

Child and Family Focus SA (CAFFSA)

Residential Care Network

Summary of recent meetings

Over the last twelve months, the Residential Care Network has:

- contributed to CAFFSA's finalised 2022 Election Policies,
- refined an Industry Blueprint and Workforce Development Strategy Paper, noting the critical shortage of a qualified, skilled and available workforce to respond to the needs of the increasing number of children and young people coming into statutory care. It calls for funding to develop and implement a South Australian NGO family support industry blueprint and workforce development strategy
- had input into CAFFSA's paper calling for the adoption and implementation of a Reportable Conduct Scheme in South Australia, based on the NSW model, consistent with recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Such a scheme should provide independent oversight of the handling of child abuse and neglect allegations against sector employees and volunteers. It would oversee how organisations and institutions prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse and misconduct by employees and volunteers. It is required because there is currently no agency in SA that collects and retains information on allegations of all forms of child abuse and neglect, even if it does not reach the criminal threshold. What this means is that people can move across sectors or organisations with a long history of allegations made against them, with no way of organisations knowing this. There is also no organisation that has the capacity to assist agencies to improve their monitoring and responding to allegations of all forms of child abuse.
- contributed to the development of a background paper, prepared with input by each of CAFFSA's Network meetings and including a comprehensive scoping of the issues regarding contracting and licensing. It was prepared by reviewing minutes of all CAFFSA meetings and correspondence since 2019, interviews with key players and circulation of the draft document. The paper was forwarded to Policy and Advocacy Committee for review and then forwarded to DCP for consideration and to serve as a platform document summarising all sector concerns with the processes. DCP are currently working collaboratively with the sector to revise the Contracting and Licensing Framework in consultation with sector representatives.
- ran a number of specific purpose sessions for PaSP providers to consider issues, trends and concerns
- received a briefing and gave input into the CAFFSA and SHINE SA issued survey regarding the development of a statewide program of training and other supports for workers and carers in areas related to respectful relationships, protective behaviours, sexual safety and sexual and reproductive health. There were 22 agency respondents to the survey, representing 1,780 workers/carers. Less than half of the organisations had good access to training and other supports re protective behaviours; only 20% had good access to training and other supports re sexual and reproductive health, contraception, sexual safety and a third for respectful relationships. Establishment of a CAFFSA Technical Group will occur if specific

funding is made available, which is particularly important for the sector given the interface between complex trauma and sexual development.

- Contributed to the development of the sector briefing papers for the CAFFSA Members Forum in May, outlining major trends, issues and concerns facing our members and received a briefing on the outcome. “*Improving Family Wellbeing and Child Protection: What are our priorities for the next four years in SA?*” was held on 6 May 2022. Sixty-eight participants attended from 28 organisations with a series of interactive panel discussions. There were also five video presentations recorded especially for the forum.
- provided input for the Policy and Advocacy Committee’s consultation with staff from the Office for Data Analytics in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on the review of the Information Sharing Guidelines. The Information Sharing Guidelines are designed to give providers of services to children, young people and adults, confidence in sharing information to prevent harm or respond to current threats to safety and wellbeing and have direct impact on our members.
- received an update on the Alternative Care Sector Workforce Mapping Project which is conducting a sector mapping exercise of Family Based and Residential Care staff across three main priorities areas to identify key challenges faced by the workforce, and identify current gaps in the sector regarding the skills, expertise and knowledge required to improve the outcomes of children, young people and families in South Australia. The three main priority areas are:
 - Workforce Recruitment and Retention
 - Qualifications, Skills and Training
 - Skills, training and development needs and gaps
- consulted with their networks and contributed to the development of CAFFSA’s background paper and subsequent submission to the *Children and Young Person (Safety) Act 2017* that was announced by Minister for Child Protection the Hon. Katrine Hildyard on Tuesday 6th September 2022.
- consulted with their networks and contributed to the development of CAFFSA’s submission to the the Inquiry into the removal and placement of Aboriginal children in South Australia announced on 30 June, the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, April Lawrie.
- received a briefing on the National Therapeutic Residential Care Alliance