

Youth & Family Service – Strengthening Relationships Building Pathways
Community Housing – Accommodating People
Roseberry House & Jack's House – Supporting Youth
headspace Gladstone
ParentsNext



01 February 2019

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission in response to the ParentsNext enquiry

Roseberry Qld were selected as one of the ParentsNext pilot project providers, and continue to provide the service after the national rollout. Roseberry Qld would like to respond to a number of points.

- *(a) the aims of ParentsNext, and the extent to which those aims are appropriate, having regard to the interests of participating parents, their children and the community* – Roseberry Qld ParentsNext team assist Participants to identify their employment goals and then support and empower Participants to navigate the pathways and systems to overcome barriers (e.g. domestic and family violence, homelessness, financial stress, legal issues, mental health issues, social disconnectedness, etc.) Flexibility in service delivery is essential, recognising that Participants are parents.
- *(b) (iv) the selection of ParentsNext providers* – In our experience, Participants' preferred outcomes are maximised when the program is provided from a supportive framework. This ensures that the Participant realises their potential through a strengths-based and SMART goals setting approach.
- *(vi) the effectiveness of the communication between Participants, the Department of Jobs and Small Business, Centrelink, and ParentsNext providers* – Participants have stated to Roseberry Qld that communication between themselves and Centrelink is unclear, and therefore causing confusion and unnecessary stress. For example, when first contacted by Centrelink to assess eligibility, Participants have reported that they have been told that they must look for work, attend a playgroup or you'll have your payments suspended, will have to travel over 100kms to attend an appointment or payments will be suspended. None of this true. Overall, Participants attend their initial appointment out of fear of payments being suspended rather than attending with a clear understanding of the benefits of the program and how it can support and empower them. It is our experience, when Participants understand the program and the service we provide, they are keen to be included.
- *(c) the appropriateness of the application of the Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) to ParentsNext, and the impact of the TCF on Participants* – The TCF, in our opinion, is useful for non-attendance of appointments. In regards to Participation Plans (job plans), the TCF is not

appropriate before their youngest child turns 5. This would give up to 12 months to assist Participants transition to becoming a job seeker.

- *(e) Other* - The administrative burden for both Participants and providers has increased dramatically. For example, scheduling activities into calendars, linking activities, creating vacancies, the funding model itself creates an enormous administrative burden.

Roseberry Qld would welcome an opportunity to discuss the above points in more depth.

With gratitude
Roseberry Qld

Colleen Tribe
General Manager