

5 Consultation arrangements

5.1 Partnership approach

The Department of Human Services will continue to consult and work collaboratively with more than 1,000 community sector organisations, state government departments and organisations to provide services which support and protect those Victorians most in need.

The Partnership in Practice Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) 2009–12, between the department and the sector represents ongoing commitment to enhancing and strengthening the partnering relationship.

The Human Services Partnership Implementation Committee (HSPIC) is the governance structure which supports implementation of the MoU. HSPIC will focus on strengthening the community services industry and workforce, better integration of services at a policy and operational level and building the capacity of community sector organisations for innovation and growth.

5.2 Consultation

The tables below outline the consultation arrangements in place for the Department of Human Services.

5.3 Consultation groups

5.3.1 Children, Youth and Families

Child protection, placement and family services

Name	Purpose	Membership
Child Protection, Placement and Family Services Strategy Group (CPP&FSSG)	<p>To provide advice on high level issues of significance impacting on the service system to the Child Protection and Family Services Branch:</p> <p>Implementation and embedding the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> reforms.</p> <p>Evaluation of the reforms</p>	Membership includes representatives from: the Child Protection and Family Services Branch, Department of Human Services Regional Offices, the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, community service organisations providing family services and out of home care services, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Foster Care Association of Victoria, CREATE.

Name	Purpose	Membership
	<p>Service coordination</p> <p>Policy development</p> <p>Collaborative planning processes</p> <p>Program development</p> <p>Review of service delivery</p> <p>Implementation of initiatives</p> <p>To communicate catchment and regional issues of statewide and strategic significance with Child Protection and Family Services Branch, and to contribute to the improvement of service integration across child and family services (child protection, family services and out-of-home care).</p> <p>To develop, oversee and monitor iterations of the Family and Placement Sector Development Plan.</p> <p>To assist in the coordination and establishment of working groups on agreed areas of significance and participate or nominate appropriate representatives for working groups as required.</p>	
<p>Child Protection and University Liaison Group</p>	<p>To promote and develop collaborative working relationships between the Child Protection Service and Universities.</p> <p>To promote and advance joint understanding and learning with respect to new and existing child protection practice issues and research.</p> <p>To contribute to the development of the undergraduate social work curriculum and to</p>	<p>Representatives from Universities that offer Social Work and Rural Social Work courses.</p>

Name	Purpose	Membership
	<p>promote development of knowledge and skills required to undertake work in child protection.</p> <p>To promote child protection as a rewarding career.</p>	
<p>Child Protection and TAFE Liaison Group</p>	<p>To promote and develop collaborative working relationships between the Child Protection Service and TAFEs that offer the Diploma of Community Welfare Work.</p> <p>To promote and advance joint understanding and learning with respect to new and existing child protection practice issues and research.</p> <p>To contribute to the development of the undergraduate social work curriculum and to promote development of knowledge and skills required to undertake work in child protection.</p> <p>To promote child protection as a rewarding career.</p>	<p>Representatives from TAFEs that offer the Diploma of Community Welfare Work.</p>
<p>Aboriginal Child and Family Services Network</p>	<p>To provide advice to the department, through the Director, on any matter affecting the provision of child and family services to Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>To promote partnerships between Aboriginal organisations, Regional offices, and Child Protection, Placement and Family Services Branch staff by providing opportunities for information exchange and the exchange of views.</p> <p>To enable departmental staff to report to, and receive high-level advice from, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations on matters relevant to the</p>	<p>Those eligible to be members are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director, Child Protection, Placement and Family Services Branch, Department of Human Services (Chair) • CEOs of registered Aboriginal organisations providing child and family services or their delegates at a senior level in the organisation. • Department of Human Services regional community care managers (or equivalent) or their delegate, (regional child protection managers, regional managers of out of home care and family services, regional managers of Partnerships Program) • Aboriginal Children and Families Unit (ACFU), DHS (Secretariat)

Name	Purpose	Membership
	<p>development, implementation and operations of children and family services funded by the Department of Human Services.</p> <p>To discuss and analyse a range of data sourced from both the department and ACCO data collections concerning the need for, provision of and outcomes of relevant services.</p> <p>To receive reports on the activities of sub committees and to provide advice and guidance to those sub committees.</p> <p>To provide opportunities for members to network and provide each other with support and advice.</p> <p>To receive reports on and discuss developments in Aboriginal Affairs arising from other forums, such as the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs, the Council Of Australian Governments and the Aboriginal Human Services Forum.</p> <p>To provide high level advice on the implementation of the Aboriginal Child and Family Service Capacity Building Project.</p> <p>To determine the most effective use of the \$500,000 in capacity building funds held in trust for the Network by VACCA.</p> <p>To record agreements and recommendations made by the Network and any subsequent actions.</p>	
Section 18 Implementation Working Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The functions of the group are to: • provide advice and input into the development of section 18 policies, procedures and models • provide feedback from stakeholders in relation to section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO and Capacity Coordinator, Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative • CEO and Manager, Children Youth and Family Services Unit, Gippsland East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative • CEO and Manager, Family Services, Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative • CEO and Manager, New Initiatives, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency • Director Child Protection, Placement and Family Services

Name	Purpose	Membership
	<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster a partnership approach utilising existing networks to support key stakeholder and Aboriginal community input • provide advice on service issues relating to Aboriginal children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager, Child Protection Policy and Practice Unit • Manager, Aboriginal Children and Families Unit • Senior Program Advisor, Aboriginal Children and Families Unit • Regional Placement and Support Manager • Regional Child Protection Manager • Representatives from Gippsland, Hume, Loddon Mallee and North and West Metropolitan regions. • Solicitor, Legal Services Branch

Youth services and youth justice

Name	Purpose	Membership
Juvenile Justice Ministerial Roundtable	Forum for key stakeholders to discuss issues with Minister and to be briefed on relevant government policy.	37 organisations and individuals including Supreme, County, Magistrates' and Family Courts, Youth for Christ, Care and Community Concern, Catholic Social Services, Jesuit Social Services, Youth Substance Abuse Service, Darebin Community Legal Centre, Melbourne University, La Trobe University, Deakin University.
Aboriginal Justice Forums (Hosted by Department of Justice)	<p>To build partnership approach between the Victorian Government and the Aboriginal community.</p> <p>To meet with community representatives and report/receive feedback on Indigenous specific justice issues.</p>	<p>Senior representatives of Government agencies, including Secretary, DOJ, Under-Secretary, DHS, Correctional Services Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Director, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, President Children's Court, Chief Magistrate.</p> <p>Community members, including Chairperson Victorian Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Chairpersons of Regional Aboriginal Justice Agreement Committees, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Services, and Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service.</p>
Group Conferencing Statewide Advisory Committee	Forum to discuss and provide feedback on issues related to the Juvenile Justice Group Conferencing Program.	The President of the Children's Court and a magistrate of the Children's Court, Victoria Police, Legal Aid, Youth Substance Abuse Services, Aboriginal Legal Service, Jesuit Social Services, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services, representatives from Department of Human Services.
School Focused Youth Service Statewide Advisory Group	To inform and participate in broad policy/program development and implementation.	DE&T, Catholic Education Office, Association of Independent Schools Victoria, service providers, SFYS coordinator, Department of Human Services and DE&T regional adviser.

Name	Purpose	Membership
Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Branch Advisory Group	To provide expert advice, knowledge, and information to support the work of the Department of Human Services Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Branch to improve outcomes for vulnerable/at risk young people so that they can achieve their potential.	Government and CSOs including Office for Youth, Department of Education & Training, Victoria Police, Department of Justice, YACVIC, Centre for Adolescent Health, Centre for Multi-Cultural Youth, Youth Research Centre, University of Melbourne, Department of Criminology, Monash University

Program and sector support

Name	Purpose	Membership
CSO Registration Project Steering Committee	The role of this committee, in part, is to oversee the external review process and to make decisions about matters related to the implementation of CSO registration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernie Geary Child Safety Commissioner, • Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare • Director, Program and Sector Support (Chair), • Director Child Protection, Placement and Family Services, • Assistant Director Placement and Support Services, • Manager, Family Services, • Two representatives from Regional Management (Community Care Manager or Manager of Children, Youth and Families • Representative of the ACCOs (yet to be nominated)
CSO Registration Quality Reference Group	The purpose of the Quality Reference Group is to provide input and advice into the processes involved in the registration of service providers under the Children, Youth and Families Act, as well as to receive information about the registration processes. The group is also an avenue for disseminating information about registration to members.	Membership of the Quality Reference Group will consist of a standing representative of one or more senior management representatives from the following: Community service organisations (CSO) representatives, inclusive of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Agency, out of home care and community-based child and family service providers Office of the Child Safety Commissioner The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Department of Human Services family services, placement and support services and child protection representatives (including at least one regional quality enhancement officer) Program and sector support staff.

5.3.2 Empowering Individuals and Communities

Office of Women's Policy

Name	Purpose	Membership
Victorian Integrated Family Violence Reforms	The aim of the integrated family violence reforms is to improve the safety of women and children and increase the accountability of perpetrators, through strengthening the integrated response across the police, family violence and justice service systems.	<p>The Office of Women's Policy provides strategic support and coordination for the reform governance and advisory mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Family Violence Interdepartmental Committee (the IDC), is the whole of government committee that oversees and monitors family violence reform. The IDC comprises the Departments of Human Services, Justice, Planning and Community Development (Aboriginal Affairs), Health, Education and Early Childhood Development and Victoria Police. • The Family Violence Statewide Advisory Committee is the key advisory body that provides advice to government in family violence policy and practice reform. It comprises key government and non-government stakeholders, including the peak and statewide services, legal services, the courts, and regional representatives.

Office for Disability - Disability Advocacy Program

Name	Purpose	Membership
Disability Advocacy Program Forums	<p>To promote the partnership between the disability advocacy sector and the Office for Disability.</p> <p>To advance sector development and build on the existing collaborative working relationship with the Office for Disability.</p>	Representatives from the Victorian and Commonwealth funded disability advocacy and self-advocacy sectors.

5.3.3 Disability Services

Name	Purpose	Membership (in addition to DHS)
Direct Employment Consultants Group	To provide strategic advice and direction, provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and contribute to the development of direct employment, including to trial direct employment	Individuals with a disability and consumers of disability services, and representatives from trial regions
Central Consultative Committee	Department of Human Services and Health and Community Services Union consultative forum	Selected Department of Human Services and Health and Community Services Union representatives
Central Training Consultative Implementation Committee	To monitor and advise on the implementation of the learning and development aspects of the Department of Human Services Disability Collective Agreement	HACSU central and regional representatives
Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Committee	To provide advice and strategic direction and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas	Advocacy agencies, education providers, disability service providers, early intervention services and a person with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Aids and Equipment External Advisory Group	To provide expert advice and guidance in relation to the aids and equipment program	Advocacy agencies, the Royal District Nursing Service, National Disability Services Victoria, Occupational Therapy Australia, VCOSS, Victorian Healthcare Association, SCOPE Victoria, Yooralla
Disability Services Research Reference Panel	To advise on the priorities in relation to disability research, to identify research funding opportunities, and to provide a forum for feedback and dissemination of research findings	Academia, National Disability Services Victoria, Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with a Disability, Yooralla, SCOPE Victoria, Jewish Care, Office of the Public Advocate
Statewide Partnerships for Positive Solutions Forum	To examine statewide trends and issues surrounding the use of restrictive interventions and compulsory treatment practices and provide advice on identified issues.	Public Advocate and State Manager, National Disability Services Victoria

5.3.4 Housing and Community Building

Homelessness assistance

Project/policy initiative	Description	Project status	Target audience	Method	Opening date	Closing date	Project contact	Phone	Email

Project/policy initiative	Description	Project status	Target audience	Method	Opening date	Closing date	Project contact	Phone	Email
Accreditation process for case-management support providers	All homelessness assistance, family violence and other housing support services need to be accredited as a condition of ongoing funding using the Victorian Homelessness Assistance Services Standards (HASS) as the basis of the accreditation system. The system is based on the Homelessness Assistance Service Standards (HASS). Organisations are required to have completed their external review by December 2009. Indigenous managed organisations are required to complete their external review by June 2010.	Current	Homelessness Assistance Organisations (including Transitional Housing managers), family violence organisations, Social Housing Advocacy & Support Providers, statewide peaks and advocacy services	External accreditation based on HASS is managed by QICSA, the nominated accreditation provider.	1-Jul-06	30-June-10	Sandy Milne	9096 8860	sandy.milne@dhs.vic.gov.au
Victorian Homelessness Data Collection	Integrated data collection for all Housing and Community Building homelessness programs—HSS, THM and HEF. The pilot phase has been completed. VHDC implemented as at 1 July 2008.	Current	HSS, THM and HEF funded services	Monitor delivery of reports and develop annual report template.	1-Oct-06	Ongoing	Yvonne James	9096 1263	yvonne.james@dhs.vic.gov.au
Opening Doors Framework	Common assessment, referral and resource allocation processes in all Housing and Community Building homelessness programs—HSS, THM and HEF.	Current	HSS, THM and HEF funded services	Pilot for six months beginning in October 2006 at five pilot sites. There will also be: network meetings; website information and two sector forums in early 2007.	2005	2010	Peter Lake	9096 9794	peter.lake@dhs.vic.gov.au
Homelessness Assistance Funding Model	An integrated model for all Housing and Community Building program funding including unit pricing, performance measures and service activity descriptions.	Current	HSS, THM and HEF funded services	Validating the model with a small number of funded services. Information sessions for funded services and DHS regions. Meeting with peak organisations.	01-Jul-09	01-Jun-13	Peter Lake	9096 9794	peter.lake@dhs.vic.gov.au

Project/policy initiative	Description	Project status	Target audience	Method	Opening date	Closing date	Project contact	Phone	Email
Sector Development Strategy	The Sector Development Strategy will build on the outcomes of the workforce survey and incorporate a range of sector capacity building initiatives to support the implementation of a range of new initiatives. A key initial project is the professional learning & development strategy. Consultation will occur with the community-managed housing, homelessness assistance and family violence sectors and the three peak organisations.	Current	Community managed Housing, Homelessness Assistance and Family Violence sectors	Consultation with peak organisations and a joint project management group. Development of the Strategy to be undertaken in collaboration with peaks and sector.	1 Jan 09	31 Dec 10	Sandy Milne	9096 8860	sandy.milne@dhs.vic.gov.au
Prison Exit Housing Pathways – Link Out	The Department of Justice has reviewed all post-release support programs to realign as needed. Implementation of the Link Out program in 2008/09.	Current	Services providing support to people leaving prison	The Department of Justice undertook this review with HCB input.	1-Apr-06	Ongoing	Peter Lake	9096 9794	peter.lake@dhs.vic.gov.au
Youth Justice	An agreed process to consider options for the future of the program, drawing on the findings of the evaluation. Support service has been restructured. HCB role in this project is ongoing.	Current	Programs funded under this initiative	Process has been agreed.	Late 2006	Ongoing	Jac Nancarrow	9096 8693	jac.nancarrow@dhs.vic.gov.au
Family Violence Communication and Change Management Strategy	Discussions with the sector to ensure that the state-wide implementation of the Integrated Family Violence Strategy is in line with Whole of Government directions.	Current	Family Violence support services Regions	Regional and Sector forums. Stakeholder advisory group.	1-Jun-06	Ongoing	Dianne Godfrey	9096 8944	dianne.godfrey@dhs.vic.gov.au
Family Violence Risk Assessment Framework	Develop and implement an Integrated Family Violence Risk Assessment Framework.	Current	Family Violence support services Regions	Regional forums.	1-Jun-06	Ongoing	Dianne Godfrey	9096 8944	dianne.godfrey@dhs.vic.gov.au
Youth Homelessness Action Plan, Future Directions	This report will outline longer-term strategic directions for the youth homelessness service sector. Directions from the report will	Current	Programs and initiatives working with homeless young people (15-25)	Consultation with the Youth Homelessness Advisory Group (comprising sector representation).	Mid-late 2005	Ongoing	Jac Nancarrow	9096 8693	jac.nancarrow@dhs.vic.gov.au

Project/policy initiative	Description	Project status	Target audience	Method	Opening date	Closing date	Project contact	Phone	Email
	contribute to implementation of services through NP on Homelessness.			Further consultation with Commonwealth Government and State Government on the draft report.					
Implementation of the National Partnership Agreement – Homelessness	Development and implementation of new service responses across all regions.	Current	All homelessness service responses	Consultations and meetings with key stakeholders throughout 2009-10.	1-Jul-09	30-Jun-13	Peter Lake	9096 9794	peter.lake@dhs.vic.gov.au

Housing assistance

Project/policy initiative	Description	Project status	Target audience	Method	Opening date	Closing date	Project contact	Phone	Email
Implementation of the National Partnership Agreement – Remote Indigenous Housing	Transition of Indigenous Community Housing Organisations (ICHOs) to the Victorian framework via registration as a housing agency, partnership with a registered housing agency or accreditation.	Current	ICHOs staff, ICHO tenant and communities, registered housing agencies.	Consultations and meeting	1-Jul-09	Ongoing	Rob Armstrong	9096 7219	robarmstrong@dhs.vic.gov.au
SfHRT Support for High Risk Tenancies	A review of the program to assist decision making on future development of the program in sustaining tenancies...	Current.	DHS divisions, regions and community service organisations. .	An external consultant will be appointed to consult directly with stakeholders.	June 2011	Sept 2011	Richard Kean	9096 9927	richard.kean@dhs.vic.gov.au
Neighbourhood Renewal	Neighbourhood Renewal is a long-term community building project funded by the Victorian Government to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged communities and the rest of the state.	Current	The initiative engages a range of stakeholders including all levels of government, community organisations, health services, local businesses and philanthropic trusts and local residents.	Ongoing liaison with community stakeholders. Residents are encouraged to participate in community governance structures.	2001–02	Projects are funded for up to eight years	Harald Klein	9096 8283	harald.klein@dhs.vic.gov.au

5.3.2 Concessions

Name	Purpose	Membership
Emergency Relief State Advisory Committee (SAC) for Department of Family and Community Services (FaHCSIA)	To assist the Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) in each state/territory office, and to ensure that decisions taken in respect of the programme have appropriate regard to the views of the community sector, to provide advice on emergency relief program policies, procedures and operations.	DHS Concessions Policy Unit, VicRelief Foodbank, Travellers Aid, Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS), The Salvation Army, Civic, St Vincent De Paul, Centrelink, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Immigration and Citizenship.
Emergency Relief Victoria Network (ERVN)	Network group representing the interests and needs of emergency relief community service organisations in Victoria, and provides opportunity to discuss and progress issues.	DHS Concessions Policy Unit, VicRelief Foodbank, VCOSS, The Salvation Army, Civic, St Vincent De Paul, Uniting Care.