



The Statement of Commitment Review Consultation

Feedback for carers

What this consultation was about

The South Australian Statement of Commitment to Foster and Kinship Carers (the Statement of Commitment) was jointly made by the Department for Child Protection (DCP), Connecting Foster and Kinship Carers SA Inc, and Child and Family Focus SA. It recognises the importance of working in partnership and valuing carers as an essential and respected part of the care team for children and young people.

The Statement of Commitment was first published more than 3 years ago. It is time to review the Statement of Commitment to make sure it continues to meet the needs of family-based carers in South Australia. In response to initial carer feedback, a draft refresh of the Statement of Commitment was prepared.

Through this consultation opportunity, carers were invited to read the draft Statement of Commitment and let us know their thoughts, feedback and ideas via a short survey. Feedback collected through this consultation will inform the final updated version of the Statement of Commitment.

Who we spoke to

We sought feedback from all types of family-based carers, including:

- Foster carers
- Kinship carers
- Foster and kinship (combined) carers
- Specific child only carers
- Respite carers.

What we asked

The consultation was focused on the following questions:

- Have you heard about the current Statement of Commitment?
- Have you talked about the Statement of Commitment with your case worker or support worker?
- Do you have any feedback on the draft update of the South Australian Statement of Commitment to Foster and Kinship carers?

Our approach



Between July 2024 and August 2024, DCP used an **online survey** (also available as hardcopy) to hear from family-based carers.



Carers were **invited to participate** in a variety of ways, including through the Minister's letter to carers, a Facebook post and a Carer News online article. Non-government organisations (NGO), including foster agencies, were also made aware of this opportunity, with emails asking support agency staff to promote this consultation to the carers they work with.



167 carers responded to the online survey.



What you told us

We heard that carers support:



The Statement of Commitment and how it assists carers in understanding what they can expect in their caring roles and the responsibilities of the peak bodies, the department and support agencies in upholding this.



The proposed principles, where we commit to inform, support, consult, value and respect carers.

77% of carers had heard about the Statement of Commitment previously.

Carers also requested that the Statement of Commitment:



Acknowledges and values the deep knowledge carers have about the children in their care.



Better reflects the diversity of carers, and the cultural strengths carers bring to their role.



Acknowledges the different emotional, social and financial impacts of caring.



Strengthens the responsibility of the department and its agencies to demonstrate accountability, consistency and fairness.

64% of carers told us they had not talked about the Statement of Commitment with their DCP case worker.

Many carers also shared feedback and ideas about the **implementation** of the Statement of Commitment. We recognise that how we work with carers and staff to embed this in practice will be very important. We appreciate the comments and suggestions we received about how to do this well, and this feedback will help to guide our next phase of work implementing the refreshed Statement of Commitment.

What happens next?

Feedback provided by carers is being incorporated into the updated Statement of Commitment. Feedback is also guiding the next phase of this work, which will promote awareness of the Statement of Commitment with carers and staff and drive fulsome implementation the refreshed Statement of Commitment in practice.

DCP sincerely thanks all who took the time to participate in these consultations and provide feedback.

We appreciate you. We hear you. We're working on improvements.

