



KALWUN S.E.Q RECOGNISED ENTITY, FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE & FOSTER KINSHIP CARE

Wednesday, March 13, 2013

Dear Commissioner Carmody,

Kalwun Development Corporation Recognised Entity & Family Support Service is pleased to offer a response to the questions raised within the Commission of Inquiry's recent Discussion Paper.

Kalwun is encouraged by the amount of focus that has been placed on, what we believe, is the most concerning and prolific feature of the Child Protection system in Queensland – the overrepresentation of our children in out of home care. We acknowledge that the Commission has encouraged and welcomed the active participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations throughout the process to assist in identifying the crucial issues and, importantly, the opportunity to offer solutions.

In responding to the paper our organisation has focused on Chapter 7, "Addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children". For ease of reference, the questions and respective responses are listed below;

21. What would be the most efficient and cost-effective way to develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family wellbeing services across Queensland?

It is our position that this could be achieved through increasing the role and scope of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the development and delivery of such services to our children and families. Demonstrating long term commitment through establishing a 5-10 year plan that is developed by working parties and lead by the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak. The Commission may consider processes being undertaken in NSW and Victoria with regard to increasing the role and responsibility of community controlled organisations, however, remaining mindful, that there needs to be room for flexibility to establish & implement a service delivery model that meets the needs of its 'respected community'.

22. Could Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family wellbeing services be built into existing service infrastructure, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Medical Services?

Yes, the establishment of child and family wellbeing service can be built into existing service infrastructure, especially in organisations, which offer a continuum of services for families such as, housing, aged care, health etc.

How would an expanded peak body be structured and what functions should it have?

An expanded peak body would have stronger functions which can only occur if there are changes in the legislation and a greater regional presence under the child & family wellbeing program; cultural support plans, convening Family Group Meetings, kin identification, case work functions, independent court advice to magistrates etc.

24. What statutory child protection functions should be included in a trial of a delegation of functions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies?

The statutory/tertiary child protection functions are limiting system functions. It would be ideal, to prioritise equally, the development of strong primary and secondary support systems so families can access without needing to go in.

25. What processes should be used for accrediting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to take on statutory child protection functions and how would the quality of those services be monitored?

Every twelve months, accredited organisations (accreditation on Out of home Care) undertake a formal internal review by completing a survey or audit. At the end of the third year, organisations undergo an audit against the standards implemented by the Peak and any other relevant parties. The audit is comprehensive and involves an examination of relevant organisational documentation and an analysis of the degree of understanding and commitment by staff to continuing to adhere to the guidelines and responsibilities put in place and re-accreditation.

Look at various aspects of required accreditation that already exists for Health, HACCC services etc. and adjust to meet the needs of Child Protection, Foster Kinship Care etc.

Again, Thank you for the welcomed active participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations throughout this process.

Kind Regards

Vanessa Summers

Regional Manager

Kalwun S.E.Q. Recognised Entity.

Family Support & Foster Kinship Care Service