

Expert Advisory Group

Information Paper, 13th April 2015

An expert advisory group has been established to support and offer guidance throughout the life of the project to develop a trauma-informed therapeutic framework for residential care of children and young people. This group will meet twice during the course of the project and members may also be called upon individually for advice. Members of the group will be invited to provide feedback and comment on drafted versions of the interim report due in June 2015 and the final report due by the end of July 2015.

Members of the expert advisory group are listed below:



Rachel Atkinson - Rachel's early professional background was in social work, child protection and youth justice. For the past seven years she has been General Manager of the Palm Island Community Company (PICC), a not-for-profit organisation delivering a range of human services on Palm Island. In 2013 PICC opened the Children & Family Centre providing holistic primary health care and early childhood education to the community of Palm Island. For ten years prior, Rachel was the Chief Executive Officer of the Townsville Aboriginal and Islanders Health Services (TAIHS) Limited, an Aboriginal community controlled medical service. This provided her with extensive experience in overseeing and collaborating on health research projects, working with a multi-disciplinary team, mentoring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health staff, and liaison and capacity building with Indigenous communities represented throughout the community controlled health sector. Rachel is a past President of the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) and former Chair of the Partnership for Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Child Safety. She was instrumental in the formation of the Australian SIDS and Kids Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee and has been a member of the national executive of the Australian National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), Chair and director of the Queensland Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Partnership, and has also sat on a number of health advisory committees including some established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) for purposes of setting national health priorities.



Howard Bath has recently left his position as Northern Territory Children's Commissioner to which he was appointed in June 2008. Howard has studied and worked in both Australia and the USA and has worked as a youth worker, manager, agency director and clinician. He was the inaugural Chair of the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia.

Howard has presented widely at conferences and training seminars and has authored numerous research reports and articles on topics including family preservation services, out-of-home care, behaviour management and child protection. From 1999 to 2008 he was Director of the Thomas Wright Institute in Canberra which provided a range of consultancy, training and clinical services for organisations working with young clients who have complex needs and challenging behaviours. His particular clinical interests have included work with young people who have experienced developmental trauma, problems around aggression and sexuality, and developmental disorders such as autism. He has had a long-standing interest in and involvement in services for children in care and protection, youth justice and disability services.



Toni Cash is a social worker who graduated from the University of Queensland in 1986. She has worked for over 25 years in the area of child and family welfare, primarily in the area of statutory child protection.

Toni has extensive experience in a range of positions within the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSD) including both practice and policy positions. Toni also has experience working in the non-government sector, particularly as the Programs Manager of Alternative Care for Save the Children in Queensland. Her programs included two residential services for young women in care of the state, a Supported Independent Living Program and the Outreach Oncall Service and leadership of the Wynnum Redlands Integrated Care and Support Initiative - an integrated partnership between non-government organisations and Child Safety Service Centres.

Toni is now the Manager of Complex Case Advice and Practice Support (CCAPS), a specialist service located within Practice Leadership Unit of the Department. Toni has a long held interest in and experience in the specialty area of sexual abuse and brings to the advisory group extensive experience in conducting investigations and assessments, counselling and therapeutic interventions and court and tribunal processes.

Toni has a passion for professional development and reflective practice and integrated partnership in the area of child protection. This is demonstrated in a number of initiatives currently undertaken by CCAPS including the Community of Practice in the Torres Strait Islands.



Michael Dawbney is a Child, Adolescent and Adult Psychiatrist. He is the current Chair of the binational Committee Section of Psychotherapy (RANZCP), Queensland President of the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health (Inc.), an Accredited Mentalization Based Therapy supervisor with the Anna Freud Centre and is undertaking a Higher Research Degree at Griffith University developing an instrument assessing social emotional development in 3 year olds.

Currently Michael is a senior Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist in the Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service and Medical Director Specialist Teams CHQ HHS CYMHS. In the past he has been Clinical Director Child/ Adolescent Psychiatry Logan/Beaudesert HSD and Metro South HSD. He is a member of a number of State Committees including Infant/Perinatal and Early Psychosis and a member of the Advisory Committee for the Qld

Schizophrenia Research Foundation. Presentations at International, State and National Conferences reflect his clinical subspecialties including Infant Mental Health, Child and Parent Trauma, Psychotherapy, Risk Assessment and Management, Psychodynamics and Adolescent Inpatient Units. He is the past District 9600 Chairman for Australian Rotary Health.



Laurel Downey is the Chief Executive Officer and Clinical Consultant for Catalyst child and family services which provides therapeutic residential care programs and clinical services, in far north Queensland. Laurel has been a mental health clinician and family therapist for 30 years, and has specialised in child trauma and attachment issues in the non-government, community and child and adolescent mental health systems. Before relocating to Far North Queensland, Laurel spent five years as the Manager of Practice Development and Training with Take Two, a Berry Street program which provides a mental health service to children in the care of the Victorian Department of Child Protection.

Laurel has extensive experience in the development of practice frameworks as well as training for the child protection and placement sectors, including Indigenous placement organisations. Laurel is currently engaged in a PhD looking at therapeutic residential care.

Laurel is the author of a series of resources published by the Victorian Office of the Child Safety Commissioner, including 'Calmer Classrooms: A guide to working with traumatised children', 'Caring Classrooms: A guide to understanding traumatised children and young people—for parents and the school community', 'From Isolation to Connection: Understanding and working with traumatised children and young people', and 'Residential Care Matters', as well as co-author of 'Yarning up on trauma', a Berry Street publication.



Lisa Hillan is a Social Worker with over 20 years' experience working with vulnerable communities in program design and delivery. She has been the Chair of the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia, Chair of the Child Protection Committee in Queensland and in 2006 Lisa completed a Churchill fellowship to study effective models of residential care and published a report entitled 'Reclaiming residential care – a positive choice for children and young people'.

For over 10 years, Lisa worked in Queensland and the Northern Territory in partnership with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to build their children and families sector.

Since 2010 Lisa has been Programs Director at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation. Lisa is responsible for supporting the development of healing and training

initiatives with a culturally strong program design creating positive change to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Noeleen Lopes is a Ghungalu woman and Chief Executive Officer of Gallang Place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation. She also serves as a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation's Board.

Noeleen graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Queensland in 1991, and has recently registered as an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker. Soon after graduating in 1991, Noeleen went on to establish Gallang Place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation in 1994.

Gallang Place was established to address intergenerational grief and trauma by providing counselling and support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Gallang Place is a trauma informed organisation, and accredited under the (Quality Improvement Council) QIC Standards.

Gallang Place recently became a Registered Training Organisation for Certificate IV in Mental Health and Diploma of Counselling. Gallang Place delivers training using Narrative Therapy approach, helping to build the capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Health and Wellbeing sector.



Lucas Moore is the Queensland coordinator for the CREATE Foundation, where he has spent the last seven years consulting and engaging with children and young people around their experiences of the care system.

CREATE is the national peak consumer body representing the voices of children and young people in care and in recent years has become well known for its targeted advocacy about the need for young people transitioning from care to independence to be provide the same opportunities as other young Australians.

Lucas believes the opinions held by children and young people provide a crucial contribution to the design and delivery any services and feels privileged to have worked with so many courageous individuals who wish to speak up about their experiences.



Gregory Nicolau is a Melbourne based Consultant Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Family Therapist and Supervisor with 32 years experience working with the most marginalised and vulnerable infants, children, young people and families in our community.

He is the founder and current Chief Executive Officer and lead Consultant Psychologist of the Australian Childhood Trauma Group, an organisation which specialises in childhood trauma and attachment and provides therapeutic programs and support services to government and non-government agencies, schools, individuals and families. He provides training and consultations throughout Australia and New Zealand. Gregory has an emphasis on helping workers and carers develop a reflective practice model promoting behaviour change.

Gregory is also the founder and chairperson of *Random Acts of Kindness* and is currently writing his first book 'Who Cares, Wins'.



Ian Nussey is a Psychologist based in south-east Queensland who has been providing therapy and development processes for individuals, families, groups and organisations since 1990, in educational facilities and in fulltime private practice since 2003.

Ian specialises in working with children, young people, their families or carers, and organisations providing out-of-home care services in either youth justice or child protection contexts. Specific issues that have become a focus of his practice include developmental trauma and attachment disorders, substance misuse, sexual abuse, problem/abusive sexual behaviours, areas of youth offending (including violent and sexual) and family reunifications after significant trauma (including abuse).

Ian frequently provides evidence based risk assessments for child protection and youth justice departments in Queensland and New South Wales, and is regularly engaged in delivering training and staff development on a consultancy basis for non-government organisations in relation to matters such as child and adolescent development, sexual development, problem/abusive sexual behaviour, development of delinquency and violence, substance misuse, suicide and working therapeutically with young people in residential care.



Sandy Wilson (PHD, MSW(Research), BSW (Hons), Grad Cert Management) has close to 30 years of experience in the child protection and youth justice areas in a range of roles including practitioner, team leader, manager, trainer, researcher and executive.

She has published papers in the areas of human service management and service delivery and was a co-author of the tertiary text book *Good Practice in Child Protection* (2007).

Sandy is currently in the role of Director - Quality Practice and Support Team within the North Coast Region of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.