Changes to the Community Support Programme for Family Day Care Service Operators

Overview

The Assistant Minister for Education, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, announced changes to the Community Support Programme (CSP) which took effect from 1 April 2014. The changes introduced similar eligibility criteria to those which apply to other care types for new Family Day Care service providers applying for funding under the CSP, as outlined in revised programme guidelines.

From 1 July 2015, all existing Family Day Care services seeking to access CSP funding will be assessed under the revised guidelines, which include the eligibility criteria. In addition, an annual cap of $250,000 on CSP Operational Support payments will be introduced for Family Day Care services.

CSP is provided directly to Family Day Care service operators not educators. These changes do not prevent Family Day Care service operators from establishing a service and providing care to families. Neither do they prevent a service from administering Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate.

Key dates

During May 2014, the Department of Education will write to all Family Day Care services in receipt of CSP funding to formally notify them that their current CSP funding agreement will be terminated effective 30 June 2015.

The Government is providing Family Day Care service operators with 12 months notice of the changes to allow time for services to make adjustments to their business models if required.

All FDC services wishing to apply for CSP after 30 June 2015 will be required to reapply using a new application form and must be assessed under the new guidelines.

Any service found to be eligible under the new guidelines will be offered a funding agreement with an end date of 30 June 2016.

Services that meet the eligibility criteria will be eligible for Operational Support and, if they meet additional requirements, Set Up Assistance and Regional Travel Assistance Grant payments.

The funding agreement for eligible Family Day Care services will include a clause limiting the financial year amount payable in Operational Support funding to $250,000.

Family Day Care eligibility criteria

FDC Operational Support is funding to support FDC services with the ongoing, day to day costs of delivering quality, affordable child care. This payment is targeted primarily towards services:

- operating in the most disadvantaged communities, and
- in rural, regional and remote locations.

For a Family Day Care service to be eligible for CSP funding the service must meet the following conditions through the application process.

Specific eligibility criteria for FDC Operational Support

To be eligible for Operational Support Your FDC service must:

- not be in receipt of any other ongoing CSP funding, such as Budget Based Funding;

- demonstrate to the department's satisfaction that there is unmet child care demand in the area(s) your service proposes to operate in; and

- meet the location based eligibility criteria that apply to your FDC service as set out below:

    (1) for services proposing to provide the majority (51 per cent or more) of their child care in 'Major City' ARIA+ locations:

    your service must be the sole FDC service provider located in the SA3 in which your service is located and the SEIFA index applying to 50% or more of the SA2 within the SA3 must be the lowest SEIFA decile;

    (2) for services proposing to provide the majority (51 per cent or more) of their child care in an 'Inner Regional' ARIA+ location;

    your service must be the sole FDC service provider located in the SA2 in which your service is located;

    (3) for services proposing to provide the majority (51 per cent or more) of their child care in an 'Outer Regional', 'Remote' or 'Very Remote' ARIA+ location;

    your service must be the sole FDC service provider located in the SA2 in which your service is located.

Where, for the purposes of the location based eligibility criteria above, the ARIA+, SA2 or SA3 in which your service is located is as determined by the department, taking into account where your Coordination Unit and the majority of your educators are located to ensure that the objectives of the CSP are met.

The definition of 'the majority of their child care' is based on the number of expected educators in a location/s that your FDC service is proposing to provide care, as determined by the Department of Education.

Undertaking a preliminary self-assessment

A Family Day Care service applying for Operational Support and/or Set Up Assistance must meet the criteria outlined above. The following information and websites may be used to self-assess against the criteria to determine if a service may be eligible or not and help contribute to the application.

a) Not being in receipt of any other ongoing CSP funding

There are a number of funding programmes under the CSP, including Budget Based Funding. If a Family Day Care service is in receipt of any payments under these programmes, the service will not be eligible for Operational Support and/or Set Up Assistance.

b) Demonstrating to the department's satisfaction that there is unmet child care demand

To be eligible for CSP funding all new Family Day Care services must demonstrate that there is unmet demand for Family Day Care in the area(s) in which the service is proposing to operate.

Examples of information that may be provided in the application process include:

- A demonstrated understanding of who and where the child care services are that already service the area; e.g. on the MyChild website you can search a database to find child care centres in your local area.

- Information from local organisations that may have an understanding of unmet demand; e.g. local child care associations may have information on the types of child care particular communities are looking for;

- Waiting lists for the applying service or other existing child care services; and

Demographic data that demonstrates demand is increasing beyond the capacity of existing child care organisations to service; e.g. population growth, new industries, evidence of families working non-standard hours, information on the

employment, training and educational needs of the local community.

A list of useful websites is provided on page 5.

c) Meeting the location based eligibility criteria

To assess eligibility under the location based criteria you may find the following information useful:

ARIA+ Remoteness Location

ARIA+ measures remoteness in terms of access along the road network from populated localities to each of five categories of Service Centre. Localities that are more remote have less access to Service Centres; those that are less remote have greater access to Service Centres.

ARIA+ is a continuous varying index with values ranging from 0 (high accessibility) to 15 (high remoteness), based on road distance measurements from over 12,000 populated localities to the nearest Service Centres in five categories based on population size.

To find the ARIA + of the area/s in which you are proposing to provide care;

1. Go to www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/map
2. Enter the suburb or area that you wish to view under the 'Text Search' function
3. Once you have the required area showing on the map, click the drop down box on the top right of the map and scroll down to 'Remoteness Areas'
4. Click once on the map in the required area and the Remoteness Area will be shown underneath the map on the left once the area has been shaded
   - Major Cities of Australia
   - Inner Regional area of Australia
   - Outer Regional area of Australia
   - Remote area of Australia
   - Very Remote area of Australia

Statistical Areas

The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) is the ABS's geographical framework. The ASGS has been utilised for release of data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. The vast majority of ABS spatial data will be based on the ASGS by 2014.

The ASGS splits Australia up into over 350,000 discreet areas, called Mesh Blocks. These combine into larger and larger blocks (SA1 to SA4). The department uses the SA2 and SA3 level of Mesh Blocks for the purposes of specific eligibility criteria in these Guidelines.

Statistical Area 2 (SA2):

SA2 are a medium-sized general purpose area built from whole Statistical Areas Level Ones (SA1s). Their aim is to represent a community that interacts together socially and economically. There are 2214 SA2s covering the whole of Australia without gaps or overlaps.

Statistical Area 3 (SA3):

SA3 are a region-sized general purpose area built from whole Statistical Areas Level Twos (SA2s). Their aim is to represent a community that interacts together socially and economically. There are 351 SA3s covering the whole of Australia without gaps or overlaps.

To find out the Statistical Area/s in which you are proposing to provide care;

1. Go to www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/map
2. Enter the suburb or area that you wish to view under the 'Text Search' function
3. Once you have the required area showing on the map, click the drop down box on the top right of the map and scroll down to 'Statistical Areas Level 2' or 'Statistical Areas Level 3'
4. Click once on the map in the required area and the Statistical Area will be shaded

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

These indexes rank geographic areas across Australia in terms of their socio-economic characteristics and are created by combining information collected in the five-yearly Census . There are four different indexes, each representing a slightly different concept.

Socio-economic characteristics are sometimes abstract and difficult to measure, so the indexes aim to capture these abstract concepts by combining information that is related to the concept. The indexes are rankings; with each index ranking different geographic areas of Australia according to a 'score' that is created for the area based on characteristics of people, families and dwellings within that area.

The department uses the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD), a general socio-economic index that summarises a range of information about the economic and social resources of people and households within an area, for the purposes of specific eligibility criteria in these Guidelines.

To find out the SEIFA index of the area/s in which you are proposing to provide care;

1. Go to maps.aedi.org.au
2. Scroll down and click on the state/territory that you wish to view
3. Use the 'Local Community' search function to find the suburb that you wish to view
4. Click on '2012' under the 'Community Results Table' (the middle option)
5. Locate the relevant area on the right of the table and view the SEIFA score on the left
6. The lowest SEIFA decile are areas that score below 874.268

d) Useful Websites

The following websites contain information to assist with your application.

Australian Bureau of Statistics	Information about Australian communities, including education and socio-economic data and special surveys.	www.abs.gov.au
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare, including reports on child health, development and wellbeing.	www.aihw.gov.au
My Child Website	Information about early childhood education and care services in Australian communities.	www.mychild.gov.au
State Government websites	Information on state government departments and agencies, including relevant infrastructure and services.	www.nt.gov.au www.act.gov.au www.nsw.gov.au www.sa.gov.au www.tas.gov.au www.wa.gov.au www.vic.gov.au www.qld.gov.au
Australian Government public data sets	State/Territory public data sets covering a wide range of categories including community, culture, environment, health, planning, recreation and transport.	data.australia.gov.au
Family Day Care Australia	The peak body for Australian Family Day Care.	www.familydaycare.com.au
Playgroups, preschool and childcare associations	Information on childcare and playgroups in states and territories in Australia	www.playgroupaustralia.com.au - contains links to state/territory contacts
My Neighbourhood data	Suburb-level information on child and family activities and resources, childcare and schools, general and specialist health services, family services and support, government services	www.raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood
Community socio-demographic snapshot	Socio-demographic information and maps for all local communities in Australia based on ABS data. There is also access to services such as local demographic forecasting, local housing reports and economic profiles for local communities (with a charge).	home.id.com.au
University of Adelaide	Mapping data on ARIA+ and Statistical Areas	http://www.spatialonline.com.au/ARIA_2011
Australian Early Development Index	The AEDI is a measure of how young children are developing in Australian communities	www.rch.org.au/aedi

More information

For more information on the CSP please visit www.education.gov.au/community-support-programme-guidelines