

10.4 Viewpoint and Care Plans - Helping Children in Care to Have Their Say

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Policy

Purpose

To guide child protection workers in the use of Viewpoint as part of care planning for children in the CEO's care.

Legislative Authority

[Children and Community Services Act 2004 - Section 10 Principle of child participation](#)
[Children and Community Services Act 2004 - Section 39 Provisional care plan](#)
[Children and Community Services Act 2004 - Section 89 Care plans](#)
[Children and Community Services Act 2004 - Section 90 Review of care plan](#)

Standards

[Better Care, Better Services - Standards for Children and Young People in Protection and Care](#)

Practice Requirements

- Every child in the CEO's care aged five to 17 years must be invited to complete a Viewpoint questionnaire as the first step in the care planning process.
- Viewpoint Interactive questionnaires can be completed online using any PC or laptop with an internet connection or in a special secure environment on any networked PC or laptop in a district office. Interactive questionnaires can also be completed offline using a dedicated Viewpoint laptop.
- Viewpoint Direct questionnaires (presented in survey format) can be completed online using a private PC, laptop, mobile phone or smart tablet.
- When a child uses Viewpoint online via a Department networked computer or laptop, it is essential they are logged in through the special secure environment. Child protection workers must log into the networked computer using the user name and password provided in the *Viewpoint Step by Step User Guide* chapter 6 (in related resources).
- Child protection workers must review the child's Viewpoint responses within two working days of completion to identify any safety concerns or matters requiring urgent intervention.
- Child protection workers must meet one-to-one with the child as soon as possible after completion of the questionnaire to explore and reflect on the issues raised and to discuss potential solutions or actions.
- A copy of the child's responses must be provided to the child and to the Chair of the care plan meeting as part of the consultation process.

Process Map

[Viewpoint Process Map](#)

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Procedure - 10.4 Viewpoint and Care Plans - Helping Children in Care to Have Their Say

Overview

Viewpoint is a web-based software program which promotes participation by children in the development of their personal care plans and in the development of services to meet the needs of all children in care. It offers:

- an interactive, computer-based self-interviewing tool for use by the child as part of the care planning process, and
- a management reporting system which collates live data for use in service monitoring and improvement, strategic and operational planning and reporting.

Child protection workers must invite each child or young person in care aged five to 17 years to use Viewpoint as part of their care planning process.

Age related questionnaires focus on the young person's views, concerns and experiences and identify issues that require further examination and reflection in follow up discussions between the child and the child protection worker. Wherever possible, solutions and actions should be identified in preparation for the development of the care plan.

Aggregated data in Viewpoint Management Reports should be used by managers (including team leaders, senior practice development officers and district management teams) to access collective feedback from children in care as a way of promoting

Related Resources

Departmental Frameworks

Corporate - Aboriginal Services Framework 2012

Corporate - CaLD Services Framework 2013

Service 1 - Foster Care Partnership Practice Framework 2012

Service 1 - Residential Care (Sanctuary) Framework 2012

Flow Charts

Viewpoint Process Chart

Related Resource Material

Viewpoint Request Form

Viewpoint - Fact Sheet for Carers

Viewpoint Step by Step User Guides

Related Casework Practice Manual Entries

10.3 Care Plans - Including Review or Modification

10.2 Provisional Care Plans

Contact Person

Manager Children and Young People in Care

their participation in performance monitoring and operational and strategic planning processes.

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Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities in the Viewpoint process are shared between:

- child protection workers
- Viewpoint technical support workers
- Viewpoint facilitators
- Care plan Chairs
- senior staff and district management teams.

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Inviting young people to use Viewpoint

Child protection workers must invite and encourage children in care aged five to 17 years to use Viewpoint as the first step in participating in their care planning process. The child's participation is central to the planning process and child protection workers should build in sufficient time for Viewpoint to be completed and the results included in the care plan discussion.

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Confidentiality

The child protection worker should assure the child that the responses they give in Viewpoint questionnaires are confidential and will not be shared with anyone else (for example, their family or carers) without their agreement, except where it is necessary to prevent significant harm to themselves or others, or as required or allowed by law (for example, if files were to be subpoenaed by a Court).

The child should be helped to understand that their responses will be used to inform their individual care plan, and to provide feedback that will assist the Department to help improve services for all children in the CEO's care.

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Choosing a venue, method and facilitator support

Viewpoint questionnaires are available in two different versions:

Viewpoint Interactive – uses colourful graphics, animated avatars and speech to guide the child through the questionnaire. Periodic game breaks are provided to maintain engagement. Young people can complete the Interactive questionnaire online using any PC or laptop with an internet connection (for example, in the home, at school, in a public library), using a special secure environment on any Department networked PC or laptop in district offices, or offline using dedicated Viewpoint laptops available in all locations. (Note: Viewpoint Interactive is not compatible with smart phones or tablets)

Viewpoint Direct – is a survey format that contains the same questions as the interactive version but in plain text. Speech is available on some (but not all) operating systems, and game breaks are not included. Young people can complete a Direct questionnaire online using their personal PC, laptop, mobile phone or smart tablet.

Child protection workers:

- determine which version is most appropriate, and
- what level of support is required for the child.

If Viewpoint Interactive is used, child protection workers should assist the child to decide how and where they will be most comfortable completing the questionnaire. This may include venues such as their placement, a park, the library, a restaurant or at the office. Headphones help ensure that the questionnaire can be completed in privacy at any chosen venue.

Older children and children familiar with Viewpoint may not need or want a facilitator to sit alongside them, and this should be respected. Where needed, children and young people should be offered a facilitator to guide and support them when completing the questionnaire.

Child protection workers may undertake the facilitator role themselves or arrange for an independent facilitator if necessary, so that the child feels comfortable to express their thoughts and feelings. The independent facilitator should be someone known to the child or young person; it may be another child protection worker, a family resource employee, or any other employee who has received Viewpoint training. In some circumstances the child protection worker may assess the child's carer as the most suitable person to undertake the facilitator support role.

Facilitators are responsible for the following actions:

- assisting the child to access (through the secure environment if using networked computers) and complete their questionnaire through their designated user login and providing any other support or assistance the child may require
- providing the child with emotional and practical support (for example, headphones for privacy) if required, and
- where a Viewpoint laptop has been used, returning the equipment to the Viewpoint technical support worker after the child has completed the questionnaire.

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Generating a personalised Viewpoint questionnaire

To start the process, child protection workers should complete the *Viewpoint Request Form* in related resources and forward it to the Viewpoint technical support worker. A copy of the completed *Viewpoint Request Form* and the child's login confirmation sheet should be filed in the child history file in Objective.

Child protection workers should use their professional judgment to determine:

- which age-related questionnaire is used
- whether the Interactive or Direct version of Viewpoint is used

- the preferred delivery method for Interactive, and
- the level of assistance the child or young person needs or wants to complete it.

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Viewpoint technical support workers

Districts must identify Viewpoint technical support workers to manage Viewpoint arrangements and to assist in the preparation and recording of questionnaires. Administrative staff with training in Viewpoint undertake this role in the district.

On receipt of a *Viewpoint Request Form*, the Viewpoint technical support worker is responsible for:

- updating the profile and assigning the appropriate questionnaire to a child already in the Viewpoint database (note: existing user login details should be in the child history file in Objective)
- creating a profile and user login for a child not yet in the Viewpoint database (a PDF copy should be sent to the child protection worker for filing in the child history file in Objective)
- notifying the facilitator (if any) of the child's user login and delivery method to be used
- downloading the selected Interactive questionnaire to a dedicated laptop (where it is to be completed offline)
- where Viewpoint Direct is to be used, entering their own name in the 'Manager to email' box, which generates an automated email once the questionnaire has been completed by the young person, and
- notifying the young person of the Viewpoint Direct hyperlink and simple login instructions (refer to Chapter 5, *Viewpoint Step-by-Step User Guide* in related resources)

When the questionnaire is completed, the Viewpoint technical support worker is responsible for:

- periodically checking under the 'individual reports' on the Viewpoint database to see whether the questionnaire is completed (if completed using Viewpoint Direct)
- uploading the questionnaire to the Viewpoint database (if completed offline using Viewpoint Interactive), and
- creating a PDF of the child's responses and emailing it to the child protection worker.

Detailed guidance is available in the *Viewpoint Step-by-Step User Guide* in related resources.

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Viewpoint logins

Manager logins for new staff can be organised via Assist district mentors in district offices, or through the Viewpoint Helpdesk.

Each child accessing Viewpoint is assigned their own user login.

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Creating and recording user logins

Viewpoint technical support workers are responsible for creating user logins within the Viewpoint database at www.vptof.com.au and for confirming login details to child protection workers, who must place these on the relevant Child History File in Objective.

Detailed guidance is available in the *Viewpoint Step-by-Step User Guide* in related resources.

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Updating user profiles

Where a child is completing a second or subsequent questionnaire, the Viewpoint technical support worker is responsible for updating the child's profile in Viewpoint to reflect any changes.

Detailed guidance is available in the *Viewpoint Tip Sheet for Staff* and *Viewpoint Step-by-Step User Guide* in related resources.

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Reviewing and storing completed questionnaires

When child protection workers receive the PDF copy of the child's responses, they must be reviewed within two working days to:

- identify any safety concerns
- matters requiring urgent intervention, and if required,
- take any necessary action.

Child protection workers must save the PDF response sheet into the Child History File in Objective and print a hard copy to place in the Child History Folder.

If a copy of the child's responses has not been received within five working days the child protection worker must follow up with the Viewpoint technical support worker.

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Following up with the young person

As soon as practicable after receiving the child's responses, the child protection worker should consult with the team leader to consider the content and identify the most appropriate person to follow up with the child. In most cases this will be the child protection worker unless another person would be more appropriate, for example, where the child has disclosed difficulties with the child protection worker in the questionnaire responses.

The child protection worker (or another designated person known to the child) must meet one-to-one with the child to present them with a hard copy of their responses, explore and reflect upon the issues raised in the questionnaire, and generate potential solutions or actions.

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Documenting Viewpoint outcomes for the care plan/review process

The child protection worker must provide a copy of the child's responses to the Chair of the care planning process. The views and proposed solutions or actions discussed in the follow-up with the child should be summarised and attached. Where applicable, child protection workers should compare the child's Viewpoint responses with any previous questionnaire responses in order to measure progress and identify areas of ongoing concern from the child's perspective.

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Each child should be encouraged to participate in the care planning process so that their views and experiences form part of the discussion, regardless of whether or not they have completed a Viewpoint questionnaire.

Where a Viewpoint questionnaire has been completed the Chair considers the confidentiality and sensitivity of the child's responses, the proposed solutions or actions, and how these can be appropriately included in the discussion and documentation.

The Chair should acknowledge and discuss the child's views as part of the care planning process whilst protecting their confidentiality.

Where a child has not undertaken a Viewpoint questionnaire, the Chair should check that they were given the opportunity and encourage them to use Viewpoint as part of their next care plan process. This information should be recorded in the child's care plan.

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The responses of each child provide a unique and unmediated perspective and a valuable tool in professional supervision.

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Viewpoint Management Reports provide collective feedback from each child in care and can make a critical contribution to their genuine participation, and the improvement of services and outcomes.

Detailed guidance is available in the *Viewpoint Step-by-Step User Guide* in related resources.

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For advice and technical assistance about Viewpoint software contact your Assist district mentor or, alternatively, the Viewpoint Helpdesk via email: helpdesk@vptorg.com.au or phone: 1300 633 307. For problems with hardware (Viewpoint laptops) contact the IT Helpdesk: 1800 898 078.

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