



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

# Families and Children Consultation 2020/21

*'What we have heard so far'* online provider forum –  
sharing your feedback

30 March 2021

*DSS acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present*

# Overview

- Funding extensions
- Consultation process
- Themes and feedback
- Timelines

# Update on Funding Extensions

- Letter of Intent and links to draft grant agreements sent on **Friday, 26 March 2021**
- Draft grant agreements and fact sheets at [www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children](http://www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children)
- Working in consultation with Community Grants Hub to provide grant agreements for signature from the end of April 2021
- Longer-term grant extensions for five years to 30 June 2026 for:
  - Communities for Children Facilitating Partners (CfC FP)
  - Family and Relationship Services (FaRS)
  - Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS)
  - national-level Children and Parenting Support (CaPS) services (5 services)
- Grant extensions for two years to 30 June 2023 for:
  - Other CaPS services
  - Budget Based Funded (BBF) services

# FaC Activity Consultation

- Appreciate organisations and individuals participating in consultation process
- Consultation launched **27 November 2020**:
  - 2 online information forums held in December and January
  - 11 Advisory Group sessions focused on each of the in-scope activities were convened, comprising 76 members in total
  - 112 written responses to the Discussion Paper were received.
  - Submissions can now be viewed via DSS Engage (where consent given)

# Five consultation themes

1. Outcomes and evidence

2. Certainty and accountability

3. Targeting and accessibility

4. Collaboration and coordination

5. Capability and innovation

# Recent and emerging impacts

- Sector faced new and challenging environment - bushfires, droughts, floods and pandemic
- Varied impacts on service delivery and access to services
- Feedback showed significant shift to online and telephone service delivery
- Sector highly adaptable and innovative in face of multiple challenges

# Outcomes and evidence

## Outcomes Framework

- Feedback indicated aims and outcomes broadly appropriate, however additional outcomes could be included and further detail given
- Working with AIFS to finalise the outcomes framework, incorporating feedback received
- Outcomes framework will be available through updated operational guidelines for each program

# Families and Children Outcomes Framework Review:

## Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS)

### Feedback received:

- Feedback from Advisory group sessions\*
- DSS Engage submission data
- FRSA written submission

\*Feedback did not attribute views to specific organisations.



# AIFS: Main topics of feedback

## General Feedback

Comments highlighted the importance of the language to be used in the framework

- Outcomes are long-term
- Language is inclusive of different family-types

## Outcome Specific Feedback

Feedback to suggest amendments, alternatives or additions

- Safety (all people and all settings)
- Community (services connected and responsive)
- Cultural connection
- Mental health

# AIFS: Next Steps

- Ensure adjustments align with relevant Outcomes Frameworks e.g the successor plan to the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020*.
- Consult with AIFS staff with expertise in relevant fields
- Provide proposed changes to sector representatives for further feedback
- Finalise Outcomes Framework in consultation with DSS

# Outcomes and Evidence

## Data Exchange (DEX)

- DEX Partnership Approach required for all providers from 1 July 2021
- Requirements include:
  - Reporting of priority requirements (client, case and session details)
  - Partnership Approach (SCORE data)
    - 50% of clients have a Circumstance SCORE recorded
    - 50% of clients have a Goal SCORE recorded
    - 10% of clients have a Satisfaction SCORE recorded.
- 12 month transition period
- Additional capability support will be provided throughout the transition

# Outcomes and Evidence

## Program Logics & Theory of Change

- Template for program logic and theory of change being developed by AIFS - available in April/May 2021
- All service providers to develop program logic for each funded activity
- First draft program logic required in March 2022, followed by final version in June 2023
- Department committed to supporting service providers to undertake new requirement
- Not a requirement for CfC FP – have Community Strategic Plan and Evidence Based Program requirements

# Certainty and Accountability

## Review Point

- Review points offer an opportunity to ‘check-in’ during grants to see how things are progressing
- Opportunities to work collaboratively with providers at review point
- Review point for programs receiving five-year extensions
- Commence from 1 September 2023
- Assessment criteria to include SCORE data, client numbers, demographics, program logics and reporting requirements
- AWP template will be updated so further context to DEX data can be provided if needed
- More detail will be provided in operational guidelines

# Targeting and Accessibility

- Providers currently targeting vulnerable cohorts and ongoing commitment to universal early intervention
- Attention to removing barriers to access
- AWP template, guidance and program operational guidelines will be reviewed and refined
- Linkages with *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children* and the renewed *Closing the Gap* agenda

# Collaboration and Coordination

## CaPS and BBF

- Feedback highlighted an openness to further consider connecting with Facilitating Partners, noting complexities about geographical location and bespoke nature of smaller services
- Further consultations on this later in 2021

## Other Collaboration

- Communities of Practice
- Service directory - finding other DSS funded providers in same area
- FMHSS to sit within FaC Activity as it aligns with early intervention goals.

# Capability and Innovation

- Feedback indicated support for capability building very welcome and consideration is being given to supports required
- Families and Children (FaC) Expert Panel Project currently available to provide support (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/expert-panel-project>)
- CFCA using knowledge translation expertise to expand previous clearinghouse role (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca>)
- All providers can use up to 10% of funding on innovation



# Grant agreement details

## What's new in my grant agreement?

- Grant agreement will be the Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement template.
- Milestones for developing and providing program logics.
- Inclusion of a review point in the five-year agreements.
- Participation in the Data Exchange Partnership Approach will be a requirement of funding.

## When will we get new operational guidelines?

- These will be available when formal letters of offer are sent (from the end of April 2021).
- These will be provided in draft format.
- The department is open to further discussions to refine the operational guidelines.

## When will we see the updated outcomes framework?

- This will be available as part of the operational guidelines (from the end of April 2021).
- This will be provided in draft format.
- Developing with the Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- The department knows that providers are engaged in this work and is keen to consult further before finalising the framework.

## Program Logics

Draft March 2022, and final June 2023.  
Additional support to assist.

## Activity Work Plans

Due in August 2021  
New template in May 2021.  
Will seek information on how services are targeted to key client groups.

## Data Exchange (DEX) reporting

Requirement from 1 July 2021.  
Resources on the DEX website.  
Additional guidance and training.

## Review Point

Commences from 1 September 2023.  
Grant milestones and DEX reporting.  
Details in operational guidelines.

## CfC FP Community Strategic Plan

Due April 2022.  
Template being updated and will be available as part of the operational guidelines.

Please contact your Funding Arrangement Manager if you have any concerns regarding the content of the grant agreement.

The Supplementary Terms and Conditions at CB27 of the grant agreement provides for the rollover of surplus and uncommitted funds in accordance with normal processes.

# Timeline

March	April	May	June	July	August
<p><b>Letter to providers about funding extensions</b></p> <p><b>Online provider forum</b></p>	<p><b>CfC FP AWP template circulated</b></p>	<p><b>AWP template circulated</b></p>		<p><b>New grants commence</b></p> <p><b>Advisory group consultation sessions recommence</b></p>	<p><b>AWPs submitted</b></p>
	<p><b>Letter of offer and grant agreements agreed</b></p>				
	<p><b>Operational Guidelines available</b></p>				

Thank you for your time today



Together, we can create better outcomes and brighter futures for Australian families and children.

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