



Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Government of South Australia
2019 Annual Report

Safe and well

Supporting families, protecting children



Government of
South Australia



Readers are asked to note that references in this report to Aboriginal children, families and communities refer to people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Department for Child Protection
31 Flinders Street
Adelaide, SA 5000

For enquiries, please email CPreform@sa.gov.au

ISBN 978-0-6486953-3-2

Contents

Foreword	4
Responding to the Royal Commission	6
Overview	6
The South Australian response	6
Supporting	7
A family-centred approach to universal services	7
Information-sharing for informed decision-making	7
Protecting	8
Coordinated notification responses	8
Needs-based care and protection	8
Environments that keep children safe	9
Responding to perpetrators of child sexual abuse	10
Investing	11
A therapeutic approach to specialised needs	11
Support for survivors of abuse	11
Hearing from children and young people	12
Cultural connection and identity	12
A strong system	13
Growing a skilled and stable workforce	13
Enhancing quality and safeguarding	13
Governance and accountability	13
Next steps	14



Foreword

The State Government is committed to supporting families, protecting children and keeping them safe and well.

As a government, we acknowledge the past failings of our institutions in keeping children safe from harm. While we cannot undo the past, we can focus our efforts on supporting those who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse, hold perpetrators accountable, and ensure we do all we can to prevent abuse and its devastating effects moving forward.

Since our last annual report on progress implementing the recommendations of the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, our government has continued its efforts to keep children safe and respond appropriately to those who pose an unacceptable risk.

We implemented stronger, more transparent and effective screening laws with the new Working with Children Check (WWCC). The WWCC means that anyone working with children will require a check by law, aligning South Australia with new national standards. It replaces a number of different clearances and allows applicants, for the first time, to initiate a screening request on their own behalf.

For victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse, we have formally joined the National Redress Scheme. This means that people who experienced child sexual abuse in a Government of South Australia institution can apply to receive support, counselling and acknowledgement for the abuse they suffered. Over 100 applications have been lodged since the State Government became a participating institution.

As a government, we believe that people who experienced abuse in institutional settings as children should be entitled to pursue compensation, regardless of when the abuse occurred. In February 2019, we established new laws and removed the statute of limitations for those who apply for compensation. By removing this limitation, we eliminated a barrier that denied justice to people who have experienced child sexual abuse.

We value the voices of children and young people, and seek to reflect their views at all points across the system.

The Department for Child Protection has commenced the development of a child and youth engagement strategy so that children and young people's voices have a direct impact and influence on policy matters, program development and the services that affect them.

Our government is determined to address the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal children and young people in our child protection system. Through our series of co-design workshops with Aboriginal people, service providers and communities, we are working in partnership to design a child and family support system that keeps Aboriginal children and young people safe and connected to their culture, family and community.

This annual report highlights further activities we have undertaken to prevent and respond to institutional child sexual abuse.

The government's efforts to support families and protect children go beyond responding to the recommendations of this Royal Commission.

As outlined in our new whole-of-government strategy, 'Safe and well: Supporting families, protecting children', we are taking action across the entire child protection system. The strategy brings together and coordinates the way we are responding to multiple royal commissions, inquiries and reviews to consider the system as a whole. By connecting up services to provide the right supports at the right time, we create a brighter future for vulnerable families and children in South Australia.

We have made considerable progress to support vulnerable families, protect children in care and invest in their future. Importantly, we have seen real change in the way we prevent and respond to institutional child sexual abuse. But there is still more to be done to protect children and young people from abuse and provide victims and survivors of abuse the opportunity to heal.



Steven Marshall
Premier of South Australia



Vickie Chapman
Deputy Premier
Attorney-General



Rachel Sanderson
Minister for Child
Protection



John Gardner
Minister for Education



Michelle Lensink
Minister for Human
Services



Stephen Wade
Minister for Health and
Wellbeing



Corey Wingard
Minister for Police,
Emergency Services and
Correctional Services

Responding to the Royal Commission

Overview

This is the second annual report on the Government of South Australia's progress implementing the recommendations of the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission was conducted over a 5-year period, bringing to light the extent and nature of child sexual abuse in institutions across Australia. The inquiry had a national focus and looked at a range of institutional contexts, such as facilities for children in care, youth justice facilities, sporting and other clubs, religious organisations, schools and charities. Thousands of people bravely came forward to tell the Royal Commission about the abuse perpetrated against them and the findings highlighted serious failings in the way institutions protect children and young people, and address reports of abuse when they occur.

The Royal Commission delivered 409 recommendations through 4 staged reports. Of the 409 recommendations, 256 are for the Government of South Australia to action. All governments across Australia have committed to reporting annually on their progress implementing the findings of the Royal Commission for a 5-year period.

Since we published the first annual report in December 2018, we have completed an additional 50 recommendations.

Status	Total
Completed	112
Implementing	51
Planning	62
For further consideration	14
Split response*	10
Not yet commenced	4
Not accepted	3
Total	256

The South Australian response

At the same time, the Government of South Australia has been responding to the state-based Child Protection Systems Royal Commission (Nyland), which released its final report, 'The Life They Deserve', in 2016. It detailed findings from a comprehensive investigation into South Australia's child protection system, including the policies, practices and structures in place for children and young people at risk of harm. Findings of both the Commonwealth and State Royal Commissions have reinforced the need for a system that is better equipped to protect children and young people from harm and provide targeted support to vulnerable families. Collectively, these two Royal Commissions delivered 512[^] recommendations for the State Government to action.

To best support vulnerable families and protect children we recognise that we need to bring together the learnings of both the Commonwealth and State Royal Commissions and be clear about the system we aspire to have. 'Safe and well: Supporting families, protecting children', is our whole-of-government strategy. It shares how we will prioritise our efforts over the next few years to reform the broader South Australian child protection system.

This strategy considers the entirety of the system from how we can identify early risk factors for children and families in need, to protecting children from harm and helping them to heal from past trauma, and investing in children in care so they have the same future opportunities as others.

We have structured this annual report around the same three focus areas: supporting, protecting and investing, underpinned by a strong system built on quality and safeguarding.

Supporting	Protecting	Investing
<p>We will provide earlier, intensive, targeted support to those families with multiple and complex needs, to reduce incidents of child abuse and neglect and prevent children entering the child protection system.</p> <p>The Royal Commission highlighted the critical importance of creating communities that are well-informed and proactive in promoting children's safety. It made recommendations for institutions to ensure that children are valued, their rights are respected and their best interests are upheld.</p>	<p>We will protect children from harm, including when they come into care.</p> <p>The Royal Commission identified the conditions that institutions need to adopt to reduce the likelihood of harm to children, increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting harm, and of responding appropriately to disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.</p>	<p>We will invest in children and their transition from care to support them to lead productive lives as adults, and help to break intergenerational contact with the child protection system.</p> <p>The Royal Commission examined how best to meet the needs of victims and survivors of child sexual abuse in institutions through advocacy and support and therapeutic treatment services.</p>

* Split responses include those where parts of the recommendation have been progressed separately and the reported status includes parts that are either completed, being implemented, planned, further considered or not accepted.

[^] The figure does not include 4 recommendations of the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission that were not accepted by the State Government.

Supporting



The Royal Commission emphasised the importance of creating child safe communities through prevention, and an increased focus on education across a range of institutional settings directed at parents, children, staff and the broader community.

Sharing information between institutions was also highlighted as a necessary function to identify, prevent and respond to incidents and risk of child sexual abuse. The Royal Commission made a number of recommendations to improve information sharing in and across agencies who deliver services to children and young people.

We recognise the importance of providing targeted support to children and families to identify and disrupt the underlying factors that may lead to abuse. By challenging the misconceptions, beliefs and behaviours that allow institutional child sexual abuse to persist, we can respond to risks earlier and make decisions that keep children safe.

A family-centred approach to universal services

The Government of South Australia is committed to collaborating with other jurisdictions and key stakeholders to progress a new National Framework for Child Safety. The framework will build upon the commitments and significant progress achieved through the 'National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020', which continues to be an integral tool used by all jurisdictions, including South Australia, in service planning, design and implementation. By refreshing our national child safety agenda, we can ensure consistency in the way we safeguard children and young people and prevent child sexual abuse.

In August 2019, attendees from government agencies and the non-government sector participated in a South Australian consultation workshop led by Families Australia and co-chaired by the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection.

South Australia will continue to work in partnership to progress a long-term national approach ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children.

Information-sharing for informed decision-making

South Australia is involved in the National Child Protection Information Sharing Project led by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. The project is looking to improve child safety by sharing child protection information across jurisdictions in a new dynamic way.

South Australia continues to work with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions and through the Australian Data and Digital Council to improve information-sharing via various initiatives. This includes providing input based on our experience with the *Public Sector (Data Sharing) Act 2016* and implementing the 'Information Sharing Guidelines for promoting safety and wellbeing'.

The Department for Child Protection has been progressing a phased approach to prepare for the long term transformation of its Connected Client Case Management System (C3MS).

The system transformation aims to increase the ability of our workforce to access key information relating to the needs, circumstances and risks to children, prevent duplication of data and support information sharing between agencies. By ensuring our system supports efficient storage of and access to information, agencies are better equipped to identify risks of child sexual abuse and implement strategies at the earliest possible opportunity.

Additional highlights:

- > Commenced a review of the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* to consider improved information sharing arrangements between the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia and other relevant authorities to enable them to share information about teachers with other teacher regulatory authorities relevant to child safety and workforce mobility.
- > Participated in initial co-design workshops held by the National Office for Child Safety to shape the development of a National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse that will encompass a range of initiatives focused on creating cultural change and supporting victims of child sexual abuse.



Protecting

The Royal Commission highlighted the importance of having staff who are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe, with child safety embedded into institutional leadership, governance and culture. This means ensuring that the people who work with children are suitable, and those who pose an unacceptable level of risk are prevented from accessing child-related work.

As a government, we must create environments that are safe for children, protect them from harm and support children and adults to raise concerns early. We can do this by ensuring the right policies are in place and that they are meaningful in practice. By being clear on how we make decisions, we can consistently keep children and young people safe and hold perpetrators to account.

Coordinated notification responses

In March 2019, the Department for Health and Wellbeing (SA Health) established its third Child Protection Service (CPS) in South Australia. The new unit is appropriately positioned within the Lyell McEwin Hospital in Adelaide's North, being the second largest birthing hospital in the state.

The CPS provides specialist assessment and therapeutic services to children and young people from birth to 18 years and their families where there are concerns about child abuse, psychological maltreatment or neglect. The CPS accepts assessment referrals from the Department for Child Protection and South Australia Police for forensic medical assessments in relation to suspicious or unexplained injuries or severe neglect, for those aged 16 and under. It also provides forensic psychosocial assessments for children under the age of 7 to assess situations where there have been allegations of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or psychological maltreatment.

Needs-based care and protection

To identify and respond to the complex health needs of children and young people in care, SA Health has established therapeutic and trauma-informed services through its out-of-home care clinics. These clinics are located within the Women's and Children's Hospital, Lyell McEwin Hospital and Flinders Medical Centre.

The clinics aim to provide comprehensive, child friendly and trauma-informed services to improve the health and wellbeing of children and

young people in care, and respond sensitively and appropriately where there are risks or indicators of child sexual abuse. This is achieved using comprehensive health and development assessments to gain a comprehensive health history of the child or young person and respond holistically to often complex and specialised health needs.

By supporting and retaining carers who provide safe and therapeutic environments, we prevent children and young people from experiencing further harm when in care. To think innovatively about how the State Government can better support its carers, the Department for Child Protection has established a Carer Recruitment and Retention Taskforce in partnership with non-government service providers and peak bodies. Since then, a new, more engaging foster care recruitment website has been launched to attract potential carers, generating almost 80 enquiries in its first month. It is part of the State Government's initiative to grow the number of foster and kinship carers, recognising that the majority of children and young people flourish in family based environments.

The website complements another new web-based platform for existing carers, providing useful and simplified information in an easy to understand format. It contains a variety of resources to support carers in their role, and ensure they can access the right training and information to provide therapeutic and trauma-informed care.

The Department for Child Protection has strengthened its focus on the needs of children and young people with disability through the recruitment of a team of staff with disability expertise. These disability specialists work across the agency to help identify children and young people with a disability and ensure they are connected with services to best meet their needs, including through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Since the team was established, the number of children in care accessing the NDIS has increased. As at 30 June 2019, more than 600 children and young people in care had an approved NDIS plan, with a further group going through the NDIS planning process. The disability specialists are located in the regional offices and support case workers to ensure that NDIS plans meet individual children's needs.

Environments that keep children safe

A critical element in protecting children from harm in our institutions is the screening of employees and volunteers before they can work with children.

On 1 July 2019, South Australia introduced a new Working with Children Check (WWCC) under stronger, more transparent, nationally consistent screening laws. The new laws replace the previous system where people may have required a number of different clearances, such as a national police check. The new WWCC is valid for five years, is transferable between jobs and aligns South Australia with new national standards.

In addition, applicants are now able to initiate a WWCC screening request on their own, unlike the previous system which required an employer or volunteer organisation to apply on their behalf. Recent legislative amendments also embed free volunteer screening checks for all South Australians into law, making it more accessible for organisations with volunteers who work with children and young people.

The Department for Child Protection, the CREATE Foundation and the Guardian for Children and Young People have developed a range of resources to assist children and young people in care to raise issues that concern them. These were designed in consultation with children, young people and key stakeholders to convey the key messages that children and young people have rights:

- in relation to the use of physical intervention when living in residential care facilities
- to have their views recorded in such circumstances
- to complain to the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection
- to complain or seek help in relation to their rights when using other pathways.

The resources include posters, booklets and videos, with two different versions developed for children under 12 and young people over 12 years of age.

In August 2019, the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019* was passed by the South Australian Parliament. This legislation will permit schools, preschools, children's services and other relevant authorities to share certain information that would assist the performance of official functions relating to the education, health, safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child, or to manage any risk to children that may arise as an employer or provider of services.

Where a child is transferring between schools, the legislation will allow the principal of the child's new school to request a report from the principal of the child's previous school. The report can include information on academic progress, as well as information relevant to the safety or wellbeing of the child or that may be relevant to the safety or wellbeing of other children or people at the child's new school.

The Government of South Australia is currently planning for implementation of the new legislation including ensuring that the personal information of children is handled appropriately.

The Government of South Australia has taken action to improve the ability of the Teachers Registration Board to deal with unprofessional conduct of teachers by strengthening teacher registration requirements to better protect students from sexual abuse.

The Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004 has been amended to enable the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia to immediately suspend, or impose conditions on, the registration of a teacher charged with serious criminal offences, which includes serious offences related to the safety of children. This amendment takes a precautionary approach to keep children safe while a criminal investigation is underway, and means that a teacher can be prohibited from working with children while they are the subject of a serious criminal charge.

New National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been designed to help organisations create safer environments when providing services or working with children and

young people. The principles were endorsed by members of the Council of Australian Governments, the Prime Minister and state and territory First Ministers in February 2019. The National Office for Child Safety is leading national coordination and implementation of the National Principles, working with state and territory governments, and non-government sectors to make organisations across Australia safe for children.

Since 2005, South Australia has had legislative obligations for organisations that provide services to children and young people to provide child safe environments. Over the last 15 years, these obligations have been expanded and applied to additional service types. The current child safe environments obligations for South Australian organisations providing services to children and young people means they are well placed to meet the new National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Once the National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations has been issued by the Government of South Australia, the Child Safe Standards will be integrated into South Australia's existing regulatory and policy framework for implementation. As South Australia already requires organisations to meet the Child Safe Environments: Principles of Good Practice, work is currently underway to develop resources designed specifically to support South Australian organisations who currently meet the 7 Principles of Good Practice to transition to the 10 National Principles.

Responding to perpetrators of child sexual abuse

To strengthen how we prosecute perpetrators and potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse, new laws were passed by the State Parliament in July 2019 that target people who distribute or help distribute child pornography online. The *Statutes Amendment (Child Exploitation and Encrypted Material) Act 2019* establishes new offences. Those who host or administer websites featuring child exploitation material, or who encourage others to use such websites, even if they are not in possession of the material, can be prosecuted.

Under the new laws, Magistrates will have additional power to authorise police to access encrypted or password protected material by compelling suspects to provide passwords, fingerprints, facial or retinal scans. In urgent circumstances, police will have the power to hold suspected offenders for up to 4 hours and to restrict their use of technology during that time. This is intended to prevent the suspect erasing or removing evidence while police wait for the order. This change is a critical step in responding to dramatic advances in technology and the new ways in which crimes are being committed, especially the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including those in institutional settings.

This change is a critical step in responding to dramatic advances in technology and the new ways in which crimes are being committed, especially the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including those in institutional settings.

Additional highlights:

- > Moved closer to the national rate of children in family based care and increased the number of family based placements in the 2018-19 financial year by over 250.
- > Progressed the development of a strategy for children and young people in care, with a specific focus on creating safe and stable placements that are therapeutic and trauma-informed.
- > Amended the General Disposal Schedule 30 for State Government agencies to ensure that records relating to child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred are retained for the appropriate length of time.



Investing

The Royal Commission identified that cultural, operational and environmental factors in an institution affected the likelihood of children experiencing sexual abuse, and also affected the prospect that the abuse is identified, reported and responded to appropriately.

Victims and survivors of abuse often require support from a range of mainstream and specialist services. Without an integrated service system it can make it hard for people to navigate the right support when they need it.

Directing our investment to the right services and making these accessible to victims and survivors of abuse is an important way the government will prevent and respond to institutional child sexual abuse. We understand these strategies must be implemented early, be therapeutic, culturally responsive and evidence-informed.

A therapeutic approach to specialised needs

Following the recruitment of a Lead Psychiatric Director, the Department for Child Protection commenced regular Complex Case Review Meetings (CCRM). These meetings bring together workers from the department and the broader service system to provide for multi-agency input and accountability. They assist in the ongoing planning for children and young people in care with complex and specialised needs, providing an escalation pathway when required.

The CCRM complements the current 12-month joint Interagency Therapeutic Needs Panel (ITNP) pilot project developed in partnership with SA Health. The ITNP offers high level therapeutic planning and case direction for children in care through the provision of expert assessment and specialist referrals. The project started in February 2019 with the recruitment of a specialist social worker in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). A trial fortnightly panel was convened in April 2019 with regular fortnightly panels occurring since then.

Support for survivors of abuse

On 1 February 2019, the Government of South Australia officially joined the National Redress Scheme, which provides acknowledgement and support to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse in both government and non-government institutions.

The Scheme was created by the Australian Government in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission, which estimated that 60,000 people experienced institutional child sexual abuse in Australia, including around 3,800 South Australians. Redress is an alternative to seeking compensation through the courts.

The Scheme can provide three things:

- > access to counselling
- > a monetary payment
- > a direct personal response from the institution (such as an apology).

Since joining as a participating institution, more than 100 applications for redress have been lodged about child sexual abuse in a Government of South Australia institution.

While the Australian Government assesses redress applications against a legislated framework, a centralised response unit has been established within the state Attorney-General's Department. The unit ensures we search through our available records quickly and provide all the relevant supporting information to the Commonwealth Scheme Operator. By working cooperatively across State Government agencies to piece this information together, we have been able to respond to the Scheme Operator in advance of legislated timeframes, allowing applications to be finalised in a timely manner.

New laws came into effect in February 2019 to allow people who have experienced child abuse to seek compensation and access to justice regardless of how long ago they experienced the abuse.

The *Limitation of Actions (Child Abuse) Amendment Act 2018* removes the three-year time limit that existed under the previous law. Prior to this amendment, people who experienced abuse as a child, including sexual abuse, serious physical abuse and related psychological abuse, were required to launch civil legal action against their abuser or others who may have contributed

to their abuse by the age of 21, unless an extension of time was granted by the court. This change removes a significant barrier that was identified by the Royal Commission for survivors seeking justice and brings South Australia into line with other states and territories.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is leading a trial of a therapeutic support dog, providing comfort to victims involved in the criminal justice system in South Australia. Many of these include children and young people who have been the victim of sexual abuse, violence or assault. The pilot features a 3-year old Labrador named Zero, specifically trained by Guide Dogs South Australia and Northern Territory.

Zero has already been involved in a number of appointments, with predominately child and teenage victims of crime, but also adults with intellectual disabilities or those who have experienced domestic or sexual violence. This innovative pilot has achieved a number of positive outcomes, particularly for children who have been able to settle more quickly, allowing staff to rapidly build rapport.

Hearing from children and young people

The *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* enshrines a strong emphasis on children and young people's views and participation in decisions that affect them. To support this,

the Department for Child Protection is actively growing its capacity to engage and work in partnership with children and young people to co-design a child and youth engagement strategy.

This strategy will identify methods and opportunities for the department to engage with children and young people so that their voice has a direct impact and influence over policy matters, program development and services that impact them. The department will work with its Aboriginal workforce to ensure the strategy provides for Aboriginal children and young people to be engaged in a manner that is meaningful, purposeful and specific to those with experience of the child protection system.

Cultural connection and identity

The Government of South Australia is committed to fully implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle, with the placement element of the Principle enshrined in section 12 of the *Children and Young Person (Safety) Act 2017*.

In July 2019, the Department for Child Protection launched its first Aboriginal Action Plan 2019-20, which includes 33 actions to embed the Child Placement Principle into the department's work. The Aboriginal Action Plan promotes the Principle as a guiding framework for action and recognises the importance of the commitment to active efforts across each of the five core elements: Prevention, Partnership, Placement, Participation and Connection. The 'Aboriginal Action Plan' also acknowledges the importance of identification as a precursor to implementation of the Principle.

Additional highlights:

- > Supported the development of learning environments that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of students experiencing trauma, by delivering professional development and training to education staff and school communities on trauma-informed practice in education.
- > Increased the proportion of children and young people in care with a current documented and approved case plan from 53.4% in June 2018 to 88.8% in June 2019.
- > Hosted a 2-day training workshop for Department for Child Protection staff to increase understanding and implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in South Australia.
- > Updated the 'Responding to problem sexual behaviour in children and young people – Guidelines for staff in education and care settings' document to reflect legislative and organisational changes, and provide additional content about online safety, to support government and non-government schools in delivering consistent and effective responses to children's problem sexual behaviours.



A strong system

The Royal Commission made a number of recommendations advocating for a strong and responsive service system, underpinned by trauma-informed practice and an understanding of institutional child sexual abuse.

Importantly, the Royal Commission highlighted child safety as a shared responsibility at all levels of an institution, and that preventing institutional child sexual abuse is everyone's business. By working together, institutions can be better equipped to translate knowledge about child sexual abuse and effective responses into policy and practice.

We know that a holistic, multi-agency approach is critical to preventing and responding to child sexual abuse across all parts of the child protection system. We also know that to do this, we must promote research and evaluation to address gaps in knowledge and develop better service models.

Growing a skilled and stable workforce

Last year, the Department for Child Protection broadened the accepted qualifications for child protection workers to address workforce shortages and better support vulnerable children across the state. Between March 2019 and May 2019, 32 new professional officers and an additional 83 social workers and case managers were recruited, resulting in a significant boost to frontline staff.

We are now recruiting staff from a range of areas including the sciences, health, nursing and psychology fields. This adds a significant depth of knowledge to the child protection workforce and supports our ability to respond strongly to abuse and neglect.

Enhancing quality and safeguarding

A strong clinical governance system ensures that people at all levels are accountable for providing services that are safe for children and young people and continuously improving. The Department for Child Protection has released a new Clinical Governance Framework. As part of this, the department has made a strong commitment to reflective practice and continuous learning.

The framework is built on:

- > leadership, planning and a purposeful culture of quality
- > partnering with children, young people, families, carers and community
- > workforce capability and effectiveness
- > quality and risk systems for safety and performance.

Governance and accountability

The Government of South Australia has continued its commitment to progress national priority recommendations relating to child safe organisations, information sharing, development of a new National Framework on Child Safety, and annual progress reporting.

The Child Abuse Royal Commission (CARC) Implementation Taskforce Inter-Jurisdictional Working Group (IJM) has ensured that recommendations requiring collaboration and consistency across jurisdictions have a suitable Ministerial council or working group to provide oversight for their implementation. Officers from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Department for Child Protection represent the Government of South Australia in all CARC Taskforce IJM meetings.

At a state level, implementation of Royal Commission recommendations is overseen by the Child Protection Reform Portfolio Management Board (PMB). The PMB was originally established in response to the state Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, but has since expanded its role to provide strategic direction and oversight to whole-of-government child protection reform. It includes chief executives and senior executives from government agencies responsible for leading reform activity.

Additional highlights:

- > Enabled frontline child protection staff to be mobile in their work through the progressive roll out of 700 laptops with secure C3MS connectivity to all DCP office locations across South Australia.
- > Initiated the Digital Workspace Program to provide DCP with a modern, mobile and user-centric platform for managing information, workflows, reporting and other activities.



Next steps

As the government moves towards a consolidated reform approach, we are transforming our learnings from various the Royal Commissions, inquiries and reviews into a coordinated strategy across government.

We will continue to meet the intent of the Royal Commission's recommendations and ensure our future initiatives build on our achievements. As we enter the next chapter of our reform journey, we have focused our priorities under 4 areas essential in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Going forward we will continue to focus on:

Supporting

- > Contributing to the development of the new national framework on child safety.
- > Enhancing systems that enable information sharing to protect children and young people from harm.

Protecting

- > Assessing the scope and benefits of implementing a Reportable Conduct Scheme in South Australia.
- > Embedding a therapeutic approach across residential care commencing with facilities run by the Department for Child Protection.
- > Growing family based care and building the capacity of carers to deliver trauma-responsive, developmentally-informed, culturally-responsive care.

Investing

- > Providing support that meets the diverse and specialised needs of children and young people in care.
- > Delivering trauma-responsive and development focused service models.
- > Embedding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.
- > Engaging young people in planning their future, preparing them as well-rounded adults able to access further education, training and employment.

A strong system

- > Investing in the collection and use of data to inform planning and service design.
- > Ensuring resources are directed towards evidence-based services designed for specific populations.
- > Building a trauma-responsive carer population and government and non-government workforce.
- > Embedding a restorative and relational practice approach.
- > Enhancing systems and structures to embed stronger safeguarding.