

Independent Report of the Review of Child Deaths at Munno Para and Craigmore

Recommendations

1. If there is concern whether referrals from DCP to another agency include a responsibility to provide child protection services as required by the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, this should be clarified by legal opinion and amendment of the legislation sought accordingly.
2. The practices within the [REDACTED] Child Protection Office should be examined to determine whether they were undertaken correctly and appropriately in all matters [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
3. That the culture of the DCP is thoroughly examined and action taken where necessary to ensure a constructive and supportive culture is established.
4. The ODA profiling report is provided to DCP and DHS to jointly consider whether any cases in the identified group require urgent attention.

As the Review cannot anticipate how the Government might respond to the proposal to form a task force on child neglect, some more specific recommendations have also been provided. If a task force is established as recommended, these recommendations may be referred to the task force for attention.

5. The criminal law is reviewed to provide a contemporary standard for the neglect of children and young people and criminal offences aligned with community expectations, including not having any unnecessary impediments to prosecution.
6. Section 35 of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 is reviewed to determine whether there are any unnecessary restrictions on medical treatment in "non-urgent" cases.
7. The Early Intervention Research Directorate undertakes research into whether multiple notifications of child neglect or abuse, including those below the intake threshold, could identify neglect cases which warrant a response.
8. The Early Intervention Research Directorate undertakes research into opportunities to intervene early in neglect cases, including through health services.
9. That training and professional development programs for all staff involved in child protection includes instilling a greater awareness of the risk of harm through neglect and squalor, measures available to obtain an appropriate understanding and awareness of the risk in particular cases, and suitable responses to those risks.
10. There is a greater emphasis in practice directions and operating procedures for child protection agencies on understanding the effects of squalor, measures to obtain suitable

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information on the risks to children and young people exposed to squalor, including whether there are any underlying medical conditions, and actions to effectively deal with these situations.

11. In dealing with squalor in child protection matters, consideration is given to the use of the provisions for court orders to require a carer with a medical, emotional or psychological condition to undergo suitable treatment.
12. The availability of and demand for services to provide child medical examinations and assessments of parenting capacity be examined, including the need to coordinate the delivery of those services.
13. The need to expand CaFHS services be more broadly considered.
14. A task force on child neglect be established for the purpose and on the basis set out in the text above.

15. The suitability of the threshold description for mandated notifiers be examined in the review of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017.
16. The DCP process for allocating notifications for investigation, referral or not proceeding be reviewed to ensure higher risk of harm matters receive priority attention, referrals are matched in a timely and informed way to appropriate services (this should include consideration of a triaging process) and there is an accountable system.
17. All open cases for both the DCP and DHS are reviewed in an ongoing way for changes in risk and priority.
18. The Government considers its policy position on the closure of low-risk notifications in a managed way.
19. The requirement for reporting data on section 32 of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 be examined as part of the review of this legislation.
20. The Early Intervention Research Directorate conducts research using screened-out and closed screened-in notifications to develop processes to identify and monitor at-risk children and families, including options for early intervention.

21. A multi-disciplinary model be developed for DHS and DCP to apply to all high risk cases being managed by DHS with intensive family services, taking into account the model suggested in this Review.
22. In the absence of a multi-disciplinary model, escalation arrangements be developed for high risk cases being managed by DHS with intensive family services which need to be referred to DCP.
23. Consideration be given to applying any of the multi-disciplinary and escalation arrangements developed for use between DHS and DCP, to any other agencies/organisations delivering services to high risk cases, including those with children or young people at imminent risk of removal.

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24. Consideration be given to developing arrangements for greater flexibility in allocating resources to cases between DCP Child Protection Offices.

25. A review be undertaken of the efficiency and effectiveness of work practices, staffing levels and related resources in the Child Protection Offices and funding be provided to enable a reasonable match with the demand for child protection services.

26. If additional funding is provided, consideration be given to the offices servicing the northern metropolitan areas of Adelaide as a priority.

27. SAPOL reviews the manner in which it accepts and responds to requests for 'welfare checks' to provide a more structured approach.

28. DCP has a suitable information technology system to support the effective and efficient management of child protection reports, cases and policy, which is made available as recommended in the Nyland Royal Commission, and is planned for as a priority.

29. The Interagency Code of Practice be reviewed to determine which organisations it applies to and how the contents of the code can be incorporated into their responsibilities and operations.

30. The areas raised in this section for possible multi-agency arrangements be considered.

31. The Government establishes an arrangement which is able to direct, oversee and monitor the efficient and effective implementation of accepted recommendations.