

Attachment 3 – Out of Home Care Therapeutic Services Response to RCIRCSA Request.

Agency: **Out of Home Care Therapeutic Services**

The Department of Health and Human Services (Children and Youth Services) currently (June 2015) funds two therapeutic services specifically for children in Out of Home Care, the Child Trauma Service operated by the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) and Therapeutic Residential Care operated by The Salvation Army (TSA) in south of the state and Anglicare in the North and North West. Neither of these services are specific to problem sexual behaviours, however children exhibiting these behaviours are often referred to these services.

Children and Youth Services are currently undertaking a major reform of the Out of Home Care system. The reformed service system is based upon a trauma informed framework and evidence based therapeutic responses, which will form the foundation for all placements. All OOHC services will be designed to provide a therapeutic benefit to the client group through the establishment of a therapeutic environment which creates a feeling of safety and support to heal and grow.

Phase 1 of the reform process which commenced in June 2014, examined specialised services for children in care including both of the current therapeutic services and consequently the way in which these services will be delivered from 1 July 2015 will change. Further detail regarding the current service models, as well as the reformed service models is provided below. The Request for Proposal documentation which outlines the service specifications for the reformed services is also included for your information.

Phase 1 of the reforms will also see the introduction of Special Care Packages for children with extreme needs. Special Care Packages are developed to match a child's extra-ordinary level of need for care including therapeutic supports required to address problem sexual behaviours. A Request for Proposal process is currently in progress to develop a register of preferred providers for use by CYS when a Special Care Package is required. It is anticipated that the Register will take effect from 1 October 2015.

Program & Service Model

Therapeutic Intervention Services - Australian Childhood Foundation

The Australian Childhood Foundation has operated a Child Trauma Service for children and young people in the statutory care system including those in Out of Home Care since October 2009. For the 2014-2015 financial year the base funding (GST exclusive) provided to ACF to deliver the service was \$766 555.

The Child Trauma Service delivers therapeutic interventions to children to reduce the trauma influenced behaviours of children and young people in care.

The Funding Agreement with ACF provides for services to be delivered to 60 children state-wide at any one time. Referral to the service is made by the Child Protection Worker (Children and Youth Services).

An evaluation of the Child Trauma Service was conducted by ACF in November 2014. This report has been provided for your information and contains much of the data sought by the Commission including details of the service and staffing models as well as referral and case closure numbers.

As part of the ongoing reforms to the OOHC system in Tasmania, there will be a greater focus within the Therapeutic Services model on training carers in trauma informed practice to build their capacity to deliver therapeutic care and ensure all placements are therapeutic. Following a Request for Proposal tender process earlier this year in which ACF was the successful respondent, the new service model will commence from 1 July 2015.

Tasmanian Government response to RCIRCSA – Therapeutic Responses to Problem or Abusive Sexual Behaviours in Children

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Under the reformed service model therapeutic interventions are still available for those clients who require more intensive direct therapies, with the Funding Agreement providing for services to be delivered to 30 children state-wide at any one time. This number is flexible and will be reassessed as part of the 12 month review of the service. Referrals will continue to be made by Child Protection staff. The base funding (GST exclusive) provided to ACF to deliver the service in 2015-2016 is \$767 000.

For further information see Attachment 3.1 – ACF Child Trauma Service Report

Therapeutic Residential Care – The Salvation Army and Anglicare

In 2010 CYS established a Therapeutic Residential Care (TRC) model to accommodate children who are unable to be placed in less intensive family based care placement options. Therapeutic Residential Care is intended to provide young people with intensive, structured care, supervision and support and aims to provide young people with therapeutic assistance to stabilise trauma based behaviours. The model is delivered by The Salvation Army (TSA) in the South and Anglicare in the North and North West. The Funding Agreement with both of these organisations provides for 32 state-wide (South – 16; North – 8; North West – 8). The base funding (GST exclusive) in the 2014-2015 financial year is \$3 168 588 for TSA and \$2 779 478 for Anglicare.

While the Funding Agreements do not specify an age range for entry into this placement type, the clients have primarily been adolescents although younger children have been accommodated at times due to the lack of other suitable placement options for children with such intensive needs. These decisions are made by CYS Child Protection staff in connection with the service provider.

The Salvation Army commissioned an independent evaluation of the TRC which was completed in January 2015. This evaluation provides considerable information regarding the service provided, staffing etc. No evaluation of the Anglicare service has been completed, however while there are some small differences between the two services resulting from them being operated by two different organisations (e.g. staff rostering models), in practice the service models operate similarly.

Residential Care Services were considered as part of Phase 1 of the reforms to OOHC. The successful Respondent to the Request for Proposal process was Centacare who will deliver the Residential Care service state-wide. The term Therapeutic has been dropped from the title to reflect the fact that all placements under the reformed system will be therapeutic. Despite the change in title, therapeutic interventions must be available to all young people placed in Residential Care as part of the service model.

Under the new Funding Agreement which commences on 1 July 2015, Residential Care services are only available for children 12 years and older. Where it is recommended that a younger child is accommodated in Residential Care, the recommendation must be approved by the Deputy Secretary, Children before the referral can be made. The number of placements available in Residential Care will increase over the five year term of Agreement commencing with 32 and increasing by agreement with CYS to 44. The increase in placement numbers will be reassessed as part of the 12 month review process and dependent upon service demand, incremental increases commencing in years 2/3 will be negotiated.

The base funding provided to Centacare for 2015-2016 is \$5 858 000 (GST exclusive).

Information regarding the new Residential Care model can be found in Attachment 3.2 Request for proposal – OOHC Reform Phase 1

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Demographics

The new therapeutic programs are not yet operational as at the time of preparation of this document

Evaluations

See Attachment 3.3– Therapeutic Residential Care (TSA) Evaluation