



Tuesday, 20 July 2010

Department for Children Protection

**Additional Question**

**Hon LINDA SAVAGE** asked:

1. I refer to p70, dot point 5 concerning residential care services and ask –

1.1 Does the Minister and the Government remain committed to increasing the proportion of children in care that are in placements provided by non-government sector organisations such as Wanslea and Anglicare as was recommended by the Ford Report?

1.2 If yes, does the Department for Child Protection have any targets to meet that commitment?

1.3 Does the Minister accept the view by the non-government sector that referrals are decreasing?

**Answer:**

1.1 Yes. The Department for Child Protection is committed to working in partnership with the non-government sector to provide quality out of home care placements for children and young people in the care of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

1.2 In response to the Ford Review, in 2008-09 the Department expanded services for out of home care placement services provided by the non-government sector with an additional 54 placements funded.

The expansion of the non-government sector in the provision of out of home care and the implementation of a new costing model has seen the Department's recurrent budget for out of home care services increase significantly from \$11.4 million in 2008-09 to \$16.5 million in 2009-10. In 2010-11, funding to the non-government sector for out of home care placement services will increase to approximately \$21.7 million which includes the new family group homes.

In 2009-10, the Department also provided an additional \$2.8 million to significantly increase intensive family support services funding to agencies such as Wanslea. This represented a doubling of the services with an additional 250 places. Intensive family support services are designed to support both a reduction in the growth of children coming into the care of the CEO and the achievement of reunification when appropriate.

In September 2009, following a tender process, the Department for Child Protection awarded the provision of new Family Group Home placement services for 84 children and young people in the metropolitan area to the following five non-government organisations: UnitingCare West; Mercy Community Services; Agencies for South West Accommodation; Parkerville Children and Youth Care; and Centrecare Djooraminda.

The metropolitan phased implementation is well underway with 17 family group homes either purchased or leased, of which 12 are fully operational and the other five coming on line following fit out and undertaking of any building remedial work as necessary.

The country family group home component is also planned to be contracted to non-government organisations with an expected rollout of 44 placement services for children and young people.

1.3 The numbers of children coming into care continues to increase, however, the ability to refer children to non-government out of home care placement agencies is only affected by their capacity to accept referrals. The Barnett Government continues with its commitment to expand the provision of out of home care placements by the non-government sector.