



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock
MLA (Deputy Chair), Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

QUESTION ON NOTICE

ELIZABETH KIKKERT MLA: To ask the Minister for Families and Community Services

Ref: Budget Statement G, p.5 (Community Services Directorate)

In relation to: Implementing Next Steps for Our Kids

Date (Question Lodged by
Member): 29/08/2022 Date
(Question Sent to DLO):
31/08/2022

1. What is the current plan/timing for releasing detailed policy updates based on the strategy?
2. When will work begin on the charter of rights for carers?
3. Will any policy updates involving carers be released before the charter is complete, or will such policy updates be guided by the content of the charter?
4. It was stated in hearings that contracting for Next Steps will be in place from 1 July 2023. When will tenders open and close?
5. A new provider of residential care is currently being sought. How long will this contract be for, and how will it interact with the process of initiating new contracts for other OOHC providers next year?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Kikkert".

29 August 2022

MINISTER STEPHEN-SMITH MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows: –

1. Detailed implementation planning is currently underway. This includes the approach to develop the first 4-year action plan that will be co-designed with key stakeholders and is currently scheduled for release towards the end of 2022. This action plan will detail the timing and sequencing of priority initiatives and reform actions.
2. Development of the Charter of Rights for Carers will be part of the program of work under the first *Next Steps* action plan. Initial consultation discussions are being progressed. The Charter of Rights for Carers will align with work already in progress on the development of the Charter of Rights for Parents and Families.
3. There are several policy projects currently being progressed that respond to issues and considerations raised by carers. These relate particularly to increased involvement by carers in decision making and improved access to information. These projects will continue to be informed by stakeholder views as consultation is progressed on the Charter of Rights for Carers.

One project that may be of interest is the “try, test and learn pilot” of a new CYPs internal decision review process. The pilot is being overseen by the Internal Review of Decisions Learning and Improvement Committee, with advocates from partner agencies including Advocacy for Inclusion, Carers ACT and the ACT Human Rights Commission. Further information about this project, including information for parents and carers, is available here:

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/children/child-and-youth-protection-services/compliments-and-complaints/decision-reviews>.

4. Planning is underway to establish service provision from 1 July 2023 for out of home care services other than residential care. Tender dates are not yet known and are expected to be published via TendersACT.
5. The Territory is seeking a new residential services contract for an initial term of 3 years with 1 x 3 years and 2 x 1 year extensions (total contract duration of 8 years). The Territory will work with the new service provider and other existing service providers as required to comprehensively plan the implementation of this contract. Implementation plans will also be developed for other out of home care contracts.

As part of the Request for Proposal (RFP) and subsequent tender brief for residential care services, information was provided on other proposed services, arrangements and expected ways of working – noting that work is still underway to finalise these arrangements.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature:



Date: 7 | 9 | 22

By Minister Stephen-Smith, Minister for Families and Community Services