

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTEGRATED FAMILY SERVICES WORKING GROUP

1. Purpose

The Integrated Family Services Working Group (IFSWG) will support the overall objective of enhancing service delivery in the Territory Growth Towns and ensure that program design and implementation focuses on addressing the Council of Australian Government (COAG) Closing the Gap targets.

The IFSWG has dual reporting responsibility to both the Northern Territory Government Early Childhood Steering Committee (ECSC) and the Australian Government Remote Service Delivery (RSD) Board of Management (BOM) regarding the progress of service integration in the Territory Growth Towns.

The IFSWG will fulfil the role of Early Childhood Sub-Committee to the BOM regarding progress with the implementation of the RSD National Partnership Agreement of the Local Implementation Plan's early childhood building block. Reporting to the BOM will be via the ECSC.

The IFSWG will inform the ECSC in its guiding of the establishment of the cross agency integration of early childhood and family services within the Northern Territory.

The IFSWG will work collaboratively to develop and support the implementation of integrated family services across the Territory Growth Towns under the Northern Territory Government's Working Futures strategy.

2. Context

The integration of family services will support meeting the COAG Early Childhood Education and Care Reform Agenda of closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children's development outcomes by increasing parental and family engagement in their development.

The integration of family services will support the implementation of the RSD Local Implementation Plan's early childhood building blocks which match those of COAG's Reform Agenda.

The integration of family services across non government organisations and three tiers of government will provide easier access and better coordinated family services for Indigenous people in the Territory Growth Towns and their surrounding regions. This will assist in reducing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children's developmental outcomes by increasing parental and family engagement in their development.

3. Outcomes

The establishment of a jurisdiction-wide coordination mechanism for the implementation of integrated family services delivery in the RSD and Territory Growth Towns.

4. Deliverables

The development of an implementation plan that will drive the establishment of integrated family services across the RSD and Territory Growth Towns.

4.1 Responsibilities

- Progress key deliverables through establishing and implementing integrated family services with a focus on the RSD and Territory Growth Towns.
- Report on the progress of the Indigenous Children and Family Centre's; Families as First Teachers; Australian Early Development Index; Department of Health and Families health and wellbeing programs; wellbeing and education programs and service integration as required to the ECSC and the BOM regarding the progress of service integration across the 20 Territory Growth Towns.
- Act as Early Childhood Sub-Committee to the BOM regarding progress with the implementation of the RSD Local Implementation Plan's early childhood building blocks.
- Inform the ECSC of any issues or matters that could affect progress of service integration.
- Actively participate in the development of new service models and contribute positively and practically to the establishment of integrated family services.
- Champion the integrated family services program within the IFSWG member's sphere of influence and be change management agents for the achievement of integrated family services outcomes.

5. Membership

The IFS Working Group is comprised of representatives of the Department of Education and Training (DET), Department of Health and Families, Department of Local Government and Housing, Police Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Northern Territory Council of Social Services, Catholic Education Office, a Shire Council from the Top End and one from Central Australia, Office of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Health, Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Youth and Family Peak Body..

Others to be invited as required.

6. Meetings

6.1 Frequency and Location

Monthly meetings in the first instance and priority matters out-of-session at DET 13th Floor Mitchell Centre, Darwin.

6.2 Chair

The Director, Integrated Family Services, DET will chair the meeting.

6.3 Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by DET, Early Childhood Policy and Regulation.

6.4 Reporting

Reporting on a monthly basis to the ECSC and to the BOM via the ECSC.