

**Early Childhood Development Workforce Productivity Commission
Draft Research Report Response**

Submission by KU Children's Services

Introduction

KU Children's Services is Australia's leading provider of early childhood education and care, and has been enriching the lives of children, families and communities since 1895. We are a leading national advocate for early childhood education and care and lead by example and support other community based, not for profit services which aspire to provide similarly high standards.

Our vision is: *Every family is able to access affordable, high quality early childhood education and care for their children.*

This response is made in support of our original submission in regards to the EC Development Workforce Productivity Commission Issue Paper and the following points are further clarification of KU's support of this consultative process.

3.6 KU supports the recommendation that governments assist services to access adequate training in the regulatory system. This assistance may take the form of financial support to develop and/or access appropriate training and resources.

5.1 KU supports permitting 3 year university trained teachers to deliver the preschool program whilst the capacity of 4 year university trained teacher's increases. This will go a long way to ensure qualified teachers are employed in early childhood services, providing quality education and care programs.

KU would like to stress that in order to retain 3 and 4 year university trained teachers salaries and conditions of all teachers working in all early childhood services will need to be competitive with those offered in the public school sector. We would equally stress that in order to encourage existing staff to undertake the Certificate III requirement and to attract those already with this minimum qualification, salaries and conditions will need to increase.

8.1 To ensure that children with additional needs benefit fully from the ECEC reforms, KU would support:

- Reviewing the level of funding to ensure all children with additional needs can be included, all costs and wages of an inclusion support worker are covered and the manner in which funding is made available
- Streamlining the application process, make funding available in a regular and timely manner and make funding multiple year, with the ability to readjust where needed.

10.5 KU supports the need for governments to ensure ECEC training is of a consistently acceptable and high standard. There is a need to provide additional resources and support to professional learning and development to early childhood professionals to ensure there is regular access to high quality, research based training. This support needs to include adequate financial support that allows early childhood professionals to access professional learning opportunities during work hours. With the increase in online training financial support is required to support IT & T based equipment for services.

14.2 In recommending that ECEC services meet cultural competency standards KU would seek to ask for clear and effective guidelines as to how to ensure cultural competency is facilitated, valued and recognised.

15.3 Integrated early childhood settings should be based on education as a universal right and supported by a suite of child and families services delivered by a multi disciplinary team. An investment and commitment to ongoing Australian based research in this area is required to ensure programs are delivering positive outcomes for children and families. Training institutions need to reflect the components required to effectively lead a multi disciplinary team within these integrated environments.

15.4 There is a need to focus on the training of new graduates around management and leadership and they are the next generation of leaders in early childhood services. The operating environments of these services are complex small business units that require managers to have broad range of skills and expertise. With the increase in acquittal procedures and complexities around service delivery, early childhood graduates need to be equipped with the skills to undertake this broad level manage through their training at University.