership with other services 2.2.4a No. and type of strategies for increasing the level of information exchange /awareness of services	2.2.1b Extent to which client or community needs are met through service collaboration within the area (*)

<sup>1</sup> Wherever (\*) is shown, this will be monitored by using data collected periodically and organised at a program level by DoCS Central Office. Services will not therefore be routinely reporting on this outcome at a project level.

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
2.3 Plan, develop and support new and existing services to meet the community's needs including those services experiencing difficulty.	2.3.1a No. of existing services resourced or supported (CSGP and non-CSGP)- <i>please list where known</i> 2.3.2 a No. of occasions of service where support is provided to other services. Please list main types 2.3.3a No. of new services developed or resourced (CSGP and non-CSGP) <i>please list where known</i> 2.3.4a No. of requests for assistance by other services/ groups received that are not able to be met	2.3.1b Extent to which services are developed and maintained within available resources to meet community needs (*)
2.4 Coordinate and promote the use of community facilities and related services.	2.4.1a No. of days that the centre/community facility is used by the community 2.4.2a Ratio of commercial to non-commercial use of facilities 2.4.3a No. of groups that use the facility- <i>please list</i> 2.4.4a No. of occasions of use	2.4.1b Percentage of time that community facility is being utilised to meet the needs of the community
2.5 Plan , develop and support community building events	2.5.1a No. of events organised or resourced by type eg festivals /entertainment 2.5.2a No. of people who participate in the event/s	

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
2.6 Advocate on community issues and related social justice issues affecting local communities	2.6.1a No. of submissions/representations made on policy issues on behalf of community members 2.6.2a No. of public meetings convened 2.6.3a No. of public meetings attended 2.6.4a No. of social action groups resourced	2.6.1b No. and examples of goals or changes achieved as a result of advocacy
2.7 Undertake research and inclusive local needs based planning	2.7.1a No. of planning meetings attended 2.7.2a No. of planning processes in which project participates 2.7.3a No. of reports developed	
2.8 Recruit, train and support volunteers <sup>2</sup>	2.8.1a No. of volunteers recruited 2.8.2a No. of volunteers retained 2.8.3a No. of hours contributed by volunteers 2.8.4a No. of people trained by type of training 2.8.5a No. of organisations to which volunteers are referred 2.8.6a No. of volunteers referred /placed with other organisations	2.8.1b Percentage of volunteers satisfied according to staff assessment

<sup>2</sup> This activity and related outputs will be most relevant for volunteer resource centres/agencies

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
<p>2.9 Undertake strategies to improve access to other services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, clients from culturally &amp; linguistically diverse backgrounds or clients from other specific disadvantaged groups</p>	<p>2.9.1a No. and type of strategies implemented that target other services to improve access to services for a particular disadvantaged group. Please identify <u>one</u> or <u>two</u> most relevant group/s from the following:)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Young people</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People affected by domestic violence or other violence/assault issues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities and their families</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Older people</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People who are gay/lesbian/transgender</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Disadvantaged urban and rural communities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Women</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People affected by addiction or other drug and alcohol issues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other ( please identify)</li> </ul>	<p>2.9.1b No. of organisations which have improved their level of service delivery and/or cultural awareness in relation to access and equity issues as perceived by the organisation</p>

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**OBJECTIVE 3. *Building and sustaining the capacity of the community services sector at a state or regional level to deliver responsive services through sector development, policy and advocacy***

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
3.1 Facilitate and coordinate collaboration and partnerships in planning, service delivery and development at a state or regional level	3.1.1a No. of new regional or state wide networks/partnerships developed 3.1.2a No. of existing networks/partnerships maintained	
3.2 Disseminate information and provide support or advice on policy, operational and management issues to services, the sector and the broader community.	3.2.1a No. of occasions where advice is provided 3.2.2a No. and type of communication strategies implemented at a state or regional level 3.2.3a No. of services/people/members who participate in peak/regional organisations; 3.2.4a No. of government departments assisted by organisation 3.2.5a No. of organisations receiving intensive support	3.2.1b Percentage of members or services satisfied with the information provided by peak/regional organisation.

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
3.3 Conduct and contribute to research, policy development and evaluation	3.3.1a No. of reports produced 3.3.2a No. of consultative bodies attended by number of meetings	3.3.1b Contribution to government policy reflects sector and community interests according to the perceptions of the organisation
3.4 Advocate on social justice and related policy issues on behalf of the sector to address disadvantage within communities.	3.4.1a No. and type of stakeholder and member consultative mechanisms in place to inform advocacy 3.4.2a No. of issues acted upon	3.4.1b Level of sector satisfaction with advocacy and representation
3.5 Identify and promote emerging community services initiatives with regional or state significance to address disadvantage within communities	3.5.1a No. of program proposals developed/promoted 3.5.2a No. of service delivery proposals developed/promoted	3.5.1b No. of proposals taken up by the sector or government where relevant

Key activity	Output measure	Outcome measure
3.6 Undertake organisational and practitioner development including training	3.6.1a No. of training / workshop sessions conducted; 3.6.2a No. of resources developed and delivered; 3.6.3a No. of conferences/ seminars held;	3.6.1b Percentage of user satisfaction.
3.7 Lead or facilitate industry change and the development of community services infrastructure	3.7.1a No. of sector infrastructure development initiatives 3.7.2a No. of stakeholders involved in industry change projects	3.7.1b No. of initiatives that lead to some improvements in sector infrastructure