

# COMMUNIQUÉ

18 May 2020

The Children and Families Tripartite Forum (the Forum) held its second meeting of 2020 on 18 May 2020. The meeting was chaired by Ms Donna Ah Chee, who welcomed members and observers from the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments, Northern Territory Council of Social Service, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency and Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory.

The focus of the Forum meeting was the response to the Productivity Commission Study into Expenditure on Children in the Northern Territory (Productivity Commission Study). The meeting commenced with a Welcome to Country from Larrakia elder and Director in the Reform Management Office, Dr Christine Fejo-King.

The Productivity Commission Study was publicly released on 8 April 2020, and explores how governments can work together more effectively so that their funding develops the strengths and protective factors that help to keep children in the Northern Territory safe and well. The Forum members expressed their overall support for the recommendations outlined in the Productivity Commission Study Report and noted they were pleased that the Productivity Commission accepted and incorporated the feedback provided by the Forum members.

The Forum agreed and advised that the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments should support and implement the agreed recommendations of the Productivity Commission Study. The forum agreed that the vehicle for actioning this would be the development and implementation of the 10-year Generational Strategy for Children and Families in the Northern Territory. The 10-year Generational Strategy was conceived and agreed through the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory.

At the 20 February meeting, Forum members agreed in principle to an outline schema for developing the 10-year Generational Strategy. An adapted version of the outline schema that incorporated the Productivity Commission Study's recommendations was discussed and endorsed by members at this meeting (Attachment A).

Forum members acknowledged that the 10-year Generational Strategy is critical for children and families in the Northern Territory. Forum Members recommitted to establish a working group comprised of Forum member organisations to commence the development of the 10-year Generational Strategy within one month of today's meeting.

The Forum agreed in principle to expanding its role in accordance with the recommendation in the Productivity Commission Study Report to providing advice to governments on funding arrangements for children and family services across the Northern Territory. The Forum also agreed that with this new role, the Tripartite Forum's 'management of conflicts of interest' protocol needed to be revised to ensure increased transparency in decision making. Forum members agreed that discussion on individual services or providers would be explicitly excluded from forum discussions.

At the Next Forum meeting, Forum members intend to discuss the progress of the development of the 10-year Generational Strategy as well as the status of key initiatives under the Northern Territory Government's Reform program.



## Attachment A – Outline Schema

