



Community Support Program

In Home Care Funding

Program Guidelines 2009–10

Version History:

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Foreword

The Australian Government is committed to supporting child care services to provide quality care and early learning opportunities for all children.

The Child Care Services Support Program (CCSSP) is funded by the Australian Government to support and promote access to quality child care and early learning for children, families and communities through strategies that complement the significant assistance provided to families through Child Care Benefit (CCB) and the Child Care Tax Rebate (CCTR).

The Community Support Program is a part of the CCSSP and includes a range of payments designed to deliver improved access to child care through support for establishment of new services and maintenance of services especially in areas where the market would otherwise fail to provide child care services.

Table of Contents

FOREWORD	3
1. ABOUT THE GUIDELINES.....	6
1.1 PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES	6
1.2 TARGET AUDIENCE.....	6
2. ABOUT IN HOME CARE (IHC).....	7
2.1 WHAT IS IHC?	7
2.2 HOW MUST AN IHC SERVICE OPERATE?.....	7
2.2 WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ACCESS IHC?	8
2.3 HOW ARE IHC PLACES ALLOCATED?	8
3. INFORMATION ON FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR IHC SERVICES	9
3.1 SET UP ASSISTANCE	9
3.1.1 <i>What is Set Up Assistance?</i>	9
3.1.2 <i>What services are eligible for Set Up Assistance?</i>	9
3.1.3 <i>What are the Set Up Assistance rates for 2009-10?</i>	10
3.1.4 <i>What can Set Up Assistance Funding be spent on?</i>	10
3.1.5 <i>What can Set-up Assistance not be spent on?</i>	10
3.1.6 <i>How do I apply for Set Up Assistance?</i>	10
3.1.1 <i>What are the obligations of services receiving IHC Set Up Assistance?</i>	10
3.2 SERVICE SUPPORT	11
3.2.1 <i>What is Service Support?</i>	11
3.2.2 <i>What services are eligible for Service Support?</i>	11
3.2.3 <i>Are there additional requirements for a service to receive Service Support?</i>	11
3.2.4 <i>What are the Service Support rates for 2009-10?</i>	12
3.2.5 <i>What amount of Service Support funding is available?</i>	12
3.2.6 <i>How is the number of EFT utilised places determined?</i>	12
3.2.7 <i>How does a Service request a reassessment of Service Support rate?</i>	13
3.2.8 <i>Representative Days Model</i>	13
3.3 REGIONAL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE GRANT (RTAG)	14
3.3.1 <i>What is RTAG?</i>	14
3.3.2 <i>How is RTAG targeted?</i>	14
3.3.3 <i>How much funding is available?</i>	14
3.3.4 <i>What are the thresholds for RTAG?</i>	15
3.3.5 <i>What is the claim process for RTAG?</i>	15
3.3.6 <i>What is a services' accountability under RTAG?</i>	15
3.4 SUSTAINABILITY ASSISTANCE.....	16
3.1.3 <i>What is Sustainability Assistance?</i>	16
3.1.4 <i>What services are eligible for Sustainability Assistance?</i>	16
3.1.5 <i>What services are not eligible for Sustainability Assistance?</i>	16
3.1.6 <i>What Sustainability Assistance is available to Multiple Care services?</i>	16
3.1.7 <i>How is Sustainability Assistance paid?</i>	16
3.1.8 <i>What are the Sustainability Assistance rates for 2009-10?</i>	17
4. FUNDING RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS.....	18
4.1 FUNDING RECIPIENTS MUST:	18
4.2 WHAT ARE THE INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS?	18
4.3 WHAT ARE SOUND BUSINESS PRACTICES FOR AN IHC SERVICE?.....	18
4.4 WHAT ARE THE IHC LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND INTERIM STANDARDS?	19
4.5 WHAT IS CHILD CARE QUALITY ASSURANCE?.....	19
4.6 COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD CARE BENEFIT APPROVAL AND CONTINUED APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS.....	19
5. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES UNDER THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM.....	20
5.1 DEEWR RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES	20

5.2	FUNDING RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES	20
6.	FUNDING AGREEMENT	21
6.1	WHAT ARE THE FUNDING AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS?	21
6.2	WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?	21
6.2.1	<i>What are Utilisation Reports?</i>	21
6.2.2	<i>What are Activity Reports?</i>	21
6.2.3	<i>What is the purpose of the Financial Acquittal Report?</i>	21
6.3	WHAT IS THE PROCESS WHEN A SERVICE CEASES TO OPERATE?	22
7	PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	23
7.2	PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	23
7.2	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	23
7.3	SECURITY OF INFORMATION	23
8	COMPLAINTS	24
8.2	COMPLAINTS – SERVICE PROVIDER	24
9	CONTACT INFORMATION	25
10	OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION	25

1. About the Guidelines

1.1 Purpose of Guidelines

These Guidelines provide the framework for the implementation and administration of Australian Government funding for In Home Care services (IHC). These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the relevant IHC Funding Agreement between the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR or the Department) and the Funding Recipient.

The Guidelines include:

- ▶ An overview of Australian Government funding for IHC, including its purpose
- ▶ DEEWR expectations of IHC service providers
- ▶ An overview of monitoring and contract management arrangements including accountability and program governance arrangements for DEEWR and the service provider and
- ▶ Other relevant information pertinent to the successful delivery of the Community Support Program.

DEEWR reserves the right to amend these guidelines from time to time by whatever means it may determine in its absolute discretion. Such amendments may be necessary to reflect Australian Government priorities. DEEWR Funding Recipients are advised that any changes to the Guidelines and their subsequent effects will be advised online at www.deewr.gov.au.

1.2 Target Audience

These Guidelines have been developed by the Department for current and prospective IHC Service Providers.

2. About In Home Care (IHC)

2.1 What is IHC?

IHC is a flexible form of child care where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. IHC is targeted to families unable to access existing child care services such as families working shift or non standard hours or those located in regional or remote regions of Australia.

IHC services must comply with applicable State and Territory regulations and licensing requirements when providing care to children.

2.2 How must an IHC service operate?

Once approved for CCB purposes, an IHC service must continue to ensure that:

- (a) the service will provide in-home care only to a child:
 - (i) to whom a circumstance mentioned in subsection 10 (1C) of the Eligibility Determination applies, and
 - (ii) to whom only an in-home care service can provide suitable care
- (b) the service will operate on all normal working days in at least 48 weeks of the year
- (c) the service will be available to provide care for any particular child for at least 8 continuous hours on each normal working day on which it operates, and
- (d) where a child attends a session of care, the service will not prevent the child from attending any part of that session.

The legislative criteria for the approval and continued approval of an IHC service are set out in the *Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000* (the Eligibility Determination). The Eligibility Determination is subject to change from time to time. The current compilation is available at www.deewr.gov.au.

One of the conditions for approval and continued approval is that IHC services must undertake to provide child care places in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines, under section 13 of the Eligibility Determination. For further information on the Priority of Access Guidelines and other legislative requirements please refer to the *Child Care Service Handbook* available at DEEWR's website located at www.deewr.gov.au.

2.2 Who is eligible to access IHC?

To be eligible for IHC, families must have no access to existing child care services and/or their circumstances mean that an existing child care service cannot meet their needs, and the family meets one or more of the following criteria (as set out in subsection 10 (1C) of the Eligibility Determination):

- (a) the child, or any other child with whom the child lives, has an illness or disability
- (b) the individual in whose care the child is, or the individual's partner (if any), has an illness or disability that reduces the individual's, or the partner's capacity to care for the child
- (c) the child lives in a rural or remote area
- (d) work hours of the individual in whose care the child is, or the individual's partner (if any), are (or include) the hours during which no other approved child care service (other than an approved in-home care service) operates that could otherwise provide care
- (e) the individual in whose care the child is or the individual's partner (if any) is caring for three or more children (including the child) who have not yet commenced school, or
- (g) any other circumstances determined by the Secretary in relation to the child.

The Department will continue to have discretion to allow exemptions to the eligibility criteria for a family in exceptional circumstances. Services must contact their State/Territory Departmental officer in such circumstances.

2.3 How are IHC places allocated?

For a service to become approved, IHC places must be available to allocate to that service. There are a limited number of IHC places available nationally and currently all of these places are allocated. Therefore, no new IHC services can become approved for the purpose of CCB at this time.

When places become available information on the application process will be made public.

Organisations can register their interest in IHC places with a child care officer in their State or Territory DEEWR office at any time.

The Australian Government allocates places based on assessed demand for IHC in a particular region and the availability of suitably qualified service providers.

Unmet demand is based on a number of characteristics, which may include:

- ▶ The number of children in the region
- ▶ The number of existing service providers of all child care types
- ▶ The population of both children and parents with disability
- ▶ The geographical area
- ▶ Demonstrated demand i.e. waiting list as demonstrated by an applicant for IHC and
- ▶ The number of shift workers.

When additional places are available, the Department advertises for applications from interested providers.

3. Information on funding available for IHC services

Under the Community Support Program, the Australian Government provides financial support to IHC services. There are four types of financial support available to IHC providers depending on their eligibility:

1. Set Up Assistance Funding
2. Service Support Funding
3. Regional Travel Assistance Grant (RTAG)
4. Sustainability Assistance

For more information contact the Department on 1300 363 079 and request the child care office in your State or Territory.

3.1 Set Up Assistance

3.1.1 What is Set Up Assistance?

Set up Assistance is a payment approved by DEEWR to help organisations to establish new child care services. It is a one-off payment to eligible, new, not-for-profit and for-profit services to assist in meeting set up costs.

Set Up Assistance is only available to CCB approved IHC services. For a service to become approved, IHC places must be available for allocation to that service. . .

3.1.2 What services are eligible for Set Up Assistance?

To be eligible to receive Set Up Assistance a **new service** must:

- ▶ be approved to administer CCB on behalf of families
- ▶ not have commenced providing child care
- ▶ not be a relocation of an existing service
- ▶ not be taking over a child care service of the same care type that has operated from the same facilities at any time in the previous 12 months, and
- ▶ be allocated places by DEEWR (**IHC only**).

Eligible for-profit organisations may receive Set Up Assistance for up to 10 child care services only. However, if they own or operate 10 or more child care services of any care type (Australia wide) they will not be eligible to receive Set Up Assistance.

3.1.3 What are the Set Up Assistance rates for 2009-10?

The following are the Set Up Assistance rates for 2009-10, which are subject to indexation:

Type of Service	Funding Amount
New IHC service	\$13,197.00
New IHC service that is supported by an existing service	\$6,598.00

3.1.4 What can Set Up Assistance Funding be spent on?

Funding will be provided to assist in meeting set-up costs by contributing to expenses such as:

- ▶ employing staff
- ▶ advertising for staff/carers and parents
- ▶ purchasing toys and equipment
- ▶ phone expenses and/or
- ▶ insurance.

3.1.5 What can Set-up Assistance not be spent on?

The funding **cannot** be used for:

- ▶ CCB fee reductions to families
- ▶ incorporation costs
- ▶ payments to fund organisations
- ▶ programs or services not essential for the core operation of the funded child care service
- ▶ support for political activities (e.g. phone calls and printing)
- ▶ rent to sponsor organisations other than a nominal charge or
- ▶ capital improvements.

3.1.6 How do I apply for Set Up Assistance?

Applications for Set Up Assistance need to be lodged prior to commencement of care.

To apply for Set Up Assistance for IHC, contact the Department on 1300 363 079 and request the child care office in your State or Territory.

3.1.1 What are the obligations of services receiving IHC Set Up Assistance?

New IHC services are required to notify the Department in writing once they have commenced providing care. If services have not commenced providing care to children within 3 months they may be asked to repay the Set Up Assistance funding to the Department.

3.2 Service Support

3.2.1 What is Service Support?

Service Support is funding to assist IHC services that are approved to administer CCB on behalf of families. IHC services receive Service Support to assist them with the costs of recruiting, monitoring and supporting a network of carers and allocating carers to provide flexible care for children in the children's family home.

3.2.2 What services are eligible for Service Support?

All IHC services that are approved for CCB purposes or centre based services providing approved IHC are eligible to receive Service Support funding.

IHC services that receive Service Support are not eligible to also receive IHC Sustainability Assistance or Budget Based Funding.

3.2.3 Are there additional requirements for a service to receive Service Support?

New IHC services are required to achieve a minimum of 10 Equivalent Full Time (EFT) utilised places and a minimum of two carers registered/engaged within three months of signing their Funding Agreement with the Australian Government.

New services will receive Service Support for a minimum of 10 EFT utilised places upon signing their Funding Agreement. After the first three months of operation, or when the service's First Utilisation Report is due, the next and subsequent payment will be based on actual EFT utilisation for that period.

If new services do not achieve a minimum of 10 EFT utilised places within three months, the Department may cease the provision of Service Support funding.

If existing services report utilisation below 10 EFT utilised places the Department may cease the provision of Service Support funding.

If these situations arise, the Department will contact the service provider in writing to advise of any changes to future payments.

To receive Service Support new services will be required to demonstrate that they can deliver care at the level of 10 EFT utilised places within three months. It is expected that some market research would be completed by the service to determine both carer availability and demand for the service within the area.

For the purposes of continuing eligibility for Service Support, all IHC services must employ a Coordinator and other administrative staff as necessary. Small services may employ a part time or shared Coordinator. However, the service must be accessible to families in accordance with the conditions of CCB approval. A person operating as an IHC carer cannot also be the IHC service's Coordinator. Carers can, however, fill other administrative roles within the service, providing there is no conflict of interest.

3.2.4 What are the Service Support rates for 2009-10?

The following are the Service Support rates for 2009-10, which are subject to annual indexation:

Geographic location	Rate per EFT utilised place (per week)*
Major Cities (base rate)	\$22.85
Inner Regional	\$23.30
Outer Regional	\$29.70
Remote	\$40.25
Very Remote	\$46.65

*indexed Annually

Funding rates are adjusted annually in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Note: the Department uses the Accessibility Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA Plus) to classify service and carer locations for Service Support funding.

3.2.5 What amount of Service Support funding is available?

Service Support is paid quarterly on the basis of the actual number of equivalent full-time (EFT) utilised places reported by IHC services. As the number of EFT utilised places changes, Service Support funding is adjusted to reflect the change.

The level of funding is currently calculated based on the location of the service's coordination unit, the location of families receiving care, and the number of EFT utilised places. To be eligible for the higher rates of Service Support available for IHC, services operating in Remote and Very Remote locations are required to have 21 per cent of their carers providing care in these areas. A threshold of 51 per cent applies for services accessing the Inner/Outer Regional rate.

The formula for calculating IHC Service Support is:

(Rate per place) x (number of EFT* utilised places) x (number of weeks open)

*An EFT equals 35 hours of care charged per week.

3.2.6 How is the number of EFT utilised places determined?

The number of EFT utilised places is the calculation of child care usage at a service, based on actual hours of care charged to families per reporting period. To calculate an IHC service's number of EFT utilised places:

Total hours of care charged during the quarter	÷	Number of weeks open during the quarter	÷	35	=	Number of EFT Utilised places for the quarter
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This calculation provides the service's number of EFT utilised places.

3.2.7 How does a Service request a reassessment of Service Support rate?

IHC services may request a reassessment of their rate by providing DEEWR with the physical address details where IHC is provided in the following format:

- ▶ Name of Carer
- ▶ Address of Carer
- ▶ Details of where care is provided:
 - › Street number
 - › Street name and type
 - › Suburb
 - › State/Territory
 - › Post code.

If approved, a higher rate per EFT utilised place will be payable from the next scheduled quarterly payment. This will be reviewed regularly in line with the service's reporting requirements as contained in the Funding Agreement.

3.2.8 Representative Days Model

The Representative Days model is used to calculate Service Support payments to certain approved IHC services (refer to 3.2 for information on Service Support funding).

The Representative Days model allows certain approved IHC service to nominate the three highest attended days of each quarterly reporting period for the basis of calculating their utilised places. This figure is then used to calculate the amount of funding the service would receive that quarterly period.

All other requirements for Service Support apply to those services on the Representative Days model.

The Representative Days model will **not** be granted to new IHC services.

3.3 Regional Travel Assistance Grant (RTAG)

3.3.1 What is RTAG?

RTAG is designed to support approved IHC services by assisting with travel costs of coordination staff who are involved with supporting the network of carers in regional and remote areas.

3.3.2 How is RTAG targeted?

RTAG is available to IHC services where more than 51 per cent of their carers provide care in Inner or Outer Regional areas, or 21 per cent of their carers provide care in Remote or Very Remote areas.

IHC services deemed by the Department as eligible to receive RTAG funding must comply with the following conditions:

- ▶ travel undertaken by coordination staff must be for the sole purpose of monitoring, training or supporting carers
- ▶ all coordination staff who drive must possess a current driver's licence, and
- ▶ coordination staff who drive are expected to have their own current comprehensive and third party insurance cover on their private vehicles.

Any claim for damage to a vehicle resulting from an accident while it is being driven to monitor, train or support carers must be made to the vehicle's insurer.

As the Australian Government does not carry or provide insurance on private vehicles, it will not accept any responsibility for financial liability or loss (including through operation of an 'excess' clause or loss of 'no claim' bonus) that may be incurred as a result of an accident or theft while using a private motor vehicle to monitor, train or support carers.

It is expected that coordination unit staff will use the most direct route when visiting carers. Where this is not appropriate, for reasons such as adverse seasonal conditions, a suitable alternative route may be used.

Travel may be undertaken by air if this is the most cost effective and convenient method for travel to remote locations.

3.3.3 How much funding is available?

Funding will be based on the number of kilometres a service must travel per quarter in order to meet the requirement to visit carers. The 2009–10 rate of RTAG is 67 cents per kilometre travelled above the given quarterly threshold. This rate is indexed annually.

3.3.4 What are the thresholds for RTAG?

For the purposes of the funding claim, services will be paid the lesser of:

- ▶ the cost of the airfare, or
- ▶ the equivalent kilometres that would have been travelled by road.

Size of service (EFT utilised places)	Kilometre threshold per quarter
50 places or less	975 km
51-150 places	1,950 km
More than 150 places	2,925 km

3.3.5 What is the claim process for RTAG?

Eligible IHC services will be required to submit a RTAG claim form to their relevant DEEWR State or Territory office at the end of each quarter during the funding year (e.g. If a funding agreement begins on 1 July 2009, the first claim will be due on 1 October 2009). RTAG payments will be made by the Department to eligible IHC Services quarterly in arrears.

3.3.6 What is a services' accountability under RTAG?

Services that receive RTAG funding must keep logbooks to record all travel undertaken to monitor, support and train carers. The logbook must contain the following information:

- ▶ the name of the driver of the vehicle and the driver's position within the coordination unit
- ▶ the registration, make, model and engine size (cc) of the vehicle
- ▶ the date of the journey
- ▶ start point and destination of each journey
- ▶ the purpose of each journey including the details and location of each carer visited
- ▶ odometer start and finish figures for each journey, and
- ▶ kilometres travelled for each journey.

In accordance with DEEWR's standard accountability procedures continued RTAG funding is conditional on:

- ▶ appropriate record-keeping and satisfactory acquittal of Australian Government funds
- ▶ DEEWR state or territory office staff being able to view all logbooks during service visits, and
- ▶ retention of all forms and records relating to RTAG, including logbooks, for a period of at least three years (36 months).

3.4 Sustainability Assistance

3.1.3 What is Sustainability Assistance?

Sustainability Assistance is funding to support small, not-for-profit child care services in areas of need approved by DEEWR. The funding is intended to help communities retain access to child care where the operation of a child care service is not likely to be financially viable without it. Funding is a contribution to support viability and is based on EFT utilised places.

IHC services that receive Sustainability Assistance are not eligible to receive Service Support or Budget Based Funding.

If a service moves to Service Support, it will no longer be eligible to receive Sustainability Assistance.

3.1.4 What services are eligible for Sustainability Assistance?

IHC services that received Sustainability Assistance in 2008-09 will continue to receive this funding in 2009-10 unless otherwise advised by the Department.

3.1.5 What services are not eligible for Sustainability Assistance?

The funding is not available to new IHC applicants.

3.1.6 What Sustainability Assistance is available to Multiple Care services?

Multiple care services are designed to provide flexible care to meet the needs of their communities. They offer an integrated service delivery model where more than one care type is provided. Services that operate more than one care type as a multiple care service receive different amounts of Sustainability Assistance funding.

Factors determining whether a service is a multiple care type include:

- ▶ The service is operated by the same Funding Recipient
- ▶ The service is operated by the same director/coordinator/administrative staff and/or
- ▶ The service shares use of existing buildings/address, facilities and resources.

3.1.7 How is Sustainability Assistance paid?

Sustainability Assistance payments are calculated, adjusted and paid quarterly by the Department to the eligible IHC Service.

3.1.8 What are the Sustainability Assistance rates for 2009-10?

The following are the Sustainability Assistance rates for 2009-10, which are subject to annual indexation:

Care type	EFT Utilised places	Funding per year*
IHC (stand alone)	1-15	\$26,901.00
	16-24	\$37,663.00
	25-50	\$54,987.00
Home-based component of multiple care service	1-15	\$26,901.00
	16-24	\$37,663.00
	25-50	\$43,043.00 or IHC Service Support (whichever is greater)

*Indexed annually

Funding rates are adjusted annually in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

4. Funding Recipient Requirements

4.1 Funding Recipients must:

- maintain approval to administer Child Care Benefit (CCB) in accordance with:
 - *A New Tax System (Family Assistance)(Administration) Act 1999*
 - *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*, and
 - related disallowable instruments made under these Acts, including the Eligibility Determination
- deliver IHC in accordance with the following:
 - the 2009–10 Funding Agreement
 - these Guidelines
 - the family assistance law (in particular, the requirement to reduce fees in accordance with notices issued by the Family Assistance Office (FAO))
 - the *Child Care Service Handbook* as amended from time to time
 - all applicable State/Territory and local government laws, regulations and licensing requirements, and
 - the Interim Standards for In Home Care
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

4.2 What are the insurance requirements?

An IHC service provider is required to have the following insurance:

- Public Liability for not less than \$10 million for each and every claim
- Workers' compensation as required by law, and
- Professional Indemnity for not less than \$5 million per claim and in the aggregate, per year.

4.3 What are Sound Business Practices for an IHC service?

All services are required to meet the business and financial requirements and obligations associated with operating a child care service as per the Funding Agreement. Issues such as insurance, bookkeeping, CCB administration and record keeping must be considered. As with all businesses, it is essential to keep receipts of all expenditure related to the business.

Receipts will be required for regular tax purposes as well as for auditing purposes.

The service provider should retain a copy of all reports, records or account books in original form for at least five years following the expiry or termination of the Funding Agreement or any longer period required under State or Territory legislation.

For more information about sound business practices relevant to approved child care services, refer to the current *Child Care Service Handbook* or visit the OECECC website at www.deewr.gov.au.

4.4 What are the IHC Legislation, Regulations and Interim Standards?

State and Territory Governments have the prime responsibility of family support, child welfare, regulations and licensing of child care services. Where no State or Territory regulations apply, the [Interim Standards for IHC](#) provide a framework to ensure an acceptable standard of child care for all children in IHC. The Interim Standards for IHC comprise minimum standards for safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate environments for children in formal child care settings, and provide the foundation for future systems of Quality Assurance. The Interim Standards for IHC are therefore relevant to all approved/employed carers of an IHC service.

IHC services are required to adhere to the Interim Standards until such time that they are replaced by National Standards.

4.5 What is Child Care Quality Assurance?

Currently, IHC services are not covered by the Child Care Quality Assurance System.

The aim of the Australian Government's Child Care Quality Assurance system is to provide a framework for reviewing, measuring and improving the quality of the work being done by approved child care providers. Quality Assurance focuses on quality outcomes for children and encompasses processes of self-assessment and continuing improvement against areas of quality care.

Quality Assurance:

- ▶ improves outcomes for children
- ▶ improves the accountability of child care to the public, and
- ▶ better equips services to cater for children's individual needs.

To be eligible for and maintain approval for CCB purposes services must register for and satisfactorily participate in quality assurance systems as set out in their Funding Agreement.

4.6 Compliance with Child Care Benefit approval and continued approval requirements

Unannounced visits to services are part of the Australian Government's improved compliance strategy to protect the integrity of payments made to support families accessing approved child care. Under the family assistance legislation and the terms of the funding agreement, DEEWR officers may visit a service unannounced.

5. Responsibilities and accountabilities under the Community Support Program

5.1 DEEWR responsibilities and accountabilities

The DEEWR State/Territory and National Offices will be responsible for:

- ▀ consulting with and providing information and advice to Funding Recipients on issues affecting IHC
- ▀ providing all reasonable assistance to Funding Recipients to help them understand their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities as an IHC service provider
- ▀ conducting Quality Assurance assessment of Funding Recipients through the National Childcare Accreditation Council (where applicable)
- ▀ ensuring financial acquittal, accountability and reporting requirements under the Funding Agreement are met
- ▀ reporting on the Program by reference to each State and Territory
- ▀ maintaining and updating these Guidelines
- ▀ providing national direction on all policy issues relating to IHC
- ▀ reporting on IHC at a national level
- ▀ monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of IHC child care on a national basis, including undertaking evaluations
- ▀ ensuring that funding allocation is targeted effectively and equitably across States and Territories, and
- ▀ ensuring a nationally consistent approach to the program is maintained.

5.2 Funding Recipient responsibilities and accountabilities

The Funding Recipient is responsible for providing the best possible care for all children at all times. In accordance with the Funding Agreement, IHC services must be approved for the purposes of CCB and continue to comply with the eligibility rules set out in the Eligibility Determination. For further information please refer to the *Child Care Service Handbook* available at DEEWR's website located at www.deewr.gov.au.

An IHC Funding Recipient is responsible for establishing and maintaining a quality child care service. More information on Funding Recipients' obligations and requirements is available within the 2009–10 Funding Agreement.

6. Funding Agreement

6.1 What are the Funding Agreement requirements?

All providers assessed as being eligible to receive funding will be sent a Funding Agreement from the Department prior to the commencement of the 2009–10 funding period. The Funding Agreement sets out the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the Commonwealth of Australia (as represented by the Department) and the Funding Recipient. All service providers must agree to the terms of the Funding Agreement and sign the Funding Agreement prior to receiving payments.

The Department requires that providers meet reporting and accountability requirements as specified in the Schedule to the Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement must be signed and returned to the Department within 30 days of receipt of the letter of offer.

It is crucial to note that the Funding Agreement is a legally binding document between the provider and the Department which is enforceable by either party upon signing.

6.2 What are the reporting requirements?

Reporting provisions are outlined in the Funding Agreement and include (but are not limited to):

- ▶ Utilisation Reports
- ▶ Activity Reports, and
- ▶ Audited or Certified Financial Acquittal Report, depending on the type of Funding Agreement (for long form or short form agreements respectively).

6.2.1 What are Utilisation Reports?

Utilisation reports provide DEEWR with a summary of the Funding Recipient's operating profile and use of IHC funding. These reports are due on the dates specified within the Funding Agreement. Funding Recipients are required to provide DEEWR with one electronic copy of each Utilisation Report in Microsoft Word format, or as otherwise specified by the Department.

6.2.2 What are Activity Reports?

Activity reports provide DEEWR with a summary of how the Funding Recipient is performing in relation to the Performance Indicators outlined within the Funding Agreement. Funding Recipients are required to report on outcomes of their Activity through Activity Reports on the dates specified within the Funding Agreement. Funding Recipients must provide DEEWR with these reports in the format specified by the Department.

6.2.3 What is the purpose of the Financial Acquittal Report?

The Financial Acquittal Report (whether Audited or Certified) provides DEEWR with information about how the allocated funding was expended and whether the funding was expended in accordance with these Guidelines and Funding Agreement.

Service providers are required to provide either an **Audited Financial Acquittal Report** or a **Certified Financial Acquittal Report** as stated within their 2009–10 Funding Agreement.

Services will be required to return to the Department any funds not spent during the activity period or funds spent other than in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

The Financial Acquittal Report must contain the information as set out in the accompanying Schedule and Terms and Conditions of the Funding Agreement.

The IHC Funding Recipient must ensure that all reports relating to the expenditure of funding are either audited by an Approved Auditor or certified by an authorised Officer in accordance with the Funding Agreement. Recipients are required to provide DEEWR with a hard copy of either the Audited Financial Acquittal Report or the Certified Financial Acquittal Report as specified in the Funding Agreement.

6.3 What is the process when a service ceases to operate?

Services must not cease to operate or substantially change the operations of their services without first giving DEEWR at least 30 days notice in writing. The Department will then notify the service in writing outlining what is needed to finalise their Funding Agreement with the Department.

If the service ceases to operate, or in the event of termination of any Funding Agreement, any Australian Government funds not used or spent other than in accordance with the Funding Agreement must be acquitted and returned to DEEWR by the service within the timeframe specified by the Department. If the amount owed is not repaid within that time it will become a debt due and payable to the Australian Government.

7 Privacy and confidentiality

7.2 Privacy and confidentiality

In accordance with the Privacy Act 1988, DEEWR undertakes to use any information obtained from applicants strictly for the purposes of administering the Community Support Program. DEEWR requires Funding Recipients, in accordance with their Funding Agreements, to comply with the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs). Further information on the IPPs can be found on the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner's website at <http://www.privacy.gov.au>.

7.2 Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) gives the community the right to access information in the Department's possession. Information collected or held by DEEWR may be released on request, unless it is exempted under the relevant provisions of the FOI Act or under specific legislation that provides for the confidentiality of that information. Individuals or bodies wishing to obtain information under the FOI Act should write to the DEEWR Program Contact Officer indicating clearly which information they would like access to.

Service providers are themselves not directly subject to the provisions of the FOI Act. However, documents that originate from DEEWR or another Australian Government body, or are created as a result of the Funding Agreements between the Australian Government and funded providers, are subject to FOI requests.

7.3 Security of Information

Funding Recipients are required to store records relating to management of funding in a secure place and dispose of them in an appropriate manner. The Department is required to maintain all records (hard copy and electronic) in accordance with the *Archives Act 1983* and the Department's Records and Document Management Policy and Guidelines.

8 Complaints

8.2 Complaints – service provider

The Department has a formal complaints service and the service provider can lodge a complaint by telephoning 1300 363 079.

A complaint is defined as:

‘Any expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service offered or provided’
[Australian Standard AS4269–1995].

The Department has a ‘complaints recording system’ to capture complaints to the Department about any of its services or those delivered by DEEWR funded service providers.

For the purposes of the Department’s complaints recording system, a ‘complaint’ does not include:

- ▶ Ministerial correspondence
- ▶ Freedom of Information requests, or
- ▶ Complaints made to service providers, as these should be covered under their own complaints mechanisms in accordance with the relevant Child Care Quality Assurance administered by the National Childcare Accreditation Council.

If the service provider is dissatisfied at any time with our handling of their complaint, they can also contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.gov.au.

9 Contact information

Service providers seeking further information about Australian Government funding for child care services can contact the Department on:

The website	www.deewr.gov.au
By phone	1300 363 079 – request to speak to a child care officer in your State or Territory
By mail	Child Care Programs Branch Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601
TTY	1800 554 609

10 Other useful information

Services seeking further information please contact:

- Child Care Access Hotline - 1800 670 305

The Child Care Access Hotline (the Hotline) is a telephone service funded by the Australian Government that provides families with information to help them choose a child care service that meets their needs.

- Family Assistance Office -1800 050 021

Services needing more information about CCB and Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance administration and calculation, should contact the Family Assistance Office Teams.

- Family Assistance Office Multilingual Call – 13 12 02

Related publications in a variety of languages can also be found online at the multilingual sections of the [Family Assistance Office](#) and [Centrelink](#).

Child Care Service Handbook

The *Child Care Service Handbook* is a reference book for approved child care service providers. The Handbook was developed as a guide to assist services with the administration of CCB and the Child Care Services Support Program.

The printed hard copy version of the *Child Care Service Handbook* has been sent to child care services. If you would like a copy please call 13 36 84.

A PDF version of the Handbook is available below:

- [Child care service Handbook 2008-2009 - PDF Version](#)

Inclusion and Professional Support Program

The Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) provides an integrated and consolidated approach to meeting the inclusion and professional support needs of child care services.

Updated details of the support services and subsidies provided through the IPSP are available at www.deewr.gov.au.

