



Pennant Hills War Memorial Children's Centre Association Inc.

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This is a submission on behalf of Pennant Hills War Memorial Children's Centre to the productivity inquiry into childcare and early childhood learning

Pennant Hills War Memorial children's centre is a 60 place that is a Community based not for profit preschool. Located in Pennant Hills NSW that has operated since 1948.

1. What outcomes from early childhood education and care are desirable over the next decade?

All children have a right to low cost high quality children care. Families should all have the same fee structure regardless of the type of care they use LDC /preschool / family day care remote services or high income areas

2. What roles should government play in ECEC?

The government should fund the wages for educators in all early childhood services to increase the wage levels

3. Any international models worth implementing? *The Scandinavia countries*

4. Is there a demand/supply mismatch?

I hear there are not enough positions for the under 2.

In our area of Pennant Hills we now have an over supply of positions due to increases in private sector places and there are still more being built.

Is flexible care needed? I think currently there is a lot of flexibility in child care but not all families want 48 weeks care a year and are often forced to because of LDC funding.

5. What types of ECEC systems work?

Community based not-for-profit as all resources go toward the quality of educators and programs not making a large profit.

This can be seen by the rating in the NQF with the majority of these services reaching exceeding standards.

6. Effect of entry age and enrolment on children's learning?

All children should have access as 4 year olds. Children with delays earlier

7. The school day – should this be extended?

*No. children attend formal school for 6 hours and **only** some do extended hours so why should small children in some cases do 11 or 12 hours a day.*

8. How important is accessibility, flexibility, affordability and quality to parents?

Very important especially Quality don't think it is appropriate for the words like sometimes being supervised use to reflect child care.

9. Why is there an increased demand?

Because more families particularly in cities need to both work full time in order to buy houses

10. How do parents find services?

Via the internet or word of mouth our reputation.

11. What are employer's views on assisting staff to access childcare, and what issues do they have? *Some employer are flexible with work arrangements to allow families access to child care they want and it is becoming an option to work at home for part of the time now*

There is a limited range of skilled educators.

Due to the low wages for teachers in child care compared to those who work in formal schools and child care workers can earn more in retail with no responsibility than working in child care.

12. How has the sector responded to growth in demand?

But building lots of private sector services that are all making mega \$ and reducing State Government \$

13. What are the viability pressures?

Attracting children in areas that are over supplied with services, attracting and maintaining staff with low government assistance for state funded preschools, increased fees to families who cannot claim a CCR means that we community based not for profit are no longer competitive.

14. What are the barriers to expansion in ECEC services?

For us there are no more children in our area that don't access child care

15. Who meets needs of additional needs children and how well are these needs met – could it be done better?

Children with needs are poorly supported. We will receive \$45 per day for a child and this is only for 15 hours a week so the rest of the cost for the support workers for these children are paid by all the families of the service.

16. Which service types work well where?

Community based preschool

17. Cost issues. Price competition, family financial issues, etc.?

Cost is becoming an issue for our families particularly with the recent increase in real estate prices in our area. As families can't get a rebate in preschool it is often cheaper for them to use LDC even if they don't want to or need to because of the rebate.

18. What are the benefits and costs of current regulations?

It is great to have a national standard and we all should be wanted to be rated as exceeding. If you operate a good service and don't take short cuts this is very easy to achieve.

19. What are the effects of increased staff ratios and qualifications for children?

I think that the lower the ratio the higher quality of care. How can 1 person look after 5-6 children under the age of 2? We employ 3 educators for 20 children. In 3-6 yrs rooms.

20. Are services OK with the pace of new ratios and what are cost impacts to services and families?

Yes we are certainly fine with this we have had plenty of time to adapt and change. The cost has not impacted on us.

21. Workforce shortages and qualifications – who is doing what and is it working?

If we paid a higher wage we would attract and maintain our staff. It is mainly ladies who work in child care as a result of the low financial remunerations. People don't work in child care to make money they do because they are passionate about children education.

22. Is the NQS clear enough for providers?

It is a document that gives us the opportunity to have flexibility in what we deliver to meet the needs of our community. Whilst it is not prescriptive it has been easy to implement and understand.

23. Is My Child useful for families?

I am not sure how many families use it. Families are encouraged to visit services and decide for them self about the centre.

24. NQF: its impact on structure, operations, cost and profitability?

In no way

25. Are services changing provision because of the NQF?

In no way we have always aimed to be a quality service and now we have a rating of exceeding in all area I guess that is the proof

26. What are the regulatory burdens?

No we should be regulated as we look after children who don't always have a voice and who can't alert parents of problems with their care.

27. How could the NQF and other regulations be improved (implementation and enforcement)?

We all should be held accountable. Services who receive meeting or working towards rating SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH SUPPORT TO IMPROVE AND BE SPOT CHECKED TO ENSURE THEY ARE DOING WHAT IS REQUIRED. BECAUSE IF YOU CAN'T GET IT RIGHT ON ONE DAY EVERY 3 YEARS AND YOU KNOW THE DAY OF A RATING VISIT..... So WHAT HAPPENING THE REST OF THE TIME.....

28. Are there cheaper ways to achieve ECEC regulatory objectives?

Child care should not be about reducing costs by investing in children.

29. Would self-regulation work?

Not all people are honest we need to be independently reviewed.

30. What type of effect is there from government support to families and childcare providers?

Cover the cost of educators and some administration cost.

31. Is the level of overall government support for ECEC appropriate?

For us the NSW government commitment to fund us is appalling and it is now a user pay system in community based services.

32. Is government support effective and clear for families and services?

Could there be any improvements? NSW has had a lot of changes to funding that has been implemented without a long or any consultation with the whole sector.

33. Is the distinction between approved and registered care necessary?

No we all should be treated the same and all families should be eligible for CCR

34. Should support be paid directly to parents or to services?

To the parents to ensure that it is used as it is intended to going into operates pockets or else only in wages to staff if it is paid to services.

35. What are the advantages and disadvantages of different payment models?

Not all families are treated equally and it affects the choices families can make about how they want their child cared for

36. What are the tax deductibility issues?

Not all families get this it depended on the care model you use.

37. Should we fund additional childcare types?

Not sure what other types you mean except maybe informal care and this may be difficult to decide what type of care you would fund. Grandma....

38. Funding: how can it be rationalised and streamlined?

All children receive the same amount of funding regardless of the type of care the access

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