

An invitation from the Secretary

The Social Policy Statement, *A Fairer Victoria*, nominates making it easier to work with government as a priority area for action. Much has already been achieved through the partnership process and the three-year funding cycle. However, there is more to be done.

Some service providers have told us that they have plans of how they could deliver better services to clients if they were able to negotiate more flexible use of DHS funds. Providers who have a proposal of how they would like to use DHS funds flexibly are invited to contact their regional office to discuss their plans so that agreed flexible arrangements can be formalised in the 2006-09 service agreement.

Other providers have told us informally that they are already using their DHS funding flexibly to create integrated services. The Department wants to acknowledge this work and invites those who are presently using DHS funds flexibly to make contact with their regional DHS office to discuss and formalise a flexible arrangement.

There is a large body of work underway within the department, including the Client Services Model and Healthsmart, that will improve business processes between the sector and the Department. In addition to these larger projects, within and across DHS divisions and programs, work continues on initiatives to simplify and improve DHS business practice. Changes that will occur as a result of the introduction of flexible funding will inform other strategic projects, such as the Ambulatory Care Framework. Into the future, these multiple initiatives will accrue business benefits to providers and, more importantly, service benefits to clients.

I invite service providers to contact your local regional office to discuss your planned or current flexible use of DHS funds. If you would like further information about Flexible Funding go to: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/flexiblefunding/index.htm

P M Faulkner
Secretary