Needs Assessment Tool Review Forum

2017 Review Process

District and CSO Forum

Cannington and Armadale Districts

What is the Needs Assessment Tool (NAT)?

- The Needs Assessment Tool (NAT) is a case management tool.

- NAT assists child protection workers and their care team to consistently identify and assess the complex and changing needs of children in care across the dimensions of well-being in the form of a *Needs Assessment*.

- A completed Needs Assessment will provide readily accessible information about the child's needs to the Department and assist with care planning, case management and care arrangement decisions.

- A NAT is completed:

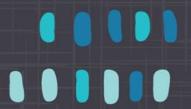| Trigger	Timing
Child enters CEO's care	When an initial care arrangement is required or within 90 days of the child entering care.
Review	Annually or when there is a significant change to the needs of the child (whichever is sooner).

- Today we are discussing the Review process.

Completing the NAT – Gathering Information

When assessing the needs of a child, information should be gathered and considered from discussions with significant others including;

- The child.

- The child's carer.

- A community service organisation (CSO) case manager (if the child's care arrangement is being provided by a CSO).

- Other members of the child's care team, for example:
    - Parents and birth family.
    - Aboriginal Practice Leader and Aboriginal community members.
    - Professionals working with the child including teachers, health professionals and others.

Completing the NAT – Gathering Information continued

Where available, information should also be gathered and considered from written information, for example:

- Viewpoint and Quarterly Care Reports (QCRs).

- Medical assessments and treatment plans.

- School reports or reports from other government agencies.

- Carer reports.

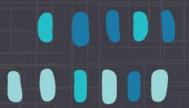- Annual care plans or cultural identity plans

Guidance document and Casework Practice Manual Chapter 3.4 will provide more information on completing NATs.

Care Team Approach

- Every child in OOHC has a 'care team' comprising of a group of people important to a child and carer.

- The care team maintains and supports a child's care arrangement and their continued connection to parents, siblings, their wider family, network, community and culture.

- The emphasis is to create stability and reduce the disruption to lifetime connections that a child has when they enter OOHC, and maintain and increase the naturally occurring networks they belonged to before coming into care.

- The Care Team, which includes a CSO who is providing a care arrangement, must be involved in completing the NAT.

- More information on the Care Team Approach can be found on the Department's website.

How to Consult with CSOs when completing the NAT

Brainstorm: What is the best way to complete NATs using the Care Team approach?

- Options may include:
    - Asking CSOs to complete the NAT questions for each child they provide a care arrangement for, with supporting evidence/comments to help inform the Child Protection Worker's final assessment.
    - Completing the NAT during a Care Team meeting.
    - Asking CSOs to provide information regarding particular behaviours/needs that can inform the NAT.
    - Any other ideas and suggestions.

Timeframes for completing NATs

Generally, in some districts, a large number of NATs will be due for review between November 2017 – February 2018.

It is important the NATs are completed as close to when due as possible.

Given the agreed process for completing NATs using the Care Team approach (previous slide) and the Nov 17 – Feb 18 timeframes:

- what key tasks are required? and

- what are reasonable timeframes to undertake these tasks?

Feedback to CSOs

- An important step is to provide feedback on the outcome of the NAT to the Care Team and the relevant CSO to enable them to support the care arrangement and the carer in meeting the child's needs.

- The outputs of the NAT and the need level will be communicated to relevant parties.

- The need level descriptors should be used to understand why a child is identified at a particular need level. These descriptors will be available on the CPM.

NOTE: the descriptions are broad and not intended to capture every need, but describe typical behaviours for that NAT level.

- How will feedback be provided?

NAT level descriptors

The NAT level descriptors are:

Level 1

Child or young person's behaviour is within the usual range for a person of their age, allowing for the impact of being placed away from their family and the expected unsettling effect this would have.

Level 2

Child or young person's behaviour shows above average indicators of trauma, developmental delay, attachment issues or other concerns that require increased support and/or assessment

NAT level descriptors (cont..)

Level 3

Child or young person's behaviour and associated needs require regular additional support and management. They may struggle with one or more aspect of functioning and their behaviours have an impact on their daily life. These can generally be managed with consistent parenting and some additional support as appropriate.

Level 4

Child or young person struggles significantly with more than one aspect of functioning and the associated behaviours impact consistently on their life. The child or young person requires specialist support services to manage these additional and complex needs.

Level 5

Child or young person has complex or extremely complex needs that have a significant impact on multiple areas of functioning. They require specialist services and considerable additional supports to assist them on a daily basis.

Summary

- The child or young person's NAT is a significant component in the overall planning that occurs for a child in care. It is important that the key people in a child's life are involved in identifying the child's needs so they can support their care arrangement.

- The Service Provider will work with and support the child or young person through the provision of trauma informed, attachment based therapeutic care and by accessing additional support services in accordance with the Care Plan.

- The service will also cater to the changing needs of the child or young person as determined by the NAT through the provision of care arrangements that are flexible and provide continuity for the child or young person within the current care arrangement.

Thank you

The Department is committed to working in partnership with CSOs to ensure NATs accurately reflect and record the needs of the child.

We thank you for your time and commitment to this process.