



'Towards a just NT – Designing the future together'

NTCOSS CONFERENCE 2011

Outcome Management and the Income Management Story

Dr Cassandra Goldie, CEO, Australian Council of Social Service
Irina Cattalini, CEO, Western Australian Council of Social Service
Elaine Peckham, Central Arrente woman and founder of the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Alliance
Joy McLaughlin, Indigenous Programs Manager, Fred Hollows Foundation
Annabel Pengilley, Welfare Rights Solicitor, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
and
John Patterson of AMSANT and APONT (Aboriginal Peaks of the NT) new jurisdictional body.

Held on Thursday 14 April, 2011
Q & A Minutes - NTCOSS

Facilitator: Pru Gell, Central Australian Policy Officer, NTCOSS

Question: With CDEP being phased out, what will this mean for countrymen, countrywomen and Centrelink?

Answer: Yes CDEP is being phased out and it appears we are moving more to a 'work for the dole' model.

Question: What do you know about the intended CDEP transition jobs?

Answer: At this time we are aware that the transition jobs will only be funded for 2 years – then the people involved will be stuck on the dole and also being income managed.

Question: Compulsory income management is regarded by many as discriminatory, as it is directed at Indigenous people in the Northern Territory. What can be done about this blanket approach?

Answer: The compulsory scheme should be withdrawn and individuals and communities invited to use income management where they think it will help them. As it stands the present system is definitely a human rights concern.

Resolutions

Resolution regarding Income Management

There was considerable discussion initiated by John Patterson of AMSANT and APONT (Aboriginal Peaks of the NT) new jurisdictional body, regarding a resolution to be drafted and edited regarding Compulsory Income Management. This resolution was articulated, worked on and supported by the conference.

Delegates across the community sector resolve at this NTCOSS conference 2011 to express our opposition to the Income Management scheme operating in the NT.

The IM scheme is not based on evidence and represents poor and harmful public policy.

In its application it breaches human rights, is discriminatory and disproportionately effects Aboriginal people.

In our collective experience we believe the IM scheme will not work to address the serious issues that it was established to address and comes at an unacceptable human and financial cost.

We call on the government to withdraw the scheme. We call on the government to begin real negotiations with sector NGOs and Aboriginal organisations and with communities to agree on measures to address the issues in the long term.

These measures should include reallocation of the cost of the current scheme towards essential financial and community service infrastructure that is urgently needed on the ground in communities, outstations and homelands.

These measures must ensure dignity and respect.

Resolutions regarding welfare payments:

Two resolutions that were raised by Dr Cassandra Goldie from ACOSS and Annabel Pengilly from NAAJA and supported by the conference were:

Resolution 1: Calls for the urgent increase in Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment Single by a minimum of \$50 per week. In order to enable a person to meet their basic living needs with dignity and respect.

Resolution 2: Increase the Income Free Area and indexation for Youth Allowance, New Start Allowance and Parenting Payment Single equal to the Income Free Area of other pensions.