



## Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

### **Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023**

#### **ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Asked by Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA

Reference: Hearing on 14 November 2023, Annual Report of Community Services Directorate

In relation to: Youth Justice Policy and Services and Transitioning Youth Justice Services to ACCOs

According to the Annual Report, the government is 'actively seeking to transition [youth justice] services to the [Aboriginal] community[-]controlled sector' (p. 88). I understand that, in the past, Gugan Gulwan provided case management and possibly other services.

- (1) What specific services does the government hope to transfer to ACCOs going forward?
- (2) How is the government 'actively seeking' to make this transition, and what is the projected timeline for making it happen?
- (3) What does the government understand now to be the downsides of having consolidated case management and other services into a single government provider under the previous youth justice strategy?

Minister Davidson: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

- (1) The Community Services Directorate (CSD) is working with a range of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to identify opportunities for ACCOs to deliver new services or to transition existing services to be delivered by ACCOs. Progress to date includes:
  - a. Grants to three ACCOs (Sisters in Spirit, Yerrabi Yurwang and Clybucca Dreaming) to deliver advocacy and support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families delivering against Recommendation 4 of the 2009 'We Don't Shoot our Wounded' Report
  - b. Gugan Gulwan Aboriginal Youth Corporation to deliver an Intensive Family Support Program
  - c. Yeddung Mura as a grant recipient under the 2022-23 Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Grants Program.

CSD is also working with ACCOs on opportunities to transition children and family services as part of a new Children, Young People and Families Panel.

- (2) CSD has established an Aboriginal Service Development Branch which is working actively with current, emerging, and new ACCOs across the ACT region on opportunities to deliver human services.
- (3) There have been several reviews into the work of Children, Youth and Families (CYF) over the past two years, including the *FFT-YJ Evaluation by the Youth Coalition*. These reports have provided insights into the work of Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) and the integrated system, suggesting that model presents some challenges regarding case managing young people in contact with the criminal justice system.

The concerns were that a fully integrated or 'dual system' of child protection and youth justice within CYP, could be seen as a barrier to effectively support young people involved or at risk of involvement with the justice system. Feedback from these reports and staff identified the urgency of child protection functions often took priority and that specialist skills in youth justice had become diluted. These insights will be considered in further work to reform the child protection and youth justice systems.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature: 

Date: 28/11/23

By the Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services, Ms Emma Davidson MLA