



Office of
Communities
Children's Guardian



OCG/1245

Ms Maree Walk
Chief Executive
Community Services
NSW Family and Community Services
Locked Bag 4028
ASHFIELD NSW 2131

Dear Ms Walk

I am writing regarding Hunter Aboriginal Children's Services (HACS) which is currently participating in the Quality Improvement Program (QIP).

In 2009, my office commenced an individualised *Program to meet accreditation criteria (the Program)* with HACS to assist it to address issues of progress in the QIP.

The most recent assessment was conducted on 22-23 November 2011 and feedback from that assessment has been provided to the agency. I have attached a copy of the feedback report and accompanying correspondence for your information.

An overview of HACS' progress through 2011 has identified several themes of critical deficit in areas of practice. Substantial improvements in practice must be made if HACS is to achieve accreditation by July 2013.

I met with Mr Terry Chenery, the newly appointed A/CEO, members of the Board, a representative from AbSec and Ms Janet Vickers on 11 January 2012. At this meeting I requested that the agency make a realistic assessment regarding its capacity to meet the requirements of accreditation. Another meeting is scheduled for 28 March 2012 to discuss the agency's decision to proceed with accreditation or otherwise. You will note that I have indicated that I may need to consider a condition prohibiting HACS from providing or arranging any new placements.

Following our recent meeting, I have advised Mr Chenery that I have requested, in the interim, that Community Services conduct face to face reviews of current placements to assess their safety.

Should you have any queries about this, please contact Ms Wendy Lawson, A/Director Accreditation on REDACTE.

Yours sincerely


Kerryn Boland
Children's Guardian
17 January 2012

Encl *Feedback on Program to meet accreditation criteria* and letter to Mr Terry Chenery