

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2017-18 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 2.1 Families and Communities**

**Question No: SQ17-000429**

**Topic: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children**

**Hansard page: 84**

**Senator Louise Pratt asked:**

Will DSS services do any contracting within this outcome to better align place based coordinated responses like that?

**Answer:**

DSS is working towards greater coordination across services in specific locations, including a range of activities to support increased coordination and collaboration at the local level.

This includes:

- integrating service delivery as part of the redesign of the Financial Wellbeing and Capability (FWC) activity to ensure clients with multiple needs are supported comprehensively.
- early intervention supports to improve the safety and wellbeing of children, with a focus on the early years and services that are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families; and
- place-based models, including Communities for Children Facilitating Partners, that coordinate local supports, services and community input, to provide holistic support for children and young people, including reviewing programs to be more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Community Services Ministers have also given priority to continuing work on prevention and early intervention, which provides an opportunity for greater coordination of responses between the Commonwealth and states and territories.

Further, funding agreements in the Families and Children outcome require providers to comply with the DSS Program Guidelines, which state that the program “aims to provide a foundation for integrated, community led programme delivery that understands and meets local needs and promotes innovation and collaboration.”

Program guidelines for each activity under this outcome also specify the need for collaboration. For example, the Families and Children Activity guidelines state that “services must work collaboratively to provide an integrated suite of local services.” The Strengthening Communities Activity guidelines state that funding under that Activity is provided to organisations “to develop solutions and deliver responsive and integrated services that meet local community needs.”