



The Hon Pru Goward MP

Minister for Family and Community Services

Minister for Social Housing

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

CFACS17/199
SUB18/149164

Mr David Blunt
Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Blunt

Please find enclosed a copy of the New South Wales Government Progress Report in response to the recommendations put forward in the report of the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No.2 titled *Child Protection*, dated 16 March 2017.

Yours sincerely

Pru Goward MP

Encl

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**Implementation of the NSW
Government's response
to report 46 of the Legislative Council
Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health and
Community Services – *Child protection***

August 2018

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Introduction

The NSW Government welcomes the opportunity to report back to the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2 (the Committee) on the government's progress in implementing its response to the inquiry into child protection (the inquiry). The NSW Government response to the inquiry was tabled in Parliament on 18 September 2017. In its response to the findings of the Committee, the NSW Government acknowledged the highly complex nature of child protection, and the critical role that government agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs), communities and families play in keeping children safe and well in NSW.

In 2018, the NSW Government continues its commitment to build stronger families and communities through a responsive child protection system, ensuring children at risk are cared for in safe, permanent and loving homes. NSW has been working on a number of child protection reforms that address many of the Committee's recommendations.

The number of completed caseworker face-to-face assessments has almost doubled over the last five years, and there were 8,011 more face-to-face assessments completed for children and young people at risk of significant harm in 2016-17 than the previous year. At the same time, supported by an investment of \$63 million over four years (in 2017-18), caseworker numbers have increased and vacancy rates decreased.

NSW has intensified its efforts to provide positive pathways to family restoration, guardianship and open adoption, where possible. The number of safe and permanent homes for at-risk children has also increased, and in 2016-17, the number of children and young people entering out of home care (OOHC) fell by approximately 900 from the previous year, representing a 24 per cent reduction of entries into care.

Recent changes to adoption laws, additional resources, and a focus on improving and streamlining the adoptions process have resulted in a record number of open adoptions for children from OOHC, with a 93 per cent increase in the number of children and young people being permanently adopted, from 67 in 2015-16 to 129 in 2016-17.

NSW is undertaking landmark reforms to the child protection system outlined below.

Their Futures Matter: A new approach

Since late 2016, the Government has been implementing its response to the Independent Review in the landmark reform that is *Their Futures Matter: A new approach*. This reform comprises a long-term strategy to transform the child protection and OOHC systems in NSW by adopting an investment approach to service design and delivery, and an unprecedented level of collaboration across government. *Their Futures Matter* sets out an accountable system that shifts investment to evidence-based services and interventions and delivers tailored needs-based support packages to vulnerable children and families. A cross-agency implementation unit has been established to implement this reform, supported by \$190 million over four years.

Permanency Support Program

In order to achieve the best possible outcomes, we need to be intervening early and supporting families to stay together where they can. The Permanency Support Program, which commenced in October 2017, is one of the most significant changes to the child protection and out-of-home care system in decades. The program is a shift from a 'placement-based' service system to a child- and family-centred service system that

operates through new performance-based contracts and personalised support packages. This reflects the Government's commitment to securing permanent and safe homes for vulnerable children and young people so that children can be supported to stay with or go home to their families. Where it isn't safe for children to go home to their families, the focus is on achieving a permanent home through guardianship or open adoption, with long-term OOHC considered as a last resort.

Targeted Earlier Intervention

The evidence clearly shows that early intervention is far preferable than a crisis response and can greatly reduce the likelihood of a child or young person facing challenges later in life. Reforms to the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program are already underway and in partnership with our community partners, the government is co-designing an earlier intervention service system that is flexible, localised and client-centred. Funding contracts with existing service providers have been extended until 2020 to maintain service continuity for clients and allow time for completion of planning and implementation of tailored service models. *Their Futures Matter* has implemented two new evidence-based intensive family preservation and restoration models aimed at keeping families together, targeting the causes of harm and responding to trauma and other underlying cases of child abuse and neglect.

Premier's Priority

The Premier's Priority 'Protecting our kids' seeks to help more children thrive in stable, safe and loving homes. The target for this priority is to decrease the percentage of children and young people re-reported at risk of significant harm by 15 per cent by 2019. By setting reduction targets across FACS, targeting geographical areas where high numbers of children at risk have been re-reported, and strengthening support for frontline practice, NSW has continued to decrease re-reports. There are already promising outcomes with a downward trend in the re-report measure, from 41.8 per cent in December 2016 to 39 per cent in December 2017.

Proposed legislative changes

In October 2017 NSW released a discussion paper *Shaping a Better Child Protection System* proposing a range of amendments to the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (Care Act) and the *Adoption Act 2000*. A report on the outcomes of statewide consultations on the proposed changes will be released later this year.

Implementation of the NSW Government's response

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>That the NSW Government ensures that future funding contracts for evidence-based prevention and early intervention services are provided for a minimum of five years, provided that the contracts incorporate specific termination provisions that may be activated if key performance indicators, incorporated into the contract, are not achieved.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Investment of \$39 million (2017-18) and \$23 million (2018-19) in the Permanency Support Program (PSP) which operates through new performance-based contracts and personalised support packages.</p> <p>Finalisation of new five-year PSP contracts for foster care and Aboriginal care which include robust reporting mechanisms and systems to ensure performance and achievement of outcomes.</p> <p>Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) reform to develop a locally responsive, evidence-informed and client focused service system that maximises positive outcomes for families and communities.</p> <p>Funding certainty given for approximately 550 TEI service providers via three-year contracts to 2020, as the reform progresses. This allows providers to maintain consistency of service provision, while planning for the implementation of a locally developed model of service.</p> <p>Development of TEI Outcomes Framework in line with the NSW Human Services Outcome Framework to help enable the systematic tracking of client outcomes across services, sectors and districts in key outcome domains important to wellbeing.</p> <p>Commencement of two world class evidence-based family preservation and restoration programs to keep families together: Functional Family Therapy through Child Welfare (FFT-CW©) and Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN©). These are operating in more than 14</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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		priority locations, serviced by 23 teams to help keep 900 families together per year. Half of all placements are designated for Aboriginal families.	
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>That the NSW Government provides a specific one off injection of additional funding for evidence based prevention and early intervention services, including targeted client services and programs that operate in regional, rural and remote areas.</p>	Supported	<p>NSW Government investment of \$149.5 million (2018-19) in early intervention services including \$95 million to provide parenting, youth and family support programs.</p> <p>Investment of \$190 million over four years (from 2016-17) for Their Futures Matter. This funding has enabled the implementation of the new evidence-based intensive intervention programs aimed at keeping families together.</p> <p>Implementation of the evidence-based prevention and early intervention initiatives to address immediate risk and demand in the child protection system under Their Futures Matter, including Multisystemic Therapy Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN®) and Functional Family Therapy through Child Welfare (FFT-CW®) to address underlying issues of substance abuse and mental illness, across more than 14 locations across NSW, including selected regional areas. As of 31 July 2018, 780 families had consented and participated in a program, 488 families were active in MST/FFT, and 134 families had completed a program.</p> <p>Development of a new Trauma Treatment Service under Their Futures Matter which is investigating placement preservation services and developing new models of aftercare services.</p>	In progress
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>That the NSW Government establish a cross-sector body to direct the injection of additional funding for evidence based prevention and early</p>	Noted	Establishment of Their Futures Matter Implementation Board which provides and promotes cross-agency government leadership and decision-making, comprising senior representatives from Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Treasury, FACS, Ministry of Health, Department of Education and the Department of Justice.	In progress

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intervention services, as provided for in recommendation 2, with this body to be comprised of key stakeholders including the NSW Children's Guardian, the NSW Ombudsman, the President of the Children's Court of NSW, senior representatives from the NSW Police Force, Health and Education, as well as independents with relevant commercial experience.		<p>Establishment of the Their Futures Matter Implementation Unit as the single commissioning entity to work with partner agencies to commission tailored service solutions.</p> <p>Development and implementation of the new FACS Commissioning Framework to enhance commissioning skills and embed the model within the FACS organisational structure.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>That the NSW Government commission an independent review of the Department of Family and Community Services' screening and assessment tools and processes, to identify how they can be improved to enhance objectivity within child protection assessments.</p>	Supported	Commencement of a whole-of-system redesign of the intake, assessment and referral system under Their Futures Matter, which is reviewing existing tools and processes.	In progress
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>That the NSW Government benchmark funding levels for men's behaviour change programs</p>	Supported	<p>Investment of \$10 million (2017-18) for behaviour change interventions and initiatives for high-risk offenders to continue to implement initiatives under the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021.</p> <p>Commencement of an independent evaluation of the four community-based</p>	In progress

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(MBCPs) in other state and territory jurisdictions, to ensure an adequate level of funding is allocated to these programs in New South Wales.		<p>MBCP pilots.</p> <p>Expansion of government-funded MBCPs in NSW to provide programs in an additional 17 locations in NSW, taking the total to 35 locations across NSW.</p> <p>Development of an automatic referral pathway from NSW Police to the Men's Telephone Counselling and Referral Service.</p> <p>Rollout of high-risk domestic violence offender teams to target recidivist offenders and investigate complex domestic and family violence incidents.</p> <p>Employment of additional facilitators to deliver behaviour change interventions to greater numbers of offenders in Corrective Services NSW facilities.</p> <p>Piloting of GPS tracking of domestic violence offenders to improve safety for women and children, and reduce reoffending and re-victimisation.</p> <p>Implementation of the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions under the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children, alongside associated initiatives to improve data collection processes and perpetrator interventions.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services develop, in consultation with the NSW Ombudsman and stakeholders, a framework that focuses on the needs of vulnerable young people, to ensure they are not overlooked</p>	Noted	<p>Review of existing frameworks relevant to the needs of vulnerable young people as part of the NSW Government's response to the final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission).</p> <p>Engagement of young people via the FACS Youth Consult for Change group.</p> <p>Launch of the YOU website which offers support and resources to young people aged 15-25 years to reduce the confusion, complexity, and time involved in navigating the OOHC system.</p>	In progress

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within the child protection system.		<p>Trial of the new Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for OOHC in NSW to enable FACS to continuously assess, assure and improve the quality of the OOHC services.</p> <p>Establishment of a centralised linked data set that combines key wellbeing data about every child in OOHC held by FACS, the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Ministry of Health.</p> <p>Development of the PSP which aims to increase the number of children and young people either restored to their family, moving into guardianship, or adopted within two years of placement.</p> <p>Development of targeted PSP support packages that address the specific, assessed needs of individual young people.</p> <p>Launch of the NSW Practice Framework for child protection and OOHC launched and statewide briefings on the Practice Framework and associated practice approaches.</p> <p>Development of new Quality Improvement model will seek feedback from young people about the quality of FACS interventions, and five year evaluation planned.</p> <p>Finalisation of progress reporting against Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2016-19.</p> <p>Launch of the Children's Advocate's Now and Forever campaign, aimed at ending violence against children and young people.</p>	
Recommendation 7	Noted	Finalisation of consultations on proposed legislative amendments outlined in	In progress

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
<p>That the NSW Government amend the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> to include a specific provision requiring the Department of Family and Community Services to clearly provide strength based evidence when presenting its case in care and protection proceedings.</p>		<p>the Shaping a Better Child Protection System discussion paper.</p> <p>Commencement of new evidence-based family preservation and restoration models under Their Futures Matter in more than 14 locations across NSW will provide support to up to 900 families, with half of all places for Aboriginal families.</p> <p>Launch of the NSW Practice Framework for child protection and OOHC focused on a strengths-based approach to working with children and families. Full implementation of the Framework in Hunter New England Central Coast and Sydney, South Eastern Sydney and Northern Sydney districts.</p> <p>Ongoing compliance with the NSW Model Litigant Policy for Civil Litigation. FACS is a model litigant and conducts care and protection proceedings in the Children's Court consistent with these obligations. The obligations include acting fairly and ensuring all relevant evidence is before the Children's Court, including evidence of a parent's strengths.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 8</p> <p>That the NSW Ombudsman undertake an annual audit of the Department of Family and Community Services' compliance with its obligations to provide strength based evidence to the court.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The NSW Government is reviewing existing oversight arrangements relevant to child protection, including the role of the NSW Ombudsman, in the context of its response to the final report of the Royal Commission.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>Recommendation 9</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Proposed legislative amendments to streamline court processes and orders have been proposed in the Shaping a Better Child Protection System</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<p>That the NSW Government amend the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> to include a specific provision requiring the Children's Court of New South Wales to consider the known risks of harm to a child on being removed from their parents or carer and placed into care, together with the risks of leaving the child in their current circumstances, when making a decision on potential child removal in care and protection proceedings.</p>		<p>discussion paper that directly supports the objectives of the PSP and are focused on the best interests of the child.</p> <p>Reforms under the PSP aim to give every child and young person the chance to have a loving, permanent home for life, whether that be with a child's parents, extended family or kin, or through open adoption or guardianship.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 10</p> <p>That the Department of Justice, in consultation with the Children's Court of New South Wales and stakeholders, review the systems and processes that operate in the Children's Court, to identify any opportunities that may exist to address the challenges and sense of power imbalance that parents may feel in care and protection cases.</p>	<p>Supported in principle</p>	<p>Consultation between the Department of Justice, the Children's Court and FACS has been undertaken about ways to address the challenges facing parents in care and protection proceedings, resulting in the Children's Court identifying possible options to progress.</p> <p>Commencement of an evaluation of the Dispute Resolution Conference process by the Children's Court to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of clients.</p> <p>FACS is referring more families to family group conferencing (FGC) early in its work with families and before bringing proceedings in the Children's Court. FGC is a family focused and strengths-based form of alternative dispute resolution.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<p>Recommendation 11</p> <p>That the NSW Government provides the Children's Court of New South Wales with funding for the appointment of at least three additional Children Magistrates, to ensure that all care and protection matters in New South Wales are presided over by a specialist Children's Magistrate.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The NSW Government notes the benefits of appointing specialist Children's Magistrates to preside over all care and protection matters.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Recommendation 12</p> <p>That the NSW Government make legislative amendments to extend the performance audit function of the Auditor-General to include audits of all non-government organisations who have been provided with state funding to deliver child protection related services.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>FACS has undertaken a regulatory impact analysis into whether child protection related services should be subject to the Auditor-General's performance audit function. The analysis includes input from Auditor-General offices across Australia, regulatory bodies, non-government agencies and NSW government departments. NSW Treasury is conducting further work to investigate opportunities to improve public accountability and transparency with relation to government finances. FACS has referred the findings of its regulatory impact analysis to NSW Treasury.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Recommendation 13</p> <p>That the NSW Government, in consultation with stakeholders, develops additional resources, training and support for carers.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>Engagement of peak organisations through the FACS Sector Development Program to deliver a range of sector capacity building and support initiatives relevant to carer support to agencies.</p> <p>Appointment of Adopt Change to deliver the My Forever Family program – a 'first of its kind' approach to carer recruitment, development and support.</p> <p>Ongoing provision of information, support and training opportunities for carers</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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		<p>of Aboriginal children and young people through the Aboriginal Statewide Foster Care Support Service.</p> <p>Ongoing carer engagement, support, training and development of Aboriginal agencies by the Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat.</p> <p>Their Futures Matter is currently procuring additional services to improve placement stability, including a therapeutic foster care service which is an alternative to institutional residential placements for children and young people with severe emotional and behavioural disorders.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 14</p> <p>That the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> be amended to provide a clear, non-discretionary responsibility on the Minister to provide ongoing support for young adults up to at least age 21, where that young person requests support.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Section 165 of the Care Act already requires the Minister to arrange or provide assistance to eligible care leavers until they reach 25 years of age where such assistance is considered necessary having regard to their safety, welfare and wellbeing.</p> <p>Supports for care leavers have been expanded and clarified in the 2017 Ministerial Guidelines for the provision of assistance after leaving OOHC, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Care Education Financial Support provision - targeted extension of placement support while a young person is completing Year 12 • specialist aftercare services (\$3 million per annum) to provide services, case coordination and brokerage • CareLeaver Line and Resolve - an app for mobile devices with information and links to services. <p>Development of specific resources aimed at FACS and non-government caseworkers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leaving and aftercare forums for the sector to build capacity and practice 	<p>In progress</p>

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a leaving and aftercare microsite within the FACS website • a new video resource for caseworkers about conversations with young people to support leaving care • a new digital and printed resource for caseworkers • the YOU campaign resources. <p>Introduction of a new annual Leaving Care Package under the PSP from 1 October 2017, benefiting young people in care by providing an annual payment of \$1,277 to their service provider over three years for leaving care planning and implementation of leaving care plans.</p> <p>Review and reconfiguration of the specialist \$3 million aftercare program to prioritise and improve access for clients most in need of specialist services.</p> <p>Development of an expanded and enhanced model of aftercare under Their Futures Matter to improve leaving care planning and specialist services to young people exiting from OOHC.</p> <p>Commencement in July 2018 of a staged rollout of new ChildStory functionality enabling caseworkers to approve children and young people's access to certain care information both while they are in care and after they leave care. Once implemented, clients can be granted access to add to their life story and events, or access information around support or their time in care.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 15</p> <p>That the NSW Government improve leaving care planning and supports</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Launch of new three year targeted support packages under the PSP - 'Leaving Care' and '15+ Reconnect'.</p> <p>Review and reconfiguration of the specialist \$3 million aftercare program to</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<p>by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing and implementing financial penalties for out of home care providers that fail to develop and action leaving care plans • establishing a designated team within the Department of Family and Community Services to develop, monitor and implement leaving care plans and supports for young people • changing the focus and name of 'leaving care plans' to 'transitioning care plans' • developing a specific strategy to create three year transition plans, with a sliding scale in the level of support to be provided from ages 18 to 21. 		<p>prioritise and improve access for clients most in need of specialist services.</p> <p>Development of an expanded and enhanced model of aftercare under Their Futures Matter to improve leaving care planning and specialist services to young people exiting from OOHC.</p> <p>Updated Ministerial Guidelines for the provision of assistance after leaving OOHC.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 16</p> <p>That the NSW Ombudsman undertake regular audits of the Department of Family Community Services' compliance with its legal obligations to provide leaving care</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Ongoing comprehensive internal and external oversight from the Office of the Children's Guardian and the NSW Ombudsman for FACS and funded NGOs.</p> <p>Ongoing auditing of OOHC service providers under the NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care.</p> <p>Regular reviews and updates to FACS' contract management, performance</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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plans and supports to young people transitioning out of care.		monitoring and risk assessment systems to reflect the increasing complexity of service provision delivered under contracts across a range of service areas.	
<p>Recommendation 17</p> <p>That the Minister for Family and Community Services provide bi-annual reports to NSW Parliament about the progress of the Independent review of Aboriginal children and young people in out of home care, with this report to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of individual cases reviewed and the review methodology • the number of cases where remedial or corrective action has been or may be taken as a result of a review • any key findings and trends that emerge as the review progresses. 	Noted	An independent review of Aboriginal children and young people who entered OOHC in 2015-16 is underway, increasing the participation of Aboriginal parents and communities in decision-making and developing solutions that prioritise relative kinship care.	In progress
<p>Recommendation 18</p> <p>That the NSW Government commit to working across NSW with</p>	Supported	Introduction of the FACS Aboriginal Cultural Inclusion Framework which embeds cultural inclusion into planning and development of all FACS' services and programs.	In progress

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<p>Aboriginal communities, as well as Aboriginal organisations such as Grandmothers Against Removals, to provide a far greater degree of Aboriginal self-determination in decisions on supporting families, child protection and child removals.</p>		<p>Delivery of capacity-building activities arising from the Plan on a Page for Aboriginal Children and Young People.</p> <p>Development of an Aboriginal child and family industry development strategy to build the capacity of Aboriginal organisations across the service continuum.</p> <p>Commencement of the Aboriginal Co-design and Evidence project under Their Futures Matter to help selected organisations to improve their evidence building and evaluation capabilities.</p> <p>Regular consultation by FACS with advocacy groups including local Grandmothers Against Removals.</p> <p>Implementation of the Guiding Principles for Strengthening the Participation of Local Aboriginal Community in Child Protection Decision Making.</p> <p>Formation of the Guiding Principles Yarning Circle, a statewide group that supports the promotion, governance and monitoring of the rollout of the Guiding Principles across NSW.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 19</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services, in consultation with the Public Service Association and staff, set caseload targets for caseworkers, taking into account the complex nature of child protection work.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring by FACS of workload requirements for caseworkers.</p> <p>Ongoing consultation with health and safety committees and the Public Service Association of NSW as specific issues arise and as part of the quarterly joint consultative committee arrangements.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
<p>Recommendation 20</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services, in consultation with the Public Service Association, change workplace systems to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff, given the challenging nature of child protection work.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>The total number of reported workers compensation claims by staff involved in casework decreased by 4 per cent from 2014-15 to 2016-17.</p> <p>The total number of reported workers compensation claims for psychological injuries has fallen 38 per cent from 2013-14 to 2017-18.</p> <p>Commencement of wellbeing initiatives for FACS caseworkers which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health and wellbeing training • Wellness coaching for caseworkers • Redesign of the self-care training modules • Development of a partnership with Charles Sturt University to research organisational wellbeing at FACS • Undertaking psychological impact assessments for caseworker roles. <p>Ongoing implementation of the SafeWork NSW Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022 for FACS staff.</p> <p>Ongoing implementation of relevant workforce elements of the Mental Health Commission of NSW's Living Well: A Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW 2014–2024.</p> <p>Development of the FACS Workforce Safety and Wellbeing Strategy that focuses on supporting frontline workers to deal with emotional and mental health issues.</p> <p>Rollout of mental health first aid training to casework managers, commencing in July 2018.</p> <p>Rollout of group supervision training across NSW and all FACS Community Service Centres are now using this model.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
<p>Recommendation 21</p> <p>That the Minister for Family and Community Services commission an independent investigation into the internal complaint mechanisms within the Department of Family and Community Services.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>Development of the Integrated Complaints Management System Project that will improve responses to issues raised by clients in a timely and coordinated manner, and supply information that can be used to deliver quality improvements in our customer services and complaints-handling.</p> <p>Implementation of Feedback Assist - a 'no wrong door' whole of government solution that aims to provide NSW Government customers a centralised consistent point to lodge and track their feedback.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>Recommendation 22</p> <p>That the NSW Government amend the <i>Ombudsman Act 1974</i> to provide the NSW Ombudsman with the power to investigate complaints relating to child protection matters, where appropriate, even if a matter may be before the courts.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The NSW Government is reviewing existing oversight arrangements relevant to child protection, including the role of the NSW Ombudsman, in the context of its response to the final report of the Royal Commission.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>Recommendation 23</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services develop, in partnership with stakeholders, a broader workforce training and development framework for staff</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>Development of the Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework and a Cultural Competency Training Program to equip FACS staff to create a more culturally safe work environment and organisational culture.</p> <p>Commencement of a review of the Caseworker Development Program that will link training to the Practice Framework, to include principles relevant to working with Aboriginal families and families from diverse communities.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
working with vulnerable children, young people and families.			
<p>Recommendation 24</p> <p>That the NSW Government review the provisions of Chapter 16A of the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i>, to improve information sharing across jurisdictions for child protection matters.</p>	Supported	<p>In February 2018, NSW agreed to amend the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 to extend Chapter 16A of the Care Act. This now allows prescribed bodies to share child protection information with other Australian jurisdiction's equivalent child protection agencies. NSW will be the first State in Australia to allow this kind of cross-jurisdictional information sharing.</p> <p>FACS is consulting with other jurisdictions to allow inter-jurisdictional sharing of Working with Children Check negative notices and the development of national minimum standards for Working with Children's Checks.</p> <p>Completion of the Social Policy Research Centre research study for the national Children and Families Secretaries child protection information sharing project working group, examining practical impediments to child protection information sharing between jurisdictions.</p>	In progress
<p>Recommendation 25</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services fully funds the Central Coast Multi-Agency Response Centre (CC MARC) model and implement this model in those areas of the state with greatest need.</p>	Noted	Evaluation of the Central Coast Multi Agency Response Centre model is being undertaken by Their Futures Matter as an example of localised and multi-agency intake, assessment and referral. Findings will inform the redesign of the access system.	In progress

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
<p>Recommendation 26</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services publish a plain English policy position on how parents and carers can work towards restoration of their children, including a clear internal review process for parents and carers who have been denied restoration.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>Accessible information for families about permanency options and parents' rights can be found on the family preservation and restoration pages of the FACS website: https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/permanency-support-program/paths</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Recommendation 27</p> <p>That the Department of Family and Community Services develop a specific strategy to improve opportunities for children and young people in out of home care to be restored to their families, where appropriate.</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>Commencement of new evidence-based family preservation and restoration models under Their Futures Matter in more than 14 locations across NSW will provide support to 900 families, with half of all places for Aboriginal families.</p> <p>Full service delivery by contracted PSP providers under the packaged care service model has taken effect across NSW.</p> <p>Continuing successful operation of the Newpin Social Benefit Bond. Results for the fifth year of the bond (FY2017-18) have been independently certified and show the number of children successfully restored to the care of their families, across the life of the bond, grow to 272, representing an overall restoration rate of 63.3% over the life of the program so far. As a result, the Newpin Social Benefit Bond has now delivered a 13.5% p.a. financial return to investors. These results reflect Newpin's continuing work providing a successful centre-based therapeutic support program that enables the restoration of children in OOH to their families. Newpin has also expanded operations in 2017-18 to support more NSW children and families, with centres opening in the Illawarra, Sydney and Newcastle areas.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Recommendation	NSW position	Achievements	Status
Recommendation 28 That the Minister for Family and Community Services provide a report to the NSW Parliament by the end of August 2018 on the NSW Government's progress in implementing the recommendations in this report.	Supported	The Minister has provided this report to the NSW Parliament on the NSW Government's progress in response to the recommendations of the report.	Completed