



Time Out

President's Report

In January this year OCCA wrote to the governing bodies in each state regarding their views on out of scope services, as occasional care services in Western Australia are considered in scope. I have summarised each state's reply. In short each service is considered individually to determine whether or not they operate in line with the National Law section 5 and National Regulations, regulation 5 (c) a service providing education and care to children primarily on an ad hoc or casual basis where – (i) the service does not usually offer full-time or all day education and care to children on an ongoing basis; and (ii) most of the children provided with education and care are preschool age or under. If you are unsure whether your service should operate as an inscope service, contact your state regulatory authority.

Here is the summary of responses from each state:

Education & Communities Office of Education, Early Childhood Education and Care NSW Government

"...there may be some services referring to themselves as 'occasional care' services that are not excluded under the National Regulations. For example, a service that operates for 8 hours a day, 3 days a week, might call itself an occasional care service, but if that service usually provides education and care to a number of children on a regular, ongoing basis, it may actually be within the scope of the National Quality Framework.the Department relies on services identifying as occasional care to typically cater for ad hoc attendance patterns. Services need to self-determine whether they fall within the 'occasional care' exemption and to contact the Department if unsure."

Education and Early Childhood Services, Government of South Australia

"...services will need to be considered individually according to how they function to determine how they will be regulated. Some occasional care services have been issued with a service approval as a residual service under the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Act 2011. Others are integrated with services regulated under the National Law."

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, State Government, Victoria

"The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law)(section 5(2)(q)) also specifies that Victorian children services operating as a limited hours or short term service under the Children's Services Act 1996 are excluded from National Quality Framework. Prior to the introduction of the National Quality Framework, DEECD wrote to all occasional care services operating under a standard licence to confirm their model of operation. This information was used to determine the services meeting the definition of an education and care service under the National Law that should transition to the National Quality Framework."

Early Childhood Education and Care Department of Education, Training and Employment Queensland Government

"Because of the diversity of the occasional care sector, there may be some services that refer to themselves as an 'occasional care' service that are not excluded under the above provision. The determination of whether a particular service is in or out of scope of the NQF therefore depends in some cases on the model of service provision, taking into consideration information about children's attendance patterns and how the service is promoted to families. authorised officers made a determination on a case by case basis regarding whether or not each service met the above definition of occasional care.....if their service delivery model changes, this may result in their status under the NQF being reconsidered."



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A meeting is scheduled for 2 July 2013 to, “progress the development of regulations for **residual early childhood services in South Australia.**” A representative from Mt. Barker Family House Occasional Care is attending that meeting on behalf of OCCA.

On 18-19 March 2013 Carla Yeates (Secretary OCCA) and I attended **the National Children’s Services Forum (NCSF) in Canberra.** The NCSF is a collaborative forum of major peak national bodies for the children’s services sector. The NCSF was established in 1995 to provide a forum where the children’s services sector could discuss issues of common concern and act as an advocate. One of our advocacy priorities was to increase awareness of the unique service that occasional care centres provide and ask for increased support for these services. Over those two days the ministers were made more aware of occasional care services throughout Australia.

The new Working With Children Check came into effect in New South Wales on 15 June 2013. For educators or volunteers who are already working in an Early Education and Care Service and who commenced prior to 15 June 2013 the phase in period is 1 January – 31 December 2017. If you commence after the 15 June 2013 you are required to complete the new Check prior to commencement. The new Check is valid for 5 years and costs \$80 for paid employees and is free for volunteers. The new Check applies to everyone in child-related work, both paid employees and volunteers who have direct contact with children. Employees or volunteers who have only incidental contact, ie bookkeepers, are not required to complete the Check. Further information on the Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 and Child Protection (Working With Children) Regulation 2013 is available from the Commission for Children and Young People’s website at www.newcheck.kids.nsw.gov.au

Just a reminder that the **Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Regulation 2012**, relating to asthma, anaphylaxis and first aid, comes into effect September 2013. At least one person, who has completed an approved asthma, anaphylaxis and current first aid course, has to be present on the premises at all times when children are provided with care.

In May 2013 we received a letter from the Office of the Hon Kate Ellis MP informing us that we were unsuccessful in obtaining funding to support the Occasional Child Care Conference. New submissions will be taken from 1 July 2013 and we will be resubmitting the application to enable us to hold a Conference in Sydney in 2014.

Jennine Blackburn
President

2012-2013 - OCCA Management Committee

OCCA’s Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 9 April 2013 at Wombat Occasional Childcare Inc. in Miranda.

Photo can be found on the website.

OCCA is looking for representative from each state to attend state meetings and voice your states issues. If you think this is you or you would like to be more involved please contact us at occa@occasional-child-care.com.au



Time Out

Reference and Forums Updates

Occasional Child Care Australia, as a peak body, is represented in the National Reference Group for the Hunter Institute of Mental Health. Carla, our secretary, attends the reference group meetings to ensure that the unique needs and service delivery of occasional care are known and the resources produced can be readily integrated into our services.

This project is an initiative of the **Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)**. The project aims to build the capacity of the ECEC workforce to support children's mental health and wellbeing.

This project centres on the development of a resource or toolkit for the ECEC sector, to be distributed throughout Australia late in 2013. It will focus on promoting mental health and wellbeing for all children and supporting those who may have additional needs.

The objectives of this resource will be to:

- Promote understanding and a shared language within the ECEC workforce in relation to children's mental health and related concepts;
- Promote an awareness of workforce knowledge, skills and values which are associated with positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes for children;
- Recognise mental health as part of the broader focus on quality service provision, by linking concepts with the National Quality Framework and other relevant documents.

National Children's Service Forum

Every three months OCCA joins other peak bodies from across Australia in a two day forum discussing important issues to all peaks, and meet with DEEWR and other government bodies in receiving updates with the Early childhood sector, this forum is chaired by ECA. If you would like more information please contact OCCA

NSW Children's Forum

This is a forum that meet to discuss issues within NSW with peak bodies, this is another great chance for OCCA to be heard and voice our issues and concerns. Each state holds these meeting every three months if you would like to being involved with your states forums please contact OCCA



Time Out

Funding for councils to open new education and care services

The Australian Government has announced a new fund which could enable local councils to open new community based education and care services.

Although the total \$\$\$ in the new **Child Care Accessibility Fund** is only \$5 million and each council is restricted to a \$250,000 grant, local councils could use this money to start new services or expand existing services that they already operate.

In announcing the fund Minister Ellis said "We invite councils whose communities face a lack of child care places to apply for funding and I look forward to seeing some great ideas to improve child care options in their area."

Examples of possible ways local governments could use the funding include:

- Partnering with businesses or community organisations to build new child care centres.
- Extending or modifying new or existing centres, to provide more child care places.
- Removing child care planning and development red tape.
- Streamlining approval processes.
- Extending child care opening hours.
- Collaborating with State Governments to free up Crown land or better access under-utilised capacity at existing sites (e.g. schools).

Applications close on 2nd August

[For more information and to apply, click here.](#)

Taken from Community Child Care Co-operative NSW

Occasional Child Care Australia has a NEW Website

OCCA members will be receiving an email shortly with log in member details; this will allow services to access resources and other information. Please email us if there is something you and your service would like to see on the website....

We'd loved to hear from you contact us at occa@occasional-child-care.com.au