



Communique – Queensland First Children and Families Board meeting

13 & 14 December 2023

The Queensland First Children and Families Board (QFCFB) Co-chairs Aunty Rachel Atkinson and Kieran Chilcott welcomed QFCFB members to the last meeting for 2023 and congratulated QFCFB members Dion Tatow, David Baird and Aunty Ivy Trevallion on their reappointment to the board for a further two-year term.

Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS), Office of the Chief Practitioners (OCP) team - Victoria Vanhoudt, Director, Gavin Power, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader and Eliza Miller, Principal Program Officer provided a general overview in relation to Cultural Support Plans (CSP) including the role of Cultural Practice Advisors (CPAs). Members were also provided the opportunity to view a sample of CSP from across the regions and provide feedback. Members spoke to the inconsistencies in the samples provided and recommended a minimum standard or framework be developed for consistency.

Jason Kidd, Executive Director, Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and Arts (DTATSIPCA) updated members on DTATSIPCA key priorities - Closing the Gap, Local Thriving Communities and Path to Treaty. Closing the Gap national reporting indicates that while most targets are not on track, report recommendations align with DCSSDS priorities underway in the *Our Way* strategy to eliminate overrepresentation, including (but not limited to): transition of service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ATSICCO); shared decision making; expenditure reporting to demonstrate reprioritisation of funds to ATSICCO, and increased data sharing to ATSICCO. Members noted that Local Decision-Making Bodies are currently focused on investment mapping and the work underway to establish the Truth Telling and Healing Institute (TTHI) to oversee the Truth Telling and Healing Inquiry.

Deidre Mulkerin, Director-General, DCSSDS launched the department's *Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen: Reframing the Relationship Roadmap*. Commencing in early 2024, Roadmap activities will focus on cultural supervision and the development of cultural behavior frameworks for consistency across central/region and policy/practice positions. Members congratulated the department on the development of the Roadmap; acknowledging how critical cultural change is to achieve the *Our Way* vision.

DCSSDS Investment and Commissioning Team provided an update on Commissioning Reform including the establishment of a new team to focus on developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families commissioning and investment strategy for the department. Members noted Family Caring for Family- the new kinship care model, is underway and discussions have begun regarding two trial sites. Funding approach for Family Wellbeing Services is changing to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated businesses in addition to community-controlled organisations.

Following on from the launch of *DCSSDS Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen: Reframing the Relationship Roadmap*, Uncle Les Skelton, Director, DCSSDS spoke to the department's approach to Culturally Responsive Leadership under *Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen* including the establishment of a new team to lead activities such as culturally responsive leadership and cultural safety. DCSSDS will host an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Wellbeing Conference in March to define cultural safety.



Day two of the meeting commenced with Co-chair Aunty Rachel Atkinson acknowledging the recent referendum result, whilst reiterating that the result does not define nor deter the QFCFB from driving self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Helen Wright, Executive Director, Delegated Authority, DCSSDS updated members on the implementation of delegated authority (DA) – Reclaiming our storyline. Six new DA sites are to be rolled out across the state with further sites proposed in North Queensland and Far North Queensland. The new sites include: Palm Island Community Company; Kambu; Kummara; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS); Kalwun and Goolburri. By early 2024 nine additional organisations will be delivering DA.

Letitia Creevy, A/Executive Director, IS&P, DCSSDS updated members on the strategic session with DCSSDS and QATSICPP executive leaders to plan the implementation of Breaking Cycles actions for 2024, including the agreed priority actions for the coming months, including:

- the co-design of a formal partnership agreement between DCSSDS, QATSICPP, DTATSIPCA, QFCFB and Family Matters Queensland (FMQ) to support implementation and oversight of Breaking Cycles;
- sharing of investment data with the sector to inform transition planning;
- development of a workforce strategy to ensure staff are available at all levels to deliver and manage the transitioned services;
- reform of commissioning processes to ensure they are appropriate for the design, procurement and implementation of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families; negotiation of a blueprint to guide the transition of resources across the period to 2032, and
- a change management strategy to drive the systems and cultural change within DCSSDS (underpinned by Reframing the Relationship). Members noted that these priority actions align with current QFCFB priorities:

Members supported the proposed approach to Monitoring and Evaluation for the Breaking Cycles phase of *Our Way* in consultation with QATSICPP, focusing on assessing the impact of Reframing the Relationship and *Our Way* to drive behavioural change across government.

Ellenah Mackie, Senior Executive Director, I&C, DCSSDS updated members on the transition of investment to ATSICCO and sector engagement to determine key aspects of the transition, i.e. place-based investment and data stacks by regions to inform funding approach. Members noted the outcome on the residential care review and welcomed that the review will inform co-designing and investing in alternate types of care that look very different to the current model.

Aunty Rachel Atkinson, Co-chair, Family Matters Queensland confirmed that while the national Family Matters campaign will no longer be promoted by SNAICC, the annual national Family Matters Report for performance to eliminate overrepresentation in child protection will continue.

Andrew Shepherd, Director, Performance, Reporting and Analysis, DCSSDS discussed *Our Way* performance data for June 2023 quarter. Key points included:

- a quarterly decrease in the number of First Nations children in care for the first time since June 2018;
- lowest yearly growth rate for First Nations children subject to child protection orders since June 2017; and
- Family Support system – FACC stable numbers, 30,000 referrals for assistance.
- FWB service referrals up 7.3% over the last 12 months - record 5259 referrals.



Kym Green, Manager, Family Support and Commissioning, DCSSDS spoke to the recent evaluation undertaken by Winangali for the Family Participation Program (FPP). An interim report will be delivered in early 2024, focussing on preliminary findings and insights from the evaluation process, with a final report and recommendations delivered by June 2024 and will be shared with QFCFB to provide the opportunity for members to influence future directions for the program.

The next QFCFB meeting is scheduled to be held **21 & 22 March 2024**. For more information in relation to QFCFB membership and previous communiques, visit [QFCFB webpage](#).

Queries can be emailed to the QFCFB Secretariat to qfcbsec@cyjma.qld.gov.au.