

## Attachment 15

- b. **What is the mechanism by which other authorities for example law enforcement, health and schools exchange information with the out-of-home care agency about risks of sexual abuse of the child in care?**

### Youth Care Policies & Procedures Manual Section 7.2: Page 457-464 [Attachment 15]

#### 7.2 LIAISON WITH OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

##### Youth Care UPA Policy No: 7.2

To work cooperatively with other agencies providing services to children, children and young persons and their families to ensure maximum benefit to their clients.

##### Policy Overview

To adhere to the philosophies of continuity of care for children and young persons, it is crucial for all agencies both government and non-government to work cooperatively and in a coordinated manner.

Youth Care UPA will promote open communication and share skills and information with other agencies.

The staff and management of Youth Care UPA have a commitment to creating pathways of care for children and children and young persons, and where possible will reduce the possibility of the child or young person falling through the net.

The following principles of interagency practice will be adhered to, including but not restricted to the following:

- An understanding of the aims of an intervention and what is good practice;
- An appreciation of and respect for different roles and contributions of practitioners;
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities;
- Open and regular contact to support monitoring and review processes;
- Comprehensive documentation, which record the involvement of agency and organisations;

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- Service development and provision working cooperatively with Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities and community members;
- Commitment to partnership between the government and non-government sectors in achieving good practice responses;
- An understanding of the context in which agencies work and acknowledgment of their constraints;
- Preference for coordinated effort rather than unilateral action by a number of agencies;
- A willingness to learn from each other;
- Belief in accountability to children and children and young persons, to each other and the community;
- The need for prompt and purposeful information exchange between agencies in the interests of the child or young person.

**Responsibility:** Manager and Case Workers

### **Documents Relating To Policy No: 7.1**

Leaving Care:

- Policy 6.1 Planning for Leaving Care to Live Independently
- Policy 6.2 After Care Support
- Policy 7.2 Liaison with other service providers
- Policy 7.3 Service identity, visibility and publicity
- Care Records

## **7.2 LIAISON WITH OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS**

### **Procedure relating to Youth Care UPA Policy No: 7.1**

To work cooperatively with other agencies providing services to children, children and young persons and their families to ensure maximum benefit to their clients.

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The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* recognises and establishes a statutory framework for cooperative and coordinated work between government and non-government agencies. In recognising that no single agency has all the knowledge, skills or authority to solely manage a child or young person's safety, welfare and wellbeing we reinforce our commitment to work cooperatively and in a coordinated manner with other service providers. Complementary services will be utilised with strengths and expertise being used productively and effectively.

### **Meetings/Contact**

The Manager and/or Team Leader are to organise meetings with other service providers to facilitate more formalised agreements regarding the provision of services to children and young persons who require support services and out-of-home care.

Interagency meetings will be used as forums to develop formalised agreements to reduce service overlap and duplication. The agreement will allow all service providers involved to tailor the services provided to ensure a more comprehensive coverage of the needs of children and young persons. The services provided are to whenever possible, be designed to complement the services provided by other agencies. This process will also assist in the allocation of scarce resources and ensure funds and human resources are used most effectively.

All participants in meetings and forums are to be given the opportunity to provide feedback, and assessment of services being offered, and the degree/success of interagency interaction. The Manager and Case Workers are to ensure there are continuing goodwill and an openness to receive external feedback of both a positive and negative (constructive) nature.

Any negative (constructive) feedback or assessments are to be addressed by the Manager and strategies are to be devised to rectify the issue.

Interagency contact will be documented in the child or young person's care file. Interagency contact will occur on a regular basis to support care plan monitoring and review processes and to address any issues as they arise.

Administrative staff will periodically review the information contained on the Interagency Database and will forward new brochures and information packages to other Service Providers. When these mail outs are undertaken, Youth Care UPA will request from other Service Providers any updated information they may have available on:

- the services/programs they provide
- the criteria to be met by service users.

Interagency Co-ordination with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities will include but not limited to:

- Contact with appropriate elders
- Open discussion interagency
- Formal talks

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- Question and answer sessions
- Information about the needs of the local indigenous community.

### Case Plans

The child or young person's case plan will identify:

- any other agencies working the them and
- what their role is in the care of the child or young person
- the name and contact details of the staff responsible
- what information may need to be shared and how this information is to be provided
- the information required needs the child or young person's consent

### Exchanging Information

All relevant information is to be provided to agencies that are participating in the ongoing care of a child or young person. The information provided is to directly relate to the services of the agency as outlined in the case plan. All original documentation must remain in Youth Care UPA's custody.

Records must accurately record the information shared using the 'Release of Information' form Section 1 Administration of the child or young person's care file:

Further records will be maintained of the following:

- Who requested the information
- What the information is to be used for
- The date of the request
- The date the request was complied with
- Copies of electronically transferred information
- A copy of the completed 'Release of Information' form
- All correspondence, which is posted out to other agencies must have PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL clearly on the envelope.
- Any documentation forwarded to other service providers will be subjected to a hierarchy of security processes.
- Emails – will be followed by Confidentiality note:

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- Letters – containing general information or non-identifying data regarding the client or Specialist Authorised Carers will be forwarded via regular post.
- Letters – containing identifying information or personal correspondence of the client will be marked 'FAO' (For the attention of).
- Formal Reports– will be forwarded by Registered Post – no confirmation required.
- Formal Reports may be faxed interagency with a cover sheet marked clearly 'Private and Confidential'.
- Legal Documentation – will be forwarded and will require the receiving agency contact to sign to confirm receipt with confirmation required.

***\*No Legal (Court Orders/Reports etc) documentation is to be faxed from Youth Care UPA.***

- All correspondence will be sealed and recorded in the Mail Out book prior to posting.

### Staff Changes

Any significant change in the role and responsibility or employment status of a staff member will be communicated to relevant agencies.

- Staff changes will result in:
- All relevant agencies being notified in advance (when possible)
- The agency being informed of any effect on services or resources available.

### Service Changes

Change of service provision, whether it is extending or reducing the level of service or programs provided, is to result in all agencies being notified. Notification may take the form of letters, e-mail, fax or informal/formal meetings. The Manager is to ensure all agencies have relevant up to date information, and amended brochures will be forwarded when available.

Where a child or young person currently in our care participates in a newly developed program, agencies sharing care will be notified of an overview of the new program and the degree of participation.

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Referral, Assessment, Case Planning and Review

Refer Section 1 Procedures.

### **Monitoring**

Refer Section 1 procedures.

### **Case Conferences**

A minute taker is to be selected for all case conferences and forums held at Youth Care UPA. These minutes are to accurately record the exchange of information.

### **Government Agencies**

All staff are to maintain open lines of communication with agencies which provide/provided support to our clients.

### **Service Development**

Flexible care options will provide scope for specialist supports and networking which will support any child or young person placed in our care who is from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background. Wherever possible the child or young person and his/her family or relevant stakeholders will be supported by a member of their community and/or community organisations.

Each placement will be viewed on an individual basis and the child or young person's Case Worker and the services manager/s will attempt to establish links to communities and will not allow issues such as location to minimise the level of participation.

### **Schools**

Details of school attended, head teacher and counsellor, are to be contained in the child or young person's initial placement summary, and will be further expanded upon in the Education/Vocation section of the care file.

If a child or young person is supported at school by a teacher's aide, details are to be recorded and the aid is to be provided with the names of the child or young person's Case worker and the Team Leader and/or Program Manager.

When appropriate, meetings are to include the teacher's aide.

Support offered by the school for behaviour problems is to be approved by the Program Manager

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### Housing

All Case Workers are required to be aware of the Department of Housing and community housing application processes and are to refer any young person seeking to live independently to the agency.

Where appropriate Youth Care UPA may provide references for the young person and a letter of introduction.

### Interagency Review

The review of interagency work will be undertaken by the Program Manager in consultation with the Team Leader and Case Workers of Youth Care UPA. The review will assess interagency relations and the effectiveness of case planning processes balanced against if the needs of the child or young person have been met.

**Responsibility:** Manager and Case Workers

### Documents Relating To Policy No: 7.1

Leaving Care:

- Policy 6.1 Planning for Leaving Care to Live Independently
- Policy 6.2 After Care Support
- Policy 7.1 Knowledge of Community Needs & Resources
- Policy 7.3 Service identity, visibility and publicity
- Care Records