

Broadside

COMMUNITY CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE (NSW) **NEWS UPDATE** JULY–AUGUST 2011

NQF: what's happening now?



Way back in 2009 when children's services first heard that the Council of Australian Governments had signed a national partnership on a National Quality Agenda, the start date of January 2012 seemed like a long way away.

Now that it is less than five months away, children's services need some certainty around what is expected from them under the NQF.

Community Child Care has always taken a very pro-NQF stance and has also been aware of the enormity of the task faced by governments and the bureaucrats charged with implementing it. A major concern we have had along the way is the lack of meaningful consultation with the sector during the development process.

But here we are, five months before implementation and there are no finalised regulations or assessment processes. We know there must be enormous work and negotiation happening behind closed doors, but this lack of information is not fair to services which must be compliant with the new regulations from 12.01am on 1 January 2012. Where are they? How can services update policies and practices without the regulations?

Where are the professional development processes and information sessions that will accompany the new regulations? What type of resourcing will services receive to help them ensure they are compliant?

What is the final assessment and ratings process? How are services going to learn about and prepare for this? What is the order of assessment of services? Who will be the assessors and what training will they have had?

It is all coming a bit too close for comfort.

The latest information available says that the final regulations will be released this month. There will apparently be support documents and guidance to the sector on interpretations ...but nothing solid has been confirmed.

We understand that the services that are going to be assessed first, will be asked in the latter part of March 2012 to submit their Quality Improvement Plans within six weeks.

The first actual assessments will be in July. We also know that services will get 12 weeks warning of an assessment visit. Who will be assessed first? At this stage we don't know, but we do know that the Department of Education and Communities will publish a schedule of the order that service types will be assessed.

DEEWR believes, at this stage, that they will release the final assessment process in September or October this year.

continued on page 2 >

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We know that: every state and territory is looking at their potential assessor workforce; there will be a national decision made on what qualifications assessors will require; and that plans are underway for the assessors to undertake 'rigorous' training.

So, what do we know in summary?

- Regulations may be released this month (and will need to be adhered to from January);
- the finalised assessment process may be released in September or October;
- the earliest anyone will have to submit a Quality Improvement Plan will be the end of April; and
- the first assessment visit will take place in NSW in July.

What don't we know? Perhaps the most important thing we don't know is how services will be informed and receive professional development about the process. There is no process currently in place to educate services about the new Regulations. This is of particular concern as this is the first change to be implemented.

NQF Preparation Working Groups

Community Child Care, on behalf of Children's Services Central, has set up NQF Preparation Working Groups to allow groups of services within a region to come together and jointly prepare for the NQF.

The working groups are designed especially for services that want to get ready for the introduction of the NQF but are looking for direction, guidance and the value of working with other services.

The Preparation Working Groups allow directors/co-ordinators and educators to come together with the guidance of a skilled facilitator to start the NQF preparation process. Meetings are occurring every three weeks at a different preschool/long day care centre in the local area.

Together with facilitators, groups are mapping out their needs and establishing how to support one another. The Working Groups will initially run for five sessions (two-hour or three-hour) then the group will decide upon the continuing direction.

Although most of the Working Groups have now started, new ones are being formed in the Blue Mountains and Bega. If there is not a current working group in your area and there are a number of services that would like to form a group, Community Child Care and Children's Services Central are open to establishing more groups. Please email us at: info@cscentral.org.au



Early Childhood Teacher Cost Contribution Scheme

Some more information has emerged about the Teacher Costs Contribution Scheme – including the fact that it will operate for one year only!

In information sent to services about the data collection process, the Department has announced that preschools will not get their payment until December, and that other NSW Government-funded services will 'have the opportunity to apply later in the year'.

The exact wording of the announcement about data collection and the Scheme is as follows:

'This year more detailed information on individual staff will be collected to determine eligibility for funding under the Early Childhood Teacher Cost Contribution Scheme. The Scheme will operate for 2011–2012 only, and will be reviewed during this period. Preschool providers will receive payments through the Scheme in December 2011 based on staffing data submitted during the August data collection.

'Please note that NSW Government-funded services, other than preschools, eligible for the Early Childhood Teacher Cost Contribution Scheme will have the opportunity to apply later in the year. Further details about the process for applying and submitting data will be forwarded shortly.'

Better wages and conditions NOW!

With the workforce census letting us know that 54 per cent of NSW preschool staff and 50 per cent of NSW long day care staff are not satisfied with their pay and conditions, Community Child Care is pleased to be supporting union campaigns to fix these issues. The following articles were provided by the unions for inclusion in *Broadside*.

United Voice:

BIG STEPS IN CHILDCARE campaign

United Voice's campaign is based on directors, educators, parents and community supporters around the country coming together on national and local levels to solve the crisis in early childhood education and care.

This crisis has arisen because dedicated childcare professionals are leaving the industry for jobs with less responsibility and more pay. And who would blame them? A qualified childcare professional earns around \$18 per hour to educate and care for our greatest resource.

The Big Steps in Childcare campaign aims to transform the childcare profession into what it should be – stable, respected and well-paid. Recognising that neither employers nor parents have the capacity to pay professional wage rates the campaign aims to secure dedicated Federal Government funding for wages.

To achieve this, Childcare Crisis Summit meetings are currently being held throughout Australia.

In NSW, there are going to be 3 Crisis Summits:

- Sydney CBD – Saturday, 17 September;
- Lismore, NSW – Saturday, 24 September;
- Penrith CBD – dates to be confirmed.

To register your attendance at a NSW Summit and for venue information, please go to <http://bigsteps.org.au/get-involved/childcare-crisis-summits>

org.au/get-involved/childcare-crisis-summits

Join us, and keep up to date with the campaign:

- Check out BigSteps website: www.bigsteps.org.au
- Find us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/bigstepscampaign
- Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/bigsteps



NSW/ACT Independent Education Union campaign: **TEACHERS ARE TEACHERS**

Early childhood teachers working in community-based preschools and long day care centres earn up to 20 per cent less than teachers working in state government preschools and independent and Catholic primary schools. A full-time early childhood teacher can earn \$14,000 less per year than other teachers.

The IEU has declared that enough is enough: Teachers are teachers and it is time to stop this lack of pay parity now! The campaign has now moved to phase two and is focusing at the moment on small fortnightly actions teachers can do within their service – sending an email, making a phone call, etc.

The much-loved IEU Early Childhood Conference is coming up on Saturday, 10 September in Sydney. It is a great chance for teachers to network and get a campaign update from General Secretary, Dick Shearman, and Gabe Connell, IEU Vice President and teacher from Albury Preschool.

The conference will also include keynote presentations on foetal and early childhood determinants of adult health and wellbeing and working with Gen-X and Y parents. Members \$40/ non-members \$110. Call (02) 9779 3200 for more information or to register.

To find out what is happening in the campaign:

- Go online: www.teachersareteachers.org.au
- Find us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/Teachersareteachers
- Sign up to our newsletter via the website:
www.teachersareteachers.org.au



My Time, Our Place!

We now have an endorsed Framework for School Aged Care. *My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia* was endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in July. The Framework will be incorporated in the National Quality Standard and ensure that children in school age care will have opportunities to engage in leisure and play-based experiences which are responsive to their needs, interests, and choices.

The Framework for School Age Care builds on the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and extends the principles, practice and outcomes to accommodate the contexts and age range of the children and young people who attend school age care settings.

A final copy of the Framework is expected to be available from the DEEWR website shortly.

Mentors and protégés needed

Community Child Care is searching for directors, co-ordinators, managers, management committee members, or owners of children's services who are interested in mentoring another person in children's services to develop new skills and knowledge over a 12-month period.

We are also searching for people who would like to be matched with a more experienced children's services professional as their protégé.

This program, being run by Community Child Care on behalf of Children's Services Central, is a great way for people in the sector to get access to one-on-one support over a sustained period.

Mentors are paid, and get to consolidate and expand their own skills by assisting someone else.

Applications close on 31 August, so get yours in today. Mentor applications can be found at:

www.cccnsw.org.au/pdfs/eoi-mentor.pdf

Protégé applications can be found at:

www.cccnsw.org.au/pdfs/eoi-protege.pdf

More information? Phone Melissa on (02) 8922 6444 or email: MelissaWoodhouse@cccnsw.org.au

Upcoming Training

NQF – Exploring the National Quality Standard in Early Childhood Services	HORNSBY PENRITH GOULBURN	23 Aug 6 Sep 21 Sep
NQF – Information Session for Preschools and Long Day Care Centres	WEBINAR	31 Aug 12 Oct
Purposeful Philosophies	CAMDEN	31 Aug
Engaging Environments for Early Years Services	OURIMBAH	1 Sep
Work Effectively with Families to Care for the Child (CHCRF301D)	NOWRA	7 Sep
Steps to Success for New Leaders	GOROKAN	14 Sep
Fab 4s and 5s: Programming for children in the year prior to school	CAMPBELLTOWN	15 Sep
Educational Leadership – Guiding Your Program's Pedagogy	CAMMERAY	20 Sep
Reignite Your Passion: Renewal for Experienced Directors	WOLLONGONG	27 Oct 28 Oct

For more information go to: www.cscentral.org.au

QUALIFICATIONS for children's services professionals



Community Child Care Co-operative offers Nationally Recognised (Accredited) training courses for people working in children's services. Community Child Care offers Certificate III and Diploma courses in Children's Services, in small Business Management and in Training and Assessment and short courses in food handling and child protection.

CALL **8922 6424** OR GO TO:
www.cccnsw.org.au/rto

Make 2011 the year you – or your staff – acquire more qualifications!

Holding up a mirror: ECEC data available

Which profession is this? In NSW there are over 30,000 of us. We are both reasonably old, and fairly young.

We are overwhelmingly white and female. We work part time. 30 per cent of us have degrees and 30 per cent are untrained. We like our jobs and yet we change jobs a lot. We think we are underpaid... and we are!

Yes, you've got it! It is the children's services sector. The National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce Census 2010 data collection results are now available, including detailed NSW data. The Census was conducted by the Australian Government in partnership with state and territory governments to 'better inform the approach used by governments and the early childhood sector to develop the ECEC workforce'.

Community Child Care has extracted the most riveting bits about NSW preschool and long day care staff.

How many of us are there?

- There are 7,613 staff in preschools in NSW and 23,238 staff in long day care centres.

How old are we?

- Just over half of the LDC workforce is under 35, compared to around one-fifth of the preschool workforce.
- Over a quarter of the preschool workforce is over 50 years old, with 13.2% over 55. This compares to 16% of the LDC workforce with only 8% over 55.

What type of people are we?

- 4.3% of the preschool workforce and 1.9% of LDC is Indigenous.
- Nationally, 3.6% of preschool staff are males, as are 2.6% of LDC staff.

How many hours do we work?

- 72% of preschool staff work less than 34 hours per week as do 48% of LDC staff.

How educated are we?

- There are 4,163 early childhood teachers in NSW preschools and LDC services.
- Almost 30% of preschool staff have a degree and 15% of LDC staff. A bit more than half of the degrees held by preschool and LDC staff are four-year degrees.
- 23% of preschool staff have a Diploma, and 28% of LDC staff have a Diploma.

continued on page 6 >



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- Almost 29% of preschool staff and a quarter of LDC staff are untrained. This means over 1,700 preschool staff and almost 5,000 LDC staff will need to get a Certificate III or be enrolled in one by 2014.
- Over one third of staff had achieved their qualification through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Do we want to become more educated?

- Almost one fifth of preschool staff and 35% of LDC staff are currently studying – one quarter of these were studying for a degree and one third for a Certificate III.
- Almost half of those surveyed said they would like to further their studies but the cost is too high.
- Almost half said it was not worth the time and money because the consequent wage increase is too small.
- 41% of preschool and 34% of LDC were not interested in any further study.

How long have we worked in this sector for?

- 38% of LDC staff have been working in the sector for less than three years. Almost 29% have been working over 10 years, if they have a qualification.
- 66.6% of LDC staff have been employed with the same service for less than three years. 9% have been with the same service for over 10 years.

Do we like our jobs?

- 91.9% of preschool staff are satisfied with their job, as are 87.2% of their LDC counterparts.
- 54% of preschool staff and 50% of LDC staff are not satisfied with their pay and conditions.
- Almost half of preschool staff and slightly more than half LDC staff thought their job was stressful.
- One quarter of LDC staff and one fifth of LDC staff may leave their current job because of dissatisfaction with pay and conditions.
- 20% would seek employment outside of the sector.

How much do we earn?

- Only 37% of preschool staff and 16% of LDC staff earned over \$52,000 a year.
- Around 50% of full time preschool staff and 62% of LDC staff earned between \$31,000–\$52,000 per year.

Do children at our services get access to a program?

- 54% of preschools had a preschool program run by a four-year trained teacher, 24% had one run by a three-year trained teacher. *(Does this suggest that 12% of preschools do not employ a university qualified teacher?)*
- 35% of LDCs had a preschool program run by a four-year trained teacher 15% had one run by a three-year trained teacher.
- 318 children in NSW are taken to a preschool program delivered by a different service!
- Almost 64,000 children in NSW participated in a preschool program within their own service.

It's the student support that sets ECTARC above all the rest.

An ECTARC Training Officer is available at all times during business hours, 8:30am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, to take your call. Studying via correspondence does not mean you are on your own. The ECTARC team is there to support you every step of the way.

For information on all ECTARC programs please visit www.ectarc.com.au or call 02 4223 1111 to speak to an ECTARC Training Officer.



SAVE THE DATE November 12–13, 2011

in, about
and for...



Early Childhood environments and the NQS

Creating Irresistible (and Sustainable) Environments for Early Childhood Services that meet the National Quality Standard Conference

This two-day conference presented by CCC and the Early Childhood Environmental Education Network (ECEEN) in Sydney is designed to challenge participants to create irresistible and sustainable environments for their services. More information soon, but in the meantime, save the date! **NOVEMBER 12–13, 2011.**