

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM INTERIM REPORT
OUR BOORIS, OUR WAY REVIEW

FEBRUARY 2019



ACT
Government

Community Services

PURPOSE

On 15 June 2017, a review into the circumstances of each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and young person involved in the child protection system, including those in out of home care was announced.

The *Our Booris Our Way* review is focusing on systemic improvements needed to address the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system in the ACT.

The Interim Report from the *Our Booris Our Way* review was provided to Government on 31 August 2018. A final report is due to be provided to Government by the end of the 2019 year. The review methodology is iterative, meaning the Steering Committee will provide recommendations to Directorates and the ACT Government throughout the review period.

The initial report from the review identified four key recommendations with themes in the areas of:

- cultural proficiency of Child and Youth Protection Service staff;
- implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principles within policy and practice; and
- access to Family Group Conferencing for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the statutory system.

All four interim review recommendations were agreed to by the Community Services Directorate.

The first progress report was provided to the Steering Committee in November 2018 outlining progress against the recommendation. This second quarterly report, dated February 2019, provides an update on progress made by the Community Services Directorate. The quarterly updates should be read together to gain a full understanding of the progress made to interim recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION 1

STATUS: IN PROGRESS

ALLOCATION PROCESS

CYPS continues to facilitate priority allocation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, where possible, to operational staff who have completed the Cultural Development Program. It is important to note that CYPS continues to strive towards achieving the intent of this recommendations and do this having consideration of several key factors that must be considered during the allocation process. Considerations include the existing workload of staff, the complexity of cases on existing workloads, leave and training commitments.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Recruitment to fill the designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Training and Workforce Development officer has been finalised. The successful applicant is due to commence in the position on 13 March 2019. The officer will review the existing CYPS Cultural Development Program and will work in partnership with the Cultural Services Team to deliver the program on a more regular basis. CYPS will give priority access to operational casework staff to this training.

CYPS CULTURAL SERVICES TEAM

The Cultural Services Team has developed three information brochures about the role of the Cultural Services Team targeting families, community organisations and young people. The brochures will be available on the CSD website when finalised. A copy of the brochures was available to community at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement launch event held on 2 March 2019. Feedback from staff was that the brochures proved to be popular.

The implementation of the new client management system, known as CYRIS, will ensure the Cultural Services Team within CYPS is automatically notified when an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family is reported to CYPS. User Acceptance Testing for the new system is underway, along with initial training for CYPS to familiarise themselves with the system and new functionality. CYPS is ensuring that lessons learnt from other jurisdictions who have developed similar IT systems are taken into consideration. Consequently, CYPS has decided to invest in additional user acceptance testing and deliver a phased, more comprehensive training program, along with ongoing data migration testing before the system goes live. It is anticipated at this stage that the system will go live by mid-2019.

RECOMMENDATION 2

STATUS: IN PROGRESS

WORKING WITH SNAICC

Following the two-day seminar with SNAICC in November 2018 on embedding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principles in practice, CYPS has continued discussions with SNAICC regarding the delivery of training to CYPS staff. SNAICC has confirmed the two trainers who will deliver the program.

The following training sessions have been confirmed by SNAICC and the trainers:

- 28 March 2019 – 3 hours workshop – 20 team leaders
- 3 April 2019 – full day workshop – 10 team leaders
- 4 April 2019 – full day workshop – 10 team leaders
- 11-12 June 2019 – two-day workshop – 25 caseworkers (group 1)
- 13-14 June 2019 – two-day workshop – 25 caseworkers (group 2)
- 25-26 June 2019 – two-day workshop – 25 caseworkers (group 3)
- 27-28 June 2019 – two-day workshop – 25 caseworkers (group 4)

There are an additional two caseworker workshops that are to be confirmed by SNAICC, bringing the total number of caseworker groups to 6. The Practice Guide developed by Curijo has been provided to SNAICC to contextualise the training to be delivered.

ABORIGINAL PRACTICE LEADER

Recruitment has occurred to the new identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader position. The Practice Leader is an enabling role that operates at both a strategic and operational level. The role will support staff to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principles into practice. The new Practice Leader commences in the position on 4 March 2019.

RECOMMENDATION 3

STATUS: IN PROGRESS

PRACTICE GUIDE

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principles Practice Guide for CYPS staff is in final stages of development. Following extensive consultation, as outlined in the November 2018 progress report, the draft Practice Guide was provided to SNAICC and the Our Booris, Our Way Steering Committee for feedback and consultation prior to finalisation. Feedback received has been incorporated into the practice guide.

Curijo have since delivered four Q&A sessions with CYPS during February 2019 on the Practice Guide and has facilitated detailed discussions with staff about how to embed the Child Placement Principles into practice. Final editing following the Q&A sessions, and design is underway.

ABORIGINAL POLICY OFFICER

Recruitment has occurred to the new designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy position. This position will work within the operational policy team to imbed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Placement Principles in its 1200+ policies and procedure documents. The new Policy Officer commences on 4 March 2019.

RECOMMENDATION 4

STATUS: IN PROGRESS

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING

Recruitment has been completed for the permanent Family Group Conferencing facilitator positions with staff commencing in February 2019. Family Group Conferencing Facilitator Accredited training is being conducted by Spirit Dreaming Training and Education Solutions on 4, 5 and 6 March 2019. Spirit Dreaming provides a range of Aboriginal training and educational programs to increase cultural competency and promote a greater understanding of Aboriginal Peoples within the workplace and communities.

Spirit Dreaming is a registered RTO and therefore following successful completion of the training program the Family Group Conference facilitators will be accredited..

FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY – CHILD WELFARE

The Functional Family Therapy Team Leader is co-locating within 11 Moore Street on a fortnightly basis to provide information about the program and to discuss referrals. Gugan Gulwan and OzChild commenced taking referrals at the end of 2018. As at the end of February 2019, twelve families are engaged with the program.