



To
The Commissioner
Childcare and Early Childhood Learning Inquiry
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
Via Email: childcare@pc.gov.au

30 January 2014

SUBJECT: THE NEED TO PROMOTE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Dear Sir/Madam

Our submission relates to the use of technology in the Early Childhood sector. In our view, technology can play a significant role in reducing some of the 'regulatory burdens' imposed on childcare services as a result of the NQF. We feel that the industry has not yet had sufficient time to optimise its use of technology when it comes to implementing aspects of the NQF and as a result, some of the negative sentiment surrounding the administrative burdens may be misplaced.

We encourage the Commission to consider recommendations which facilitate and promote further use of technology and promote innovation within the sector. Detailed analysis of such recommendations is beyond the scope of this submission, however, in broad terms, recommendations may include:

1. Incentives and assistance for software and other technology developers to develop customized proprietary technologies for the Early Education sector which are designed to improve efficiencies. A collaborative effort between developers, service providers and/or the government at the early phases of development will enable practical solutions to be found;
2. Facilitation of greater collaboration among educators. The government can have oversight over such collaborative arrangements and be available to provide guidance upon request, however, technology such as social media and other internet based services, can be used to increase the connectivity among educators; and
3. Support for educator and operator training in relation to the use of technology – the Early Education sector risks lagging behind in its adoption of technology and a focus on the implementation of technology is required.

Our personal experience

We have achieved significant improvements in efficiency and productivity through the implementation of technology within our 75 place, Brisbane based, child care centre. Technology we have implemented includes portable tablet devices and reporting software with easy to use links to the NQF and EYLF. We have also designed and developed custom software to meet our own requirements. We have designed two proprietary pieces of software which can be accessed by our educators on the go from tablet devices, smartphones or computers.

We have found the availability of various forms of technology with an adequate level of practical training for our staff on how to use the technology has reduced the time taken for our staff to plan for and report on classroom activities. This has had flow on effects in reducing stress for our staff and increased quality of care for children attending our service. We have also noticed significant decrease in the use of paper and have found it far more efficient to communicate with parents and guardians.

We thank you for your consideration of our submission and will be happy to discuss further if you have any further queries.

Kind regards

Fahim Khondaker

Co-founder

EYLF Apps Pty Ltd