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05 MAR 2020

Ms Leanne McLean
Commissioner for Children and Young People
GPO Box 708
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Dear Commissioner

On behalf of the Tasmanian Government I would like to thank you for your first Monitoring Report No 1 *Tasmanian Out-of-Home Care System and 'Being Healthy'*.

The Tasmanian Government remains absolutely committed to improving the lives of Tasmanian children and young people in out-of-home care.

In response to your Monitoring Report and on behalf of the Tasmanian Government, I am pleased to present this Response Report and Action Plan 2020.

This report sets out commitments across the Departments of Communities Tasmania, Health and Justice, to build on work currently underway to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in out-of-home care in Tasmania.

My department, Communities Tasmania will report on progress of the Priority Actions in December 2020.

Yours sincerely

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Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Human Services

Enc: Tasmanian Government Out of Home Care Response Report and Action Plan 2020

Tasmanian Government

Out of Home Care Response

Report and Action Plan 2020

Response to the Out of Home Care
Monitoring Report No 1 Recommendations

Tasmanian Government
Out of Home Care Response Report and Action Plan 2020
Published: February 2020
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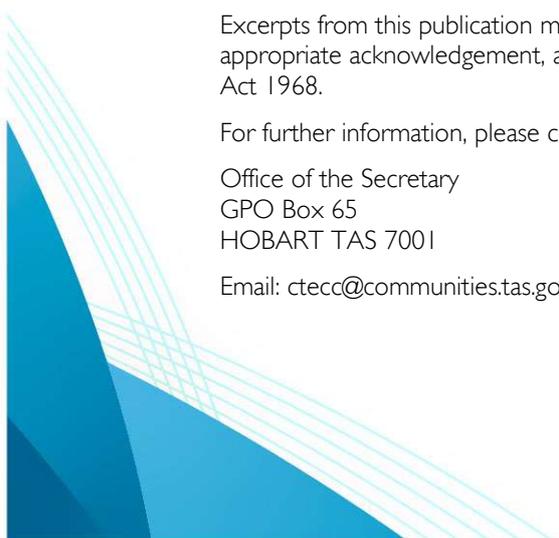


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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



I acknowledge and welcome the Commissioner for Children and Young People's inaugural Monitoring Report No 1 The Tasmanian Out of Home Care System and "Being Healthy".

The Tasmanian Government remains committed to improving the lives of Tasmanian children and young people in care. We are undertaking a number of initiatives to continue to strengthen Tasmania's out-of-home care system, however, there is still more work to be done.

I convey my sincere thanks to all the children and young people, the foster and kinship carers, the Out of Home Care providers, and members of the Expert Panel for the Out of Home Care Monitoring Program who willingly shared their experiences, opinions and made a valuable contribution to the Commissioner's 2018-2019 Out of Home Care Monitoring Report. Your voices and insights are critical in our quest to protect the best interests, rights and wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people in care.

On behalf of the Tasmanian Government I am pleased to present this Response Report and Action Plan 2020, which responds to the Monitoring Report No 1 The Tasmanian Out of Home Care System and "Being Healthy" recommendations. The Tasmanian Government will report on our progress of the Priority Actions contained in the Response Report in December 2020.

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Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Human Services

Background

The Commissioner for Children and Young People ('the Commissioner') is an independent statutory office established under the Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016 (Tas).

In 2017-2018 the Tasmanian Government invested \$1 million over four years for the Commissioner to undertake independent, systemic monitoring of out of home care (OOHC) in Tasmania.

The purpose of the Commissioner's monitoring of OOHC is to promote and protect the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in OOHC in Tasmania. The Commissioner released the first monitoring report in October 2019, titled: Monitoring Report No 1: the Tasmanian Out-of-Home Care System and "Being Healthy" (Monitoring Report No 1).

This Report is the Tasmanian Government's response to Monitoring Report No 1.

The Tasmanian Government remains steadfast in driving change that will improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in OOHC. Recent enhancements which are in addition to the actions listed in this Response Report include:

- appointing an independent Child Advocate to provide a voice to children and young people in OOHC;
- releasing the Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People in OOHC Tasmania;
- establishing the Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line, which is a phone contact point for anyone who has a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person;
- supporting care leavers through the new Transition to Independence program;
- encouraging young people in OOHC to complete year 12 or equivalent of their schooling through the Learning Incentive Allowance Program; and
- the Tasmanian Government commitment of \$7.5 million over three years to the Intensive Family Engagement Service which provides intensive early intervention services to families and reduces the number of children and young people needing OOHC.



Structure of this Report

The Commissioner's Monitoring Report No 1 contains 24 recommendations. The Commissioner has grouped the recommendations under five themes. The five themes are listed in Table 1.

This Response Report contains two sections:

- Section 1 contains the Tasmanian Government's response and priority actions against each of the five themes listed in Table 1. Many of the Commissioner's recommendations align with work already underway, including work undertaken by the Tasmanian Government in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission). Links to existing work is noted where relevant.
- Section 2 contains the Tasmanian's Government response against each of the 24 recommendations.

Table 1. The Five Themes of Monitoring Report No 1

	Making sure children and young people in OOHC have a say about their care and their lives.
	Making sure everyone involved in the care of children and young people in OOHC is doing a good job.
	Making sure everyone involved in the care of children and young people in OOHC knows about the child they are caring for, what they need and how they are going.
	Making sure we know about and promote Aboriginal culture.
	Making sure children and young people in OOHC can be healthy.

Section A - Responses to the Themes

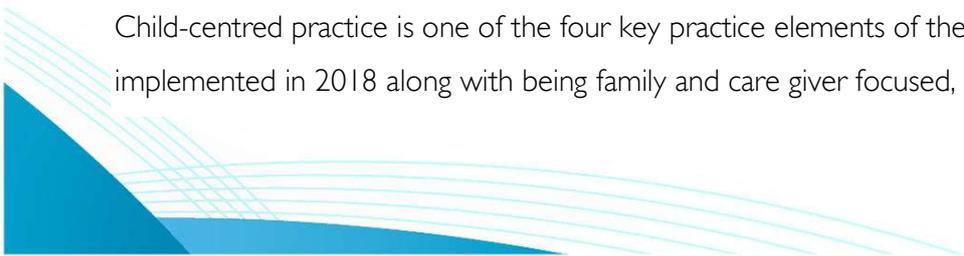
THEME I: Making sure children and young people in OOHC have a say about their care and their lives.

The Tasmanian Government will ensure children and young people have a much greater say in matters that affect them. The Government is actively increasing the opportunities for this to occur.

In 2018 the Tasmanian Government appointed a Child Advocate to provide support and a greater voice to children and young people in OOHC regarding the quality of, and decisions made about their care and their lives. In late 2019, the Child Advocate implemented a Youth Change Makers Program. Youth Change Maker Forums have been convened in the north and south of the State and a closed online Facebook forum has been established. This creates a forum for young people in care to be regularly consulted and encouraged to provide input to continuously improve the OOHC service system. Further work will be undertaken during 2020 that includes a new resource to support young people in care to raise their concerns and/or to make a complaint which will consist of an interactive web-based program to capture the voices of children and young people in care. The Child Advocate will also commence a formal Visitor Program to young people living in non-family-based settings.

Children and Youth Services (CYS) in the Department of Communities Tasmania (Communities Tasmania) has implemented the *CYS Children's Rights to Participate in Decision-Making* model. *CYS* staff actively consider ways to enable children to participate in decision making. OOHC service providers are also expected to encourage and support children and young people to participate in decision making and planning processes. This model supports children to participate in decision making by acting as a guide for practitioners across the five key areas of: creating a space for children to be informed and respected; supporting children to express their views; ensuring children are heard by adults; taking children's views seriously; and children sharing responsibility for planning and decision making.

Child-centred practice is one of the four key practice elements of the *Child Safety Practice Framework* implemented in 2018 along with being family and care giver focused, culturally responsive and sharing



responsibility. Creating opportunities for children and young people to participate in decision making is also a key element of child-centred practice.

CREATE Foundation plays an important role as advocates for children and young people in OOHC.

Communities Tasmania's partnership with the CREATE Foundation has provided additional opportunities to listen to children and young people in care. CREATE Foundation held sessions in April 2019 focused on the CYS Children's Rights to Participate in Decision-Making model and how the CYS staff could improve engagement with children and young people. Posters were developed that are now displayed in CYS offices and the learnings are applied in staff training.

Strengthening participatory mechanisms within case and care planning is a significant focus for CYS in 2020. Communities Tasmania initiated the Case and Care Planning project in 2019 with the aim of empowering children and young people and their families through active and positive engagement in a developmentally appropriate manner that ensures children and young people's voices are front and center in all decisions that affect them.

Communities Tasmania has drafted a Family Based Care Model for OOHC. The Family Based Care Model supports the development of a quality and sustainable OOHC system by improving family-based care (foster and kinship care). It builds on existing good practice and gives emphasis to the processes that need to be strengthened to support the wellbeing of children and young people in OOHC. Finalising and commencing implementation of the Family Based Care Model will also be a key priority for CYS in 2020.

During 2019 there has been a concerted effort in CYS to improve child participation in family group conferences. Children and young people now attend and are included in 'private family' time. This focus will continue throughout 2020 and is an important element in the redesign of the Child Safety Service.

Priority Actions

In 2020 Communities Tasmania will:

- complete and implement a revised complaints process to ensure the Department's complaints management processes are child and youth friendly;
- finalise and commence implementation of the Case and Care Planning Project;
- implement a Visitor program to children and young people in non-family-based care;
- establish an interactive web-based resource through the role of the Child Advocate;
- finalise and commence implementation of the Family Based Care Model; and
- continue to monitor and improve the performance of Departmental visits occurring within specified timeframes.

Work in 2020 captured and reported via other action plans

The Tasmanian Government's Second Annual Progress Report and Action Plan 2020 "Implementing Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse".



THEME 2: Making sure everyone involved in the care of children and young people in OOHC is doing a good job.

The Tasmanian Government will implement key initiatives to deliver a robust and accountable OOHC system in Tasmania.

Communities Tasmania has drafted a Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework for OOHC. The Department will finalise and commence the implementation of the Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework for OOHC in 2020. This Framework will include Tasmanian OOHC Standards, with a specific standard which incorporates the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The framework will inform how Communities Tasmania will work with OOHC providers in a coordinated, integrated and accountable way through OOHC standards and good governance.

Communities Tasmania recognises the need to adopt a more robust purchaser/provider model. The Department has applied dedicated resourcing to a strategic commissioning project which will examine current purchasing and contractual arrangements to identify and progress the implementation of improved contractual management processes for all OOHC services.

The Strong Families Safe Kids Redesign project has had a strong focus on promoting collaborative cross-agency approaches to producing improved wellbeing outcomes for Tasmanian children and young people, both in OOHC and across the broader community. This has been supported through the delivery of a range of outputs including the release and promotion of the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework to embed a common definition and shared language of child and youth wellbeing across the sector; the collaborative development of the Child and Family Wellbeing Assessment Tool to promote a consistent wellbeing assessment process across all services supporting children, young people and families; and the implementation of the Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line.

Communities Tasmania recognises the importance of children, young people and carers receiving timely and up to date information and continues to work on streamlining processes to ensure this occurs. The Department will also identify and progress actions to enable non-government OOHC providers access to relevant departmental policies.

Priority Actions

In 2020 Communities Tasmania will: -

- finalise and commence implementation of the Tasmanian Standards for OOHC and Quality and the Continuous Improvement Framework for OOHC in Tasmania; and
- commence the Strategic Commissioning Project.

Work in 2020 captured and reported via other action plans

Tasmanian Government Second Annual Progress Report and Action Plan 2020 “Implementing Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse”.



THEME 3: Making sure everyone involved in the care of children and young people in OOHC knows about the child they are caring for, what they need and how they are going.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children in OOHC and continues efforts to improve outcomes for children and young people in OOHC and enhance monitoring processes.

The development of the OOHC Outcomes Framework provides a solid foundation for making sure that everyone involved in the care of a child or young person is working together to ensure that child or young person feels loved and safe, is healthy, is learning and participating, is provided with the material basics and has a standard of living that supports them to reach their potential, and importantly have a positive sense of culture and identity. The approach to monitor and report against the Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People in OOHC will be set out in a Companion Document. The Companion Document will commence in 2020 and is intended to evolve over time as new data sources and outcome-focused, system-based indicators become available.

One of the key mechanisms to facilitate these outcomes is the care team meeting process. Care team meetings initiated by the Child Safety Service will require all the people who are caring for the child or providing services to the child to be fully engaged in information sharing and decision-making.

Communities Tasmania acknowledges the capability of current reporting systems impacts on the ability to provide the desirable range of data. CYS continues to refine and develop reporting whenever possible, particularly where this relates to national initiatives.

Priority Actions

In 2020 Communities Tasmania will:

- commence the upgrade of the Integrated Client Information System Program; and
- finalise the indicators and begin implementation of the Companion Document to support reporting against the OOHC Outcomes Framework.

THEME 4: Making sure we know about and promote Aboriginal culture.

The Tasmanian Government values its relationship with the Tasmanian Aboriginal people and is committed to improving the social, cultural and economic outcomes for Tasmanian Aboriginal children, young people and families while also promoting a greater understanding and acceptance of Aboriginal culture.

CYS is a signatory to the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) and participates in the national process to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children in OOHC under the National Framework for the Protection of Australia's Children 2009-20, Fourth Action Plan.

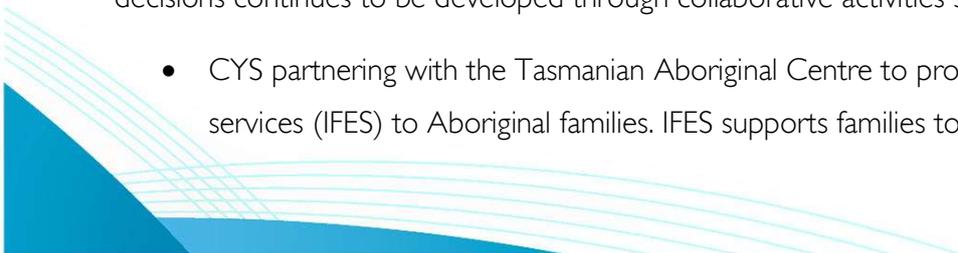
In 2019 Communities Tasmania hosted a two-day workshop facilitated by the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) to explore and identify progress and barriers to full implementation of the ATSICPP. The workshop informed work underway in CYS to establish a Stability Framework for children and young people who enter the Child Safety system.

As acknowledged in the Commissioner's Monitoring Report during 2019, there was a concentrated focus to improve the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children involved with the Child Safety Service. This has resulted in a significant decrease from 30% of children and young people for whom Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is 'unknown' to 2%. This will support and enable targeting of culturally responsive practices.

Work continues within CYS to ensure the workforce knows about and supports Aboriginal culture. The redevelopment of the CYS Beginning Practice program for new workers has been completed with the addition of new online and face-to-face training modules. This new program embeds the Child Safety Practice Framework practice elements including culturally responsive practice into the learning program. Developing an understanding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and how to apply the principle in practice is one of core objectives of the cultural competency module. Additionally, CYS has partnered with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre to deliver more in-depth cultural training to Child Safety Service staff in 2020.

The participation of Aboriginal communities and organisations in service design and delivery and care decisions continues to be developed through collaborative activities such as:

- CYS partnering with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre to provide intensive family engagement services (IFES) to Aboriginal families. IFES supports families to develop parenting skills where there



are concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. By supporting parents to provide a safe and nurturing environment for the child, the need for OOHC can be avoided. This initiative has provided a common ground for building relationships and sharing responsibility between services.

- The creation of three Aboriginal Liaison positions as part of the Strong Families, Safe Kids redesign of the Child Safety Service. These officers will be engaged by Baptcare and Mission Australia and located in the regions to support and work closely with the Aboriginal community.

As part of the Strategic Commissioning Project identified in Theme 2 consideration will also be given to the establishment of therapeutic 'on country' programs.

Priority Actions

In 2020 the Tasmanian Government will:

- engage local Aboriginal organisations to develop and commence implementation of an Action Plan to embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle;
- finalise and implement the Stability Framework; and
- fully operationalise the Aboriginal Liaison Officers as part of the Strong Families, Safe Kids redesign.

Work in 2020 captured and reported via other action plans

- The Tasmanian Government will continue to work with other jurisdictions to achieve enhancements to the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set relating to data collection and reporting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in OOHC and will continue to participate in work at the national level relating to ATSI CPP.
- The Tasmanian Government will continue to report nationally through Closing the Gap.

THEME 5: Making sure children and young people in OOHC can be healthy.

The Tasmanian Government considers it is critically important to provide timely health care to support the health and wellbeing of all children and young people in Tasmania. Being healthy and having a strong sense of wellbeing helps children and young people to be happier and more resilient, as well as improving long-term health outcomes. Promoting health and wellbeing in childhood has long lasting positive effects on the child, their family and their community. While most Tasmanian children and young people are healthy and safe, the Government's aim is to ensure every child and young person achieves optimal healthy development to improve long-term health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Tasmanian Department of Health provides a range of services to support the health and wellbeing of all children and young people, including targeted services for vulnerable cohorts such as children and young people in OOHC. Children and young people in OOHC can access a physical health review via the OOHC paediatric clinic at the Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH). The OOHC clinic provides health screening and follow-up as a preventative health strategy. All children are checked for their growth, immunisation, development and behaviour as well as general health care. All children and young people in OOHC are also provided a dental check via Oral Health Tasmania as a preventative health strategy.

Young people aged 12 to 24 years can access Youth Health Services (YHS), a health promotion, prevention and early intervention service provided by the Tasmanian Health Service. YHS provides a mix of clinical services, education and health promotion programs which assist young people to address a wide range of health issues such as sexual health, drugs and alcohol counselling, financial assistance with one-off health costs, specialist counselling, pregnancy testing and referral to other services.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) assists infants, children and young people (up to 18 years) who are experiencing severe and complex mental illness or disorder, and their families or care giver.

The Tasmanian Government is increasing access to inpatient mental health care for children and young people. The development of the Launceston General Hospital's (LGH) Paediatric Adolescent Unit and RHH's new Adolescent Unit will both include provision for inpatient mental health beds for children and young people.

The Tasmanian Government's response to the Mental Health Integration Taskforce includes a commitment to a statewide review of the CAMHS model of care, with a focus on integration of service responses for



adolescents across community and inpatient settings. This will also provide a new model of care for CAMHS in Tasmania.

Priority Actions

In 2020 the Tasmanian Government will:

- Explore options to improve access to health services for children and young people in the north and north west of the state. This may include a range of strategies such as the flexible use of existing models.
- Review the model of care for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, with a focus on integration of service responses for adolescents across community and inpatient settings.

Section B - Responses to the Recommendations

Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>1a. Ensuring all OOHC providers have mechanisms in place for children and young people in OOHC to communicate their views about their care, as well as concerns and complaints, consistent with Recommendation 12.10 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission)</p>	<p>Tasmania Government's Second Annual Progress Report and Action Plan 2020</p> <p><i>Implementing Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i></p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government accepted Recommendation 12.10 of the Royal Commission in June 2018.</p> <p>Communities Tasmania has developed and is implementing strategies to ensure children and young people in OOHC communicate their views about their care as well as their concerns and complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities Tasmania has implemented the CYS Children's Rights to participate in decision-making model; • Communities Tasmania is undertaking a review of its complaints systems and processes; and • The Child Advocate has developed and is implementing a Youth Change Makers Program and an interactive web-based program to capture the voices of children and young people in care is under development.

Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>1b. Ensuring that children and young people in OOHC have their voices heard in the development and review of Case and Care Plans and participate in day-to-day decision-making that affects their lives.</p>	<p>Case and Care Planning Project Tasmania Government's Second Annual Progress Report and Action Plan 2020 <i>Implementing Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i></p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government is improving Case and Care Plans to ensure children and young people in OOHC participate in day-to-day decision-making that affects their lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities Tasmania initiated the Case and Care Planning Project in 2019; and • The Government committed to progressing legislation establishing a framework for Child Safe Organisations for Tasmania which includes a legislative provision to ensure children participate in decisions affecting them in 2019.
<p>1c. Establishing a visitor program funded by the Tasmanian Government, initially focusing on children and young people in OOHC who are living in non-family-based care settings.</p>		<p>The Child Advocate will develop and implement an initial visitation program focussed on children and young people in OOHC that reside in non-family based care setting.</p>
<p>1d. Ensuring that visits from Child Safety Officers occur regularly and in accordance with policies of the Department of Communities Tasmania.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government will continue to remain focused on improving visiting schedules.</p>

Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>1e. Consistent with former Commissioner Morrissey's Recommendation 6C, expediting the establishment of a Tribunal in Tasmania, that can review decisions about children and young people's wellbeing while they are in OOHC.</p>	<p>Work towards a Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal</p>	<p>The Department of Justice is currently working to establish a single Civil and Administrative Tribunal that will provide Tasmanians with an efficient method of civil and administrative arbitration. The capacity to review decisions about children and young people's wellbeing whilst they are in OOHC will be considered further following the full establishment of Tasmania's Civil and Administrative Tribunal.</p>
<p>2a. Implementing a robust 'purchaser-provider' model for OOHC in Tasmania by more clearly delineating the role of Communities Tasmania as system owner from its role as provider of OOHC.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government has commenced planning to establish a more robust purchase-provider OOHC model.</p>
<p>2b. Progressing the development and implementation of a Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework for OOHC in Tasmania, which includes Tasmanian standards and ensuring there is a specific standard (or standards) which incorporate(s) the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.</p>	<p>Tasmania Government's Second Annual Progress Report and Action Plan 2020 <i>Implementing Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i></p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government is strengthening OOHC in 2020 by: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencing implementation of the Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework for OOHC; and • Commencing implementation of Tasmanian Standards for OOHC which will incorporate the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.



Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>2c. Ensuring that implementation of the Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework:</p> <p>(i) is appropriately resourced and includes rigorous quality assurance processes;</p> <p>(ii) occurs in accordance with an Implementation Plan which is publicly available; and</p> <p>(iii) occurs in a staged manner as follows:</p> <p>A. the capacity of the existing independent external oversight of out-of-home care currently undertaken by the Commissioner for Children and Young People is expanded and resourced to undertake systemic monitoring based on agreed standards;</p> <p>B. the introduction of a system of accreditation of OOHC providers, including Communities Tasmania, based on compliance with the agreed standards.</p>	<p>Tasmania Government's Second Annual Progress Report and Action Plan 2020</p> <p><i>Implementing Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i></p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government is currently considering the quality assurance processes required and the staged approach for implementing the Quality and Continuous Improvement Framework.</p>

Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>2d. Ensuring that communication processes between Communities Tasmania, non-government OOHC providers and carers are improved, so that:</p> <p>(i) critical up-to-date information is shared about a child or young person in OOHC in a timely manner;</p> <p>(ii) children and young people can receive timely answers to everyday questions such as: “Can I dye my hair?”; “Can I go on a sleepover?”; and “Can I go on a school excursion?”;</p> <p>(iii) there is a clear delineation of responsibilities for the care of a child in OOHC including for organising health care and during crisis situations; and</p> <p>(iv) non-government OOHC providers are aware of and have access to applicable Departmental policies.</p>	<p>Case and Care Planning Project</p>	<p>The Case and Care Planning Project encompasses the factors listed under recommendation 3D.</p>
<p>2e. Putting in place, as a priority, overarching Funding Agreements for all non-government OOHC providers delivering Special Care Packages to ensure quality and consistency of care.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government has initiated a strategic commissioning project to establish a more robust purchase-provider OOHC model. The project includes the delivery of Special Care Packages.</p>



Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>2f. Extending any examination of the model and cost of care for children and young people in OOHC with the most complex, specialised needs to include an investigation of mechanisms to promote Tasmanian Government agencies working more collaboratively and sharing accountability for achieving wellbeing outcomes for children and young people in OOHC.</p>	<p>Case and Care Planning Project, Strong Families Safe Kids; OOHC Outcomes Framework.</p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government Strong Families Safe Kids redesign of the Child Safety System is identifying and progressing increased collaboration opportunities for achieving improved wellbeing outcomes for children and young people in OOHC.</p>
<p>3a. Commissioning an independent review to determine data system capacity, capability and resourcing requirements to support effective system oversight and purchasing arrangements which promote positive wellbeing outcomes for children and young people in OOHC.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government notes the following actions are already in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A functional review of the Department of Communities Tasmania • Implementation of a redesigned Child Safety Service: • Child Protection Information System upgrade project.
<p>3b. Supporting non-government OOHC providers to improve their ability to report on the wellbeing of children and young people placed with them.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government has considered as part of the implementation of OOHC standards how non-government OOHC providers can improve on their ability to report on wellbeing of children and young people.</p>

Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>3c. Finalising the indicators for the Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People in OOHC in Tasmania and initiating a process of regular reporting on the wellbeing outcomes of children and young people in OOHC, including to the Commissioner, as recommended by former Commissioner Morrissey in his 2017 review into OOHC.</p>	<p>CYS Quarterly Reporting to the Commissioner</p>	<p>Communities Tasmania has been providing regular quarterly reporting to the Commissioner against the wellbeing domains for children and young people in OOHC for approximately twelve months. It is anticipated these reports will be iteratively improved.</p>
<p>4a. Ensures that the ATSICPP is embedded in legislation, policy and practice, including an increased focus on cultural planning.</p>	<p>Implementation of ATSICPP</p>	<p>The ATSICPP is reflected by Section 10G of the <i>Children Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997</i>. CYS is represented on the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Group under the Fourth Action Plan of the National Framework for Protection Australia's Children 2009-20.</p>
<p>4b. Ensures the participation of representatives of Aboriginal communities and organisations in service design, delivery and individual case decisions, and otherwise promotes and invests in genuine partnerships with Aboriginal communities to support self-determination.</p>	<p>Implementation of ATSICPP</p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government intends to progress the recommendation via the implementation of an Active Efforts Action Plan to embed ATSICPP with local Aboriginal communities.</p>
<p>4c. Ensures all those involved in decisions regarding Tasmanian Aboriginal children and young people in OOHC are appropriately trained to ensure they have an understanding and appreciation of Tasmanian Aboriginal history, heritage and culture.</p>	<p>Beginning Practice Program for Child Safety Officers</p>	<p>Cultural training has been included in the foundational Beginning Practice Program for Child Safety Officers.</p>



Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
4d. Ensures the Aboriginal identity of children and young people in OOHC is appropriately and promptly ascertained and communicated to carers and to non-government OOHC providers.		Over the last 12 months, Communities Tasmania has reduced the percentage of children and young people in OOHC for whom Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is unknown, from 30 per cent to 2 per cent.
4e. Funds and develops, in collaboration with representatives of Aboriginal communities and organisations, the establishment of a therapeutic 'on country' residential program for Aboriginal children and young people which is delivered in Tasmania by Aboriginal people.		Communities Tasmania will engage and work with Aboriginal communities and organisations to scope an 'on country' residential program for Aboriginal children and young people which is delivered in Tasmania by Aboriginal people.
5a. Ensures that all children and young people entering OOHC in Tasmania receive a preliminary health assessment with a General Practitioner within one month of entering OOHC and a comprehensive paediatric health and developmental assessment within three-to-six months of entering care.		CYS guidelines state that children should have a full medical check within one month of entering care.

Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>5b. Implements a policy of priority access to health services for children and young people in OOHC in Tasmania.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the importance of ensuring children and young people in OOHC have timely access to health services. Tasmania's health system is based on the principle of universal access, meaning it is designed to provide equitable access to health services for the whole community, with prioritisation based on clinical need. This is important to support positive health outcomes for those with the greatest clinical need.</p> <p>Universal health services are delivered alongside more targeted supports for vulnerable cohorts such as children and young people in OOHC. For example, the paediatric OOHC clinic at the RHH provides health screening and follow-up to all children in OOHC in the south of the State. While this service is also able to be accessed by children in other parts of Tasmania, children in OOHC in the North and North-West of the State are generally referred to mainstream paediatric clinics or private providers.</p>
<p>5c. Establishes and appropriately resources a dedicated paediatric OOHC clinic in the North and North West of Tasmania to redress the inequitable access to health services experienced by children and young people in these regions.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government provides a paediatric OOHC clinic at the RHH which provides health screening and follow-up to all children in OOHC in the south of the state, including checks for growth, immunisation, development and behaviour in addition to general health care concerns.</p> <p>The Government will explore further options to improve access to health services for children and young people in the north and north-west of the State. This could include a range of strategies such as the flexible use of existing models.</p>



Recommendation	Links to other work	Comments
<p>5d. Ensures each of the paediatric OOHC clinics are resourced with sufficient multi-disciplinary allied health expertise to meet the needs of children and young people in OOHC in Tasmania.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government acknowledges access to multi-disciplinary allied health expertise is important to ensure optimal health and development for children with certain health and disability care needs.</p> <p>The Tasmanian Government funds (and in some cases provides) allied health therapy and interventions through many different programs and agencies, such as services related to the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the Department of Education's Early Childhood Intervention Service. As such, referrals to services outside the Tasmanian Health Service may be the most appropriate option to ensure children and young people in OOHC access the services they require to meet their individual needs, and to ensure the Tasmanian Government avoids duplicating services already funded through other programs.</p> <p>The Tasmanian Government will continue to explore options to improve access to multidisciplinary allied health expertise for children and young people in OOHC.</p>
<p>5e. Ensures that personal health information of children and young people in OOHC is up-to-date and available to non-government OOHC providers, carers and health professionals, in a timely manner.</p>		<p>The Tasmanian Government notes CYS guidelines require carers to receive the child's <i>Essential Information Record</i> either before or at the time of the placement of the child. This record provides the carer with core information about the child, the child's informal and formal networks and their health and wellbeing.</p>

Glossary

ATSICPP	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle
Commissioner	Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania
CAT	Civil and Administrative Tribunal
CYS	Child and Youth Services, a division of the Department of Communities Tasmania
IFES	Intensive family engagement services
OOHC	Out of home care
Royal Commission	Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
SNAICC	Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care





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