

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Service coordination in communities with high social needs

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Terms of reference

1. That the Standing Committee on Social Issues inquire into and report on service coordination in communities with high social needs, including:
 - (a) the extent to which government and non-government service providers are identifying the needs of clients and providing a coordinated response which ensures access to services both within and outside of their particular area of responsibility
 - (b) barriers to the effective coordination of services, including lack of client awareness of services and any legislative provisions such as privacy law
 - (c) consideration of initiatives such as the Dubbo Minister's Action Group and best practice models for the coordination of services, and
 - (d) any other related matter.
2. That the Committee report by 11 December 2015.

The terms of reference were referred to the committee by the Hon Troy Grant MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for Arts, Minister for Racing and Member for Dubbo. The committee adopted the terms of reference on 25 June 2015.

Committee membership

The Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC	The Nationals	<i>Chair</i>
The Hon Greg Donnelly MLC	Australian Labor Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
The Hon Shayne Mallard MLC	Liberal Party	
Revd the Hon Fred Nile MLC	Christian Democratic Party	
The Hon Dr Peter Phelps MLC	Liberal Party	
The Hon Penny Sharpe MLC	Australian Labor Party	

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Chair's foreword

The coordination of human services across government agencies, and between government and non-government organisations, has long been a goal of those involved in delivering these services to communities with high social needs. However, this inquiry has highlighted that there is still a long way to go to achieve effective service coordination for these communities.

The complexity and persistence of disadvantage in many communities necessitates a collaborative approach to ensure sustainable and positive change. There remain a number of barriers to overcome, including organisational silos, a lack of access to relevant and timely data and a knowledge gap between what is permitted by privacy law and what is practiced by service deliverers. There are also significant constraints within the funding environment, including the short-term length of funding periods.

A number of best practice principles for service coordination became apparent during the inquiry. Most notably, a collective impact framework was espoused as having great potential to transform the way in which services are coordinated. Critically, inquiry participants emphasised the importance of having a backbone organisation to drive, monitor and evaluate service coordination within a geographic area.

Too often we lose sight of the individuals and communities we are trying to help. Our visits to Claymore, Mount Druitt and Bourke reminded us of the importance of service coordination to ensure that our children and vulnerable members of our community have the chance to reach their full potential and contribute to the prosperity of our state. The people of New South Wales deserve nothing less.

We acknowledge the hard work that is being done throughout New South Wales, by government and non-government organisations, to provide support and assistance to communities with high social needs. We hope that this inquiry has highlighted what needs to be done to make it easier for them to achieve positive, enduring outcomes for the people and communities they serve.

The committee appreciates that there is no simple panacea to achieving service coordination for communities with high social needs. However, the New South Wales Government can do much more to make coordination easier and to give the human services sector the ability to more effectively meet the needs of their clients. We are optimistic that the suite of recommendations contained in this report will achieve better service coordination and a more holistic approach to addressing the needs of individuals and communities across the state.

Importantly, service coordination does not require additional funding – we just need to make better use of the resources we already have. Through coordination and collaboration, through a holistic outlook at both individual and community needs and through community ownership of programs, we can improve the quality of life for people in communities with high social needs.

On behalf of the committee, I express our sincere thanks to all who participated in the inquiry, from both the government and non-government sectors, who shared their expertise. I would like to particularly thank the people of Bourke, Claymore and Mount Druitt for welcoming us to their communities and sharing their experiences with us.

I thank my committee colleagues for their work and commitment. Each has brought a very valuable perspective to the inquiry, which has contributed greatly to the strength of this report. On their behalf, I thank the committee secretariat for their hard work and professionalism.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping tail.

The Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC
Committee Chair

Summary of recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **23**
 That the NSW Government develop a website that details the human services provided by both the government and non-government sector within particular geographic areas, and the eligibility requirements for the service.
- Recommendation 2** **32**
 That the NSW Government introduce key performance indicators for Secretaries of all government agencies that encourage collaboration, planning, co-design and alignment of outcomes in human services programs delivered by government and non-government agencies.
- Recommendation 3** **32**
 That the NSW Government implement a requirement in human service funding contracts to collect and measure data on program outcomes.
- Recommendation 4** **33**
 That the NSW Government include a process for community consultation at the design and evaluation stage that involves those who live in the targeted areas:
- for human service programs delivered by the government and
 - as part of funding agreements for non-government organisations contracted to deliver human services on behalf of the government.
- Recommendation 5** **33**
 That the NSW Government on at least an annual basis, and preferably more frequently, publish de-identified data, at both an aggregated and disaggregated level, from the Data Analytics Centre similar to the approach taken by Community Indicators Victoria.
- Recommendation 6** **33**
 That the NSW Government investigate the ability of the data sets released from the Data Analytics Centre to be used for research and other purposes.
- Recommendation 7** **46**
 That the Privacy Commissioner develop guidelines for both government and non-government organisations on appropriate information handling and information sharing, including information on how organisations can meet their obligations under the privacy framework when contracted to deliver services on behalf of the NSW Government.
- Recommendation 8** **46**
 That the NSW Government:
- establish the Privacy Commissioner as a central point of coordination with other bodies within the privacy field, both within New South Wales and federally
 - fund the Privacy Commissioner to assist in the development, implementation, training and oversight of adherence to the guidelines proposed in Recommendation 7.

- Recommendation 9** 46
That the NSW Government require the Secretaries of all government agencies involved in the delivery of human services to enter into memorandums of understanding on information sharing practices.
- Recommendation 10** 51
That the NSW Government undertake a review of the competitive tendering process for human services that:
- examines best practice models in other jurisdictions, particularly those that facilitate co-design, collaboration and joint tendering, and
 - includes consultation with non-government service providers.
- Recommendation 11** 57
That the NSW Government increase funding periods to a minimum of five years for human service providers, with the opportunity for an extension beyond this time.
- Recommendation 12** 57
That the NSW Government allow longer lead-times in tender preparation to encourage joint tenders from human service providers.
- Recommendation 13** 57
That the NSW Government:
- mandate that a percentage of the value of human service contracts is targeted to undertake service coordination, and
 - develop a key performance indicator to measure coordination and collaboration.
- Recommendation 14** 64
That the NSW Government establish One Place Service Centres in communities with high social needs across New South Wales, with a particular focus on Brewarrina, Claymore, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Wilcannia and Windale, the locations identified by the *Dropping off the Edge 2015* report as experiencing complex, concentrated and persistent disadvantage.
- Recommendation 15** 65
That the NSW Government evaluate the co-design approach being pursued on the Central Coast, with a view to utilising co-design in other geographic areas across New South Wales.
- Recommendation 16** 65
That the NSW Government engage in collaborative planning and funding allocation for all specific geographic areas that have communities with high social needs.
- Recommendation 17** 69
That the NSW Government:
- provide an additional five years of funding to the Maranguka Initiative, Bourke
 - provide an additional five years of funding to The Hive, Mount Druitt
 - nominate an additional five areas of high social needs in New South Wales to trial The Hive approach to service coordination, including in Claymore and in three regional and rural areas.

Recommendation 18

77

That the NSW Government support the establishment of a national Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation, together with linked state and territory counterparts.

Recommendation 19

77

That the NSW Government establish a state-based Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation, with the centre empowered to allocate funding for service coordination to backbone organisations.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the establishment and conduct of the inquiry, as well as an outline of the structure of this report.

Conduct of the inquiry

Terms of reference

- 1.1 The inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs was referred to the committee by the Hon Troy Grant MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Racing. The committee resolved to undertake the inquiry on 25 June 2015.¹
- 1.2 The terms of reference can be found on page iv.

Submissions

- 1.3 A media release announcing the inquiry and a call for submissions was sent to all media outlets in New South Wales. The committee also sought submissions by writing directly to individuals or organisations with a likely interest in the inquiry, including government agencies, non-government organisations and academics.
- 1.4 The committee received a total of 50 submissions from a range of stakeholders. A list of submissions is contained in Appendix 1.

Public hearings

- 1.5 The committee held three public hearings at Parliament House; the first on 28 August 2015, the second on 8 October 2015 and the final on 6 November 2015.
- 1.6 A list of witnesses is set out in Appendix 2 and published transcripts are available on the committee's website. A list of documents tabled at the public hearings is provided in Appendix 3.

Site visits

- 1.7 The committee conducted a number of site visits during the inquiry.
- 1.8 On Wednesday 7 October 2015, the committee visited The Hive, Mount Druitt. The committee met with representatives from The Hive, the Department of Family and Community Services and United Way to discuss strategies The Hive is currently implementing to achieve effective service coordination in the local area.

¹ *Minutes*, Legislative Council, 11 August 2015, p 268.

- 1.9** The committee also visited Claymore on 7 October 2015 where a panel of representatives from numerous services in the Claymore area, together with local residents, presented the successes and challenges of service coordination in Claymore.
- 1.10** On Thursday 5 November 2015 the committee travelled to Bourke. Whilst in Bourke, the committee had the opportunity to meet with local government, local service providers, government agencies and community members regarding service coordination in the Bourke region.
- 1.11** More comprehensive details about the site visits can be found in Appendix 5.

Structure of the report

- 1.12** Chapter 2 provides an overview of service coordination in New South Wales, including defining key terms and outlining the current service environment.
- 1.13** Issues in relation to information sharing and data collection are explored in chapter 3.
- 1.14** Chapter 4 looks at the issues surrounding privacy including the existing legislative framework and the organisational aversion to information sharing.
- 1.15** Chapter 5 discusses the impact that the current funding environment has on service coordination, including the competitive tendering model and the length of funding periods.
- 1.16** Chapter 6 highlights the best practice principles that have emerged during the inquiry process, together with a number of best practice programs.

Chapter 2 Service coordination

This chapter begins by providing an overview of service coordination, including defining key terms and outlining the current service environment. The chapter then reflects on the Dropping off the Edge 2015 report, which identified that communities with high social needs face disadvantages that are entrenched, persistent and complex. The chapter concludes by discussing the momentum for enhanced service coordination expressed by inquiry participants.

Overview of services

2.1 This section commences by defining two key terms for the inquiry: service coordination and high social needs. It then provides a brief overview of the services that are delivered to communities with high social needs. These services are delivered by government providers and/or the non-government sector.

Service coordination

2.2 The New South Wales Government observed that service coordination can occur along a scale of intensity, depending on what is appropriate to the circumstances. The range of factors which can help determine the intensity and type of coordination required include:

- the needs and experiences of the client receiving services
- the complexity, nature, and number of issues being addressed
- the objective of the coordination
- the number and nature of stakeholders
- geographic considerations
- resourcing constraints
- whether the coordination is being undertaken at a central (head office) or local level.²

2.3 The New South Wales Government identified five levels along the coordination spectrum, each of which is appropriate for use in different situations. These levels are:

- consultation, such as sharing information about service activities
- coordinated activity across agencies, including strategic plans with different agencies leading different elements, and referrals and case coordination across agencies
- joint service delivery at the client level, including integrated service delivery in response to particular issues and the co-location of service delivery
- joint service design and planning, such as collaboration at a systems level towards joint outcomes, pooled funding and co-commissioning of services
- structural reform, which may include the amalgamation of service providers.³

² Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 4.

³ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 5.

2.4 In undertaking this inquiry, the committee has considered activities ranging across the spectrum and how they can contribute to better outcomes for communities with high social needs.

High social needs

2.5 The New South Wales Government defines ‘high social needs’ as communities ‘...with a high proportion of people with multiple and complex issues, or those which perform poorly over multiple socio-economic indicators’.⁴ These indicators include:

- social distress, including financial distress, social exclusion and isolation
- health and/or disability issues
- community safety, including child maltreatment, rates of criminal activity, rates of domestic and family violence and prison admissions
- economic, including the skill level of the workforce, unemployment and housing stress
- education, including school readiness and performance, the engagement of young people in education and training, and the overall education level of the population.⁵

2.6 The New South Wales Government stated that it is communities with high social needs that would benefit the most from service coordination because ‘... no one agency is able to address the range of complex and interconnected needs which exist on their own.’⁶

Services provided

2.7 A number of government agencies deliver human services across New South Wales. The evidence gathered during this inquiry has mainly considered the services provided by three agencies that have responsibility for delivering a wide-ranging suite of human services: Department of Family and Community Services, NSW Health and the Department of Education. There has also been evidence received concerning justice issues, particularly in relation to domestic and family violence and youth.

2.8 In addition to services provided by the government sector, a large number of human services are delivered by the non-government sector. The government commissions the non-government sector to deliver a range of human services to communities.

2.9 Some inquiry participants highlighted the significant number of services that are being delivered to some communities, with minimal or non-existent coordination. For example, Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, said:

You talk about 200 services in Mount Druitt. There are Aboriginal communities where there are many more services than that ... Groote Eylandt⁷ is a really good

⁴ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 3.

⁵ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 3.

⁶ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 4.

⁷ Groote Eylandt is the largest island in the Gulf of Carpentaria in northeastern Australia. It is the homeland of, and is owned by, the Anindilyakwa people.

example of a massive number of services who are providing activity that is not coordinated in any way. You sometimes think you would be better just giving everyone a million dollars.⁸

- 2.10** Ms Ann Hoban, Director, City Life, City of Sydney, similarly observed the high number of programs being delivered within the City of Sydney, with specific reference to programs aimed at assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders:

... we engaged a consultant to look at all the services that were available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our local government area around social and economic support and for the 2,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents that we have, there were 192 services. You have to think that if there are 192 services available to that type of group, why is there still a problem? So clearly something is not working well.⁹

- 2.11** These comments highlight a key theme that ran through out the inquiry: the importance of coordinating services to ensure better outcomes for communities with high social needs.

Communities with high social needs

- 2.12** This section explores the characteristics of communities with high social needs. It commences by discussing the Dropping off the Edge 2015 report, the latest in a series of reports that examines social disadvantage across Australia. The report highlighted three features of communities with high social needs: persistence, entrenchment and complexity.

Dropping off the Edge 2015

- 2.13** The committee's inquiry coincided with the release of the *Dropping off the Edge 2015 – Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia*. The report is the latest in a series of four reports that examines the characteristics of disadvantage and identifies solutions to address it.¹⁰
- 2.14** The 2015 report identified a persistent, entrenched and complex web of disadvantage in a small number of communities throughout Australia:

Dropping off the Edge 2015 shows clearly that complex and entrenched disadvantage is experienced by a small number of communities in each state and territory across Australia and that such disadvantage is persistent over time.¹¹

- 2.15** In regard to New South Wales, *Dropping off the Edge 2015* found that disadvantage was persistently concentrated in a small number of communities. The submission from Catholic

⁸ Evidence, Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, 8 October 2015, p 59.

⁹ Evidence, Ms Ann Hoban, Director, City Life, City of Sydney, 28 August 2015, p 28.

¹⁰ Tony Vinson and, Margot Rawsthorne, with Adrian Beavis and Matthew Ericson, *Dropping off the Edge 2015 – Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia*, (hereafter referred to as *Dropping off the Edge 2015*) Advocacy statement – Urgent action needed to address disadvantage; Submission 38, Catholic Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Services, p 1.

¹¹ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, Advocacy statement – Urgent action needed to address disadvantage, p 1.

Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Services, sponsors of the report, outlined the findings:

In NSW the report examined 621 postcodes across 21 different indicators of disadvantage. The results showed that disadvantage was concentrated in a small number of communities with those living in the 3 per cent most disadvantaged communities, 3.6 times as likely to have spent time in prison and three times likely to be experiencing long term unemployment, low levels of education and domestic violence. Twenty four of the state's 40 most disadvantaged postcodes in the 2015 report were also found to be the most disadvantaged in 2007.¹²

2.16 The communities where disadvantage was most concentrated were Brewarrina, Claymore, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Wilcannia and Windale.¹³

2.17 Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, further elucidated on the concentration and characteristics of disadvantage during his appearance before the committee:

... six per cent of the postcodes in New South Wales will account for 49.5 per cent of the top ranking places across all of those indicators. When you look at the places that are multiply disadvantaged a certain profile appears, which has marked similarities to those in the rest of the country. In those areas that are most likely to have multiple disadvantages you will find high rates of criminal conviction, unemployment, domestic violence, prison admissions, lack of post school qualifications, juvenile offending, and young adults not in full-time work or education and training. They are the most prominent of the indicators which cluster within the multiply disadvantaged areas.¹⁴

2.18 Professor Vinson stated that the 'most compelling thing' about the ratings of communities in New South Wales was that '... nine of the 12 places were on the same shortlist 15 years ago. So there has not been much movement'.¹⁵

2.19 The *Dropping off the Edge* advocacy statement argued that a new approach is required to address this deep-seated disadvantage. This new approach should comprise:

... a multi-layered, cooperative and coordinated strategy that is owned and driven by the community. It must involve all layers of government and the business and community sectors, reflecting shared responsibility and joint commitment to resolve this entrenched problem. The strategy must take account of the unique characteristics and circumstances of local communities and must be sustained over the long term.¹⁶

2.20 The *Dropping off the Edge* advocacy statement contended that the new approach should encompass the following elements:

- targeted - the response must be targeted or concentrated to specific areas that meet the most severe criteria for disadvantage

¹² Submission 38, Catholic Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Services, p 1.

¹³ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, NSW Fact sheet, p 3.

¹⁴ Evidence, Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge*, 28 August 2015, p 18.

¹⁵ Evidence, Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge*, 28 August 2015, p 19.

¹⁶ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, Advocacy statement – Urgent action needed to address disadvantage, p 2.

- tailored – the policies, programs and approach to dealing with disadvantage in a community must be tailored to that community’s needs and supplemented by informed audits of the existing programs in that locality
- integrated and cooperative - must address the multiple and interrelated causes and exacerbating factors that underpin the entrenched nature of disadvantage, and should therefore involve cooperation between relevant agencies and organisations
- a long term horizon – a long-term, bipartisan commitment is vital
- community owned and driven – community leaders must be engaged to drive sustained change.¹⁷

2.21 The report recommended the establishment of a national Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation to identify and assist communities with high social needs and concentrated disadvantage. The centre should be located to:

... facilitate its coordination of community service initiatives by government and non-government organisations, and undertake rigorous collaborative evaluations of community strengthening projects. It should be established on a basis that enables it to gather full statistical information on local populations while adhering to existing data confidentiality guidelines, in the manner illustrated by the present project. The Centre should continue to develop and refine the data gathering and dissemination of community wellbeing information pioneered by a number of non-government agencies over recent decades, including the sponsors of the present project.¹⁸

2.22 The report continued to suggest that the national centre should be supported by ‘... the creation of counterpart state and territory units performing linked coordinating, educational and evaluation functions’.¹⁹

2.23 The proposed national centre will be discussed further in chapter 6.

2.24 The Dropping off the Edge report also emphasised the necessity of a long term commitment beyond electoral cycles to address the complex web of disadvantage:

Given the persistence of documented cumulative disadvantage in a number of Australian communities, it is unrealistic to expect rapid short-term improvements following brief community strengthening interventions. What is needed is a firm political and administrative commitment to staying the distance with a manageable number of highly disadvantaged communities ...²⁰

Entrenched, multifaceted disadvantage

2.25 In addition to the Dropping off the Edge 2015 report findings, a number of inquiry participants also observed that communities with high social needs are frequently

¹⁷ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, Advocacy statement – Urgent action needed to address disadvantage, pp 2-3.

¹⁸ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, pp 11-12.

¹⁹ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, p 12.

²⁰ *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, p 13.

characterised by entrenched, multi-faceted disadvantage. In order to address such complex disadvantage, it was argued that commitment to change must be sustained over the long term.

- 2.26** A number of inquiry participants highlighted the multi-faceted nature of disadvantage experienced by some people. Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, identified that clients seeking help from human services are likely to have a range of issues that they need assistance with, including mental health, housing and employment:

People, you have probably already heard, as the theme presenting at these services rarely come with one issue. Often they might come for a voucher to pay for an energy bill but may also be struggling with a range of concurrent issues related to the risk of homelessness, unemployment, mental ill health and relationship stress. Those are a few of the often presenting issues.²¹

- 2.27** Domestic Violence NSW noted that there is often a linkage between the rates of domestic and family violence and the disadvantage experienced by a community:

More often than not, communities with high social needs have a high correlation of domestic and family violence rates. While reporting abuse and seeking support is increasing within all communities, the corresponding critical investment has not grown to meet the demand on all parts of the system.²²

- 2.28** Centacare Southwest NSW noted that rural and regional communities are ‘unfairly carrying the burden’ of complex and entrenched disadvantage:

Experiences of disadvantage in Australia are not evenly distributed across the community: they are geographically concentrated, complex and persistent and rural, regional and remote are disproportionately represented.²³

- 2.29** The Smith Family noted the intergenerational impacts of entrenched disadvantage for both the community and for service providers attempting to assist families and individuals with complex needs:

When social disadvantage becomes entrenched in a community it can lead to intergenerational disadvantage and poorer outcomes for children and families... In many of these neighbourhoods there is often a narrower range of health, education and community services available and services are often more difficult to access. Additionally, those existing local services can find it challenging to respond effectively to the complex needs of the families in these communities and have difficulties engaging with vulnerable and marginalized families.²⁴

- 2.30** In order to address entrenched, multifaceted disadvantage, inquiry participants argued that a long term commitment to change is required. For example, Liverpool City Council suggested that the failure by government to take a long term view of change has inhibited attempts at service coordination:

²¹ Evidence, Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, 28 August 2015, p 36.

²² Submission 11, Domestic Violence NSW, p 3.

²³ Submission 2, Centacare Southwest NSW, p 1.

²⁴ Submission 37, The Smith Family, p 3.

Several factors have been identified consistently to act against successful partnership working and the co-ordination of service delivery:

- the failure, on the part of policy makers, to take a long term view of effecting change. Poverty is deep-rooted, multi-dimensional and complex. There are no ‘quick-fix’ solutions
- compounding the above failure is the tyranny of the short-term funding cycles. Securing the resources, both financial and human, necessary to break the cycle of disadvantage and sustain change is dependent on bi-partisan political support over time.²⁵

2.31 The Smith Family said: ‘... perseverance is required and it is unrealistic to expect rapid short term improvements following brief community strengthening interventions’.²⁶

2.32 The Australian Medical Association (NSW) concurred that efforts to affect positive change must be sustained over time:

To address chronic and complex social and related health needs, we must recognise that massive social change requires massive social investment, sustained over time, which spreads new and existing innovations that are proven effective. The hard work that’s necessary to build sustainable institutions that foster justice, opportunity, and health cannot be short-circuited.²⁷

2.33 Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, further noted that ‘getting coordination across that range [of services] is key and needs to be done but is hard yakka’.²⁸

Momentum for enhanced service coordination

2.34 Inquiry participants identified a number of barriers which impede service coordination.²⁹ For example, the Benevolent Society highlighted constraints to effective coordination, but noted that not every issue is experienced in each area where the society delivers services:

- lack of resources, both personnel and funding, for coordination
- failure to involve the community and the non-government sector in planning for service delivery
- difficulties in obtaining and maintaining consistent and meaningful government involvement in coordination mechanisms
- inconsistent or inadequate sharing of information and inability to easily access up-to-date information on funded activities in an area
- inconsistent commitment to meaningful coordination

²⁵ Submission 26, Liverpool City Council, p 6.

²⁶ Submission 37, The Smith Family, p 7.

²⁷ Submission 30, Australian Medical Association (NSW), p 4.

²⁸ Evidence, Ms Field, 8 October 2015, p 59.

²⁹ See for example Submission 2, Centacare Southwest NSW, p 1; Submission 8, Shellharbour City Council, p 3; Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 9; Submission 23, Lifetime Connect, p 4; Submission 33, Wellington Council, p 2; and Submission 40, Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth, p 1, Submission 30, Australian Medical Association (NSW), p 5.

- lack of communication and coordination within state government ('silos'), as well as between federal and state government leading to duplication of funding and services
- lack of access to the full range of services to meet community needs
- competition for government funding
- lack of robust quality standards and systems across all activities to ensure the quality of services being provided to communities based on sound empirical evidence
- lack of knowledge and skills on how to coordinate effectively in staff from many organisations.³⁰

2.35 The Benevolent Society concluded: '[i]mproving coordination of services alone will not solve this problem. Collectively, we need to think more creatively about how to best reach those who are hardest to reach and who are most in need of help'.³¹

2.36 Many of these barriers will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters, including data collection and sharing (chapter 3), privacy concerns (chapter 4) and the funding environment (chapter 5).

2.37 Despite the existence of these barriers, inquiry participants expressed overwhelming support for improved coordination between government agencies, and between the government and non-government service providers, as a means of achieving better outcomes for communities with high social needs.³² Inquiry participants identified a number of potential benefits to coordination, and encouraged the government to pursue a collaborative approach to service delivery.

2.38 The New South Wales Government expressed a commitment to achieving service coordination to improve the effectiveness of service delivery across New South Wales:

NSW is committed to improving the way services are delivered to achieve better outcomes for vulnerable people. This is particularly important in communities with high social needs, where the existence of multiple complex needs can also be compounded by locational disadvantage. Service coordination can improve the effectiveness of service delivery as it addresses the difficult issues of fragmented and siloed service responses, and supports client centered services which are responsive to the needs of the community.³³

2.39 Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, reiterated this commitment to better service coordination, and indicated that there are different approaches to coordination that may best fit different communities:

³⁰ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 9.

³¹ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 9.

³² See for example Submission 4, MacKillop Family Services, p 1; Submission 25, The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, p 2; Submission 26, Liverpool City Council, p 1; Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, pp 6-7.

³³ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 3.

Our experience has demonstrated that it is really vital to undertake service coordination when we are working in communities with high social needs. As we know, often people in those communities have multiple needs that span agency boundaries and service boundaries, and it is really important that we coordinate and work together ... that there are many different approaches to doing this and often a one-size-fits-all is not the right approach across the State. We need to be flexible to adapt to communities and the particular issues in local areas.³⁴

- 2.40** The Information and Privacy Commission commented on the critical importance of information exchange, together with transparent guidelines to facilitate that exchange, in enabling service coordination and thus better meeting client need:

... there can be pockets of intense social, economic and cultural disadvantage where communities have severe and complex needs that extend across employment, education, parenting support, domestic violence, accommodation and housing and health services. Meeting these needs requires effective consultation, planning and delivery of often siloed services in a coordinated, client-focused way ... Effective coordination is easier with purposeful exchange of information based on sound, structured decision making that is also transparent and open so as to maximise community participation and trust.³⁵

- 2.41** Ms Hoban, City of Sydney, expressed strong support for coordinated service models across all levels of government and with the non-government sector in order to achieve ‘... proactive and preventive community-strengthening strategies – as opposed to reactive actions’.³⁶

- 2.42** Cabramatta Community Centre noted the importance of effective service coordination in building a cohesive society where all people are able to reach their potential:

We strongly believe that effective service coordination is critical to the effective provision of the full range of services needed by our communities. This in turn contributes to building a socially cohesive society where those that are severely disadvantaged are not left behind.³⁷

- 2.43** The Australian Medical Association (NSW) expressed support for improved coordination as a critical means of addressing the ‘intertwined’ needs of groups with high social needs, particularly in regard to improving health related outcomes:

The intertwined nature of the needs of many disadvantaged groups mean that a coordinated response involving a combination of services working together is required to deliver a comprehensive solution to the concurrent and bidirectional problems present in these groups. The AMA (NSW) recognises the need for more efficient arrangements to support the provision of well-coordinated multidisciplinary care to communities with high social needs, particularly groups vulnerable to chronic and complex health care needs.³⁸

³⁴ Evidence, Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 8 October 2015, p 2.

³⁵ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, pp 1-2.

³⁶ Evidence, Ms Hoban, 28 August 2015, p 26.

³⁷ Submission 31, Cabramatta Community Centre, p 1.

³⁸ Submission 30, Australian Medical Association (NSW), p 2.

- 2.44** Greater Taree City Council highlighted that achieving a more collaborative approach is especially important for regional and rural communities that have limited access to services:

Collaborative approach is essential for regional communities to address gaps and create efficiencies, because it provides an opportunity to share resources, reduce duplication of services and maximise outcomes for clients. Additional to this, collaborative approach is important because access to resources in regional areas can be limited. Organisations in metropolitan areas are able to use economies of scale to provide additional resources to collaborative projects. Community services within regional areas do not have access to the same opportunities and often collaborative projects are limited to a core group of organisations who have the capacity to support additional projects.³⁹

- 2.45** Parramatta City Council observed that in order to address entrenched disadvantage in communities with high social needs, better service coordination together with action to improve economic, physical and social infrastructure was required:

Many key issues in communities with high social needs can be long term, interrelated, ‘wicked’ and with histories of failed attempts to tackle them. Collective capabilities, fashioned to tackle the primary causes of complex social issues need to be encouraged ... Better services coordination, of itself, is unlikely to achieve major changes in quality of life, standards of living and social exclusion in communities with significant social needs. However, when applied with other efforts to improve local economies and jobs, to enhance physical and social infrastructure and to expand secure and affordable housing options, better services coordination can deliver strong results.⁴⁰

- 2.46** The Smith Family was encouraged by recent efforts from the New South Wales Government to coordinate service delivery and identified where future collaborative efforts should be focussed:

We are heartened by the clear efforts across the NSW Government to better coordinate service delivery across departments to provide holistic person centred services. This has been an appropriate response to the complex and interrelated issues faced by people experiencing disadvantage. We strongly encourage the NSW government to continue and further strengthen these initiatives and to consider moving to the next step of pooled funding and devolved responsibility for decision making to local community governance arrangements.⁴¹

Committee comment

- 2.47** The committee acknowledges the complexity and entrenchment of disadvantage for many communities across New South Wales. We also note the important work of the Dropping off the Edge report series in highlighting that much work remains to be done to address disadvantage, and identifying ways in which positive change can be achieved.
- 2.48** The committee notes the lack of government coordination across agencies, with too many overlapping programs and little documented commitment to shared outcomes.

³⁹ Submission 21, Greater Taree City Council, p 1.

⁴⁰ Submission 49, Parramatta City Council, p 15.

⁴¹ Submission 37, The Smith Family, p 6.

- 2.49** We are encouraged by the enthusiasm of all inquiry participants for better service coordination, including the support that the New South Wales Government has expressed towards pursuing collaborative approaches to service delivery. Indeed, while the coming chapters demonstrate that there is a long way to go to achieve effective service coordination, the New South Wales Government has commenced a number of initiatives that aim to provide better coordination in communities with high social needs. The non-government sector has also put much effort into better service coordination initiatives.
- 2.50** The remaining chapters of this report will make a number of recommendations that we consider will address many of the barriers to coordination and facilitate better outcomes for communities with high social needs.

Chapter 3 Information sharing and data collection

This chapter will explore the key issues in relation to information sharing and data collection. It commences with a discussion of the impact of government agency silos on service coordination, before examining the need to undertake an analysis of the services available to communities in New South Wales. The chapter then looks at the issue of data collection, including what should be measured, community involvement in data collection and the comparability and accessibility of data.

Information sharing

- 3.1** Inquiry participants identified three aspects of information sharing that can both help and hinder service coordination. Firstly, the existence of silos between government agencies was highlighted as a significant barrier. Secondly, the geographical alignment of service boundaries was considered by many inquiry participants as an attempt to overcome these silos. Finally, the lack of awareness of precisely what services are available in any particular area of New South Wales and throughout the state was seen as a significant barrier to service coordination.
- 3.2** Each of these three issues is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Silos

- 3.3** A major barrier to service coordination identified by inquiry participants was the existence of silos between government agencies, and between government agencies and non-government organisations. For example, Lifetime Connect noted that the ‘continuing practice of many government agencies to think and plan in silos’ exacerbates difficulties in achieving coordination.⁴²
- 3.4** The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre warned that ‘[a]gencies operating in ‘silos’, never straying beyond what they regard as their ‘core business’, can cause entire systems to fall apart’.⁴³ As an example of the negative impact of siloed approaches, the centre cited the lack of coordination between Corrective Services and other government departments such as Housing NSW in assisting people transitioning out of custody into the community:

The difficulty in lining up services such as accommodation, health care and drug rehabilitation before being released from custody often results in the refusal of bail or parole, or the imposition of a custodial sentence by default because no other options are available. Regrettably we are often frustrated by a lack of coordination between government services. We would suggest that a ‘whole of government approach’ appears to be lacking, and at times it appears that different government agencies are pursuing conflicting policy agendas. One of the most glaring examples is the lack of coordination between Corrective Services and other government agencies, particularly Housing NSW, for prisoners who are released or seeking to be released from custody.⁴⁴

⁴² Submission 23, Lifetime Connect, p 4.

⁴³ Submission 25, The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, p 7.

⁴⁴ Submission 25, The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, p 4.

- 3.5** Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, commented that the existence of silos created significant additional work for non-government organisations in regard to contract management and reporting requirements:

There is a question: What does Government do that makes my life or our lives more difficult? There is the old chestnut of silos. There is a lot of government, a lot of different departments and a lot of different agencies each with its own contracting model and its own set of reports that we need to submit and data we need to collect... Those government agencies seek different kinds of data. They ask similar questions, which may be slightly different. So, there are number of different departments with a number of different expectations – slightly similar but quite different at the same time. Managing and engaging with that, and trying to get some sort of coordination and alignment with all of that is pretty time-consuming, and can be resource intensive for an organisation such as ours.⁴⁵

- 3.6** Ms Karen Willis, Board member, Domestic Violence NSW and Chief Executive Officer, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia, commented on the negative repercussions of a siloed approach for people who experience domestic or family violence, arguing that a high-level approach to coordination is required:

What we have in New South Wales when it comes to sexual assault and domestic violence is a spread of responsibility across, certainly, police, Family and Community Services, Health and Attorney General's, and then there are numbers of other bits and pieces all over the place. At that strategic coordination level we have no coordination; we have silos. And often – over and over again – we find that one department is doing exactly the same as another or is doing the complete opposite in the same space and they are not talking to each other about it. So that is, I think, the first thing: we need to have that high-level coordination brought together under the Premier's control within his department.⁴⁶

- 3.7** Ms Willis further suggested that government and non-government organisations must work closely together, commencing at the policy planning stage, to ensure that all organisations involved in delivering services to communities with high social needs are focussed on achieving the same outcomes:

The second thing is that we need to get rid of the divide between the services provided by non-government organisations and government agencies. They all need to be on the ground together at the start of a process, rather than government services waiting for the final sign-off of documents before consulting the non-government sector. Non-government organisations should be brought in in the first place, to look at the blueprints, the strategies and the key issues, to work with government to find solutions ...⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Evidence, Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, 8 October 2015, p 48.

⁴⁶ Evidence, Ms Karen Willis, Board member, Domestic Violence NSW and Chief Executive Officer, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia, 28 August 2015, p 4.

⁴⁷ Evidence, Ms Willis, 28 August 2015, p 4.

Aligning service boundaries

- 3.8** In an attempt to overcome silos, a number of government agencies are aligning their service boundaries. Most notably, the Department of Family and Community Services together with NSW Health have geographically aligned their service boundaries across 15 districts, as noted in the New South Wales Government submission:

The Department of Family and Community Services has aligned the services streams of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Community Services and Housing NSW at a local level in districts aligned to Local Health District boundaries. This was in recognition of the significant overlap of common clients, and that service delivery could be improved through fostering greater coordination through a more cohesive and aligned structure. Health and social care are inextricably linked. There are multiple government programs, at the State and national level, serving the needs of people with high social needs, from health, aged care and disability, to housing, education, employment and social services. The aligned structures make service delivery and planning easier.⁴⁸

- 3.9** The New South Wales Government submission also advised that while the Department of Education does not have service boundaries, it is possible to generate data and information across a comparable geographic area to assist in better coordination:

While the Department of Education does not have regional boundaries, it has considered ways in which data and information can be shared in a meaningful way across agencies enabling planning at the local level to meet the needs of children and young people.⁴⁹

- 3.10** Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, explained how this boundary alignment assists better coordination:

We have observed that having some complementary organisation boundaries across our government agencies has helped these processes and helped people be able to work collaboratively and to think about services because the people around the table are responsible for those in the same areas.⁵⁰

- 3.11** Inquiry participants were encouraged by this move, expressing optimism about the potential benefits of the boundary alignment for coordination of service delivery. For example, the City of Wagga Wagga observed that the council ‘... valued recent realignment of NSW Health and Family and Community Services boundaries to increase opportunities for collaborative service provision’.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, pp 10-11.

⁴⁹ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 11.

⁵⁰ Evidence, Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 8 October 2015, p 3.

⁵¹ Submission 9, City of Wagga Wagga, p 1.

- 3.12** Ms Ann Hoban, Director, City Life, City of Sydney, similarly said: ‘We really welcome the introduction of consistent boundaries across the State’s Health, Education, Family and Community Services departments. That is going to help us a lot’.⁵²
- 3.13** NSW Family Services, the peak body for non-government, not for profit organisations working with vulnerable children, advised that it had established a district representation program to match the Family and Community Services and Health boundaries. Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Family Services, explained their approach:
- In response to Family and Community Services [FACS] localisation process, NSW Family Services [FamS] established a district reps program. We have had one of our members in each of the districts put their hand up to be our go-to locally. They are very well connected and respected within their local district, but we bring those 15 district reps together six times a year to talk to us – three face-to-face, three on the phone and then however many else we need – to really touch base around what is happening locally.⁵³
- 3.14** As a consequence of this approach, NSW Family Services has been able to ‘... not only have a real and valuable presence locally, but create a forum to identify and debate emerging systemic issues affecting service delivery and access pathways for clients’.⁵⁴

Service mapping

- 3.15** As noted in chapter 2, there are an array of services provided by both government and non-government agencies. However, a recurrent theme throughout the inquiry was that there is no awareness of precisely what services are available. The lack of clarity of service availability creates confusion amongst both clients and service providers over what services can be accessed within a geographic area, as well as being a barrier to planning for future service delivery. It was suggested that to overcome this problem a comprehensive analysis of available services be undertaken. This is known as service mapping.
- 3.16** Mr Thomas Nance, Community Sector Development Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum, highlighted the critical importance of determining what services were available:
- ... we need to go a step back in terms of reliable information in the sector in terms of what is going on, what organisations are out there and what organisations are funded to do ... The first step is knowing what is out there, knowing who is who at the zoo. I think that is a massive barrier in terms of quality service planning. If we do not have that data there we can only do so much. When we talk about reform whether it is at a Family and Community Services level, a Federal level or whatever level, if we do not have the data about what is out there we are not going to be making the best choices we can and being client centred. We need to have that data.⁵⁵

⁵² Evidence, Ms Ann Hoban, Director, City Life, City of Sydney, 28 August 2015, p 27.

⁵³ Evidence, Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Family Services, 6 November 2015, p 16.

⁵⁴ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 2.

⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Community Sector Development Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum, 6 November 2015, p 6.

3.17 The Benevolent Society considered that '[e]ffective planning and service coordination requires access to information about the full range of services which are being funded and delivered in a given area'.⁵⁶ The society continued to note that '[u]p-to-date data and information which is accessible to communities and service providers is currently not available for many of the communities in which The Benevolent Society works'.⁵⁷

3.18 Carers NSW argued that service mapping is required to develop a comprehensive understanding of the service landscape and to also identify service gaps:

The first step towards improving integration and coordination of services is comprehensive service mapping, which allows all stakeholders to see how communities with high social needs are currently being serviced. Service mapping allows government and non-government agencies to understand the service landscape, and highlight what is working, and where there are service gaps.⁵⁸

3.19 Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, argued that it was essential to have a 'bird's eye view' of available services to ensure that any proposed reforms did not disrupt or duplicate existing service networks:

I would like to think that before a funding reform process or agenda is considered there is a really intensive bird's eye view of what is going on in a particular region or districts and what is already working. I think what we need to do is to actually figure out what the landscape is, because there is often a perverse result when you go in with a very good idea about a reform agenda. It might even have extra funding attached. But it can have the actual opposite effect by dismantling what is already there. In short, I think it is about having a really good look at what is already happening.⁵⁹

3.20 The Cabramatta Community Centre said that service mapping would be especially useful given the complexity and fragmentation of the service environment:

... given the complex and fragmented nature of the service system, both service providers and clients in need of services struggle to understand and keep up to date with the range of resources and services available in their areas. The effect of this is simple – when we are not aware of a service, we cannot fill the gaps in our own services and enable our clients to access it. From our experience, this in turn results in many of our clients slipping through the cracks.⁶⁰

3.21 Ms Maxine Mackay, a community member from Bourke, highlighted the value of service mapping in identifying areas of duplication: 'I don't know how many services we have in Bourke, we were talking about doing an audit of service provisions, so you can identify the gaps and duplication, as to perhaps why two or three services are being funded to do the same job'.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 8.

⁵⁷ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 8.

⁵⁸ Submission 7, Carers NSW, p 4.

⁵⁹ Evidence, Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, 28 August 2015, p 37.

⁶⁰ Submission 31, Cabramatta Community Centre, p 6.

⁶¹ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke.

3.22 The Bourke Area Health Service raised a similar issue, observing that there is no single reference point of service provision that identifies service providers, leading to the duplication of services without achieving efficiency in service delivery.⁶²

3.23 Richmond Valley Council commented on the difficulties in keeping up to date information on services, meaning that people requiring assistance often do not know what help is available:

Individuals who need services do not know where to start when looking for services. There have been efforts from organisations, Council and Neighbourhood Centres to collate information on services, but it is very difficult to include every service and keep information up to date (e.g. considering funding is sourced from different places and so services and programs disappear and reappear).⁶³

3.24 CentaCare (Wilcannia/Forbes) explained that ‘[s]ervice users are confused by the number and diversity of service providers’:

From a client’s perspective the service provider network is complicated, overwhelming and on occasions impossible to navigate; i.e. a parent dealing with a teenager showing early signs of mental illness does not know where to start looking for support unlike a parent whose child is presenting with a tooth ache who knows immediately that the dentist is the first place to visit for assistance. This issue is inflated by

- the short lifetime of programs due to short term funding;
- the tight parameters of programs (i.e. prescribed target group, geographical area);
- the changing names of programs and service providers

Service users are most likely to access a service if there is consistency, simplicity and a continuum of service delivery.⁶⁴

3.25 When asked if Blacktown City Council would be able to identify the services provided within the council’s geographic footprint, Mr Tony Barnden, Manager, Community Development, Blacktown City Council, responded:

Probably not. I would know all of the services that operate and we would have information about the services, but their catchments and their programs vary quite considerably ... While we might have a service directly that describes where it is at that does not tell you how the service is operating or whether it has a waiting list.⁶⁵

3.26 Ms Hoban also acknowledged the complexity of service mapping, indicating that the City of Sydney found it difficult to identify all the services available within the city:

I am not sure that I can say that we have mapped all the services because it is quite a complex issue. There is a question of: Are the services physically in the city and then

⁶² Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke.

⁶³ Submission 3, Richmond Valley Council, pp 2-3. Submission 16 from The Fairfield LGA Community Organisations made a similar observation.

⁶⁴ Submission 50, CentaCare (Wilcannia/Forbes), p 1.

⁶⁵ Evidence, Mr Tony Barnden, Manager, Community Development, Blacktown City Council, 6 November 2015, p 25.

do they operate nationally or statewide or do they just have their head office in the city but the actual service operation happens somewhere else?⁶⁶

- 3.27** Ms Juana Reinoso, Chief Executive Officer, Cabramatta Community Centre, explained that much of this complexity stems from the increasing use of consortia and sub-contracting to deliver services to communities with high social needs:

Given the way services are funded at the moment, a database could not simplify something so complex. The view held by many services is that government prefers organisations to put in for tenders as consortiums. There has been a trend lately for services to join up and provide tenders as consortiums. That can lead to people subcontracting. Even though one organisation is delivering the program, it could have five or six different subcontractors. People would know that organisation X is delivering the program, but the subcontractors that are delivering it in different areas might not come up in a directory that lists the funded organisations.⁶⁷

- 3.28** In considering available tools to undertake mapping, Mr Barnden suggested that the Links database, which is used by local councils and available to the public, is a current instrument for determining what services are available with a local government area:

We have an online directory and once a year we contact every organisation and say, 'Please update your material'. When you go into this online directory you can use the words 'homelessness, Rooty Hill' and it will give you the list of every funded organisation and non-funded organisation from a geographic point that takes you all the way out to 10 kilometres.⁶⁸

- 3.29** However, due to the complexity of the service environment, the database does not provide the necessary granular detail of what is available and where. Ms Susan Gibbeson, Manager, Social Development, Fairfield City Council, explained: 'It does not have the fine grain level of information you need and because funding is shorter term and things are constantly changing it is a fluid situation.'⁶⁹

- 3.30** Ms Reinoso also noted the difficulties of utilising the Links database: 'It is complex to navigate because a person needs to know exactly what category their issue falls under ... It lists the lead agency, not necessarily the organisations that are delivering it on the ground'.⁷⁰

- 3.31** Mr David Lilley, Director, The Hive, Mount Druitt, advised that The Hive was attempting to develop a service directory application for mobile devices with assistance from Random Hacks of Kindness, Western Sydney University, and the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation. However, Mr Lilley indicated that it was an exceptionally difficult undertaking given the complexity of the service environment.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Evidence, Ms Hoban, 28 August 2015, p 28.

⁶⁷ Evidence, Ms Juana Reinoso, Chief Executive Officer, Cabramatta Community Centre, 6 November 2015, p 38. Funding arrangements are discussed in chapter 5.

⁶⁸ Evidence, Mr Barnden, 6 November 2015, p 25.

⁶⁹ Evidence, Ms Susan Gibbeson, Manager, Social Development, Fairfield City Council, 6 November 2015, pp 25-26.

⁷⁰ Evidence, Ms Reinoso, 6 November 2015, p 38.

⁷¹ Tabled document, The Hive, Mount Druitt, *The Hive Journey – whiteboard presentation*, 7 October 2015. The Hive project is discussed further in chapter 6.

Patchwork – a government initiative for information sharing

3.32 A government initiative identified by inquiry participants as assisting improved service coordination through information sharing was Patchwork, an IT solution used by the Department of Family and Community Services. Patchwork ‘...enables service providers to establish a team of cross agency workers for clients, identify key contacts and send team messages through a single mobile enabled online tool’.⁷²

3.33 Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services, explained that Patchwork is being rolled out across the department, and is showing positive signs of sharing information about a client across the network of services that may be addressing their particular needs, including non-government organisations:

It is where you very clearly get permission from the client to be able to share with whom in your network is important. You might have the mental health nurse, you might have the school counsellor, you might have a range of people. It is beautiful visually ... The client can see it, but each agency can see it. If I am the teacher I cannot say, ‘I could not possibly ring the mental health nurse because I do not know if I have got permission’ because you do; you have been given the number and the permission from the client. So it really opens it out.⁷³

3.34 Ms Walk noted the positive response from clients in achieving better linkages across their service providers, together with Patchwork’s ease of use:

What we found is that clients generally want to give permission to all of these groups to be able to talk to each other about their care and support. Patchwork is a great example and it is good because visually you can see it, it is clear and it manages the privacy issues very well because some people do not want all of their history shared with everybody but they do want each other to talk with one another.⁷⁴

3.35 Mr Brian Smyth King, Executive Director Learning and Engagement, School Operations and Performance Division, Department of Education, commented that the strength of Patchwork is the connectivity it provides to all service providers assisting an individual, as well as reducing the need for a client to continually re-explain their needs:

The Patchwork profile does not give you the detail of what they might have shared with a particular service or provider but it tells you that that person or that organisation has been involved. So it enables you to make the contact and the phone calls ... Patchwork works very well for us in the places where we have been able to use it and build on it in that people are quite willing and happy to trust somebody else to assist them in telling their story rather than they having to go and tell their story three, four, 500 times over because everybody is a new person.⁷⁵

⁷² Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 12.

⁷³ Evidence, Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services, 8 October 2015, p 31.

⁷⁴ Evidence, Ms Walk, 8 October 2015, p 31.

⁷⁵ Evidence, Mr Brian Smyth King, Executive Director Learning and Engagement, School Operations and Performance Division, Department of Education, 8 October 2015, p 31.

- 3.36** The City of Wagga Wagga commented that while there was support for the ongoing roll-out of Patchwork from service providers in the region, there remained some concern about the potential for breaches of privacy:

Wagga Wagga has maintained an understanding of the direction of FACS to implement a database to increase service coordination through an online portal 'Patchwork'. Whilst a number of service providers have expressed an interest and some have actively encouraged staff participation there remains a degree of concern in relation to possible breaches of privacy and confidentiality.⁷⁶

Committee comment

- 3.37** The committee notes the concerns of inquiry participants that government agencies acting as silos greatly inhibits the ability to achieve service coordination and welcomes the move to boundary alignment for government agencies providing services. This will assist with breaking down the silos and moving towards better service coordination.
- 3.38** The committee is concerned that there is no clear understanding of what services are available to communities across New South Wales, which may lead to service duplication and gaps in services for particular areas of need. This can also create a significant impediment for individuals or communities seeking and accessing the services they need.
- 3.39** As noted in chapter 2, the *Dropping of the Edge 2015* report stated that a new approach to service coordination should include informed audits of existing programs in each high needs locality. Whilst the committee acknowledges the complexities inherent in service mapping, we nonetheless consider that it is a worthwhile initiative that will ensure that finite resources are appropriately directed.
- 3.40** The committee believes that the New South Wales Government should develop a website that details the services the government provides within particular geographic areas, and the eligibility requirements for the service. In addition, as part of their contractual relationships with the New South Wales Government, non-government organisations should provide the same information on their programs, including any delivered by sub-contractors. Non-government service providers that receive their funding from sources other than the New South Wales Government should be encouraged to provide the same information to ensure a comprehensive service map. This information should then be published as soon as practicable.

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government develop a website that details the human services provided by both the government and non-government sector within particular geographic areas, and the eligibility requirements for the service.

- 3.41** The committee considers that Patchwork has great potential to facilitate improved service coordination for communities with high social needs. We are encouraged that the Department of Family and Community Services is continuing to roll out the Patchwork system and are

⁷⁶ Submission 9, City of Wagga Wagga, p 3.

optimistic that this will allow for all services involved in the care of a client to take a holistic approach to that client's needs. We also note there may be concern with privacy issues and the use of Patchwork. This concern, together with other issues relating to privacy, will be addressed in the next chapter.

Data collection

3.42 The critical importance of data collection was discussed throughout the course of the inquiry. The collection of comparable, consistent data allows for the assessment of the efficacy of programs, and the development of an evidence-based understanding of what does – and does not – work. As Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, said: ‘... the data revolution in a sense has given us a much clearer insight into what we are not achieving, and also some clearer insight into what we would be achieving with the right coordination’.⁷⁷

3.43 Inquiry participants identified three key aspects of data collection:

- shifting from measuring outputs, to include measurement of outcomes
- undertaking community consultation during initial program design, as well as during the assessment of a program's effectiveness
- ensuring that data, at a state and local level, is accessible for all service providers.

3.44 Each of these aspects of data collection are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Outcomes not outputs

3.45 A key aspect of data collection is having a shared understanding about what is being measured. Notably, inquiry participants argued for a greater emphasis to be placed on the measurement of the outcomes of service delivery, rather than just outputs. For example, Ms Willis said:

If we are looking at having a statewide approach to data collection, it cannot be only about collecting widgets. High-quality, robust, internationally accepted evaluation process and outcome measures should be implemented. That will ensure that we provide good quality services. That is the job. It will also allow us to identify where we need to improve the quality of services and develop an enhanced capacity to ensure that we are doing what we should be doing.⁷⁸

3.46 Ms Willis observed that simply measuring ‘widgets’, or outputs, did not provide a true understanding of the quality of service provided, or of the changes made to a person's circumstances:

My position is that we have two major responsibilities. The first is to provide high quality services to those who have a right to expect nothing less. In doing that, we are spending a lot of money, so the second responsibility is to be accountable and

⁷⁷ Evidence, Ms Field, 8 October 2015, p 60.

⁷⁸ Evidence, Ms Willis, 28 August 2015, p 5.

transparent. I do not have a problem with reporting processes. I find it difficult that we are required to report on widgets: 'How many women did you see? How long did you see them for? How many occasions of service were there? What was their age range? What was their income?' That is all useful information; I am not arguing against that. But it does not monitor the quality of service delivery or the outcomes for that person as they move towards safety and recovery.⁷⁹

- 3.47** Similarly, Ms Hourigan Ruse, NSW Family Services, argued that a results based accountability framework that encompasses outcomes measurement allows for the identification of improvements to a person's life:

The results-based accountability framework sounds very simple but is premised on three questions. How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anybody better off? ... Often the answer to the question, 'How well did we do it?' is captured in client surveys and satisfaction surveys. We can gauge some of that. Everyone captures the data on 'How much did we do?' That is the output. The question, 'Is anybody better off?' is really at the heart of outcomes measurement because it is about asking what positive impact – hopefully the impact was positive – we had on the client that we have worked with. It is not about curing clients or achieving perfection. We all work with complex clients who make incremental improvements. It is about saying, 'Our client was at this point when they started, and we have worked with them using a range of interventions, and these are the positive improvements and impacts that we have made.'⁸⁰

- 3.48** NSW Family Services proposed that one outcome that should be measured was the amount of collaboration between organisations, thus making coordination part of 'core business':

NSW Family Services strongly contends that all organisations should be measuring outcomes and engaging in continuous quality improvement. One of those outcomes should address collaboration and engagement with organisations in their community which will increase accountability around service coordination and make it clear that it is expected as part of their core business.⁸¹

- 3.49** Professor Ilan Katz, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, observed that outcomes based tendering is becoming more common, but warned that some organisations may be reluctant to report on outcomes if they felt the results may jeopardise the organisations reputation:

... in the child welfare situation, all agencies are pushing towards – and I know the Government is pushing towards – outcome-based tendering, for example. Agencies themselves also are looking to measure outcomes of their interventions. Obviously, that is absolutely appropriate. But if you are an agency and you find that only 20 per cent or 30 per cent of your clients achieve the goals they set out to achieve – which is possible; it is very challenging in this area to achieve some of those situations – then you might be quite reluctant to share that with other agencies who may claim that 80 per cent of their clients achieve their goals, for example. Agencies are quite wary about sharing that sort of data, both with the Government and with each other.⁸²

⁷⁹ Evidence, Ms Willis, 28 August 2015, p 5.

⁸⁰ Evidence, Ms Hourigan Ruse, 6 November 2015, p 10.

⁸¹ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc (FamS), p 11.

⁸² Evidence, Professor Ilan Katz, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, 28 August 2015, p 14.

3.50 Dr Dianne Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, highlighted an approach utilised in New Zealand where human services are required as part of their funding contract to report on outcomes:

We must get to a point where we have a system that supports the measurement at ground level but also expects it. In New Zealand, which you may or may not know about, in their human services they now have as part of their funding contract a requirement to collect and measure data in a certain way towards outcomes and they use a specific mechanism to do that ... They have done all this streamlining in Government and it has not been an easy task. It is driving a different way of thinking. You move away from 'how many bums have I got on seats today' to 'did all the children sitting on those seats actually have a positive shift in their development', or family, or someone has a job. Until we get to a point where we put structural expectation around it we will not get anywhere.⁸³

3.51 Through the Investing in Services for Outcomes (ISO) program, the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development has implemented outcomes-based contracts, '... which aim to give providers more flexibility to do what they know will work to achieve specified outcomes for the people needing their social service' by measuring outputs tailored to each service provider.⁸⁴ For example, in addition to outputs the Family Service Centres Guidelines measure the following outcomes:

- percentage of clients who reported that they have developed new skills
- percentage of clients who reported that the service helped them access or connect with other required services
- percentage of clients who say the program has increased their knowledge about how children develop and learn.⁸⁵

3.52 Ms Walk, Department of Family and Community Services, recognised the importance of measuring outcomes and indicated that the New South Wales Government is working towards an outcomes framework for programs:

The establishment of an outcomes framework within government is really critical and it is something that most of us at a government level are working towards and I think most non-government agencies as well would have their own outcomes framework. To be honest, having been around the traps for a long time now, they are all pretty similar and they generally have good developmental outcomes for children, good family outcomes and good employment and safe communities kind of outcomes.⁸⁶

⁸³ Evidence, Dr Dianne Jackson, Chief Executive Officer,, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, 6 November 2015, pp 44-45.

⁸⁴ New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, *Investing in services for outcomes* <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/investing-in-services-for-outcomes/index.html>; New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, *Working with providers – outcomes based contracts* <http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/investing-in-services-for-outcomes/working-with-providers.html#Outcomesbasedcontracts3>.

⁸⁵ New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, *Family Service Centres Guidelines 2015*, p 8 <https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/documents/working-with-us/funding-and-contracting/practice-guidelines-2013/family-service-centres.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Evidence, Ms Walk, 8 October 2015, p 15.

Community consultation

3.53 The second aspect of data collection identified by inquiry participants was the importance of community consultation in program design and assessing a program's effectiveness. The involvement of the community in these aspects of program delivery increases the likelihood of a program's success, as articulated by The Benevolent Society: 'From our experience, services are coordinated more effectively when communities are involved in planning and prioritising the service needs'.⁸⁷

3.54 Fairfield City Council argued for a 'ground-up approach'⁸⁸, noting that local governments close relationships with their community makes them well placed to assist in identifying local needs and priorities. The council considered that:

Reestablishment of the partnership between state and local government to undertake needs identification and priority setting has mutual benefit for each tier of government. This information can assist state, regional and local planning to enable the appropriate social services to be funded in areas in which they are required. The state government needs to consider reinstating the funding, resourcing and commitment previously provided for this partnership with local governments.⁸⁹

3.55 Mr Harkin emphasised the critical importance of community input, noting that the Benevolent Society plans using a combination of local and higher level data:

We get community buy-in. We would start with getting an understanding of what is burning for the community and there will be different things that are really popping, but we will also look at what does data tell us about that community because I think we need to also look at what we know about it – what does the ADC's data tell us, what does the census data tell us, what does research in general tell us about the extra space in communities such as this – and then we map that against what the community is telling us is important to them and develop a community plan in partnership with them.⁹⁰

3.56 Mr Harkin felt that while there have been increased efforts to undertake community consultation by both government and non-government organisations, there remained room for improvement:

Both government and non-government organisations have come a long way in terms of engaging with communities about ensuring that how we implement services is done in partnership with them and with their buy-in, because we just know they will not access it because it will not meet their needs, it will not be the right thing for them delivered in the right way ... in terms of understanding the needs of communities, in designing services that go into them, I think we have a way to go.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 8.

⁸⁸ Submission 15, Fairfield City Council, p 4.

⁸⁹ Submission 15, Fairfield City Council, pp 8-9. See also Submission 24, Blacktown City Council, pp 3-4, and Evidence, Ms Hoban, 28 August 2015, p 26.

⁹⁰ Evidence, Mr Harkin, 8 October 2015, p 53.

⁹¹ Evidence, Mr Harkin, 8 October 2015, p 56.

- 3.57** The Illawarra Forum acknowledged the usefulness of high level data, but argued that it should not be used in isolation of community input: ‘Data analysis should be used in conjunction with in-depth community consultation in order to implement a person-centred, community based solution approach’.⁹²
- 3.58** Ms Walk also noted the need to balance community input with high level data when determining target issues:
- ... there has not been enough engagement of local community to work on what matters most. Government bureaucrats might think it is about school engagement and others say it is the needles in the park. There has been a disconnect around those issues ... I would be a little loath to lose data driving some of the initiatives that we need to address. I think you are absolutely on the money in the sense that we need to work out what it is that people want to get energised about. What do they want to change about their community and how you work with that.⁹³
- 3.59** The committee heard from local residents at Claymore that while the Department of Family and Community Services and other government agencies offers a range of services in the local area, the communities’ own priority was security so that they were not afraid to leave their houses to access services. This demonstrated the need for the community to be involved in setting priorities and program design for their own area.⁹⁴
- 3.60** A number of organisations in Bourke argued that a community should also have input into the evaluation of a program’s effectiveness. For example, Bourke Shire Council suggested that local input into the assessment of a program’s success provides authenticity of outcomes, while a number of people at the education roundtable argued that including local involvement in assessment would strengthen accountability for outcomes.⁹⁵

Accessibility of data

- 3.61** The final factor identified by inquiry participants in relation to data collection was the accessibility of data. Many of the organisations involved in this inquiry were frustrated by their lack of access to data and information, which hinders their own efforts to plan and design services for their local communities.
- 3.62** The Smith Family highlighted the ‘critical’ importance of the non-government sector having access to both aggregated and disaggregated data to ensure the public accountability and efficacy of programs:

We note the considerable progress made by the NSW Government to implement outcomes reporting across all parts of Government in accordance with the *NSW 2021* plan. This ongoing measurement is fundamental to the development of good policy and service delivery planning. We note the efforts also to improve reporting times for indicators so that more immediate action can be taken where appropriate. This ongoing monitoring and evaluation is essential if Government funds are to be

⁹² Submission 19, The Illawarra Forum, p 2.

⁹³ Evidence, Ms Walk, 8 October 2015, p 23.

⁹⁴ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Claymore.

⁹⁵ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke.

prudently allocated and to ensure that there is public accountability on whether initiatives support those who are most disadvantaged. Ensuring that data is reported both at the aggregate and disaggregated levels and is publicly available is critical if real progress is to be made ...⁹⁶

- 3.63** NSW Family Services noted the frustration of many people in being unable to access local data, observing that while data is sometimes available at a state level, there is a clear need for local data to enable localisation of services:

... shared measurement systems require access to local data. It is easy to access the number of substantiated child protection reports at a state level but very difficult to access this data at a local level. This valuable form of information can be a catalyst for action in communities and will undoubtedly strengthen the process of localisation. Many people from the community sector have expressed frustration at how difficult it is to access local data. Shared outcomes and measurement are important ways to encourage all stakeholders within a community to collaborate.⁹⁷

- 3.64** NSW Family Services recommended that the government should ‘... provide non-government organisations with better access to local data to strengthen the process of localisation and inspire action and collaboration in communities’.⁹⁸

- 3.65** Local councils were also concerned about the inability to access local data from government and non-government agencies, commenting that the dearth of information impacted negatively on service planning. For instance, Fairfield City Council commented that the lack of publically available data on a local level has resulted in ‘inequitable access to information’, which hinders the ability of some organisations to provide services and reduces awareness of emerging issues:

The cessation of a centralised, collaborative and transparent process to assess needs and set priorities means that some organisations cannot access information relating to community needs at a population level. There is no requirement for non-government organisations who undertake needs assessment of a particular area or demographic to make that information available to other organisations or local government, or to articulate their methodology and processes. This has led to an environment where there is inequitable access to information that leads to some organisations being less competitive in a competitive funding environment and government less aware of emerging issues and needs.⁹⁹

- 3.66** Mr David Lilley, Director, The Hive, Mount Druitt spoke of the difficulties in accessing data on the number of pre-school aged children in the Mount Druitt area. The inability to access the data meant that resources were used to physically door knock the community and seek information directly from households.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Submission 37, The Smith Family, p 6.

⁹⁷ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 11.

⁹⁸ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 15.

⁹⁹ Submission 15, Fairfield City Council, p 7. See also Submission 24, Blacktown City Council, pp 3-4.

¹⁰⁰ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Claymore.

3.67 Ms Hourigan Ruse from NSW Family Services identified Community Indicators Victoria, a program that publishes an array of information on community wellbeing, as being a project worth implementing in New South Wales:

Something they have in Victoria is called Community Indicators Victoria [CIV] and it is through Melbourne University. They actually have like a database of all the indicators and it is categorised into the communities so that communities can actually see what is out there. That is something that could be useful.¹⁰¹

3.68 Community Indicators Victoria is a collaborative project, funded by VicHealth and hosted by the McCaughey Centre, School of Population Health, at the University of Melbourne. The project ‘... aims to support the development and use of local community wellbeing indicators with the purpose of improving citizen engagement, community planning and policy making’.¹⁰²

3.69 The centre works with a wide range of government, community, and academic organisations to produce the indicators, which are utilised by a wide range of people including local government, state government and non-government organisations.¹⁰³ The Community Indicators Victoria present data and reports on the wellbeing of Victorians using an integrated set of community wellbeing indicators in five main areas: social, economic, environmental, democratic and cultural.¹⁰⁴

3.70 Community Indicators Victoria aims to:

- provide a sustainable mechanism for the collation, analysis and distribution of local community wellbeing indicator trend data across Victoria;
- be a resource centre supporting the development and use of local community wellbeing indicators by local governments and their communities; and
- contribute to national and international policy research on the development and use of local community wellbeing indicators as a basis for improving community engagement, community planning and policy making.¹⁰⁵

Data Analytics Centre – a government initiative for data sharing

3.71 A number of inquiry participants identified a government initiative that will assist in improving service coordination that relates to data sharing. The Data Analytics Centre (DAC) will collect, aggregate and analyse data from across the whole-of-government.

¹⁰¹ Evidence, Ms Hourigan Ruse, 6 November 2015, p 15.

¹⁰² Community Indicators Victoria, Vic Health and the University of Melbourne, *About Us*, http://www.communityindicators.net.au/about_us

¹⁰³ Community Indicators Victoria, Vic Health and the University of Melbourne, *About Us*, http://www.communityindicators.net.au/about_us

¹⁰⁴ Community Indicators Victoria, Vic Health and the University of Melbourne, *About Us*, http://www.communityindicators.net.au/about_us

¹⁰⁵ Community Indicators Victoria, Vic Health and the University of Melbourne, *About Us*, http://www.communityindicators.net.au/about_us

3.72 Ms Durham advised that the New South Wales Government was establishing a DAC within the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation to improve the ability of government to collate and analyse information collected across all government agencies:

The purpose [of the DAC] is to develop a capability within government to be able to undertake data analytics that span agency boundaries. So we have capabilities within education and health to understand the data around analytics but this is about a central whole-of-government capability to be able to take data from each of those agencies and analyse what that data tells us to help inform service planning, policy making and service improvement.¹⁰⁶

3.73 The *Data Sharing (Government Sector) Act 2015* establishes the DAC. A main objective of the act is to facilitate the sharing of government sector data within government, including with the newly established DAC.¹⁰⁷ Once established, the DAC will:

- collect, aggregate and analyse whole-of-government data, including from State-owned corporations and local councils, in relation to approved projects
- coordinate the consistency of definitions and data standards across New South Wales government agencies
- establish and maintain a register of data assets in government and provide advice to government on the greater publication of open data
- investigate and establish processes and methodologies to enable the protection of personal information and advise the government on best practice analytic processes and data and information security.¹⁰⁸

3.74 When questioned on the likely public availability of the data collected and generated by the centre, Ms Durham advised that data will be publically released from the DAC on a case by case basis:

Decisions to publically release the data and findings of the Data Analytics Centre will be made on a case by case basis. The Data Analytics Centre will be the custodian of any new datasets it generates. It will assess the suitability of these datasets for public release and make them available where appropriate. NSW Government agencies that provide data to the Data Analytics Centre will remain the custodian of data they provide and will continue to be responsible for assessing and publishing it as open data as appropriate.¹⁰⁹

Committee comment

3.75 The committee appreciates the critical importance of reliable, comparable data in achieving service coordination for communities with high social needs. The collection of such data allows for the assessment of the efficacy of programs, and the development of an evidence-

¹⁰⁶ Evidence, Ms Durham, 8 October 2015, p 17.

¹⁰⁷ *Hansard*, Legislative Council, 28 October 2015, p 5159 (John Ajaka).

¹⁰⁸ *Hansard*, Legislative Council, 28 October 2015, pp 5158 (John Ajaka).

¹⁰⁹ Answers to questions on notice, Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 5 November 2015, p 1.

based understanding of what programs achieve positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

- 3.76** The committee considers that in order for government agencies to prioritise achieving service coordination, the New South Wales Government should introduce key performance indicators for Secretaries of all government agencies that encourage collaboration, planning, co-design and alignment of outcomes in human services programs delivered by government and non-government agencies.
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Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government introduce key performance indicators for Secretaries of all government agencies that encourage collaboration, planning, co-design and alignment of outcomes in human services programs delivered by government and non-government agencies.

- 3.77** We concur with inquiry participants that the measurement of a program's success should include outcomes, not just outputs. While outcomes can be difficult to measure, they nonetheless provide a more fulsome understanding of a programs ability to improve the circumstances of individuals and communities. The committee is encouraged that the New South Wales Government has recognised the importance of measuring outcomes and is moving in that direction.
- 3.78** The committee notes the approach used in New Zealand whereby there is a requirement in human service funding contracts to collect and measure data on outcomes. We consider that this would be a worthwhile initiative to implement in New South Wales to shift the focus in from simply measuring program outputs to also measuring program outcomes.
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Recommendation 3

That the NSW Government implement a requirement in human service funding contracts to collect and measure data on program outcomes.

- 3.79** We also agree that the community should be consulted in program design and assessment. As part of a focus on individual and community outcomes it is important to ensure community consultation at the program design phase and at the evaluation stage of programs, to reduce the reliance on high level data gathered or outputs. To this end the committee recommends that the New South Wales Government include a process for community consultation at the design and evaluation stage of programs delivered by the government and as part of funding agreements for non-government organisations.
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Recommendation 4

That the NSW Government include a process for community consultation at the design and evaluation stage that involves those who live in the targeted areas:

- for human service programs delivered by the government and
 - as part of funding agreements for non-government organisations contracted to deliver human services on behalf of the government.
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3.80 The committee believes that the DAC has the potential to transform the way in which data is collected, aggregated and analysed across the whole of government, assisting to breakdown silos and allowing the development of a holistic understanding of disadvantage and how to address it.

3.81 Furthermore, the release of de-identified data at both the aggregate and disaggregated level, would allow non-government organisations, local government and community organisations to better plan and target their own services for communities in need. We consider that the approach taken by Community Indicators Victoria is a highly worthwhile initiative that is worth implementing in New South Wales to ensure the accessibility of data on a range of factors that contribute to social wellbeing.

3.82 The committee notes that it is the intent of the New South Wales Government to release information from the DAC on a case by case basis. We consider that the government should take a more pro-active approach to information publication and recommend that there be at minimum an annual, but preferably more frequent, release of de-identified data at both an aggregated and disaggregated level from the centre similar to the approach taken by Community Indicators Victoria. Further, we believe that the government should investigate the ability of the data sets released from the DAC to be used for research and other purposes.

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government on at least an annual basis, and preferably more frequently, publish de-identified data, at both an aggregated and disaggregated level, from the Data Analytics Centre similar to the approach taken by Community Indicators Victoria.

Recommendation 6

That the NSW Government investigate the ability of the data sets released from the Data Analytics Centre to be used for research and other purposes.

Chapter 4 Privacy

The chapter examines issues relating to privacy, including the existing legislative framework and the organisational aversion to information sharing that was identified as a significant barrier to coordination. The chapter also explores the importance of building trust with clients to facilitate information sharing, before making recommendations on how these issues can be addressed to ensure better outcomes for individuals and families with high social needs.

Privacy

- 4.1** The next section of this report discusses a number of issues in relation to privacy and attempts to achieve service coordination. Inquiry stakeholders acknowledged the critical importance of privacy law in facilitating better service coordination and noted the inherent difficulties in achieving ‘the sensitive balance’¹¹⁰ between information sharing and an individuals’ right to privacy.
- 4.2** Most notably, the Information and Privacy Commission, together with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, argued that service coordination and respect for privacy rights are not mutually exclusive. For example, Dr Elizabeth Coombs, Privacy Commissioner, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, said:

... the collection of sensitive information which will consist of both personal information and health information is a very important part of effective service coordination and the delivery of good outcomes ... my primary concern is that all New South Wales citizens have their privacy respected, whatever their location or circumstances happen to be. Good public policy outcomes and a respect for the privacy rights of New South Wales citizens are not necessarily mutually exclusive. You do tend to notice that people see them as such but they are polar opposites. But to the contrary, privacy protection is also a very good public policy outcome. It underlies the nature of the community and society that we want to live in. As Privacy Commissioner I support wholeheartedly the appropriate and lawful flow of information between stakeholders and service providers.¹¹¹

- 4.3** The Information and Privacy Commission suggested that more proactive release of information could result in ‘a holistic model’ of service coordination:

Open access and informal release have advantages for agencies and applicants. In terms of open access for example, consent based proactive release of information between government agencies may be an effective mechanism to move beyond the current perceived barriers to information sharing in service provision. This approach can advance the NSW Government’s intent to move to a holistic model of service delivery to the citizens of NSW whilst being respectful of privacy safeguards. It encourages accountability and transparency in the exercise by agencies and government of powers and discretion.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Submission 30, Australian Medical Association (NSW), p 2.

¹¹¹ Evidence, Dr Elizabeth Coombs, Privacy Commissioner, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, 8 October 2015, p 42.

¹¹² Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, p 8.

4.4 The section continues by outlining the legislative framework as it relates to privacy, before considering the organisational aversion to information sharing that was identified by both recent research and inquiry participants. The importance of building trust between an organisation and its clients is then examined, as is a need for better guidance for organisations in clearly delineating their responsibilities and obligations in regard to client privacy and information sharing.

Legislative framework

4.5 There are four central pieces of legislation¹¹³ that form the New South Wales privacy regime:

- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*
- *Privacy and Personal Protection Act 1998*
- *Health Records and Information and Privacy Act 2002*
- *Government Information (Information Commissioner) Act 2009*.¹¹⁴

4.6 Ms Elizabeth Tydd, Information Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Information and Privacy Commission emphasised that the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* ‘... starts from a presumption in favour of disclosure and, indeed, that is possibly the most important aspect of the operationalisation of that legislation. It starts from the presumption of, yes, you can have access to that information’.¹¹⁵

4.7 The Office of the Privacy Commissioner explained that the *Privacy and Personal Protection Act 1998* regulates the way in which all New South Wales public sector agencies, including departments and agencies, statutory authorities, universities, local councils and other bodies whose accounts are subject to the Auditor General, collect, use, access, store, dispose of, and discloses personal information of members of the public.¹¹⁶

4.8 The Act applies to private sector or non-government organisations ‘... if they are contractually required to comply with the privacy regime by a NSW public sector agency’.¹¹⁷

4.9 The *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* applies to New South Wales public sector agencies and private sector organisations, health service providers and businesses with a turnover of more than \$3 million which hold health information.¹¹⁸ The Act aims to promote fair and responsible handling of health information.¹¹⁹

¹¹³ There are other laws that may apply to certain situations, including the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, *Workplace Surveillance Act 2005 (NSW)* and the *Surveillance Devices Act 2007 (NSW)*. See the website of the Information and Privacy Commission for further detail.

¹¹⁴ Evidence, Ms Elizabeth Tydd, Information Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Information and Privacy Commission, 8 October 2015, p 35; Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, p 2.

¹¹⁵ Evidence, Ms Tydd, 8 October 2015, p 35.

¹¹⁶ Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, p 2. The Act does not apply to New South Wales state owned corporations.

¹¹⁷ Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, p 2.

¹¹⁸ Information and Privacy Commission, *Privacy Laws*, <http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/privacy-laws#>

¹¹⁹ *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*, s 3(1).

4.10 There are some exemptions from the privacy regime in specific circumstances, most notably in the area of child protection, as explained by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner:

These circumstances include people who have been reported as missing and for public health and safety. The government can also amend legislation to allow non-compliance with the privacy legislation for a particular purpose. In the child health and welfare context, Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* expressly notes that the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young persons takes precedence over the protection of confidentiality or privacy of the individual. In that special circumstance, information may be provided to or requested by prescribed bodies for investigative or service provision purposes relating to the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person.¹²⁰

Recent research

4.11 A number of recent research projects were identified by inquiry participants as being relevant to this inquiry. Firstly, the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales was commissioned by the New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet to conduct research on:

- the policy and legal context of information exchange
- how the information policies are interpreted by different stakeholders
- gaps, enablers, and opportunities for improving the sharing of personal information within and between government and non-government organisations to support more effective service delivery.¹²¹

4.12 The research found that although most professionals in New South Wales tended to exchange information appropriately, there were some indications of over-cautious practice where information is not shared. The two main reasons for the lack of information sharing were risk-averse organisations, and organisational or professional cultures which did not value holistic interventions.¹²²

4.13 The research indicated that effective and appropriate information sharing can only take place in a context where:

- there is a clear legal and policy framework
- policies and procedures specify the appropriate processes, but are flexible enough to allow for these processes to be tailored to individual situations
- organisational cultures facilitate appropriate information sharing and collaborative practice while taking into account peoples' rights to privacy and confidentiality
- the human services workforce has knowledge of the legal and policy framework and is trained and supported in delivering good practice

¹²⁰ Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, p 2.

¹²¹ Submission 27, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, p 1.

¹²² Submission 27, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, p 1.

- workers and agencies trust each other to use the information appropriately.¹²³

4.14 The research concluded that '[t]here did not appear to be significant legal impediments to information sharing in NSW'. However, it continued to note that currently there is a lack of overarching guidance around information exchange and a need for clarity:

At present, there is little overarching guidance for NSW agencies around appropriate decisions regarding privacy and information exchange. There should be greater clarity and consistency across agencies and sectors around the application of laws relating to sharing information and for agencies to understand how information exchange operates in practice, including how another agency will use the information that has been provided. Education, training and promotion should be undertaken across all human service sectors.¹²⁴

4.15 One of the authors of the research, Professor Katz, explained that while there are multiple barriers to information sharing, an organisations culture was the most important barrier:

From the literature we identified three domains or areas of barriers to and facilitators of information sharing. Those are: firstly, the policy or legal context in which information is exchanged; secondly, the technological situation or the way that information is held; and, thirdly, the organisational cultures within different agencies. We found that the third one, the organisational cultures, is the most important barrier to information exchange. Although you have to have appropriate legislation in place, and appropriate guidance – and technology can help or hinder information exchange – one of the barriers is around organisations or individual practitioners who are risk averse.¹²⁵

4.16 Professor Katz outlined the implications of this organisational reluctance to share:

Where people are risk averse, the organisation may give the message to people practising that they should not share information with other organisations because it might affect their organisations. In other words, the organisation comes first and the client comes second in those situations. Organisations may have an over-determined view of privacy. So they interpret privacy in a way that means that they could never talk to anybody about anything to do with their clients because they are patients or clients and therefore any information is only for the organisation. The law does allow you to talk to other agencies about your clients, so that is a misinterpretation of the law, but some people believe that that is what the law says.¹²⁶

4.17 Both the Information and Privacy Commission and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner highlighted the findings of the Social Policy Research Centre that there is no legislative impediment to information sharing, but rather an organisational barrier.¹²⁷ For example, Dr Coombs agreed that organisations' over-determined view of privacy is a misinterpretation of the law, and noted the consequences of this 'knowledge gap':

¹²³ Submission 27, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, p 7.

¹²⁴ Submission 27, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, p 8.

¹²⁵ Evidence, Professor Ilan Katz, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, 28 August 2015, p 11.

¹²⁶ Evidence, Professor Katz, 28 August 2015, p 11.

¹²⁷ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, pp 3-4 and p 9; Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, pp 6-7.

My experience both as a service provider as well as Privacy Commissioner which comes from advising agencies on privacy is that those knowledge gaps only lead to missed opportunities for service outcomes which are good for the people of New South Wales, and most particularly, for certain communities of very high need.¹²⁸

4.18 The second research project of note for this inquiry was a report prepared for the interagency Enabling Information Sharing Working Group. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner advised that the report identified five barriers to improved information sharing:

- process, including inexperience and gaps in resources or infrastructure
- technology, including poorly organised or inaccessible data
- culture, including agencies not viewing data as an asset to be shared
- legislation/regulation, including myths and misconceptions about what can be shared
- policy, including lack of direction on what can be shared.¹²⁹

4.19 Finally, the Information and Privacy Commission said that it had commissioned research from the University of Technology of Sydney to identify global better practices in encouraging information sharing. The research found three ‘switches’ promoted positive information sharing between government agencies, as follows:

- a clear legal and policy framework to promote a model of agency sharing
- promote proactive release across organisational walls
- build inter-agency trust by using ‘soft law’ mechanisms to communicate good practice systems, provide adequate resources for training and security systems, maintain good interagency working relationships and provide clear rules of disclosure while maintaining flexibility.¹³⁰

Organisational aversion to information sharing

4.20 A clear barrier to service coordination identified by both research and a number of inquiry participants was organisational aversion to information sharing, attributable to a lack of understanding of the legal framework and personal views about what can legally be shared. This aversion can inhibit the flow of information about clients themselves and about the services available to address the complex array of a client’s needs.

4.21 As noted by Professor Katz, organisational aversion to information sharing is not a function of the legislative framework but of the organisational policies, procedures and culture which interpret the law:

... we did not find any real problems with the legal side of it so the law in New South Wales seems to be quite appropriate but it is not applied uniformly across all situations. There are examples of very good practice and in the education sphere it is mainly good practice but there are cases where there are horror stories where

¹²⁸ Evidence, Dr Coombs, 8 October 2015, p 42.

¹²⁹ Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, p 7.

¹³⁰ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, pp 6-7.

information was not exchanged ... It can get very messy in certain circumstances. And that is not because of a problem with the law; it is a problem around interpreting the law...¹³¹

- 4.22** When discussing the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* the MacKillop Family Services commented that there still exists a bureaucratic reluctance to facilitate information sharing despite the act clearly permitting such exchanges between prescribed bodies:

... there is some work to be done in ensuring that agencies understand their responsibilities in relation to information sharing. While Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act* allows information to be shared between prescribed bodies, despite restrictions in privacy laws, the *Keep Them Safe Outcomes Evaluation* noted that ‘...stakeholders reported continuing challenges and significant bureaucratic delays in relation to information sharing’.¹³²

- 4.23** The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) suggested that uncertainties around disclosure obligations may deter organisations from sharing:

Despite the extensive efforts of the legislature concerns regarding privacy remain an obstacle to effective information sharing for service coordination. For some providers their real responsibilities and permissions remain uncertain, while for others the obstacles are ethical or philosophical.¹³³

- 4.24** Ms Elizabeth Koff, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, Ministry of Health, observed that ‘[a]lot of health professionals feel a personal liability for sharing information inappropriately’.¹³⁴ Ms Koff continued to acknowledge the critical importance of addressing this aversion to sharing information in order to achieve service coordination:

It is going to be absolutely critical that we do change that [reluctance to share information]. It is both the culture and the knowledge and understanding. It was highlighted to me when I went to Cowra because we have an integrated care program there that involves GPs, the health service, NGO providers, et cetera. People even felt uncomfortable discussing the case conference in the presence of NGO providers there who were not directly involved with the case. I can understand people wanting to safeguard an individual’s privacy and health conditions but if we are working towards a common purpose we have to be far more sophisticated in how we do that. We will continue to operate in silos if we do not have that free exchange of information between people.¹³⁵

Client consent

- 4.25** An aspect of encouraging better information sharing within the existing legislative framework for privacy was the importance of earning trust from clients to share information across

¹³¹ Evidence, Professor Katz, 28 August 2015, p 16.

¹³² Submission 4, MacKillop Family Services, p 2.

¹³³ Submission 40, Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth, p 2.

¹³⁴ Evidence, Ms Elizabeth Koff, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, Ministry of Health, 8 October 2015, p 31.

¹³⁵ Evidence, Ms Koff, 8 October 2015, p 32.

different service providers. Professor Katz said that clients are more likely to consent to having their personal information shared if service providers are able to clearly articulate the purpose of the information exchange:

I think that the key to information exchange—and actually we find quite pure practice in all these spheres around this—is to actually talk to the person before you exchange the information. So if you are concerned about a particular client rather than say, ‘Well, under section X, Y and Z I can disclose information’, to say to the client, ‘Look, I think it is very important that the school knows this about your child’, and explain why. In most situations that then facilitates appropriate information exchange. It builds up trust with the client and when you have got consent, there is no legal issue about exchanging information with the consent of the person involved.¹³⁶

4.26 The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre said that they had ‘rarely’ encountered a client who would not consent to information sharing, so long as the client understood what was happening:

We have rarely encountered a client in need of a service who has declined to provide the necessary and relevant information due to privacy concerns. We also find that service to service information flow is not unduly restricted by privacy laws. A simple consent form is all that is required, and in some cases verbal consent is all that is necessary to allow for timely service coordination. In our experience, such consent is usually forthcoming from the client if it is explained to them why it is necessary.¹³⁷

4.27 Ms Jane Sanders, Principal Solicitor, Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, noted that consent may occasionally be refused in some circumstances, such as if there was a perception that there was no clear reason for sharing the information:

In many cases our clients will readily consent to us sharing information with other services if it is explained to them why they need it, if they know it is not going to be abused and that it is going to be used within their services for their benefit. I think there may be some resistance to information sharing if there is a perception that that information might end up falling into the wrong hands or if there is not a clear reason or purpose for wanting that information.¹³⁸

4.28 The Benevolent Society commented that in their extensive experience, privacy is not a barrier to information so long as consent is gained from the client.¹³⁹ Mr Harkin from The Benevolent Society articulated the importance of building trust with the client in gaining this consent:

It [privacy] is not necessarily a major barrier to people accessing but how we handle that and how we handle it with our clients becomes really important. As you heard yesterday, workers need to tell the person ‘I am going to share this’. Even though they are not required to and even though they have signed, it is just that trust piece. It is just about saying ‘Here is what we are going to do.’¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Evidence, Professor Katz, 28 August 2015, p 12.

¹³⁷ Submission 25, The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, p 9.

¹³⁸ Evidence, Ms Jane Sanders, Principal Solicitor, Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, p 32.

¹³⁹ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 9.

¹⁴⁰ Evidence, Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, 8 October 2015, p 51.

- 4.29** Dr Coombs highlighted the necessity of informed consent in ensuring that clients trust their service provider and are not deterred from using their services:

If people feel that you are sharing information about them without their knowledge or their consent, they tend to do two things: they either will not give you accurate information, they will give you incomplete information – and that means that your services are going to be less effective, you will be less likely to pick up things that you need to pick up – or they will not use your services.¹⁴¹

- 4.30** The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre similarly cautioned: ‘Confidentiality is a fundamental element of building rapport and trust between clients and service providers. Clients who believe their confidentiality is at risk may be discouraged from seeking out and engaging with services’.¹⁴²

A way forward

- 4.31** In order to improve service coordination through better information sharing practices, inquiry participants identified the need for clear education on what is permitted under the privacy framework that currently exists in New South Wales. The committee heard that while some government and non-government organisations have clear internal guidance on permitted sharing practices, others lack clarity, creating a knowledge gap that can have a negative impact on efforts to coordinate. It was therefore argued that better guidance on the legislative framework and how it should be applied was needed to ensure consistency in the application of privacy law and better service coordination.

- 4.32** The variance of approaches between government and non-government organisations was noted by Professor Katz, together with the lack of a single source of guidance for organisations that might clarify responsibilities:

... we found that some agencies have got quite good guidance but there is not a kind of one-stop shop within New South Wales for information exchange across agencies. So that was our recommendation that there should be a web site or some guidance that cuts across different agencies. This is particular, for example, in the non-government sector where you have multiple non-government organisations, each with their own policies and procedures, but there is no really clear-cut guidance across the sector as to the appropriate way to respond. Some kind of central guidance, plus advice, a place where people can go for advice is what we thought would be appropriate.¹⁴³

- 4.33** The Australian Medical Association (NSW) suggested that clearer, simpler guidance on information sharing practices was needed, such as ‘... making available and training frontline staff in standard operating procedures about privacy of patient health information and circumstances where information can and cannot be shared’.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Evidence, Dr Coombs, 8 October 2015, p 44.

¹⁴² Submission 25, The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, p 9.

¹⁴³ Evidence, Professor Katz, 28 August 2015, pp 16-17.

¹⁴⁴ Submission 30, Australian Medical Association (NSW), pp 4-5.

4.34 Ms Howe of NCOSS agreed that clarity was needed to ensure consistency in information sharing practices and identified the Privacy Commissioner as the appropriate source to provide such guidance:

We do not really know about the sharing of private information because there is no clear direction on it. That concerns me. We need to ensure client confidentiality, particularly in families with domestic violence and safety issues. The corollary is that you want to ensure that services do the best job and have the capacity to take on board the work needed to look after a complex family with longstanding support needs. There needs to be firm instruction and guidance ... If the Privacy Commissioner were to give clear direction, it would not need to be as complex as it is currently.¹⁴⁵

4.35 Professor Katz advised that the South Australian Ombudsman has produced guidelines for agencies that exchange information, and also suggested that the Privacy Commissioner would be well placed to play such a role in New South Wales:

... we found that in South Australia the Ombudsman, who has this kind of responsibility, has produced some very, very good online guidance for agencies or for people who need to exchange information. The Privacy Commissioner here was quite keen when we spoke to her to do something quite similar here because in New South Wales there is no kind of central place that people can go to to get information about these sometimes very tricky situations.¹⁴⁶

4.36 Professor Katz suggested that the production of guidelines together with an online program that would allow service providers to assess what path to follow in different situations, would alleviate much confusion:

Guidelines could be produced. For example, in the child welfare situation, which is really my main area of research, when reporting to Community Services there is the reporters memorandum guidance and you could have something similar with information exchange. It is an online resource that people go through an algorithm and say, 'If this happens, then you should do this and if not, get that.' That, combined with the facility perhaps to approach the Privacy Commissioner in really tricky cases, would resolve a lot of the problems.¹⁴⁷

4.37 In order to address the knowledge gap between organisations and awareness of the legislative framework, the Information and Privacy Commission said that it currently undertakes a number of activities to promote information release and open access, including:

- improving agency understanding of the open access regime, such as through releasing fact sheets and on e-learning portal
- supporting interagency initiatives, including steering committees and working groups
- working with individual agencies to improve access to information.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ Evidence, Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, 28 August 2015, p 40.

¹⁴⁶ Evidence, Professor Katz, 28 August 2015, p 12.

¹⁴⁷ Evidence, Professor Katz, 28 August 2015, p 13.

¹⁴⁸ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, pp 5-6.

- 4.38** In addition to these tools, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner advised that it has developed the Privacy Governance Framework to support agencies in developing and embedding ‘good privacy practices’:

I have developed the Privacy Governance Framework for agencies to support their responsibilities under the NSW privacy regime and to embed good privacy practices in their business processes. The Privacy Governance Framework is an online privacy tool developed to assist agencies to understand the NSW privacy and personal information protection framework, to identify how the NSW privacy regime can be effectively implemented, and to help agencies identify, measure and resolve privacy risks to comply with NSW privacy legislation. It is aimed at Chief Executive Officers and senior executives while emphasising the need to be privacy aware at all organisational levels and at all points of service provision or project planning.¹⁴⁹

- 4.39** In her evidence to the committee, Dr Coombs concurred with the need for the development of guidelines for government and non-government agencies to narrow the knowledge gap relating to privacy legislation. Dr Coombs also noted that the commission did not currently have the resources to develop and implement such guidelines:

... I support the concept of guidelines to be developed. These are to assist government and non-government organisations to meet their obligations and manage implementation of contractual arrangements that they might have with government agencies. This would greatly assist to narrow the knowledge gap. It is something that the team in the commission and I are strongly committed to achieving. It is a function that requires significant resourcing, and that is something we do not have at the moment.¹⁵⁰

- 4.40** Dr Coombs further suggested that the Privacy Commissioner should:

... act as a point of coordination with other bodies such as the Federal Privacy Commissioner where sometimes there is overlapping of legislation, particularly in the health area. Unlike the *Government Information (Public Access) Act*, the New South Wales privacy framework allows me, as Privacy Commissioner, to relate directly to non-government organisations that provide health services or that hold health information.¹⁵¹

- 4.41** The Information and Privacy Commission observed that ‘... differing definitions and frameworks for decision making under different pathways for access can lead to inconsistent decision making and confusion in terms of process for decision makers and the public’.¹⁵² In order to overcome this confusion, the commission suggested that a whole-of-government strategic information policy be developed:

The citizens of NSW would be better served if there was a cohesive legislative framework for the management of government held information. More broadly, at a strategic level, a comprehensive whole-of-government strategic information policy would facilitate the best possible outcomes for an open, accountable and participatory government. Implementation of a whole of government strategy would build on the

¹⁴⁹ Submission 45, Office of the Privacy Commissioner, p 4.

¹⁵⁰ Evidence, Dr Coombs, 8 October 2015, p 43.

¹⁵¹ Evidence, Dr Coombs, 8 October 2015, p 43.

¹⁵² Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, p 9.

work being done under the NSW Government ICT strategy and facilitate better policy development and service delivery which reflects citizen input and contemporary data sets whilst also maintaining access and privacy rights in a more coordinated and contemporary way.¹⁵³

4.42 The Information and Privacy Commission noted that it had ‘...raised this issue in the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* statutory review for consideration by the Department of Justice’.¹⁵⁴

4.43 The Information and Privacy Commission also suggested the development of a fifth pathway under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* to facilitate better information exchange between agencies:

In the context of information sharing between government agencies, there is an option to consider amending the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* to place beyond doubt that information can be released through exchange between agencies (as a fifth pathway to accessing information) whilst still maintaining the well-established and effective system of decision making under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.¹⁵⁵

Committee comment

4.44 The committee was deeply concerned to discover that while the legislative framework for information sharing in New South Wales provides appropriate permission and safeguards to share information, organisations and practitioners continue to demonstrate a reluctance to share information.

4.45 While we appreciate the need to protect an individual’s privacy, the best outcomes are achieved when a holistic approach is taken to a person’s needs. This necessitates the sharing of information, as people with complex needs often require assistance from multiple organisations. Inquiry participants argued that better guidance on the legislative framework and its application was needed to ensure consistency in the application of privacy law and better service coordination.

4.46 The knowledge gap between what is permitted by law and what is done in practice must be overcome. In order to close this gap, we believe that the Privacy Commissioner should produce clear guidelines for both government and non-government organisations on appropriate information handling and information sharing practices. In order to do this, there will need to be a reallocation of resources towards the Privacy Commissioner.

4.47 We also note the suggestion that the Privacy Commissioner should act as a point of coordination with other bodies within the privacy field, including the Federal Privacy Commissioner and non-government organisations. This would provide an easily identifiable source of guidance for individuals, government agencies and non-government organisations seeking to understand their rights and responsibilities under privacy legislation in New South Wales.

¹⁵³ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, p 9.

¹⁵⁴ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, p 9.

¹⁵⁵ Submission 39, Information and Privacy Commission, p 8.

Recommendation 7

That the Privacy Commissioner develop guidelines for both government and non-government organisations on appropriate information handling and information sharing, including information on how organisations can meet their obligations under the privacy framework when contracted to deliver services on behalf of the NSW Government.

Recommendation 8

That the NSW Government:

- establish the Privacy Commissioner as a central point of coordination with other bodies within the privacy field, both within New South Wales and federally
 - fund the Privacy Commissioner to assist in the development, implementation, training and oversight of adherence to the guidelines proposed in Recommendation 7.
-

- 4.48** Furthermore, the committee considers that government agencies would be more inclined to share information if given explicit permission to do by the Secretaries of those agencies. The development of memorandums of understanding between government agencies on information sharing will provide a clear authorising environment for information sharing practices and establish information sharing as an expectation of how staff undertake their roles.
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Recommendation 9

That the NSW Government require the Secretaries of all government agencies involved in the delivery of human services to enter into memorandums of understanding on information sharing practices.

- 4.49** During the drafting of this report, the committee was made aware that the New South Wales Government is commencing a review into privacy and information sharing between government agencies and with non-government service providers. As this has been a significant focus for this inquiry, it is suggested that the New South Wales Government consider the committee's recommendations in this area as part of its review.

Chapter 5 Funding environment

One of the central concerns raised throughout the inquiry was the impact that the current funding environment has on service coordination. This chapter will examine the issues around funding for non-government service provision, including the impacts of a competitive tendering model and the length of funding periods.

Competitive tendering

- 5.1** As mentioned in chapter 2, non-government agencies are commissioned by the government to deliver a range of human services to children, young people, families and communities. Funding sources include federal, state and local government, philanthropic organisations and commercial businesses. The focus of this chapter will be on New South Wales Government funding arrangements.
- 5.2** The New South Wales Government funding arrangements encourage agencies to promote competition in the aim of greater efficiency and innovation. The length of funding is usually three years and generally does not exceed a period of five years, including extensions.¹⁵⁶
- 5.3** A number of inquiry participants indicated that the current funding environment served as a barrier to the effective coordination in communities due to the level of competition between service providers applying for tenders.¹⁵⁷ The committee heard that this level of competition had a tendency to reduce trust and collaboration as well as impacting negatively on information sharing between service providers.
- 5.4** Domestic Violence NSW reflected on the *Going Home Staying Home* reforms and how the competitive tendering approach ‘created significant trauma, change and turmoil’ across the sector.¹⁵⁸ Ms Sophie Trower, Policy Manager, Domestic Violence NSW, emphasised to the committee that a positive funding process ‘cannot be done in an environment where there is a toxic undertone’.¹⁵⁹
- 5.5** Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Family Services expressed the view that competitive tendering devalued what service providers were doing and put ‘a very big fear in the sector’.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, Ms Jane Sanders, Principal Solicitor, The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre, told the committee that during the reforms there was a lot of fear across the sector with service providers competing for their existence:

¹⁵⁶ NSW Procurement Board, *NSW Procurement Policy Framework for NSW Government Agencies* (Policy Framework No 4, July 2015) p 11 and Department of Family and Community Services, *Contract Governance Guidelines – April 2014*, p 38.

¹⁵⁷ Submission 19, Illawarra Forum Inc, p 3; Evidence, Ms Ann Hoban, Director, City Life, City of Sydney, 28 August 2015, p 27.

¹⁵⁸ Submission 11, Domestic Violence NSW, p 8.

¹⁵⁹ Evidence, Ms Sophie Trower, Policy Manager, Domestic Violence NSW, 28 August 2015, p 5.

¹⁶⁰ Evidence, Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Family Services, 6 November 2015, p 14.

I think certainly we could say, particularly during the Going Home Staying Home process when non-government organisations had to tender for all the services, there was a lot of fear around that process. It was unknown, new and I think there was quite a bit of competition or competitiveness then, because a lot of small, community-based non-government organisations felt that they were fighting for their existence.¹⁶¹

Reduced trust and collaboration

- 5.6** Inquiry participants argued that competitive tendering has impacted on the community sector by reducing trust between providers and discouraging collaboration as service providers seek to secure funding. As articulated by Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge*, ‘one of the enemies of collaboration between organisations is persistent rivalry and a desire to remain positioned for the next government grant’.¹⁶²
- 5.7** Dr Elizabeth Reimer, Board Member, NSW Family Services, informed the committee that the ‘silo funding’ model has ‘reduced trust between services’.¹⁶³ Further in their submission, NSW Family Services noted that when services are competing against each other relationships break down ‘which is not conducive to collaborative practice[s]’.¹⁶⁴
- 5.8** For regional and rural areas, Ms Trower indicated that competitive tendering has a much stronger negative impact on the collaborative services provided in these communities:

Small communities can have more than 50 services that have been encouraged to collaborate and coordinate their service delivery to individuals in that community. Competitive tendering requires them to turn around the relationships that they have developed – which is really hard to do in some areas – to chase a small amount of money. They then become competitors. That creates a negative environment in which to foster collaboration, which is ultimately what is needed in small communities. Rural and regional areas depend on services having a good quality relationship. Competitive tendering turns that into a negative process.¹⁶⁵

- 5.9** However, there was some support for the idea that the initial shock of the competitive tendering process was receding, to be replaced with a more collaborative approach. For example, Ms Sanders expressed the opinion that there is a culture amongst non-government organisations to collaborate and that there ‘may have been some unhealthy competition around with fear and distrust but I think we are coming out the other end of that now’ with services beginning to work together again.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ Evidence, Ms Jane Sanders, Principal Solicitor, Shopfront Youth Legal Services, 6 November 2015, p 30.

¹⁶² Evidence, Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge*, 28 August 2015, p 22.

¹⁶³ Evidence, Dr Elizabeth Reimer, Board Member, NSW Family Services, 6 November 2015, p 14.

¹⁶⁴ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, pp 10-11.

¹⁶⁵ Evidence, Ms Trower, 28 August 2015, pp 4-5.

¹⁶⁶ Evidence, Ms Sanders, 6 November 2015, p 30.

Impacts on information sharing

- 5.10** Another issue highlighted by inquiry participants due to the competitive tendering model is the resistance of service providers to share information.
- 5.11** The Illawarra Forum advised that organisations ‘are cautious about sharing information or resources in case it affects them negatively in future [funding] rounds’.¹⁶⁷ Likewise, Ms Ann Hoban, Director, City Life, City of Sydney, explained how some services are unwilling to share ‘caseloads and information about successful practices’ which in turn impacts on the capacity to work in collaboration.¹⁶⁸
- 5.12** Tweed Shire Council, in reference to homelessness, also noted the reluctance to share data and its constraints on collaboration:

Competition for resources, housing and funds between housing providers limits and inhibits the ability to coordinate and collaborate for the benefit of people seeking assistance. This makes providers unwilling to share information and work together for solutions to improve housing services and options, to develop innovative housing strategies, and to provide advocacy.¹⁶⁹

Impacts on service coordination

- 5.13** Several inquiry participants expressed concern regarding the negative impact competitive tendering has had on the services provided to communities and service coordination.
- 5.14** The United Services Union indicated that ‘the increase in the use of competitive tendering in community services has had a devastating impact upon the provision of social services’.¹⁷⁰
- 5.15** The Nambucca Shire Council highlighted that ‘in some cases services are so focussed on securing their funding and meeting their outcomes that it can lead to competition between service providers’, which then impacts on service coordination.¹⁷¹
- 5.16** The Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS) noted that the time taken for organisations to seek funding and protect their position against competitors would be better spent focusing on the needs of clients.¹⁷² In addition, NCOSS highlighted how competitive funding models impact on collaboration and relationships between service providers which can result in a loss of services:

Competitive tendering and project-based funding are increasingly used as a funding model in the Community Services Sector. These models can run counter to the collaborative nature of the Sector, threatening to undermine relationships and service sustainability. As a result, local knowledge that can guide effective and targeted

¹⁶⁷ Submission 19, Illawarra Forum Inc, p 3.

¹⁶⁸ Evidence, Ms Hoban, 28 August 2015, p 27.

¹⁶⁹ Submission 6, Tweed Shire Council, p 2.

¹⁷⁰ Submission 46, United Services Union, p 5.

¹⁷¹ Submission 32, Nambucca Shire Council, p 2.

¹⁷² Submission 14, Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS), p 7.

responses to community's needs is lost and people's access to appropriate services can be diminished.¹⁷³

Suggestions to improve the tendering model

5.17 Some inquiry participants suggested changes to the tendering model to improve the current funding environment and deliver effective service coordination. For example, Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, expressed the view that while negative impacts due to competitive tendering are not always the case, there is a need for a process to be established that takes into account the best person or organisation to implement services for families and children. Ms Field added that there should be 'drivers within the way governments buy services which enable coordination, cooperation and facilitation'.¹⁷⁴

5.18 NCOSS highlighted that 'there may be positives to competitive tendering' but a 'full and thorough cost-benefit analysis' should be undertaken to assess whether it aims to achieve the desired results.¹⁷⁵ NCOSS continued to emphasise the importance of acknowledging the expertise and knowledge already evident in a local area and urged the committee to consider giving a weighting to future tenders:

It is important that local knowledge and expertise be valued and respected in procurement processes. This includes providing a weighting for:

- a proven track record within the community;
- an understanding of the culture of a community;
- knowledge of hidden need;
- the trust that people have in a service
- existing relationships that enable person-centred responses; and
- the ability to respond to those isolated by distance, lack of transport or barriers specific to that community.¹⁷⁶

5.19 When asked by committee members on how to improve the competitive tendering process, Ms Karen Willis, Board Member, Domestic Violence NSW, advised:

The solution is to start with a statewide plan that says, 'In this population, with this group of people, with these particular characteristics, these are the services that need to be provided.' We know that organisations may already have been working in that area for 10, 20 or 50 years. They might be able to provide 50 or 90 per cent of the services that are required, but not 100 per cent. Rather putting in place something new, why not put the resources into working with that organisation to build its capacity to meet the demands of a growing and changing evidence-based system? That would build on existing knowledge, rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater every time a new plan is implemented, which is what competitive tendering does.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Submission 14, Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS), p 7.

¹⁷⁴ Evidence, Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, 8 October 2015, p 58.

¹⁷⁵ Submission 14, Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS), p 7.

¹⁷⁶ Submission 14, Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS), pp 7-8.

¹⁷⁷ Evidence, Ms Karen Willis, Board Member, Domestic Violence NSW, 28 August 2015, p 4.

Committee comment

- 5.20** The committee acknowledges the frustration expressed by inquiry participants regarding the competitive tendering process.
- 5.21** We also note the concerns raised by inquiry participants regarding the impact that competitive tendering has had on the delivery of services, including the reduced propensity for coordination between services. While there have been suggestions of ways to improve the tender process, the committee has not been able to identify a viable alternative to competitive tendering.
- 5.22** In the interests of public accountability and transparency, it is essential that the allocation of government funds balances value for money principles with ensuring the best organisation is chosen to deliver the service. In order to ensure that New South Wales achieves these dual goals, we recommend that the government undertake a review of the competitive tendering process for human services and examine best practice models in other jurisdictions, particularly those that facilitate co-design, collaboration and joint tendering. This review should include extensive consultation with non-government service providers.

Recommendation 10

That the NSW Government undertake a review of the competitive tendering process for human services that:

- examines best practice models in other jurisdictions, particularly those that facilitate co-design, collaboration and joint tendering, and
 - includes consultation with non-government service providers.
-

Funding

- 5.23** As indicated at paragraph 5.2, the length of funding provided to human service providers does not generally exceed five years, including extensions.¹⁷⁸ When asked by committee members what is the usual length of funding, Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, replied, ‘... there is a variety. Some grants are 12 months and some are three years’.¹⁷⁹
- 5.24** This section of the report examines a number of issues pertaining to funding arrangements. Many inquiry participants observed that the existing short term funding cycles have a negative impact on service coordination, arguing that a longer term funding was necessary to achieve change. The ability to undertake joint tenders with other organisations was also explored, as was the need to provide funding specific for service coordination.

¹⁷⁸ NSW Procurement Board, *NSW Procurement Policy Framework for NSW Government Agencies* (Policy Framework No 4, July 2015) p 11 and Department of Family and Community Services, *Contract Governance Guidelines – April 2014*, p 38.

¹⁷⁹ Evidence, Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, 28 August 2015, p 43.

Impacts of short funding time frames

- 5.25** The committee heard from several inquiry participants that the current short-term funding arrangements were a barrier to building relationships, sustaining outcomes, implementing long-term planning and building capability across the sector.
- 5.26** NCOSS advised that the *2015 State of the Sector Report* found that ‘more than half (53 per cent) of organisations stated that funding contracts are not long enough to achieve outcomes’.¹⁸⁰
- 5.27** Both Blacktown City Council and Western Sydney Community Forum highlighted that the short term funding arrangements are a barrier to building and sustaining relationships and this impacts on the service coordination within communities.¹⁸¹
- 5.28** The Illawarra Forum advised that ‘short term funding negates the long term commitment required for service coordination and sustained outcomes’.¹⁸² Similarly, the NSW Family Services commented on the disadvantage to the families involved in services and programs that ‘may need ongoing support beyond the time constraints of the short term funding contracts’.¹⁸³
- 5.29** Community Organisations in Fairfield Local Government Area advised that short term funding arrangements makes it difficult for service providers to coordinate planning and long-term strategies and impacts on the professional development and capacity building of staff, who become ‘demoralised’ by the uncertainty of contracts.¹⁸⁴ Domestic Violence NSW captured this issue when stating ‘where funding and strategic direction is uncertain, service provision is uncertain’.¹⁸⁵
- 5.30** Other participants reported the confusion amongst clients when service providers changed or lost funding within short periods of time. Cabramatta Community Centre commented that clients ‘may find it difficult to keep up to date with information in regards to which organisations are providing what service in the community’.¹⁸⁶
- 5.31** Community Organisations in Fairfield Local Government Area indicated that it is also difficult for community groups and organisations to remain up-to-date, and used Emergency Relief as an example:

This was recently seen in the changes to Emergency Relief provision in the Fairfield area whereby for a period of several weeks, there was no knowledge of who was providing this significant service to highly vulnerable people.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁰ Submission 14, Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS), pp 9-10.

¹⁸¹ Submission 24, Blacktown City Council, p 6; Submission 43, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 3.

¹⁸² Submission 19, Illawarra Forum Inc, p 2.

¹⁸³ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 9.

¹⁸⁴ Submission 16, Community Organisations in Fairfield Local Government Area, p 6.

¹⁸⁵ Submission 11, Domestic Violence NSW, p 19.

¹⁸⁶ Submission 31, Cabramatta Community Centre, p 5.

¹⁸⁷ Submission 16, Community Organisations in Fairfield Local Government Area, p 5.

- 5.32** On its visit to Bourke, the committee heard from the Bourke Shire Council that short funding time frames for programs based in regional or rural areas has the potential to limit the talent pool of professionals interested in relocating to these areas without the certainty they will be there for longer than two or three years.¹⁸⁸

Calls for longer funding time frames

- 5.33** In order to address the problems caused by the short-term funding cycle, several inquiry participants recommended a minimum five year term for the allocation of funding.
- 5.34** Ms Trower suggested that a five year funding period would assist in building capacity and the workforce amongst service providers.¹⁸⁹ NSW Family Services concurred with the need for a five year funding period ‘to allow for increased stability within the sector, long term engagement, planning and service coordination’.¹⁹⁰
- 5.35** When asked by committee members whether two year funding grants were sufficiently long to effect change, Ms Howe replied:

... you are only just getting the training wheels off in the first year and then you are thinking, ‘Well, we have only got another year to go.’ It is not enough time to really demonstrate that any milestones have been met or longevity around the service ... I would think a minimum of five years.¹⁹¹

- 5.36** Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, indicated the length of funding depends on what needs to be achieved and that sometimes one to two years might be enough but ‘for the kinds of services that we are increasingly delivering five years would be much more appropriate’.¹⁹²
- 5.37** On a similar note, Mr David Lilley, The Hive, Mt Druitt also called for longer funding periods to overcome the variability of the funding cycle.¹⁹³

Joint tendering

- 5.38** Inquiry participants held divergent views on whether joint tendering was a model that would work, emphasising the importance of sufficient time frames to prepare joint tenders if they were to be successful.
- 5.39** Ms Howe reflected on the *Going Home, Staying Home* reforms, noting that at the beginning of the reforms there was a promising co-design approach but the ‘wheels fell off’ at the

¹⁸⁸ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke.

¹⁸⁹ Evidence, Ms Trower, 28 August 2015, p 5.

¹⁹⁰ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 14.

¹⁹¹ Evidence, Ms Howe, 28 August 2015, p 43.

¹⁹² Evidence, Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, 8 October 2015, p 49.

¹⁹³ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Mt Druitt.

procurement stage. Ms Howe suggested that to overcome this, the framework around future tenders could be better designed to encourage joint tenders:

It is actually good common sense to say maybe there is a big charity and three small local services and a Rotary club who want to come together because they already work together. Why do we not frame a tender around them and not consider this in the same way you would purchase the best tables or chairs or cars? I think that is where the wheels fell off with Going Home, Staying Home. I think that is a real shame because if it had continued right through you could have looked at what was happening on the ground. Let us pull it together and work around that.¹⁹⁴

5.40 Ms Hourigan Ruse was of the view that joint working arrangements don't always succeed, especially when tenders are produced quickly under tight time frames:

What has played out in recent reforms, and particularly Going Home Staying Home, was the sector realised, almost at the eleventh hour, that if they were going to survive they needed to put in joint working arrangements, consortia-type agreements. That threw very strange bedfellows together and many of those tenderers that became the successful tenderer, fell over before they started. Competitive tendering, as a blanket 'This is what we need to do' has the potential to backfire badly.¹⁹⁵

5.41 Ms Hourigan Ruse advised that it takes time for service providers to organise a joint tender, providing the example of four small services joining together for a tender requiring four boards to be involved in approving the tender, agreeing upon which organisations would play the lead role and how the joined service delivery would function.¹⁹⁶

5.42 Mr Thomas Nance, Community Sector Development Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum, advised the committee that there are mechanisms in place to promote joint collaboration but 'where organisations ultimately struggle is taking the next step in terms of prioritising their resources' to be able to focus on partnerships.¹⁹⁷ Similarly, Fairfield City Council expressed the view that a number of recently funded services seem to not have sufficient time or priority to engage with other agencies in the aim to improving collaboration.¹⁹⁸

5.43 The New South Wales Government reflected that while there are some good individual programs that encourage collaboration across agencies or involve joint service delivery, experience has shown that they are not sufficient to 'significantly improve outcomes in communities with high social needs'. The New South Wales Government recommended 'a fundamental transformation in approaches to service delivery is required that moves beyond coordination to collaboration'.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ Evidence, Ms Howe, 28 August 2015, p 43.

¹⁹⁵ Evidence, Ms Hourigan Ruse, 6 November 2015, pp 13-14.

¹⁹⁶ Evidence, Ms Hourigan Ruse, 6 November 2015, p 14.

¹⁹⁷ Evidence, Mr Thomas Nance, Community Sector Development Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum, 6 November 2015, pp 5-6.

¹⁹⁸ Submission 15, Fairfield City Council, p 6.

¹⁹⁹ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 8.

Funding for service coordination

- 5.44** There was support from inquiry participants for funding to be provided to specifically target service coordination and collaboration. In particular, representatives from NSW Health recognised the importance of making coordination part of core business. Ms Elizabeth Koff, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, Ministry of Health, stated:

From my perspective in the ministry, I think we also need to have it documented in service level agreements that it is core business of the health system to work in partnership with other government agencies. Most of the metrics around service agreements to the districts involve emergency department attendance performance, surgical waiting list performance and adverse clinical events, but quantifying and measuring how we do it is a little more challenging. But if something is not there, it is not recognised as core business, and that is the next priority for us.²⁰⁰

- 5.45** When asked if collaboration should be a part of funding requirements, Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, replied:

We are starting to build that in. Previously, the funding was given out. We are now sitting down and talking with the agencies not just about their KPIs but what we are asking them to deliver, how they will deliver it and how they will work with us and the other agencies. So it is not in there at the moment, but there has been lots of discussion about how we start to build that understanding. Working across agencies is absolutely building this.²⁰¹

- 5.46** Ms Louisa McKay, Director, Policy and Projects, NSW Family Services, when asked by committee members whether a commitment of a certain percentage of funding specifically for coordination would produce better outcomes said:

Absolutely. We believe that. From listening to all the conversation, outcomes-based contracting is something that we feel would be important and that goes back to value for money around actually achieving for outcomes. Part of that is about the client being better off, but it is also about the quality of the work. Are you engaging with services within your community? And having that as part of a contract where you have to prove in evidence that you are actually doing that work and you cannot work in a silo. So the answer is, yes.²⁰²

- 5.47** While service providers see the benefit in collaboration, it is not always a priority for them. Mr Nance highlighted that many organisations would like to devote time specifically to collaboration, but that the immediate needs of clients frequently take priority:

My first thought was that we often attend interagency meetings both on a management level and on a staff level. A lot of mechanisms promote these conversations around partnership. Where organisations ultimately struggle is taking the next step in terms of prioritising their resources ... at the end of the day a lot of services are more worried

²⁰⁰ Evidence, Ms Elizabeth Koff, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, Ministry of Health, 8 October 2015, p 8.

²⁰¹ Evidence, Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, 8 October 2015, p 9.

²⁰² Evidence, Ms Louisa McKay, Director, Policy and Projects, NSW Family Services, 6 November 2015, p 14.

about the immediate picture. I have, for example, 24 people waiting to come through my door for counselling. I would love to get on the phone and talk to the mental health organisation down the road about how we can do things in partnership but where do I find the time.²⁰³

Suggestions to improve current funding arrangements

- 5.48** A number of inquiry participants provided solutions on how the current funding arrangements can be improved. Domestic Violence NSW suggested that any further procurement or reforms need to take a ‘strengths-based approach’ to ‘ensure stability for both services and clients’ and guarantee co-design, transparency and timely communication to enable services to plan and build working relationships.²⁰⁴
- 5.49** Mr David Lilley, Director, The Hive Mount Druitt made some suggestions on how substantive change might be achieved through:
- funding for collaborative initiatives like The Hive, that involve stakeholders from all sectors, in initiatives that are tailored to local conditions.
 - an enabling or facilitative environment, in which funding contracts encourage or mandate collaborative planning and action amongst human service providers.
 - structural and procedural change that sees Government Departments engaging in collaborative planning and funding allocation for specific geographic areas, as part of core business (as distinct from forming interagency committees that provide ad hoc funding and plans as an add-on to business as usual).²⁰⁵
- 5.50** Lifetime Connect also suggested that procurement models should be more specific in regards to ‘service linkages, collaboration and partnerships’ and should not discriminate against small locally based service providers.²⁰⁶
- 5.51** Similarly, Ms Koff of the Ministry of Health, highlighted that collaborating with other agencies should be documented in the service level agreements to be recognised as core business and given priority.²⁰⁷ The City of Sydney also suggested the inclusion of ‘partnership capabilities’ as a core key performance indicator in funding contracts would drive more effective service delivery.²⁰⁸

Committee comment

- 5.52** The committee concurs with the evidence from a number of inquiry participants that the current length of service funding is too short for service providers to effectively build and

²⁰³ Evidence, Mr Nance, 6 November 2015, pp 5-6.

²⁰⁴ Submission 11, Domestic Violence NSW, p 8.

²⁰⁵ Correspondence from Mr David Lilley, Director, The Hive Mount Druitt, to secretariat, 12 October 2015. The Hive is discussed in further detail in chapter 6.

²⁰⁶ Submission 23, Lifetime Connect Inc, p 5.

²⁰⁷ Evidence, Ms Koff, 8 October 2015, p 8.

²⁰⁸ Submission 12, City of Sydney, p 13.

maintain relationships with clients and other organisations, or to implement long-term planning and strategies to build capability across the sector.

- 5.53** As noted in chapter 2, the *Dropping of the Edge 2015* report highlighted the importance of a 'long term horizon' for funding with bipartisan commitment. This can only be achieved by increasing funding time frames. We therefore recommend that the length of funding provided to human service providers be increased to a minimum of five years, with the opportunity for an extension beyond this time.

Recommendation 11

That the NSW Government increase funding periods to a minimum of five years for human service providers, with the opportunity for an extension beyond this time.

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- 5.54** In the committee's view, collaboration amongst government and non-government service providers is a critical factor in effectively meeting the needs of communities, especially those with high social needs. The committee considers that joint tendering, where possible, has great potential to achieve better service coordination, so long as sufficient time frames for tender preparation are provided. We therefore recommend that funding contracts encourage joint tenders by allowing longer lead-times in tender preparation.

Recommendation 12

That the NSW Government allow longer lead-times in tender preparation to encourage joint tenders from human service providers.

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- 5.55** The committee notes the suggestion that funding be specifically quarantined within contracts for organisations to undertake service coordination. We consider this to be a sound method of ensuring that organisations prioritise service coordination, without unduly impacting on service delivery to clients. A key performance indicator to measure attempts at coordination should also be developed to ensure that organisations undertake coordination as part of their core business.

Recommendation 13

That the NSW Government:

- mandate that a percentage of the value of human service contracts is targeted to undertake service coordination, and
- develop a key performance indicator to measure coordination and collaboration.

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- 5.56** We also acknowledge that Recommendation 3 in chapter 3, pertaining to a requirement in funding contracts to collect and measure data on outcomes, will impact on the funding environment.

5.57 In the next chapter, the committee considers the merits of establishing funding specifically targeted at service coordination, through the creation of backbone organisations in local communities to drive coordination across multiple service providers.

Chapter 6 Best practice principles

Throughout the inquiry there was ongoing discussion about the best practice principles that are most likely to contribute to effective service coordination. This chapter examines these principles. The chapter commences by discussing a number of programs that are achieving positive change from both the government and non-government sectors. The chapter then examines the best practice principles that are most likely to result in successful service coordination, including the collective impact framework. A critical aspect of the collective framework is the identification of a backbone organisation to drive a coordinated approach that brings organisations together from across the government and community sectors to address complex social issues.

Best practice programs

- 6.1 While the committee's terms of reference highlighted the Dubbo Minister's Action Group as an example of a best practice model for service coordination, inquiry participants identified a range of other programs that are achieving success in communities across New South Wales. These innovative models have demonstrated the potential to transform how government and non-government services coordinate to achieve holistic outcomes.
- 6.2 This section considers some of these programs. It is by no means an exhaustive list of all programs discussed during the inquiry.

Government led initiatives

- 6.3 The New South Wales Government provided a number of examples of government agencies collaborating with each other, and with non-government agencies, to coordinate their service delivery for certain clients and communities. These include:
- *It Stops Here: Safer Pathways* – a single, streamlined referral pathway for victims of domestic violence, providing an integrated and coordinated response in six locations across the state
 - *Networked Specialist Centres* – a new way of bringing together schools, their local communities, and government and non-government agencies to achieve better educational and life outcomes for students and their families. Centres currently operate in four demonstration sites with a further eleven currently being established and an additional five to be in place by early 2016.²⁰⁹
- 6.4 In addition to these two programs, inquiry participants identified three other initiatives as demonstrating positive outcomes: Family Referral Services, co-design on the Central Coast, and the One Place Service Centre, Coniston. These three programs are discussed in further detail below.

²⁰⁹ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, pp 5-7.

Family Referral Services

- 6.5** Family Referral Services are a state-wide non-government child protection and wellbeing service that links vulnerable children, young people and their families with a range of support services in their local area. The service ‘... also plays an important role in strengthening coordination and collaboration amongst service providers in their region to promote child safety, welfare and wellbeing’.²¹⁰
- 6.6** The service responds to client needs in a range of ways, ranging from the provision of information, to referral, to service or case coordination, depending on what is required.²¹¹ The Family Referral Services Senior Officers Group indicated that the service has two core functions:
- client intake and referral – to engage with clients, assess their needs and nature of support/s required, provide information, referral and other assistance with accessing appropriate services and other supports in their local community
 - service system support and systemic advocacy – to improve local service provider knowledge of other support services in the area, and strengthen coordination and collaboration in service delivery to promote child safety, welfare and wellbeing.²¹²
- 6.7** The Senior Officers Group also highlighted that the eleven referral services are located in communities with high social needs:
- These communities are commonly suburbs or townships with high concentrations of public housing, higher numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, and remote communities in rural New South Wales where there are few services. The Family Referral Service concentrate much of their service delivery in the communities identified in the recent ‘Dropping off the Edge 2015’ report.²¹³
- 6.8** The Family Referral Services Senior Officers Group emphasised the critical role of service coordination and partnerships with other organisations to the referral service model:
- As a centralised referral point for the child and family service system and the community in each of its funded regions it is critical to effective Family Referral Service functioning that their staff have a comprehensive knowledge of government and non-government service availability and capacity ... The Family Referral Service are funded to drive coordinated service delivery in each of their regions. They have the government remit to be sector leaders in this important activity.²¹⁴
- 6.9** During the committee’s site visit to Bourke, Mr David Ryan, Acting Manager, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside, advised that the referral service in Bourke had been open for five months. Within this period, Mr Ryan said that there was an increasing number

²¹⁰ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, pp 5-6.

²¹¹ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, pp 5-6.

²¹² Submission 41, Family Referral Services Senior Officers Group, p 2.

²¹³ Submission 41, Family Referral Services Senior Officers Group, p 2.

²¹⁴ Submission 41, Family Referral Services Senior Officers Group, p 4.

of self-referrals to the service following wide-spread community promotion and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.²¹⁵

Co-design

6.10 The New South Wales Government advised that co-design, which aims to include all relevant stakeholders to jointly design new solutions to problems, has commenced in four districts across New South Wales: Western Sydney, Nepean, Blue Mountains and Central Coast.²¹⁶

6.11 The New South Wales Government explained how the co-design approach is utilised, using the Central Coast as an example:

... the Central Coast has designed a multi- agency intake and service point centre, staffed by people drawn from Family and Community Services, Police, Education and Health, who possess a strong understanding of the local service system. Staff from the local Networked Specialist Centre and Family Referral Service will also support the operation of the multi-agency centre. Child protection reports for Central Coast children and young people will be diverted from the central Helpline to the local multi-agency centre. Utilising an array of tools, intake staff will assist reporters, where appropriate and where risks do not require a statutory response, to continue to support the child and family.²¹⁷

6.12 The New South Wales Government concluded that ‘... staff will work with other co-located services to support families to get the right response and faster. It will also result in families not having to tell their story multiple times for multiple assessment processes ...’.²¹⁸

6.13 Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services, outlined that the co-design approach required identification of common goals, followed by the marshalling of resources around the achievement of those goals:

It was really permission to say, ‘Let us just set aside what is in your contract to deliver here and there. Let us try and say what we are we shooting for. How can we make a difference?’ ... They literally have all the evidence about this area, so they start to solve the problem: How will we service the needs of vulnerable children and young people in the Central Coast? What is in our power to do that? They take that apart and look forward about where to go next.²¹⁹

6.14 Ms Walk noted that the Central Coast model required no additional funding, and that the model’s strength came from the clear permission from the government to pursue innovative thinking about service delivery and coordination:

²¹⁵ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke, Mr David Ryan, Acting Manager, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside, 5 November 2015.

²¹⁶ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 8; Submission 47, NSW Ombudsman, p 3.

²¹⁷ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 9.

²¹⁸ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, p 9.

²¹⁹ Evidence, Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services, 8 October 2015, p 14.

The agencies in the room have a strong permission literally from the government to be able to move things around should they need, and each of the individual government agencies are very strong on that and certainly all the non-government organisation agencies, wherever their head offices are, their imprimatur to their local people is to work as far and as fast as you can in terms of a joined up system.²²⁰

- 6.15** With regard to the authorising environment, Mr Brian Smyth King, Executive Director Learning and Engagement, School Operations and Performance Division, Department of Education, noted the importance of people at the frontline of service delivery being confident to articulate new ways of working:

I guess the real challenges in this space as we move forward have been around what is a tension between, if you like, local governance. You can authorise agencies and people of agencies to do things, but what becomes a real challenge is getting people on the ground to utilise the authorisation they have to do things differently. So what we are finding is the need to focus as much on anything in these spaces around the local governance and its arrangements that we put in place, so there is decision-making across the agencies contributing that is equal. People have a say.²²¹

One Place Service Centre

- 6.16** The third initiative raised was the One Place Service Centre, located in Coniston, near Wollongong. The centre has co-located services delivered by the Department of Family and Community Services, together with services offered by other government agencies and non-government organisations, in one shared location. Mr Smyth King outlined the how the centre operates:

In that particular location [Coniston] we have education, mental health services, ageing, disability and home care, child protection services, housing and ten non-government organisations working. So people come in and they get triaged into the service systems they need and then those various agencies then take the issues that might be pertaining to those particular people or those groups of people back into the service systems that they are dealing with.²²²

- 6.17** Mr Smyth King spoke positively about the benefits being achieved by the co-location:

... we have a management process that enables people from the various agencies to come together on a daily basis and do their case management work and look at the implications of what might have come through the door that morning or the day before and what the implications are for the service sectors that will be responding to that. That has some really strong promise for us as we move forward.²²³

- 6.18** While the Consiton service centre has had a promising start, Mr Smyth King cautioned against assuming the model would work elsewhere, noting the importance of tailoring solutions according to local needs:

²²⁰ Evidence, Ms Walk, 8 October 2015, p 15.

²²¹ Evidence, Mr Brian Smyth King, Executive Director Learning and Engagement, School Operations and Performance Division, Department of Education, 8 October 2015, p 15.

²²² Evidence, Mr Smyth King, 8 October 2015, p 15.

²²³ Evidence, Mr Smyth King, 8 October 2015, p 18.

... you cannot have a model of service delivery that you roll out from here across New South Wales that will work for everybody ... I think you have got to go back to this notion of being able to empower local people to design the service system that is going to work for them ... Having a one-stop shop will not necessarily work for every community. It is about us being able to liberate our service sectors to be able to design what is going to work for them locally.²²⁴

- 6.19** Some inquiry participants expressed a desire for co-located services within their communities. For example, Narrandera Shire Council identified a need for what it termed a ‘One Stop Community Services Hub’ to facilitate the provision of services in a holistic way to the Narrandera community.²²⁵ The council outlined the potential benefits of the hub:

The community benefits from a hub as they are facilitated in finding the right service or information when it is needed. The co-location of services such as psychologists, drug and alcohol councillors, family services etc. in a neutral, non-confronting environment greatly increases successful outcomes for the user community ... A hub would be a venue that provides information about parenting, child development, health, drug and alcohol information, counselling services and local service providers. It would be a meeting place where families and individuals could participate in activities and develop crucial support networks.²²⁶

- 6.20** Parallels were drawn between the Coniston service centre and the approach utilised by Service NSW, which brings a range of transactional services, such as licensing, provided by government under the one roof. Ms Rachna Gandhi, Executive Director Service Delivery, Service NSW advised that before Service NSW was developed, an individual could interact with approximately 900 telephone numbers, 350 websites, and 350 shopfronts to determine how to address their needs.²²⁷ Ms Gandhi explained the rationale for Service NSW:

The idea was that it should be easy for the citizen or the customer of the State to interact with government, that they should be able to go to the one-stop shop and have a conversation about all their transaction needs ... We did not want to create silos within the one-stop shop. You should be able to ask anyone in our service centre or our contact centre and any one of them should be able to help you with any general inquiry you have.²²⁸

- 6.21** Ms Gandhi suggested that there was a ‘...very rich opportunity to leverage infrastructure that the government has invested in through Service NSW’ into the human services sector, including the physical and technological infrastructure used by the centres, and the client-focused approach to the delivery of services embedded in the corporate culture.²²⁹

- 6.22** Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, advised that ‘[a]t this

²²⁴ Evidence, Mr Smyth King, 8 October 2015, pp 20-21.

²²⁵ Submission 17 Narrandera Shire Council, p 2.

²²⁶ Submission 17 Narrandera Shire Council, p 2.

²²⁷ Evidence, Ms Rachna Gandhi, Executive Director Service Delivery, Service NSW, 8 October 2015, p 26.

²²⁸ Evidence, Ms Gandhi, 8 October 2015, p 26.

²²⁹ Evidence, Ms Gandhi, 8 October 2015, p 28.

point in time there is no government decision to expand Service NSW into more intensive service delivery, particularly for the communities we are talking about here'.²³⁰

Committee comment

- 6.23** The committee acknowledges the work of the New South Wales Government in attempting to create an environment that fosters service coordination for communities with high social needs. Initiatives such as the Family Referral Services, co-design on the Central Coast, and the One Place Service Centre, Coniston are placing a greater emphasis on collaboration to achieve holistic outcomes for individuals and communities across the state.
- 6.24** Initiatives such as the Family Referral Service and the One Place Service Centre allow the complex needs of clients to be addressed in a holistic way, through the construction of a network of support services around an individual or family. We also acknowledge that the importance of tailoring solutions according to local needs.
- 6.25** The committee notes that while Family Referral Services are in place in eleven locations across the state, there is only one Service Centre. Whilst local needs should be taken into consideration, we believe that the establishment of One Place Service Centres in communities with high social needs across New South Wales and most particularly in regional and rural communities will greatly assist in achieving better outcomes for communities.
- 6.26** Further, in identifying locations for Service Centres the government should give priority consideration to Brewarrina, Claymore, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Wilcannia and Windale, the locations identified by the *Dropping off the Edge 2015* report as experiencing complex, concentrated and persistent disadvantage.

Recommendation 14

That the NSW Government establish One Place Service Centres in communities with high social needs across New South Wales, with a particular focus on Brewarrina, Claymore, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Wilcannia and Windale, the locations identified by the *Dropping off the Edge 2015* report as experiencing complex, concentrated and persistent disadvantage.

- 6.27** The committee is also optimistic about the potential outcomes from the co-design approach being pursued on the Central Coast and in three other locations, particularly in respect of government departments engaging in collaborative planning and funding allocation for specific geographic areas. We consider that this is a sensible approach to ensuring that agencies collaborate, and that a holistic approach is taken to addressing the complex needs of individuals and communities.
- 6.28** The committee believes that, pending an evaluation of the co-design approach being pursued on the Central Coast, the New South Wales Government should utilise co-design in other geographic areas across the state.

²³⁰ Evidence, Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 8 October 2015, p 29.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Government evaluate the co-design approach being pursued on the Central Coast, with a view to utilising co-design in other geographic areas across New South Wales.

Recommendation 16

That the NSW Government engage in collaborative planning and funding allocation for all specific geographic areas that have communities with high social needs.

Non-government led initiatives

- 6.29** Inquiry participants also identified a number of non-government led initiatives as examples of best practice in service coordination. While these initiatives frequently have some level of government involvement, typically through collaborative partnerships, the projects are typified by strong involvement from the local community.
- 6.30** Three of these initiatives, The Hive in Mount Druitt, the Maranguka Initiative in Bourke and the Claymore Action Network in Claymore, are discussed in the next section of this chapter. As noted in chapter 1, the committee visited each of these locations during the inquiry.

The Hive, Mount Druitt

- 6.31** Blacktown City Council described the purpose of The Hive, Mount Druitt as ‘... a collective impact project with the aim that every child in Mt Druitt should have the opportunity to reach their full potential in life – to be healthy, happy, learning, safe, equal and growing up in a positive environment’.²³¹
- 6.32** Blacktown City Council noted that since its establishment in January 2015, The Hive has ‘quickly gained support from community and agencies’ and achieved the following outcomes:
- agreement on an overarching goal
 - a collaboration structure
 - an leadership group that will guide decision-making and help find the strongest group of leaders from the community and other organisations
 - established Networked Action Teams on transition to schools and building a
 - child-friendly community.²³²
- 6.33** The Hive approach is based on a collective impact framework, discussed further at paragraph 6.57. The Hive’s self-stated goal is to achieve ‘a thriving generation of children with diverse life opportunities’.²³³

²³¹ Submission 24, Blacktown City Council, p 8.

²³² Submission 24 Blacktown City Council, p 8.

²³³ Tabled document, The Hive, Mount Druitt, *The Hive Journey – whiteboard presentation*, 7 October 2015.

- 6.34** The Hive does not engage in service delivery, but has been established specifically to foster collaboration between agencies and organisations delivering services in Mount Druitt. The Hive is funded by a combination of government agencies, corporate supporters and philanthropic organisations, which ‘will enable us to take a more long-term view that is not subject to funding cycles’.²³⁴
- 6.35** Mr David Lilley, Director, The Hive highlighted that The Hive has ‘...a deep commitment to improving service coordination and outcomes for children and their families’ over the long term.²³⁵ Mr Lilley concluded: ‘I think we are taking a very thoughtful, innovative and authentic approach. I’d like to suggest that Mt Druitt would make an excellent test/pilot site for work in any of the above areas’.²³⁶
- 6.36** Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services, complimented The Hive’s approach to achieving service coordination in Mount Druitt, by providing a forum for diverse agencies to work together with a common purpose:

Everybody absolutely joined in wanting to achieve those outcomes but they were undergoing different activities and they did not necessarily leverage off each other’s activities and sometimes they were not necessarily even evidence-based ... The Hive grew out of a number of interesting initiatives in Mount Druitt that they wanted to put together and say we have got this new way of approaching very disadvantaged families and communities, and these groups all work together for similar outcomes. Is there a way we can build from the ground up the community and those agencies to get some very specific outcomes?²³⁷

Claymore Action Network, Claymore

- 6.37** The Claymore Action Network and its working groups are a ‘... collaborative service model designed to enable multidisciplinary services to work together with residents, and other key stakeholders, to respond effectively to local issues’.²³⁸
- 6.38** The network utilises a collective action framework to guide its activities.²³⁹ An important part of the initiative is the coordinated working groups that deliver, monitor and evaluate actions and results in the areas of learning and employment, community engagement, and youth.²⁴⁰

²³⁴ The Hive, Mount Druitt, *Why? – Improving outcomes, a different way of working* <http://thehivemtdruitt.com/why/>

²³⁵ Correspondence from Mr David Lilley, The Hive, Munt Druitt, to Chair, 12 October 2015.

²³⁶ Correspondence from Mr David Lilley, The Hive, Munt Druitt, to Chair, 12 October 2015.

²³⁷ Evidence, Ms Walk, 8 October 2015, p 6.

²³⁸ Tabled document, Claymore Action Network, *Inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs – Claymore visit - Wednesday 7 October 2015*, 7 October 2015, p 5.

²³⁹ Tabled document, Claymore Action Network, *Inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs – Claymore visit - Wednesday 7 October 2015*, 7 October 2015, p 3.

²⁴⁰ Tabled document, Claymore Action Network, *Inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs – Claymore visit - Wednesday 7 October 2015*, 7 October 2015, pp 6-9.

- 6.39** There are also a number of initiatives involved in the area, such as the R.I.S.E. Collaboration (Reengagement Initiative towards Supportive Education), the Home Interaction Program For Parents and Youngsters, and a range of employment and training programs such as Partners in Employment, Pathways to Job Readiness, Pathways to Opportunity Program.²⁴¹
- 6.40** Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, described the Claymore Action Network as ‘a very good example’ of a collaborative project, noting the comprehensiveness of their approach to effecting social change:
- ... there are very clear goals in the collaborative programs, and Claymore is a very good example. When you look at the list of programs that they are running at the moment, there are clear goals to look at improvements in education in that community, improvements in access to schools, improvements to health at a much broader level ...²⁴²
- 6.41** Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, commented that despite the commitment of the Claymore community to achieve better outcomes, there was a need for ‘funding for coordination facilitation’.²⁴³

Marunguka Initiative, Bourke

- 6.42** The third non-government led initiative discussed during the inquiry was the Marunguka Initiative in Bourke. Marunguka builds on existing policy initiatives, including from the Department of Premier and Cabinet Strategic Coordination Group in Bourke, Department of Aboriginal Affairs OCHRE (opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility and empowerment) strategy and the Department of Family and Community Services. Marunguka is also working with Justice Reinvestment, to address the underlying causes of youth crime.²⁴⁴
- 6.43** The NSW Ombudsman advised that the project stemmed from the communities response to a 2010 inquiry by the Ombudsman into service provision in Bourke and Brewarrina.²⁴⁵ The Ombudsman outlined the Marunguka approach:

The service, known as the Marunguka Community Hub, is a multi-purpose centre where families can come as a first point of contact to discuss issues or problems they may be experiencing, and to seek help in accessing appropriate assistance in relation to their needs. The Hub was conceived by community leaders in response to our 2010 inquiry into service provision to the Bourke and Brewarrina communities, and commenced operating in May this year. We provided support to facilitate the Hub’s establishment. The Western NSW Family Referral Service will have two staff at the Hub. FACS Western NSW District provided the premises, and will also locate a

²⁴¹ Tabled document, Claymore Action Network, *Inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs – Claymore visit - Wednesday 7 October 2015*, 7 October 2015, pp 10-14.

²⁴² Evidence, Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, 8 October 2015, p 24.

²⁴³ Evidence, Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, 8 October 2015, p 55.

²⁴⁴ Just Reinvest NSW, *The Marunguka Justice Reinvestment Project, Bourke NSW* <http://www.justreinvest.org.au/projects/jr-in-bourke/>

²⁴⁵ Submission 47, NSW Ombudsman, p 3.

caseworker and an administration assistant at the Hub. As well, Western NSW Local Health District will contribute to the Hub. More recently, a federal agency has agreed to explore providing financial support to Maranguka to enable it to employ a senior operations manager.²⁴⁶

- 6.44** As described by Maranguka, the initiative seeks to achieve coordination across a number of service providers, without the need for additional financial resources or new services:

Government, non-government organisations, corporate and charitable sectors will support and work with Maranguka in a way that we have the biggest say in managing and coordinating better service provision, promoting transparency and avoiding duplication and gaps. Maranguka won't replace existing services or organisations; rather compliment by providing better pathways for our People to have confidence to access services.²⁴⁷

- 6.45** The Law Society of NSW also noted that the initiative '... does not seek to replace existing services or organisations, but rather to act as a hub for individuals and service providers'.²⁴⁸ The society continued to outline the initiatives' chosen focus areas:

The Maranguka Proposal involves establishing community-led, multi-disciplinary teams working in partnership with relevant government and non-government agencies and organisations to develop a new accountability framework for addressing Aboriginal disadvantage, and develop a fiscal framework that ensures the sustainability of programs and services. The priority areas of the Maranguka Proposal were set by the community, and are safe families, connected communities, youth and justice reinvestment and women's and men's action.²⁴⁹

- 6.46** Maranguka does not provide case management services; however, it undertakes supported referrals for people seeking assistance from the centre to ensure that the required help is received. In addition to acting as a hub for the community, government and non-government agencies, Maranguka is also seeking to harness corporate and philanthropic investment to achieve their goals.²⁵⁰

Committee comment

- 6.47** The committee was privileged to visit The Hive, Claymore and Maranguka during this inquiry. At each of these three locations, we were impressed by the dedication of all those involved to achieve positive change for their communities.

- 6.48** The committee believes that each of these initiatives demonstrate great promise for better service coordination. In particular, The Hive approach to service coordination whereby an impartial organisation is tasked with facilitating and driving coordination has significant potential.

²⁴⁶ Submission 47, NSW Ombudsman, pp 3-4.

²⁴⁷ Tabled document, Marunguka Community Organisation, *Powerpoint presentation*, 5 November 2015, p 5.

²⁴⁸ Submission 44, Law Society of NSW, p 7.

²⁴⁹ Submission 44, Law Society of NSW, pp 7-8.

²⁵⁰ Appendix 5: Site visit report: Bourke.

- 6.49** The committee believes that the New South Wales Government should provide an additional five years of funding to The Hive, Mount Druitt to allow The Hive to continue its approach to service coordination. Further, the government should nominate five additional sites in New South Wales to trial The Hive approach to service coordination, including in Claymore and in three regional and rural areas.
- 6.50** We acknowledge that some communities, most notably Claymore, may already have existing collaborative approaches in place. However, we consider that The Hive's simple yet innovative approach to service coordination provides a flexible structure that can be adapted to a community's unique needs.
- 6.51** In addition, the committee considers that the Maranguka Initiative will achieve positive social change in Bourke. We believe that the NSW Government should continue its support for the initiative, and provide an additional five years of funding to continue its development.

Recommendation 17

That the NSW Government:

- provide an additional five years of funding to the Maranguka Initiative, Bourke
 - provide an additional five years of funding to The Hive, Mount Druitt
 - nominate an additional five areas of high social needs in New South Wales to trial The Hive approach to service coordination, including in Claymore and in three regional and rural areas.
-

Best practice principles

- 6.52** A number of best practice principles for service coordination were identified throughout the inquiry. The New South Wales Government listed the following best practice principles in their submission to the inquiry:
- a genuine commitment to collaborate and work as joint partners, in recognition that no one agency or person can solve complex social issues on their own
 - shared goals, objectives and accountability amongst the partners
 - shared understanding of how the goals to be achieved and the service activities align with each agency's charter
 - an authorising environment, or 'permission' to participate in service coordination
 - a strong facilitator/coordinator who can build respect between all parties, hold people to account and manage and resolve tensions when these arise
 - local place based solutions developed by those closest to the community whose needs it is trying to meet, as top down approach can dampen innovation, reduce coordination between agencies and limit flexible adaptation to client needs and local circumstances
 - where service coordination models are designed centrally, there should be the opportunity for these to be locally adapted

- a participatory approach which includes the voice of clients, community and the non-government sector in identifying what the problem is and any design solution
- the collection and use of data to inform service coordination design, and to monitor and evaluate whether the service delivery is achieving the outcomes sought.²⁵¹

6.53 There was wide-spread agreement among inquiry participants regarding these principles. For example, The Benevolent Society, Australian Medical Association (NSW), and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, all identified similar best practice principles in their submissions to the inquiry.²⁵²

6.54 The NSW Ombudsman cited their extensive experience in examining issues related to the delivery of human services in emphasising the positive outcomes achieved by place-based solutions that are integrated into local communities:

In a number of reports since 2010, starting with our *Inquiry into service provision to the Bourke and Brewarrina communities*, we have emphasised that efficient and effective place-based models of service planning, funding and delivery are an integral part of improving the identification of, and response to, vulnerable families and high needs communities. We have noted the impacts of poorly integrated and inefficient service systems operating in local communities, including: the failure to identify and meet the needs of those most vulnerable; the continued funding of non-government organisations that are failing to provide a good quality service; and the limited return on investment from a number of agency programs.²⁵³

6.55 The Ombudsman continued to state that their reviews have repeatedly demonstrated the need for an ‘overarching framework to be in place which is tailored to the needs of individual communities’ that:

- relies on evidence to identify need and to determine priority areas for funding, as part of an ongoing ‘whole of community’ service planning and mapping exercise
- funds services based on the priority areas that have been identified (and according to a rigorous procurement process that assesses the capacity of individual services to deliver), and
- ensures that the level and nature of services which are provided by funded agencies are tracked, and the related outcomes are monitored.²⁵⁴

6.56 The Ombudsman also ‘... emphasised the need for robust and effective governance arrangements to drive a genuinely integrated service approach.’²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Submission 48, New South Wales Government, pp 14-15

²⁵² See Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, pp 9-10; Submission 30, Australian Medical Association (NSW), pp 3-4, and the Submission 40, Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth, pp 13-14.

²⁵³ Submission 47, NSW Ombudsman, p 2.

²⁵⁴ Submission 47, NSW Ombudsman, p 2.

²⁵⁵ Submission 47, NSW Ombudsman, p 2.

A collective impact framework

6.57 As discussed throughout this report, there are a number of barriers to achieving service coordination in communities with high social needs. The Benevolent Society identified three key reasons why collaboration is undermined:

- competition – between government partners and between non-government organisations who compete for government funding and their role in the community
- control – issues of relinquishing and sharing control
- commitment – differing levels of motivation, commitment and skills for effective collaboration.²⁵⁶

6.58 The Benevolent Society, together with a number of other inquiry participants suggested that to overcome these barriers, a collective impact framework should be implemented. A collective impact framework involves:

...a coordinated approach that brings organisations together from across government, community and the business sector to solve difficult social issues and achieve important social change. The underlying premise of collective impact is that no single organisation can create large-scale, lasting social change alone. Sustainable change which addresses complex issues requires people from different sectors, different functions, different cultures and diverse geographies to come together to be part of the solution.²⁵⁷

6.59 The Benevolent Society, NSW Family Services and The Hive, Mount Druitt each outlined the five conditions of success under a collective impact framework:

- common agenda – all participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions
- shared measurement – collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable
- mutually reinforcing activities – participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action
- continuous communication – consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation
- backbone organisation – creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organisation(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organisations and agencies.²⁵⁸

6.60 NSW Family Services expressed the view that a collective impact framework would:

²⁵⁶ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 15.

²⁵⁷ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 15.

²⁵⁸ Submission 13, The Benevolent Society, p 15; Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 11; Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke.

... increase and enhance cross-sector collaboration, will pull organisations out of silos and help the sector to start thinking about the system as a whole rather than just about their programs... Further, collective impact must include all levels of government, non-government organisations and the community.²⁵⁹

- 6.61** NSW Family Services recommended that the New South Wales Government should ‘...endorse, support and resource Collective Impact initiatives’ in each of the 15 Department of Family and Community Services districts, commencing with the most disadvantaged communities.²⁶⁰ Further, the service suggested that there be a whole of government plan for each of the districts, developed using the collective impact framework, ‘...that includes all levels of government, non-government organisations and the community and is focussed on community wellbeing outcomes and shared measurement’.²⁶¹
- 6.62** Parramatta City Council was also supportive of a collective impact framework, saying that ‘[s]ignificant opportunities exist to adopt collective impact approaches in tackling multifaceted problems in communities with high social needs’.²⁶²
- 6.63** Local Community Services Association emphasised the critical involvement of the community if a collective impact approach is to be successful:

A collective impact approach holds enormous promise for bringing about meaningful change – but only if such action is taken with communities, not apart from them. Currently within the community services sector in Australia, and particularly in NSW, collective impact is seen as an effective framework to coordinate existing resources in order to tackle complex social issues collaboratively. Observation and analysis of the use and success or failure of collective impact initiatives within the USA demonstrates the importance of considered and effective community engagement.²⁶³

- 6.64** The Western Sydney Community Forum expressed support for a collective impact approach to service coordination, placing particular emphasis on the need to have a backbone organisations to drive relationship development and analyse the need for services:

... the collective impact approach brings together and aligns the efforts of diverse stakeholders around a common agenda for common benefit. In communities with high needs, a coordinating body or backbone organisation needs to effectively facilitate the building of stronger relationships as well as analyse service coverage. The success of this role is contingent on existing connections within the community which can be leveraged to facilitate strong cooperation between services and stakeholders.²⁶⁴

A backbone organisation

- 6.65** The majority of inquiry participants raised the importance of a backbone organisation to drive and monitor service coordination as a key success factor in attempts to achieve service

²⁵⁹ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 11.

²⁶⁰ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 14.

²⁶¹ Submission 28, NSW Family Services Inc, p 14.

²⁶² Submission 49, Parramatta City Council, p 15.

²⁶³ Submission 22, Local Community Services Association, pp 2-3.

²⁶⁴ Submission 43, Western Sydney Community Forum, p 4.

coordination. For example, the Illawarra Forum, which represents the non-government community services industry in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, ‘strongly’ recommended that ‘... a best practice service coordination approach would include a dedicated organisation, person or hub to take responsibility for the initiation and ongoing implementation of the coordination’.²⁶⁵

6.66 The City of Sydney said that the time involved in a coordination role necessitated a stand-alone organisation, focussed solely on facilitating service coordination:

The process essential to coordinated responses – including regular meetings, consistent communication among all partners, and agreed processes and protocols – can be time and resource intensive. It requires an organisation to take up a leadership role and bring adequate resources and skills to undertake it effectively. Sometimes there is no organisation willing to take on this role, which makes it difficult to bring partners together and maintain a coordinated response.²⁶⁶

6.67 Fairfield City Council also supported the establishment of backbone organisations to lead service coordination between community organisations, government and non-government agencies. The council identified that a coordinating organisation should be able to:

- identify community issues at a population level, as well as within demographic groups and issue areas
- offer a single point of contact for philanthropic, funding and commercial sponsors
- maintain information regarding all funded services within the area
- advocate for the needs of the area
- provide a research function, evidence base and evaluation frameworks for use by all stakeholders
- support small community organisations and groups
- develop and maintain partnerships to facilitate the coordination of services and make this information available to all stakeholders, regardless of size or scope of organisation.²⁶⁷

6.68 Ms Anne Hampshire, Head of Research and Advocacy, The Smith Family, emphasised the value of a backbone organisation in identifying the desired collective outcomes and marshalling resources around achieving those outcomes:

I think the point is to move away from having just a single, discrete program. We have lots of single, discrete programs which in and of themselves might be quite high quality, but they do not actually get to the purpose of: ‘What are the outcomes we would want for, for example, children in this community?’ And that is the piece where I think the backbone organisation potentially adds most value – to look across those

²⁶⁵ Submission 19, The Illawarra Forum, p 4.

²⁶⁶ Submission 12, City of Sydney, p 15.

²⁶⁷ Submission 15, Fairfield City Council, p 8.

programs, to narrow down what are the collective outcomes we might want from a suite of programs and deliver those in a very coordinated way.²⁶⁸

Who should be the backbone?

6.69 There was some discussion amongst inquiry participants as to whether or not a backbone organisation should be involved in service delivery, or simply play a coordinating role. There was also some discussion about the affiliation of the backbone – should it be a government organisation or a non-government organisation?

6.70 Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services, was of the view that a backbone organisation could be either a government or non-government organisation, depending on the circumstances:

I am a bit agnostic about who can be the backbone, either individually or organisationally. Some agencies or individuals have a lot of authority in communities and sometimes they are well placed. Sometimes it is about who is prepared to be engaged and active, and that might be because they are able to be because they won the tender to do it and sometimes that helps with the authorising environment. Sometimes it is because they are not a service provider and that enables them to do that work. I am always leery of saying it always has to be a government department, or it never can be a government department, or it always should be a non-government organisation that is not a service provider. We have enough examples of the opposite where it has worked very well.²⁶⁹

6.71 Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge*, was also loathe to rule out the possibility of a non-government organisation playing a backbone role, particularly if that organisation was well-regarded in the community:

I would be wary to avoid thoughts, given the culture that exists in this area of society, that no-one is wilfully exploiting an opportunity to become dictatorial. I would mix it up. There is every reason why a government agency need not necessarily be the lead agency in many instances. It will have a character and a set of responsibilities and accountabilities that we will continue to market, I hope, but there could be a non-government agency, as long as it is trusted.²⁷⁰

6.72 Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and the ACT, The Benevolent Society, expressed support for backbone organisations, highlighting the backbone role played by the Benevolent Society in the Communities for Children program as a highly effective model:

We run a program called Communities for Children at Rosemeadow and Ambarvale in Campbelltown. It is a federally funded service that invests in a coordinating body—they are called a facilitating partner—that works with the community agencies in that area to identify needs. It brings together the consultation data, hard data and creates a community plan for that area and funds services on the basis of that community plan. We believe that is a really effective model in breaking down some of those silos, in

²⁶⁸ Evidence, Ms Anne Hampshire, Head of Research and Advocacy, The Smith Family, 8 October 2015, p 60.

²⁶⁹ Evidence, Ms Walk, 8 October 2015, p 7.

²⁷⁰ Evidence, Professor Tony Vinson, report author, *Dropping off the Edge*, 28 August 2015, p 24.

getting a shared understanding of what the needs of the communities are and what strategies they want to focus on.²⁷¹

- 6.73** Mr Harkin explained that under the Communities for Children program, the Benevolent Society was not able to be both the coordinating body and a service provider, thus removing possible perceptions of bias:

We cannot be a service provider under it ... it just takes the competition out of the whole thing; we are not a competitor in it then. We facilitate the process; we create a panel of residents and agencies to make decisions as tenders come in and people apply to run certain aspects of it and we adapt the plan as we move forward and can be quite flexible and can be quite flexible quickly to respond to local needs.²⁷²

- 6.74** Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, similarly observed that in its role as a facilitating partner for Communities for Children, The Smith Family also elected to remove itself from service delivery to reduce perceptions of bias:

In our role as facilitating partner for Communities for Children we made a conscious decision before it became the applied policy not to be a service deliverer in communities where we were a coordinator. We think that it sets up some potential conflicts and that in your role as a facilitator the things that you should be assessed on are not service delivery but actually how you are coordinating service delivery – how you are facilitating and brokering solutions for that community. So we would say it would be best if there is an agency who has responsibility for coordination that they are not a service deliverer.²⁷³

- 6.75** When questioned as to whether such separation should be mandatory for all backbone organisations, Ms Field responded that it may be difficult to enforce in some communities where there is a limited number of service providers, such as in remote and regional areas:

I think in some communities it is tricky because they would be on a journey around having a critical mass of service delivery, so if there is not the community based infrastructure in a community then it is tricky for an organisation that does have the capacity to deliver those services not to deliver. So in some remote areas I am aware that some of the facilitating partners have struggled to find an organisation that has the capacity to be able to deliver those services. In some ways a function of that model and in some ways of the Families First model was to play a service strengthening and coordination role. So you could say that that has not succeeded very well. To be short, you would have to take account of the infrastructure in the community before you made it mandatory.²⁷⁴

- 6.76** The Smith Family also emphasised the importance of having a locally-based backbone:

²⁷¹ Evidence, Mr Harkin, 8 October 2015, p 52. Communities for Children is a federally-funded program that provide services to ensure children have the best start in life by focussing on prevention and early intervention approaches that bring about positive family functioning, safety and child development outcomes in disadvantaged communities throughout Australia.

²⁷² Evidence, Mr Harkin, 8 October 2015, p 53.

²⁷³ Evidence, Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, 8 October 2015, p 58.

²⁷⁴ Evidence, Ms Field, 8 October 2015, pp 58-59.

While endorsing the establishment of Commonwealth and counterpart State agencies to coordinate service planning across levels of government, at the community level, we believe that a locally based ‘backbone’ organisation are best placed to coordinate implementation efforts at the local level.²⁷⁵

- 6.77** The Hive and Maranguka Initiative are both working examples of neutral, locally-based organisations driving service coordination in their communities. Ms Maxine Mackay, community member, expressed strong support for Maranguka as the community’s ‘voice’:

On the topic of the backbone, the Bourke community stayed strong, with Maranguka, with the tribal council, with the Aboriginal working community. That backbone is the voice of the community. To me that’s the strength and not money.²⁷⁶

- 6.78** Bourke Shire Council suggested that local councils would be well-placed to be a backbone organisation, particularly in regional and rural areas.²⁷⁷

- 6.79** As discussed in chapter 2, one of the key recommendations from the *Dropping off the Edge 2015* report was the establishment of a national Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation to identify and assist communities with high social needs and concentrated disadvantage. Amongst other things, the centre should facilitate service coordination by government and non-government organisations, and evaluated community strengthening projects.²⁷⁸

- 6.80** Furthermore, the national centre should be supported by ‘... the creation of counterpart state and territory units performing linked coordinating, educational and evaluation functions’.²⁷⁹

- 6.81** The Smith Family expressed strong support for these recommendations, particularly with regard to the role that governments can play in strengthening communities and coordinating activities:

The Smith Family endorses the recommendation in the *Dropping off the Edge* report to establish a Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation as set out in the recommendations of that document. We also endorse the recognition of the crucial role that state and territory governments play in strengthening communities and support the establishment of counterpart state and territory units performing linked coordinating educational and evaluation functions.²⁸⁰

Committee comment

- 6.82** The committee considers that backbone organisations have a critical role to play in facilitating service coordination for communities with high social needs. We acknowledge the need for

²⁷⁵ Submission 37, The Smith Family, p 8.

²⁷⁶ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Claymore and Bourke.

²⁷⁷ Appendix 5, Site visit reports: Bourke.

²⁷⁸ Tony Vinson and, Margot Rawsthorne, with Adrian Beavis and Matthew Ericson, *Dropping off the Edge 2015 – Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia*, pp 11-12.

²⁷⁹ Tony Vinson and, Margot Rawsthorne, with Adrian Beavis and Matthew Ericson, *Dropping off the Edge 2015 – Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia*, p 12..

²⁸⁰ Submission 37, The Smith Family, p 8.

backbone organisations to be embedded in the community they seek to serve. We further believe that a backbone organisation should be unique to each community and tailored to local conditions – a successful backbone organisation in Bourke may look very different to a backbone organisation in Claymore. However, there will undoubtedly be common elements of success which should be shared across these organisations to increase the likelihood of successful service coordination.

- 6.83** The committee endorses the recommendations of the *Dropping Off the Edge 2015* report that a Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation, together with linked state and territory counterparts, be established. Furthermore, we consider that a key role for the centre would be to provide support to backbone organisations to equip them with the necessary skills and support to undertake a coordinating role. The centre would also act as a repository of best practice programs and principles and help communities to identify how to best address unique needs.

Recommendation 18

That the NSW Government support the establishment of a national Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation, together with linked state and territory counterparts.

- 6.84** However, the committee is aware that the establishment of a national centre is likely to take significant time. We therefore consider that the New South Wales Government should lead by example in the field of service coordination and establish a state-based Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation to support backbone organisations and be a repository of best practice programs and principles in service coordination and delivery. In addition, the centre should have the ability to allocate funding, targeted specifically at service coordination, to backbone organisations to enable them to undertake their coordinating role.

Recommendation 19

That the NSW Government establish a state-based Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation, with the centre empowered to allocate funding for service coordination to backbone organisations.

- 6.85** Finally, the committee considers that the impartiality of a backbone organisation is a critical factor for success. We believe that backbone organisations should not be involved in the delivery of services in order to reduce the potential, both real and perceived, for competitive tensions to arise. However, we acknowledge that this may not always be possible, particularly in rural and regional areas where there can be a scarcity of organisations with sufficient resources and commitment to fulfil the backbone role. In such instances, it is important that the backbone organisation be a respected and trusted member of the local community.

Appendix 1 Submission list

No	Author
1	Mr Chris Gillard
2	Centacare South West NSW
3	Richmond Valley Council
4	MacKillop Family Services
5	Mr Joe Ibbitson
6	Tweed Shire Council
7	Carers NSW
8	Shellharbour City Council
9	Wagga Wagga City Council
10	Drug ARM
11	Domestic Violence NSW
12	City of Sydney
13	The Benevolent Society
14	Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS)
15	Fairfield City Council
16	Community Organisations in Fairfield Local Government Area
17	Narrandera Shire Council
18	Campbelltown City Council
19	Illawarra Forum Inc
20	Community Resource Network (CRN) Inc
21	Greater Taree City Council
22	Local Community Services Association
23	Lifetime Connect Inc
24	Blacktown City Council
25	The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre
26	Liverpool City Council
27	Centre for Social Research in Health and Social Policy Research
28	FAMS NSW Family Services Inc.
29	Holroyd City Council
30	Australian Medical Association
31	Cabramatta Community Centre
32	Nambucca Shire Council
33	Wellington Council

No	Author
34	The Shed
35	Confidential
36	Gosford City Council
37	The Smith Family
38	Catholic Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Services
39	Information and Privacy Commission
40	Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
41	Barnardos
42	Shoalhaven City Council
43	Western Sydney Community Forum
44	The Law Society of New South Wales
45	Office of the Privacy Commissioner
46	United Services Union
47	NSW Ombudsman
48	NSW Government
49	Parramatta City Council
50	Centacare Wilcannia-Forbes

Appendix 2 Witnesses at hearings

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Friday 28 August 2015 Macquarie Room Parliament House	Ms Sophie Trower	Policy Manager, Domestic Violence NSW
	Ms Karen Willis	Chief Executive Officer, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia
	Professor Ilan Katz	Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW
	Ms Julie Prideaux	Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services
	Professor Tony Vinson	Author, Dropping off the Edge Report
	Ms Ann Hoban	Director, City Life, City of Sydney
	Ms Christine McBride	Manager, Social Programs and Services, City of Sydney
	Ms Ya'el Frisch	Research and Policy Officer, Council of Social Services NSW (NCOSS)
Ms Tracy Howe	Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS	

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Thursday 8 October 2015 Macquarie Room Parliament House	Ms Amity Durham	Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet
	Ms Alison Morgan	A/Executive Director Regional Coordination, Government, Corporate and Regional Coordination Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet
	Ms Maree Walk	Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services
	Ms Brian Smyth King	Executive Director Learning and Engagement, School Operations and Performance Division, Department of Education
	Ms Amanda Larkin	Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District
	Ms Elizabeth Koff	Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, Ministry of Health
	Ms Rachna Gandhi	Executive Director Service Delivery, Service NSW
	Ms Elizabeth Tydd	Information Commissioner and CEO, Information and Privacy Commission
	Dr Elizabeth Coombs	Privacy Commissioner, Office of the Privacy Commissioner
	Mr Paul Harkin	Regional Director, Southern NSW and ACT, The Benevolent Society
	Ms Nerida Dalton	Manager Government Relations, The Benevolent Society
	Ms Wendy Field	Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family
Ms Anne Hampshire	Head of Research and Advocacy, The Smith Family	

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Friday 6 November 2015 Jubilee Room Parliament House	Ms Billie Sankovic	Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum
	Mr Thomas Nance	Community Sector Development Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum
	Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse	Chief Executive Officer, NSW Family Services
	Dr Liz Reimer	Board Member, NSW Family Services
	Ms Louisa McKay	Director Policy and Projects, NSW Family Services
	Mr Kerry Robinson	General Manager, Blacktown City Council
	Mr Tony Barnden	Manager Community Development, Blacktown City Council
	Mr Mark Tough	Senior Minister, St Clement's Anglican Church Lalor Park <i>(accompanying Blacktown City Council)</i>
	Ms Susan Gibbeson	Manager, Social Development, Fairfield City Council
	Ms Jane Sanders	Principal Solicitor, Shopfront Youth Legal Services
	Ms Patty McCabe	Social Worker, Shopfront Youth Legal Services
	Ms Juana Reinoso	Chief Executive Officer, Cabramatta Community Centre
	Mr Morlai Kamara	Community Development and Policy Officer, Cabramatta Community Centre
Dr Dianne Jackson	Chief Executive Officer, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)	
Mr Ross Beaton	NSW State Convenor, ARACY	

Appendix 3 Tabled documents

Friday 28 August 2015

Macquarie Room, Parliament House

- 1 Document entitled A Safer State: a blueprint to end sexual assault and domestic and family violence in NSW, *tendered by Ms Sophie Trower, Policy Manager, Domestic Violence NSW*
- 2 Document entitled Urgent action need to address disadvantage, dated 21 July 2015, *tendered by Ms Julie Prideaux, Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services*
- 3 Document entitled Dropping off the Edge: Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia – Summary, *tendered by Ms Julie Prideaux, Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services*
- 4 NSW Fact Sheet, *tendered by Ms Julie Prideaux, Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services*
- 5 Document entitled Four dimensions of community capacity, *tendered by Ms Julie Prideaux, Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services*
- 6 Study by Provan and Milward ‘A case study on Network Structure and Network Effectiveness of a Dutch Mental Health Care Network’, dated October 2007, *tendered by Ms Julie Prideaux, Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services.*

Wednesday 7 October 2015

The Hive, Mount Druitt

- 7 Copy of White board presentation, *tendered by Mr David Lilley, The Hive*
- 8 Overview document of a ‘Swam Session’ at The Hive Mount Druitt, dated: 18-19 March 2015, *tendered by Mr David Lilley, The Hive.*

Wednesday 7 October 2015

Gumnut Cottage, Claymore

- 9 Slides from Powerpoint presentation entitled ‘Inquiry into service coordination: Claymore visit’, *tendered by the Ms Cathryn Noble, Department of Family and Community Services.*

Thursday 8 October 2015

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney

- 10 Report of the Privacy Commissioner under section 61B of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, February 2015, *tendered by Dr Elizabeth Coombs, Privacy Commissioner*
- 11 Office of the Privacy Commissioner, Statutory Obligations Fact sheet, Report of the Privacy Commissioner, *tendered by Dr Elizabeth Coombs, Privacy Commissioner.*

Thursday 5 November 2015

Bourke Shire Council, Bourke

- 12 Opening statement, *tendered by Cr Andrew Lewis, Mayor, Bourke Shire Council*

Thursday 5 November 2015**Maranguka Community Hub, Bourke**

- 13 Waste-Aid PowerPoint slides, *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka*
- 14 UnitingCare submission on targeted earlier intervention programs, October 2015, *tendered by Mr David Ryan, Acting Manager, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside*
- 15 Document entitled 'A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: September 2015, *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka*
- 16 Document entitled 'A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: Reduced data version – September 2015, *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka*
- 17 Document entitled 'Maranguka and Justice Reinvestment project', *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka*
- 18 Document entitled 'Re-engaging Bourke Youth: Come Half Way', *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka*
- 19 Powerpoint entitled 'Maranguka Community Organisation', *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka*
- 20 Document entitled 'Establishment of a Bourke Aboriginal Community Data Action Group under RJCP', *tendered by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka.*

Appendix 4 Answers to questions on notice

The committee received answers to questions on notice from:

- Professor Tony Vinson, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- Ms Wendy Field, The Smith Family
- Mr Paul Harkin, The Benevolent Society
- Ms Elizabeth Tydd, NSW Information Commissioner
- Dr Elizabeth Coombs, NSW Privacy Commissioner
- Ms Amity Durham, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Ms Maree Walk, Department of Family and Community Services
- Dr Dianne Jackson, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.

Appendix 5 Site visit reports

Site visit to Mount Druitt and Claymore – Wednesday 7 October 2015

Committee members undertook site visits to The Hive, located at the Rutherglen Community Centre, Mount Druitt and to Gumnut Cottage at Claymore on Wednesday 7 October 2015.

The Hive – Mount Druitt

The Hive is a collective impact initiative that commenced in Mount Druitt in January 2015, facilitated through a partnership with United Way, Ten20 Foundation and the Department of Family and Community Services.

The Hive's vision is to work with the Mount Druitt community, service providers and government to create the conditions for a thriving generation of children who have access to diverse life opportunities. The Hive supports stakeholders to form a common agenda, draw on collective strengths, develop and test new ways of working and achieve long term change at an individual, family and community level.

Mr David Lilley, Director of the Hive, lead a presentation and discussion on The Hive's journey to date. Mr Lilley was joined by several Hive stakeholders who participated in the discussion with committee members:

- Cathryn Felstead, community member
- Traci Carse, FACS
- Eleanor Loudon, Head of Community Impact, The Hive
- Liz Dibbs, Board Member, United Way

The Hive stakeholders held a 'swarm' in March 2015' which involved seventy people from the Mount Druitt community, local services, government departments and business, coming together to explore the question 'how might we work together so that all children in Mount Druitt have the opportunity to thrive?' The group identified four major priorities to work towards:

- Goal 1: Transition to schools
- Goal 2: Child friendly communities
- Goal 3: Engaging the community
- Goal 4: Service Directory app.

The Hive aims to provide a project management / service coordination response, from its position as a politically neutral entity, due to not being funded to provide direct service delivery in the Mount Druitt community.

The Hive project is a new way of working collaboratively across the service system with a long term (<10 years) vision for community change. In its scoping stage, The Hive team consulted with approximately 50 organisations in 2014 prior to setting up the model and has a fluid, continuous improvement approach with an evaluation framework built in to the model.

The key issues highlighted during the visit to The Hive were:

- Need for a ‘backbone’ organisation to coordinate resources, increasing their effectiveness through collaboration rather than duplication
- Giving communities the opportunity to reimagine themselves
- Community driven solutions
- Organisations need to work together (200+ existing service organisations in Mount Druitt) to tackle entrenched disadvantage
- Need for pooled funding to integrate service coordination and planning
- Although The Hive does not have direct funding for projects, funding would be beneficial at the point of concrete solutions being identified through the collaborative work
- Funding should be matched to outcomes not outputs and longer funding periods
- Access to information and data on social needs in the community
- Difficulties of developing a service directory application for mobile devices due to the complexity of the service environment.

Gumnut Cottage – Claymore

The committee visited Gumnut Cottage in Claymore and participated in presentations by government and community members on various initiatives in the Claymore area including a new housing development consisting of 70 per cent private and 30 per cent social housing.

The Department of Family and Community Services coordinates funded services in Claymore through a collective impact framework. This framework provides a structured approach to collaboration with a broad range of involvement including the Claymore leadership forum and investment for capacity building projects. Current initiatives in Claymore include:

- The Claymore ACTION Networks and working groups
- Youth Advisory Committee
- RISE (Reintegrative Initiative towards Supportive Education) Alternative Learning Program
- Claymore Youth Services Audit
- Claymore Child and Family Connect
- Home Interaction Program For Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)
- Good Beginnings: Playgroup and School Readiness Program
- Benevolent Society’s “Wheely Good Fun”
- Partners in Employment
- Pathways to Job Readiness
- Pathways to Opportunity Program

The committee heard presentations from following stakeholders:

- Claymore Action Network and Leadership Forum, Ms Cathryn Noble, Department of Family and Community Services
- Collective Impact approach, Bruce McCausland, Manager Community Resources and Development, Campbelltown Council
- Claymore Action Network, Karen Barwick and Julie Jarrett, residents and working group leaders

- RISE Alternative Learning Project, Kelly Hinton, NSW White Lion
- HIPPY, Ms Anne Tibbles, Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative.

The committee was informed that these initiatives and sector development projects are assisting the community in forming common agendas and open, continuous communication and accountabilities necessary for effective, collaborative service coordination.

Residents are being encouraged to talk to other residents and identify what the issues for the community are through various working groups and forums. The service coordination approach includes leadership at local levels in addition to a service/program level and government coordination in response.

The key issues highlighted during the presentation and discussion in Claymore were:

- Community priorities are not always what governments diagnose
- Not being trapped in silos/programs but looking at individual/community needs is necessary for good service coordination
- The community itself has the greatest expertise to identify problems
- Community engagement initiatives are crucial to building trust and rapport in reaching 'hard to reach' individuals and families
- Specific funding and agreements are needed for collaboration within government funding contracts
- Joint funding/pooled funding could increase collaboration
- Shared measurement and consistent data collection would assist in coordination of services
- Local community leadership and capacity development can overcome limited project or funding timeframes.
- Cyclical nature of funding can impede long term planning and visions for change.

Site visit to Bourke – Thursday 5 November 2015

On Thursday 5 November 2015 the committee travelled to Bourke to meet with a number of local service providers. Meetings were held in the Bourke Shire Council chambers, at Bourke High School and in the Maranguka Community Hub.

Bourke Shire Council

The committee meet with the following representatives of Bourke Shire Council:

- Cr Andrew Lewis, Mayor
- Mr Ross Earl, General Manager
- Mrs Leonie Brown, Manager of Corporate Services
- Mr Phil Johnston, Manager of Tourism and Development.

A number of matters were discussed, including:

- the lack of meaningful coordination on issues such as health, social and family
- local workers often aware of the inefficiencies and waste but their work direction and program based funding does not allow for the required level of local discretion
- reduction in local state government based employees in government departments in favour of outsourcing responsibility to non-government organisations with fewer local staff, centralised administrations and budgets for programs rather than outcomes
- little accountability for programs and no link between local community members and policy makers. The council argued for local sign-off on a program's effectiveness as part of the evaluation process to ensure the authenticity of the evaluation
- The role that Bourke Shire Council plays in the delivery of:
 - doctors housing and surgeries
 - owning assets such as the preschool and mobile children's services offices
 - partnering with Services NSW to provide local services
 - assisting in the coordination of youth activities via the youth interagency, ownership of infrastructure such as the PCYC building and funding
- A focus on local decision making, locally based budgets and project outcomes will improve the coordination of services
- A five-year term for contracts is preferable to three, especially in rural areas where the establishment costs of a project can be spread over a longer period of time and it can be easier to recruit people for a longer-term role. The longer-term contract also allows for the development of relationships and trust within the service delivery area
- The potential for the council to act as a backbone organisation to drive service coordination in the area, given their closeness to the local community knowledge of local issues and ability to immediately see a program's outcomes.

Non-government organisations

The committee meet with the following representatives of non-government organisations operating in Bourke:

- Ms Ann Winterton, Regional Leader for Central and Far West, Mission Australia
- Ms Dale Towns, Area Manager for Central and Far West, Mission Australia
- Mr James Moore, Acting Regional Manager, Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporations

- Mr Ricky Mitchell, Activity Development Officer, Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporations
- Mr Mark Hollman, Senior Youth Worker, Youth Off The Streets
- Mr Brendon Willoughby, Assistant Manager, PCYC
- Ms Belinda Stephens, Trainee Manager, PCYC.

A number of matters were discussed, including:

- the need to set realistic key performance indicators for program evaluation
- the importance of locally-developed solutions, that are implemented over the long-term
- the drive towards collaboration, partly attributable to funding constraints
- benefits of a community facilitator to act as a single point of contact
- quarantined funding in contracts for service coordination
- the competitive tensions that have arisen following the use of competitive tendering and the short-term funding cycle
- gaps in local services, such as youth mental health and employment options
- the use of informal information sharing protocols and the reluctance of some government agencies to share information because of an over-determined view of privacy.

Education

The committee meet with the following representatives of the education community in Bourke:

- Mr Robert Bourke, Executive Principal, Bourke High School
- Ms Joan Dickson, Senior Leader Community Engagement, Bourke High School
- Ms Sharon Knight, Bourke High School Reference Group
- Mr Matthew Knight, School Captain, Bourke High School
- Miss Emma Cunningham, School Captain, Bourke High School
- Ms Kylie Pennell, Principal, Bourke Public School
- Mr Troy Gordon, Senior Leader Community Engagement, Bourke Public School
- Ms Melanie Milgate, Bourke Public School Reference Group.

A number of matters were discussed, including:

- the lack of sufficient counselling services for students – there is only one day/week of counselling services offered, which is insufficient to meet demand
- a lack of accountability, coordination, common goals and evaluation of what programs are achieving productive outcomes, despite the high number of services being delivered in Bourke at significant expense
- support for the recommendations made by the NSW Ombudsman's 2010 report into service provision in Bourke and Brewarrina
- the need for more pro-active, preventative mental health services, especially for 5-12 year olds. There are limited services available for primary students and it becomes harder to address issues as children grow up
- need for long term solutions and commitment to change, rather than 'band aid solutions'
- support was expressed for strengthening accountability for program outcomes, not just outputs. In particular, there was strong support for community involvement in the evaluations of a program's effectiveness
- need to tailor programs to suit local needs, including having an awareness of where the service gaps are in a community

- the school captains noted that:
 - while the Clontarf Foundation is achieving good results with male students, there is no equivalent option for female students
 - there is a need for parents to take greater accountability for their children to allow the school community – teachers and students – to focus on education.

Maranguka Initiative

The committee meet with the following representatives from the Maranguka Initiative in Bourke:

- Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Ms Vivianne Prince, Project Officer, Maranguka and Just Reinvestment NSW
- Mr David Ryan, Acting Manager, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside
- Ms Kerry-Anne Howarth, Coordinator, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside
- Mr Darren Smith, Principal Project Officer – Indigenous Engagement, Western NSW District, Family and Community Services
- Ms Teena Bonham, Principal Project Officer, Western NSW District, Family and Community Services
- Mr Phillip Sullivan, community member
- Ms Maxine Mackay, community member
- Ms Lillian Lucas, community member
- Ms Petina Smith, community member.

A number of matters were discussed, including:

- Maranguka's use of the collective impact framework, including the establishment of Maranguka as a backbone organisation
- Family Referral Service, which has been operating in Bourke for five months and is being well-accepted and utilised by the community
- support for the recommendations made by the NSW Ombudsman's 2010 report into service provision in Bourke and Brewarrina
- importance of co-design, with programs tailored to suit a community's specific needs
- importance of being equipped with the right resources to achieve service coordination – not more money, but wiser use of existing funds with better support mechanisms
- accountability and transparency with the use of government funds
- the importance of investment in youth, through early intervention programs
- the need for a service audit, to identify gaps and duplications
- Maranguka does not do case management, but refers people to the relevant services and provides support to ensure that the appropriate help is being received
- importance of access to data to measure change and implement evidence-based programs
- government agencies and service provided should report back to the community, not just to their funding bodies. Community involvement in program evaluation is also essential
- lack of flexibility in funding contracts, meaning funds cannot be reallocated if different needs arise
- support for localisation as a means to achieve greater flexibility and innovation
- the great success of the 'Yes I Can' reading program, which assisted 90 adult learners to develop literacy skills.

Health Services

The committee meet with the following representatives from Bourke health services:

- Ms Jennifer Griffiths, Acting General Manager for the Northern Sector, Western NSW Local Health District
- Ms Chris Druce, Acting Nurse Manager, Western NSW Local Health District
- Ms Cathy Marshall, Patient Safety and Clinical Quality Manager, Western NSW Local Health District
- Ms Pat Canty, Acting Health Service Manager, Western NSW Local Health District.

A number of matters were discussed, including:

- the duplication of services and lack of efficiency. For example, it was noted that there are six providers of mental health, drug and alcohol programs in the region but they do not collaborate
- attempts at service mapping have failed, meaning that there is limited knowledge about where service gaps exist. The situation in rural areas is also complicated by the number of 'fly in, fly out' services, which can be difficult to track. An online hub listing local services would be highly valuable, so long as the information was current
- a need for clearer privacy guidelines, with some clinicians hiding behind a barrier of privacy if they are unsure about protocols. There can also be an organisational reluctance to share information
- value of case managers to take responsibility for building a support network around the client to address the entirety of their needs
- need for greater flexibility around the delivery of services, including using the best technology available to increase the amount of productive time spent helping people as opposed to travelling from client to client
- need for a comprehensive approach to recruitment and retention of staff with an emphasis on 'growing your own' from the local employment pool and upskilling local people to be able to fill positions.

Appendix 6 Minutes

Minutes No. 1

Thursday 25 June 2015

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Members' Lounge, Parliament House, Sydney, 4.08 pm

1. Members present

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*

Mr Donnelly, *Deputy Chair*

Mr Mallard

2. Apologies

Revd Nile

Dr Phelps

Ms Sharpe

3. Tabling of resolution establishing the committee

The Chair tabled the following resolution of the House establishing the committee:

Appointment

1. Three standing committees are appointed as follows:

(a) Law and Justice Committee,

(b) Social Issues Committee, and

(c) State Development Committee.

.....

Social Issues Committee

2. The committee may inquire into and report on:

(a) issues concerned with the social development and wellbeing of the people of New South Wales, including health, education, housing, ageing, disability, children's services and community services, and

(b) matters concerned with citizenship, sport and recreation and gaming and racing.

Referral of inquiries

3. (1) A committee:

(a) is to inquire into and report on any matter relevant to the functions of the committee which is referred to the committee by resolution of the House,

(b) may inquire into and report on any matter relevant to the functions of the committee which is referred by a Minister of the Crown, and

(c) may inquire into and report on any annual report or petition relevant to the functions of the committee which has been laid upon the Table of the Legislative Council.

(2) Whenever a committee resolves to inquire into a matter, under paragraph 8 (b) or 8 (c), the terms of reference or the resolution is to be reported to the House on the next sitting day.

Powers

4. A committee has power to make visits of inspection within New South Wales and, with the approval of the President, elsewhere in Australia and outside Australia.

Membership

5. Each committee is to consist of six members, comprising:

- (a) three government members,
- (b) two opposition members, and
- (c) one crossbench member.

Chair and Deputy Chair

6. (1) The Leader of the Government is to nominate in writing to the Clerk of the House the Chair of each committee.
- (2) The Leader of the Opposition is to nominate in writing to the Clerk of the House the Deputy Chair of each committee.

Quorum

7. The quorum of a committee is three members, of whom two must be government members and one a non-government member.

Sub-committees

8. A committee has the power to appoint sub-committees.

Substitute members

9. (1) Members may be appointed to a committee as substitute members for any matter before the committee, by notice in writing to the Committee Clerk.
- (2) Nominations for substitute government or opposition members are to be made by the Leader of the Government, Leader of the Opposition, Government or Opposition Whip or Deputy Whip, as applicable.
- (3) Nominations for substitute crossbench members are to be made by the substantive member or another crossbench member.

Electronic participation in deliberative meetings

10. (1) A committee member who is unable to attend a deliberative meeting in person may participate by electronic communication and may move any motion and be counted for the purpose of any quorum or division, provided that:

- (a) the Chair is present in the meeting room, and
- (b) all members are able to speak to and hear each other at all times.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph 15(1), a member may not participate by electronic communication in a meeting to consider a draft report.

Conduct of committee proceedings

11. Unless the committee decides otherwise:

- (a) submissions to inquiries are to be published, subject to the Committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration,
- (b) the Chair's proposed witness list is to be circulated to provide members with an opportunity to amend the list, with the witness list agreed to by email, unless a member requests the Chair to convene a meeting to resolve any disagreement,
- (c) transcripts of evidence taken at public hearings are to be published,
- (d) supplementary questions are to be lodged with the Committee Clerk within two days, excluding Saturday and Sunday, following the receipt of the hearing transcript, with witnesses requested to return answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions within 21 calendar days of the date on which questions are forwarded to the witness, and
- (e) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, subject to the Committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration.

4. Conduct of committee proceedings – Media

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That unless the committee decides otherwise, the following procedures are to apply for the life of the committee:

- the committee authorise the filming, broadcasting, webcasting and still photography of its public proceedings, in accordance with the resolution of the Legislative Council of 18 October 2007
- the committee webcast its public proceedings via the Parliament's website, where technically possible
- the committee adopt the interim guidelines on the use of social media and electronic devices for committee proceedings, as developed by the Chairs' Committee in May 2013
- media statements on behalf of the committee be made only by the Chair.

5. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence received:

- 24 June 2015 – Letter to Chair from the Hon Troy Grant MP, Deputy Premier, requesting the committee to consider terms of reference for an inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs.

6. Legacy Report of 55th Parliament

The committee noted the Legacy Report of the 55th Parliament.

7. Consideration of terms of reference

The Chair tabled the following terms of reference received from **the** Hon Troy Grant MP, Deputy Premier, on 24 June 2015:

1. That the Standing Committee on Social Issues inquire into and report on service coordination in communities with high social needs, including:
 - a. The extent to which government and non-government service providers are identifying the needs of clients and providing a coordinated response which ensures access to services both within and outside of their particular area of responsibility;

- b. Barriers to the effective coordination of services, including lack of client awareness of services and any legislative provisions such as privacy law;
 - c. Consideration of initiatives such as the Dubbo Minister's Action Group and best practice models for the coordination of services;
 - d. Any other related matter.
2. That the Committee report by 11 December 2015.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the committee adopt the terms of reference.

8. Conduct of the inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs

8.1 *Proposed timeline*

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the closing date for submissions be Sunday 16 August 2015.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the secretariat circulate to members a proposed timeline for the administration of the inquiry, and that the committee agree to the timeline by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

8.2 *Stakeholder list*

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That the secretariat circulate to members the Chairs' proposed list of stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to amend the list or nominate additional stakeholders, and that the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

8.3 *Advertising*

The committee noted that all inquiries are advertised via twitter, stakeholder letters and a media release distributed to all media outlets in New South Wales.

9. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.25 pm *sine die*.

Stewart Smith
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 2

Friday 28 August 2015
 Standing Committee on Social Issues
 Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 10.30 am

1. **Members present**

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*
 Mr Donnelly, *Deputy Chair*
 Mr Mallard
 Revd Nile
 Dr Phelps
 Ms Sharpe

2. **Draft minutes**

Confirmation of draft minutes no. 1.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That draft minutes no. 1 be confirmed.

3. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence received:

- 26 June 2015 – Email to secretariat from the Dubbo Minister’s Action Group providing a copy of their report entitled East Dubbo Minister’s Action Group Report
- 14 August 2015 – Email to secretariat from the Australian Institute of Family Studies providing summary notes entitled Abstracts from selected relevant Australian Institute of Family Studies Publications
- August 2015 – email to secretariat from Ms Carolina Simpson, Policy and Development Officer, Carers NSW, declining the committee’s invitation to appear at a public hearing
- 20 August 2015 – email to secretariat from Ms Nerida Dalton, Manager Government Relations, Benevolent Society, requesting to appear at a later public hearing.

4. Conduct of the inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs

4.1 Proposed timeline

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That the committee adopt the following timeline for the administration of the inquiry:

- Friday 28 August – public hearing (Sydney)
- Wednesday 7 to Thursday 8 October 2015 – site visit and hearings
- Wednesday 4 to Friday 6 November 2015 – site visit and hearings
- Friday 20 November 2015 – public hearing (Sydney)
- Tuesday 8 December 2015 – report deliberative.

The Chair undertook to circulate proposed locations and activities for the October and November site visits at a later date.

4.2 Public submissions

The committee noted that the following submissions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of an earlier resolution: submission nos. 1-33, and 36-48.

4.3 Partially confidential submissions

The committee noted that submission no. 34 was partially published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of an earlier resolution.

Mr Mallard joined the meeting.

4.4 Confidential submission

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That the committee keep submission no 35 confidential, as per the request of the author.

4.5 Attachments to submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Revd Nile: That all attachments to submissions received during the inquiry remain confidential, unless otherwise published by the committee.

4.6 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Sophie Trower, Policy Manager, Domestic Violence NSW
- Ms Karen Willis, Board Member, Domestic Violence NSW and Chief Executive Officer, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia.

Ms Trower tendered the following document:

- *A Safer State: a blueprint to end sexual assault and domestic and family violence in NSW*, Domestic Violence NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn in and examined:

- Professor Ilan Katz, Social Policy Research Centre, University of NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Professor Tony Vinson, Report author, *Dropping off the Edge*
- Ms Julie Prideaux, Executive Director, Advocacy and Strategic Communications, Jesuit Social Services.

Ms Prideaux tendered the following documents:

- *Dropping off the Edge: Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia – Summary*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- *NSW Fact Sheet*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- *Urgent action needed to address disadvantage*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- *Four dimensions of community capacity*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- Study by Provan and Milward, *A case study on Network Structure and Network Effectiveness of a Dutch Mental Health Care Network*, dated October 2007.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

Ms Sharpe left the meeting.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Ann Hoban, Director City Life, City of Sydney
- Ms Christine McBride, Manager Social Programs and Services, City of Sydney.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS
- Ms Ya'el Frisch, Research and Policy Officer, NCOSS.

Ms Sharpe rejoined the meeting.

The hearing concluded and the witnesses, public and media withdrew.

4.7 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing held on Friday 28 August 2015:

- *A Safer State: a blueprint to end sexual assault and domestic and family violence in NSW*, Domestic Violence NSW
- *Dropping off the Edge: Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia – Summary*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- *NSW Fact Sheet*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- *Urgent action needed to address disadvantage*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- *Four dimensions of community capacity*, Dropping of the Edge 2015
- Study by Provan and Milward, *A case study on Network Structure and Network Effectiveness of a Dutch Mental Health Care Network*, dated October 2007.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 3.30 pm *sine die*.

Cathryn Cummins
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 3

Wednesday 7 October 2015
Standing Committee on Social Issues
Hospital Rd, Parliament House, Sydney, 9.00 am

1. Members present

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*
Mr Donnelly, *Deputy Chair (from 10am)*
Mr Mallard
Revd Nile
Dr Phelps
Ms Sharpe

2. Conduct of the inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs

2.1 Site visit, The Hive, Mount Druitt

The committee travelled to The Hive, Mount Druitt.

Mr Donnelly joined the meeting.

The committee was briefed by the following people on The Hive's establishment, aims and achievements:

- Mr David Lilley, Director, The Hive,
- Ms Traci Carfe, FACS
- Ms Eleanor Lousdon, Head of Community Impact, United Way
- Ms Liz Dibbs, Board Member, United Way
- Ms Catherine Felsted, local resident and member of The Hive

Mr Edmond Atalla MP, Member for Mount Druitt, was also in attendance.

Mr Lilley tendered the following documents:

- The Hive Story – white board presentation
- The Hive Mount Druitt: The Swarm Session Overview, 18-19 March 2015.

2.2 Site visit, Gumnut Cottage, Claymore

The committee travelled to Gumnut Cottage, Claymore.

The committee was briefed by the following people on a number of initiatives being undertaken in Claymore to deliver services and enhance the liveability of the area:

- Ms Cathryn Noble, Mr Mike van der Ley and Mr Robert Bosi, Department of Family and Community Services
- Mr Neil McGaffin, Mr Theo Posumah, Ms Deborah Follers and Ms Pam Ransom, Land and Housing Corporation Renewal
- Mr Bruce McCausland Campbelltown Council,
- Ms Penny Waldon, South Western Sydney Local Health District
- Ms Lisa Porter Claymore Public School
- Mr David Roberts, SWS Institute of TAFE
- Mr Chris Campbell, The Junction Works
- Ms Magdalena Liso, Mission Australia
- Mr Paul Harkin, The Benevolent Society
- Ms Kelly Hinton, Whitelion
- Ms Karin Vasquez, Macarthur Diversity Services
- Ms Ann Tibbles, Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)
- Mr Gareth Jenkins, Save the Children Australia
- Mr Edward Feuerstein, Life Consultancy Services Pty Ltd
- Ms Danielle Saad, Max Employment
- Mr Rodrigo Gutierrez, Hume Community Housing
- Ms Alison Lane, Argyle Housing
- Ms Susan Snooks, Claymore Community Centre
- Ms Cathy Chopping, Claymore Action Network (CAN)
- Ms Karen Barwick, Resident and lead of CAN Learning and Employment Working Group
- Ms Julie Jarrett, Resident and lead of CAN Community Engagement Working Group.

Ms Noble tendered the following document:

- PowerPoint presentation entitled 'Inquiry into service coordination: Claymore visit – Wednesday 7 October 2015'.

3. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.05 pm until 9.15am, Thursday 8 October 2015, Macquarie Room, Parliament House.

Cathryn Cummins
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 4

Thursday 8 October 2015
Standing Committee on Social Issues
Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 9.15am

1. Members present

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*
Mr Donnelly, *Deputy Chair*
Mr Mallard
Revd Nile
Dr Phelps
Ms Sharpe (*from 9.29 am*)

2. Draft minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That draft minutes no. 2 be confirmed.

3. Correspondence***Received:***

- 8 September 2015 – From Professor Tony Vinson to the secretariat, providing answers to questions taken on notice at the public hearing held on Friday 28 August 2015
- 11 September 2015 – From Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, to the Chair, clarifying evidence provided at the public hearing on Friday 28 August 2015.

Sent

- 28 September 2015 – From the Chair to Mr Edmond Atalla MP, Member for Mount Druitt, advising that the committee will be visiting Mount Druitt on 7 October 2015
- 28 September 2015 – From the Chair to Mr Greg Warren MP, Member for Campbelltown, advising that the committee will be visiting Claymore on 7 October 2015.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That the correspondence from Ms Tracy Howe, Chief Executive Officer, NCOSS, clarifying evidence provided at the public hearing on Friday 28 August 2015 be published.

4. Conduct of the inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs**4.1 Public submissions**

The committee noted that submission 49 was published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of an earlier resolution.

4.2 Answers to questions on notice

The committee noted that the following answer to questions on notice and supplementary questions was published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of an earlier resolution:

- answers to questions on notice from Professor Tony Vinson, received 8 September 2015.

4.3 Site visit – 5/6 November 2015

The Chair proposed that the committee travel to Bourke for a site visit on Thursday 5 November 2015, followed by a public hearing at NSW Parliament House on Friday 6 November 2015.

The committee noted that:

- there are no commercial flights to Bourke
- preliminary quotes for the total charter range from \$15,000 to \$22,000, departing from Sydney Airport
- travelling by charter plane would potentially allow for officers from the Legislative Council's Training and Research section to accompany the committee to conduct educational outreach activities with local school students, depending on the seating capacity of the charter plane.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That the committee:

- travel to Bourke by charter flight for a site visit on Thursday 5 November 2015, and
- hold a final public hearing at NSW Parliament House on Friday 6 November 2015.

Ms Sharpe joined the meeting.

4.4 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Amity Durham, Executive Director Family and Community Services and Service Innovation, Social Policy Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Ms Alison Morgan, A/Executive Director Regional Coordination, Government, Corporate and Regional Coordination Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Ms Maree Walk, Deputy Secretary, Programs and Service Design, Department of Family and Community Services
- Mr Brian Smyth King, Executive Director Learning and Engagement, School Operations and Performance Division, Department of Education
- Ms Elizabeth Koff, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, Ministry of Health
- Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive South Western Sydney Local Health District
- Ms Rachna Gandhi, Executive Director Service Delivery, Service NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn in and examined:

- Ms Elizabeth Tydd, Information Commissioner and CEO, Information and Privacy Commission.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witness was sworn in and examined:

- Dr Elizabeth Coombs, Privacy Commissioner, Office of Privacy Commissioner

Dr Coombs tendered the following documents:

- NSW Privacy Commissioner: statutory obligations
- Report of the Privacy Commissioner under section 61B of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, February 2015.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Mr Paul Harkin, Regional Director, Southern NSW and ACT, The Benevolent Society
- Ms Nerida Dalton, Manager Government Relations, The Benevolent Society

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family
- Ms Anne Hampshire, Head of Research and Advocacy, The Smith Family

The hearing concluded and the witnesses, public and media withdrew.

4.5 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the site visits held on Wednesday 7 October and the public hearing held on Thursday 8 October 2015:

- The Hive Story – white board presentation
- The Hive Mount Druitt: The Swarm Session Overview, 18-19 March 2015
- PowerPoint presentation entitled ‘Inquiry into service coordination: Claymore visit – Wednesday 7 October 2015’
- NSW Privacy Commissioner: statutory obligations
- Report of the Privacy Commissioner under section 61B of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, February 2015.

5. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.43 pm until Thursday 5 November 2015.

Cathryn Cummins
Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 5

Thursday 5 November 2015
Standing Committee on Social Issues
Sydney Airport, 8.30 am

1. Members present

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*

Mr Donnelly, *Deputy Chair*
 Mr Mallard
 Revd Nile
 Dr Phelps
 Ms Sharpe

2. Conduct of the inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs

2.1 Site visit, Bourke

The committee travelled to Bourke Shire Council, Bourke.

The committee was briefed by the following people from the Bourke Shire Council on service coordination in Bourke:

- Cr Andrew Lewis, Mayor
- Mr Ross Earl, General Manager
- Mrs Leonie Brown, Manager of Corporate Services
- Mr Phil Johnston, Manager of Tourism & Development

Cr Lewis tendered his opening statement.

The committee was briefed by the following people on the extent to which non-government service providers are providing a coordinated response in Bourke:

- Ms Ann Winterton, Regional Leader for Central and Far West, Mission Australia
- Ms Dale Towns, Area Manager for Central and Far West, Mission Australia
- Mr James Moore, Acting Regional Manager, Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporations
- Mr Ricky Mitchell, Activity Development Officer, Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporations
- Mr Mark Hollman, Senior Youth Worker, Youth Off The Streets
- Mr Brendon Willoughby, Assistant Manager, PCYC
- Ms Belinda Stephens, Trainee Manager, PCYC.

The committee travelled to Bourke High School and was briefed by the following people on the barriers to the effective service coordination in Bourke:

- Mr Robert Bourke, Executive Principal, Bourke High School
- Ms Joan Dickson, Senior Leader Community Engagement, Bourke High School
- Ms Sharon Knight, Bourke High School Reference Group
- Mr Matthew Knight, School Captain, Bourke High School
- Miss Emma Cunningham, School Captain, Bourke High School
- Ms Kylie Pennell, Principal, Bourke Public School
- Mr Troy Gordon, Senior Leader Community Engagement, Bourke Public School
- Ms Melanie Milgate, Bourke Public School Reference Group.

The committee travelled to the Maranguka Community Hub and was briefed by the following people on Maranguka's establishment, aims and achievements:

- Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Ms Vivianne Prince, Project Officer, Maranguka and Just Reinvestment NSW

- Mr David Ryan, Acting Manager, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside
- Ms Kerry-Anne Howarth, Coordinator, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside
- Mr Darren Smith, Principal Project Officer – Indigenous Engagement, Western NSW District, Family and Community Services
- Ms Teena Bonham, Principal Project Officer, Western NSW District, Family and Community Services
- Mr Phillip Sullivan, Community Member
- Ms Maxine Mackay, Community Member
- Ms Lillian Lucas, Community Member
- Ms Petina Smith, Community Member.

Mr Ferguson tendered the following documents:

- Document entitled ‘A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: September 2015, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Document entitled ‘A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: Reduced data version – September 2015, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Document entitled ‘Maranguka and Justice Reinvestment project’, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Document entitled ‘Re-engaging Bourke Youth: Come Half Way’, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Powerpoint entitled ‘Maranguka Community Organisation’, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Document entitled ‘Establishment of a Bourke Aboriginal Community Data Action Group under RJCP’, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka.

Mr Ryan tendered the following document:

- UnitingCare submission on targeted earlier intervention programs, October 2015.

The committee travelled to the Bourke Shire Council and was briefed by the following people on health services in Bourke and barriers to the effective coordination of these services:

- Ms Jennifer Griffiths, Acting General Manager for the Northern Sector, Western NSW Local Health District
- Ms Chris Druce, Acting Nurse Manager, Western NSW Local Health District
- Ms Cathy Marshall, Patient Safety and Clinical Quality Manager, Western NSW Local Health District
- Ms Pat Canty, Acting Health Service Manager, Western NSW Local Health District.

3. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4.45 pm until 10.30am, Friday 6 November 2015 in the Jubilee Room, Parliament House.

Cathryn Cummins

Clerk to the Committee

Minutes No. 6

Friday 6 November 2015

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 10.30 am

1. Members present

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*

Mr Donnelly, *Deputy Chair*

Mr Mallard

Dr Phelps

Ms Sharpe (*from 1.45pm*)

2. Apologies

Revd Nile

3. Conduct of the inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs**3.1 Public hearing**

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Billie Sankovic, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum
- Mr Thomas Nance, Community Sector Development Officer, Western Sydney Community Forum.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Family Services
- Dr Liz Reimer, Board Member, NSW Family Services
- Ms Louisa McKay, Director Policy and Projects, NSW Family Services.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Mr Kerry Robinson, General Manager, Blacktown City Council
- Mr Tony Barnden, Manager Community Development, Blacktown City Council
- Mr Mark Tough, Senior Minister, St Clement's Anglican Church Lalor Park
- Ms Susan Gibbeson, Manager, Social Development, Fairfield City Council.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

4. Deliberative**4.1 Draft minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That draft minutes nos. 3 and 4 be confirmed.

4.2 Correspondence

The committee noted the following correspondence:

Received

- 12 October 2015 – From Mr David Lilley, The Hive, to the secretariat, thanking the committee for their visit and providing further information and suggested recommendations.
- 30 October 2015 – From Ms Alison Morgan, Senior Regional Coordinator, Western NSW, Department of Premier and Cabinet, providing the committee with a briefing paper on Bourke, as requested.
- 2 November 2015 – From Ms Elizabeth Tydd, NSW Information Commissioner, to the Chair requesting a meeting to discuss initiatives of the Information and Privacy Commission.

Sent

- 15 October 2015 – From the Chair to Mr Kevin Humphries MP, Member for Barwon, advising that the committee will be visiting Bourke on 5 November 2015.
- 15 October 2015 – From the Chair to the Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health and Western NSW, advising that the committee will be visiting Bourke on 5 November 2015.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That the committee authorise the publication of correspondence and attachment from Mr David Lilley regarding The Hive site visit, dated 12 October 2015.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That the Chair, on behalf of the committee, respond to Ms Tydd declining the request for a meeting and offering the opportunity to submit a supplementary submission to the committee.

4.3 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions

The committee noted that the following answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of an earlier resolution:

- answers to questions on notice from Ms Wendy Field, The Smith Family, received 14 October 2015
- answers to questions on notice from The Benevolent Society, received 3 November 2015
- answers to questions on notice from Ms Elizabeth Tydd, NSW Information Commissioner, received 4 November 2015
- answers to questions on notice from Dr Elizabeth Coombs, NSW Privacy Commissioner, received 4 November 2015
- answers to questions on notice from Ms Amity Durham NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, and Ms Maree Walk, Department of Family and Community Services, received 5 November 2015.

4.4 Publication of documents

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That the committee authorise the publication of the following documents provided by participants during the committee's site visit to Bourke:

- Opening statement by Cr Andrew Lewis, Mayor, Bourke Shire Council
- Waste-Aid PowerPoint slides provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- UnitingCare submission on targeted earlier intervention programs, October 2015, provided by Mr David Ryan, Acting Manager, Western Family Referral Service, UnitingCare Burnside.

5. Public hearing continued

Ms Sharpe joined the meeting.

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Jane Sanders, Principal Solicitor, Shopfront Youth Legal Services
- Ms Patty McCabe, Social Worker, Shopfront Youth Legal Services.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Ms Juana Reinoso, Chief Executive Officer, Cabramatta Community Centre
- Mr Morlai Kamara, Community Development and Policy Officer, Cabramatta Community Centre.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn in and examined:

- Dr Dianne Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth (ARACY)
- Mr Ross Beaton, NSW State Convenor, ARACY.

The hearing concluded and the witnesses, public and media withdrew.

6. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 3.45 pm until 9.30 am, Tuesday 8 December 2015.

Cathryn Cummins

Clerk to the Committee

Draft Minutes No. 7

Tuesday 8 December 2015

Standing Committee on Social Issues

Room 1136, Parliament House, 9.33 am

1. Members present

Mrs Taylor, *Chair*

Mr Green (*substituting for Revd Nile*)

Mr Mallard (*from 10.00 am*)

Dr Phelps

Mr Primrose (*substituting for Mr Donnelly*)

Ms Sharpe

2. Draft minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That draft minutes nos. 5 and 6 be confirmed.

3. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 12 November 2015 – Email to Committee Director from Ms Samara Dobbins, Director Business Improvement, Information and Privacy Commission initiative, indicating the Commissioner will not make a supplementary submission however has offered to meet with any interested members who may like further information on the work of the commission in general.
- 20 November 2015 – Email to Chair from Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, FamS, inviting committee members to meet with Dr McAfee, Collective Impact.

Sent:

- 10 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Elizabeth Tydd, Information Commissioner, declining meeting and offering opportunity to make supplementary submission 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Cathryn Noble, Claymore Acton Network and Leadership Forum, thanking them for their role in the Claymore site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mr David Lilley, The Hive, thanking them for their role in the Mt Druitt site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mayor Andrew Lewis, Bourke Shire Council, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Gerry Collins, DPC, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Jennifer Griffiths, Western NSW Local Health District, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Rhonda Brumby, Family and Community Services, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mr David Ryan, Western NSW Family Referral Service, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mr Brendon Willoughby, PCYC, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mr Mark Hollman, Youth Worker, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Ann Winterton, Mission Australia, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mr Alistair Ferguson, Maranguka, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Mr James Moore, Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporation, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Robert Bourke, Bourke High School, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 17 November 2015 – Letter from Chair to Ms Kylie Pennell, Bourke Public School, thanking them for their role in the Bourke site visit
- 20 November 2015 – Email from Committee Director to Ms Julie Hourigan Ruse, Chief Executive Officer, FamS, declining an invitation to attend a meeting with Dr McAfee as committee members are not available.

4. Tendered documents

The committee noted that the following documents were provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka, in relation to the committee's site visit to Bourke:

- Document entitled ‘A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: September 2015
- Document entitled ‘A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: Reduced data version – September 2015
- Document entitled ‘Maranguka and Justice Reinvestment project’
- Document entitled ‘Re-engaging Bourke Youth: Come Half Way’
- Powerpoint entitled ‘Maranguka Community Organisation’
- Document entitled ‘Establishment of a Bourke Aboriginal Community Data Action Group under RJCP’.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Green: That the committee authorise the publication of documents provided by participants during the committee’s site visit to Bourke, except the following documents which should be kept confidential:

- Document entitled ‘A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: September 2015, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka
- Document entitled ‘A snapshot of life for Aboriginal children & young people in Bourke, NSW: Reduced data version – September 2015, provided by Mr Alistair Ferguson, Executive Officer, Maranguka.

5. **Answers to questions on notice**

The committee noted that the following answers to questions on notice were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee from:

- Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs, The Smith Family, received 14 October 2015
- Dr Dianne Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth, received 26 November 2015.

6. **Consideration of Chair’s draft report**

The Chair submitted her draft report entitled *Service coordination in communities with high social needs* which, having been previously circulated, was taken as being read.

Chapter 2

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That the following new paragraph be inserted before paragraph 2.48:

‘The committee notes the lack of government coordination across agencies, with too many overlapping programs and little documented commitment to shared outcomes.’

Chapter 3

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That the following committee comment and recommendation be inserted after paragraph 3.75:

‘The committee considers that in order for government agencies to prioritise achieving service coordination, the New South Wales Government should introduce key performance indicators for Secretaries of all government agencies that encourage collaboration, planning, co-design and alignment of outcomes in human services programs delivered by government and non-government agencies.’

Recommendation X

That the NSW Government introduce key performance indicators for Secretaries of all government agencies that encourage collaboration, planning, co-design and alignment of

outcomes in human services programs delivered by government and non-government agencies.’

Fire drill began at 9:45am and the committee resumed proceedings at 10.00am

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That Recommendation 3 be amended by inserting ‘that involves those who live in the targeted areas’ after ‘evaluation stage’.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That the first dot point of Recommendation 3 be amended by omitting ‘of’ and inserting instead ‘for’.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That

- paragraph 3.81 be amended by omitting ‘an annual’ and inserting instead ‘at minimum an annual, but preferably more frequent,’
- Recommendation 4 be amended by omitting ‘annually’ and inserting instead ‘on at least an annual basis, and preferably more frequently’.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That:

- paragraph 3.81 be amended by inserting at the end ‘Further, we believe that the government should investigate the ability of the data sets released from the DAC to be used for research and other purposes.’
- The following new recommendation be inserted after Recommendation 4:

‘Recommendation X

That the NSW Government investigate the ability of the data sets released from the Data Analytics Centre to be used for research and other purposes.’

Chapter 4

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That Recommendation 6 be amended by omitting ‘redirect funding to’ and inserting instead ‘fund’.

Chapter 5

Ms Sharpe moved: That paragraph 5.21 be amended by omitting: ‘While there have been suggestions of ways to improve the tender process, the committee has not been able to identify a viable alternative to competitive tendering.’

Question put and negatived.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That Recommendation 8 be amended by inserting ‘co-design’ before ‘collaboration’.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That Recommendation 11 be amended by inserting ‘and collaboration’ after ‘measure coordination’.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Mallard: That Recommendation 11 be amended by omitting ‘ensure’ and inserting instead ‘mandate’.

Chapter 6

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Sharpe: That Recommendation 14 be amended by inserting ‘all’ before ‘specific geographic’.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Phelps: That Recommendation 14 be amended by omitting ‘include’ and insert instead ‘have’.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Green: That:

- the draft report, as amended, be the report of the committee and that the committee present the report to the House;
- the transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions and correspondence relating to the inquiry be tabled in the House with the report;
- upon tabling, all unpublished attachments to submissions be kept confidential by the committee;
- upon tabling, all unpublished transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions and correspondence relating to the inquiry, be published by the committee, except for those documents kept confidential by resolution of the committee;
- the committee secretariat correct any typographical, grammatical and formatting errors prior to tabling;
- the committee secretariat be authorised to update any committee comments where necessary to reflect changes to recommendations or new recommendations resolved by the committee;
- dissenting statements be provided to the secretariat within 24 hours after receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting;
- the report be tabled on Friday 11 December 2015.

The committee thanked the secretariat for their support and professionalism throughout the inquiry.

7. **Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 10:32 am *sine die*.

Cathryn Cummins
Clerk to the Committee

