



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Children, Youth and Families

In relation to: Out of Home care

Hearing: 12 November 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript: pp 17-18

Transcript provided: 18 November 2025

Answer Due: 25 November 2025

MISS NUTTALL: Yes. I did. Just are back to the preferred provider panel with— stakeholders have informed us that there are young people out of home care who are being referred to organisations that are not on this panel. My question is how many young people are being referred to non-panel organisations and why might this be happening?

Ms Sabellico: Can you ask the second part of that question again? Sorry, Miss Nuttall.

MISS NUTTALL: Yes, absolutely. How many young people are being referred to non-panel orgs and why this is happening?

Ms Sabellico: Yes. Okay. So we do not just refer to our panel organisations, we actually do look at the whole of the service system and refer appropriately to what the needs are of the families that we are working with. So we would refer to our child and family centres if what they actually need is some parenting support. We would refer to other agencies where we might be able to in fact look at getting some in-home support as well. There might be a need to actually look at some youth mentoring for older children in the family, or we also might refer to places that look at how to address for some of that family friction and stuff like that in terms of looking at how to again get in there and work with the family about what the issues are. So we use the whole of the service system, we are not just confined to our panel arrangements.

In fact the panel can be built out as, you know, however we need as we start to also bring on more different arrangements through different program areas and stuff as well. It is just a construct in terms of how we identify who has actually met the threshold to be able to provide services, particularly given that referral from Children, Youth and Families usually means that they need to be accredited under the Care and Protection Organisations regulations.

MISS NUTTALL: Got you. That is the case for all organisations that you refer out to

irrespective of what sort of domain?

Ms Sabellico: If we are referring a matter that meets our threshold for risk of significant harm, then they need to have CAPO(?) [2.03.04]. If we also receive reports that do not meet that threshold and they are also the ones we would refer out to those that, you know, also, you know, deliver for services but not necessarily require CAPO registration.

MISS NUTTALL: Do you sort of actively I suppose maintain your contact list with organisations, like, do you build a strong relationship with all of them irrespective of whether they are on the panel or not?

Ms Sabellico: Yes, so all of our practitioners do, so they would have relationships with quite a lot of services but in our structure as well because we understand that it is difficult for 200 practitioners to actually keep across all of the changing aspects of the service system. We have created what we call our information resource and referral unit who are a group of practitioners who specialise in knowing all of the services, knowing what their entry criteria is, being able to understand, do they have vacancies and things like that, what their service models are, so that our practitioners can consult with them about the best referrals to achieve for the case plan direction or the issues that sit with to the family.

MISS NUTTALL: Awesome. Thank you. Do you have those numbers of how many have been referred through?

Ms Sabellico: We can for those that we keep track of, yes.

MISS NUTTALL: If that is all right, I would be grateful to understand that. Thankyou.

Mr Michael Pettersson MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The Referrals Team, within Children Youth and Families (CYF) Information, Referrals and Resources Unit (IRRU), was established in March 2025. IRRU assists families at any point of contact with CYF—whether from a single report, or when a Care and Protection Order is in place.

The Team strives to match families with services that best meet their needs and acts as a single point of access for CYF Practitioners and families to:

- CYF Panel Providers
- Community Service Providers
- Specialist services

Since its inception, the team has made the following referrals:

Provider Type	Number of Referrals	Start date
CYF Panel Providers	126	07/03/2025
Non CYF Panel Providers	142	11/04/2025

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Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of loops and strokes, positioned over the signature line.

Date: 24.11.25

By the Minister for Children, Youth and Families, Michael Pettersson MLA