



## Out of Home Care – Information Session – Questions and Answers Thursday 16 January 2020

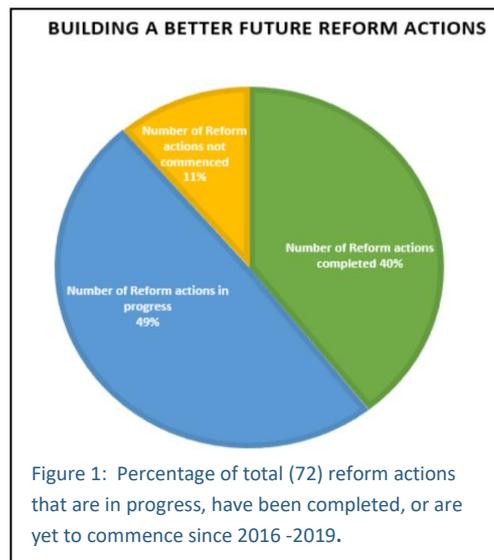
Question	Response
<b>How will the Department for Communities ensure that culturally diverse children in out-of-home care (OOHC) will maintain their connection to culture?</b>	<p>The Independent Reference Group (IRG) for OOHC, in partnership with the Department for Communities (Communities), has formed three sub-groups to focus on specific bodies of work.</p> <p>The <b>Aboriginal Cultural Engagement Sub-group</b> is working to ensure the inclusion of the views of Aboriginal communities, children in OOHC and their families across metropolitan and regional parts of Western Australia are incorporated into the work of the OOHC reform.</p> <p>Providing OOHC services that support Aboriginal young people to heal from trauma, while keeping them deeply and intimately connected to their family, community and culture is a defining challenge for all members of the OOHC sector.</p> <p>The collective work across Communities such as the legislative amendments to the <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i>, the recommendations being implemented as a result of the <i>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i>, the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) Action Plan and the OOHC reform program outlines a range of measures to focus service delivery on reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in OOHC and to better support these young people to remain connected to their culture.</p>
<b>What process will be used to identify trials and pilot programs and which organisations will deliver these?</b>	<p>Proposals for pilot programs and trials will be generated through <b>Service Solutions Sub-group</b> that is working on alleviating pressures on the current OOHC system.</p> <p>The Program Board will provide final approval of trial and pilot programs. Evaluation findings will be used to inform future OOHC service models.</p>
<b>What is the percentage of children in care arrangements with family carers, community service providers and Department of Communities?</b>	<p>As of 30 June 2019, <i>Child Protection Activity Performance Information 2018-19</i> indicates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Family carers provide 51 per cent of all care arrangements.</li><li>• Community service organisations provide 17 per cent of all care arrangements.</li><li>• The remaining 32 per cent of care arrangements are provided by Communities.</li></ul>



**Why is the Department of Communities focusing on the 20 per cent of children in Community Service Organisation care arrangements rather than the 80 per cent of children in departmental care arrangements?**

The Department is committed to improving outcomes for all children in OOHC. Work has been underway to reform the OOHC system in alignment with the Building a Better Future: OOHC Reform Plan and its 72 reform actions since 2016. This has included changes to the way Communities' delivers services to families and children in OOHC.

Of the 72 reform actions 40 per cent have been completed and another 49 percent are in progress and will have a direct impact on all children in OOHC.



A number of reform actions have **completed** including, but not limited to:

- Restructuring Communities' district service delivery teams.
- Commissioning and implementing the Earlier Intervention and Family Support Services.
- Developing and implementing the Needs Assessment Tool (NAT) currently in the third year of use.
- Revising and re-launching the Better Care Better Services Safety and Quality Standards for Children in OOHC.
- Developing and implementing mandatory foster care preparation training.
- Undertaking the statutory review of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* and *Adoptions Act 1994*.
- Implementing the Outcomes Framework for Children in Out-of-Home Care in Western Australia.

Work **currently underway** includes, but is not limited to:

- Further embedding the NAT for children in OOHC and aligning it with the Care Arrangement Support Costs and Care Team Approach.
- Identifying changes to service delivery practices such as referral practices and recording and collection of data.
- Identifying changes to systems such as IT and contract management systems.



- Piloting a District Care House service model which will inform the Temporary Care House service model.
- Reviewing the Outcomes Framework for Children in Out-of-Home Care in Western Australia.

It is intended the outcomes, principles, conceptual framework, and certain elements of the designed services will inform provision of all care arrangements. In the first instance these will be implemented with the community service sector. (For more information please refer to the *Building a Better Future Out-of-Home Care Reform Program Roadmap 2019-2023* on the [OOHC Project Page](#)).

**Can you share with us what work SalaryOne has been engaged to undertake?**

Department of Communities has engaged SalaryOne, an Industrial Relations consultancy service, who has partnered with an Industrial Relations lawyer to identify the current industrial relations that will impact future service models. The findings of their work is expected to be provided to Department of Communities in the first half of 2020.

**Why isn't the Department of Communities growing CSO care arrangements?**

Since 2016 there has been a steady growth in the percentage of care arrangements provided by CSOs and family carers.

Care Arrangement	Jan-20	Apr-16	Change
Family Care	2462	1983	24.2%
General Foster Care (Department)	1303	1200	8.6%
Foster Care (CSO)	653	472	38.3%
Parent/Former Guardian	294	305	-3.6%
Residential (CSO)	287	253	13.4%
Unendorsed Arrangement	287	159	80.5%
Residential (Department)	97	101	-4.0%
Other	86	74	16.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5469</b>	<b>4547</b>	<b>20.3%</b>

## Further information

To find out more about the Out of Home Care Reforms, please visit our website or email:

**Web:** [www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au)

**Email:** [StrategyandReform@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:StrategyandReform@communities.wa.gov.au)