

IMPORTANT UPDATE
Re: CSGP Streaming Process
Context and Analysis for Youth Services



Summary / Key Points

- Services will have received, or soon will, a letter from the Department of Human Services – Community Services, advising them of where each of their CSGP-funded project has been 'streamed', into either “Direct Services to Children, Young People and Families” or “Community Strengthening”
- This streaming decision is not final, and services have two weeks to provide feedback and suggest grounds for changing into the other stream, if needed.
- Generally, the default for youth services has been into the “Direct Services to Children, Young People and Families” stream, however, there is clearly room for 'drop-in' centres and similar services to fit the criteria for Community Hubs in the “Community Strengthening” stream.
- Funding context: Whilst there was \$10 million announced for the “Community Strengthening” stream in the NSW Budget, and three pools of funding under Keep Them Safe that could be applied for by services in the “Direct Services to Children, Young People and Families” stream, there is no assurance that any of this funding will end up in youth services. Therefore, services are advised against positioning projects in streams solely based on possible funding increases.
- Many youth service projects will cut across both streams. A solution for services in this situation is still being discussed with Community Services. However, committing to one stream now will not affect services once solutions to this issue are agreed upon.
- YAPA will continue to work to develop the service activity models under both streams, the process and principles for funding allocation, and allocation model and the application process, and information to keep the sector updated.
- All CSGP-funded youth services are highly encouraged to attend Community Services regional meetings which will be conducted in July/August, to get more information about the directions of the reform and to raise any concerns or questions to CS directly.
- YAPA can be contacted via email to info@yapa.org.au with “CSGP” in the subject line, or by calling 02 9281 5522 – then dialling 0 for reception.

Friday, 18 June 2010



Dear CSGP-funded youth service provider,

IMPORTANT UPDATE
Re: CSGP Streaming Process
Context and Analysis for Youth Services

This letter builds upon the information compiled by YAPA in February this year, discussing possible impacts on youth services of changes to the Community Services Grants Program (CSGP). A copy of this document can be found at <http://www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/csgp/CSGPLEtterFeb2010.pdf> or <http://bit.ly/93ZANQ>

Introduction and Background

Since our analysis in February, Community Services (CS) have progressed this area significantly, with input from YAPA and other peak bodies, and have advised their intentions through an initial letter to CSGP services dated 7 May outlining the planned process. That letter outlined the criteria that were to be applied by Community Services in deciding whether a service aligns “Community Strengthening” or “Direct Services to Children, Young People and Families.”

It is expected that most youth services will align with at least one of these two streams, and in some cases the breadth of services provided by CSGP-funded youth services may cut across both (e.g. youth drop in centres that run youth development programs, as well as informal counselling when required). However, for the purposes of stage one will only be listed as aligning to one of the two streams. (Note: Services that cross streams will be further discussed below).

By now, you should have received a second letter from Community Services that was sent to service providers earlier this week (i.e. dated 15/06/10) with further details of stage one of the streaming process.

It is important that all service providers look at and consider Attachment 2 of that 15/06/10 letter, which contains specific information on each Service Specification held by the service provider.

Most importantly, “6. *Allocated Stream for this Service Specification*” in **the table shows where CS has placed the funding for your service**, either in:

- Community Strengthening; or
- [Direct Services to...] Children, Young People and Families

Service providers have **less than two weeks to get the interim request for a review to transfer into the other stream** to CS by fax, before the Wednesday, 30 June deadline. Due to CS budget requirements, it is important

that services keep to this deadline. Whilst all requests should be received by this date, **they can be withdrawn after the deadline without penalty.**

The desktop exercise conducted by Community Services which resulted in this alignment/allocation, may not reflect the most appropriate alignment for your service. As the letter states, the general rule is that most youth services will have been allocated to the Direct Services to Children, Young People and Families Stream. However, **all youth services should assess their current activities against the “Service Specification Streaming Criteria”** table (contained in both 07/05/10 and 15/06/10 letters from Community Services) to decide which stream they think is most appropriate.

Factors to consider – Community Strengthening Stream

Whilst services receiving funding from the “Community Services Grants Program - Youth Services” classification in the CS budget¹ will mostly have been classified into the Direct Services Stream by default, YAPA, its NGO peak partners and a number of CS representatives have noted that many services under this banner would fit neatly into the Community Strengthening Stream

YAPA has been working with the Communities and Early Years division (CEY) of CS since December 2009 to ensure that youth development services that work within the community strengthening philosophy are accommodated within the models developed for this stream. This work has built upon CEY’s development of the Community Builders funding program (formerly the Area Assistance Scheme), and has resulted in four Service Activity Descriptions having been developed for when these Community Strengthening Stream services transition into the new funding program. These four Service Activity Descriptions will be:

1. Community Capacity Building;
2. Community Skills Development;
3. Community Sector Development; and
4. Community Hubs (*note: this is a new Service Activity Description that has been developed specifically for CSGP Community Strengthening services*)

YAPA understands that services that transition from CSGP to Community Builders will be able to deliver activities under any or all of these four categories.

Whilst the details of the service models are still being finalised by CS and therefore cannot be referenced specifically, YAPA’s work with CEY has ensured that under the “Community Strengthening Criteria” contained in both CS letters to services explicitly states that groups of young people can be defined as a “community of interest” for the purposes of this streaming

¹ See http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/annual_report09/documents/funded_services.pdf at page 206 for a complete listing

process (and eventually, the activities that services conduct under Community Builders).

Capacity Building, Skills Development and Sector Development

Based on the pre-existing Community Builders program guidelines, which details the Service Activity Descriptions 1, 2 & 3 listed above, YAPA believes that services that *predominantly* work to ensure –

- Young people feel connected to their community;
- Young people are resourceful, skilled & access services;
- Young people participate in community activities and services;
- Young people participate in community decision-making;
- Young people trust each other (and other community members); and/or
- Young people respect each other (and other community members);²

should strongly consider whether their service is better placed within the Community Strengthening Stream.

Community Hubs

The new Community Hubs Service Activity Description is yet to be finalised for release, however the model builds upon discussions with CEY and the Local Community Services Association (the NSW peak for neighbourhood and community centres) with input from YAPA, NCOSS and other peak bodies and is designed to recognise the unique community strengthening outcomes that ongoing presence within, and working with, a community can deliver. Discussions with CS and peaks have highlighted that the design of this model intends to accommodate drop in services within the youth sector, along with neighbourhood and community centres in the broader community.

New Funding in NSW Budget 2010/11

Many services will be aware that last Tuesday (08/06/10), the NSW Minister for Community Services announced an enhancement for the new Community Strengthening Stream under the Community Builders program, with an additional \$10 million allocated “to enhance social inclusion services that strengthen communities experiencing disadvantage”. This great achievement in attracting investment from the NSW Government for community development and support services is applauded by YAPA, however at this stage the funding allocation models and processes have not been developed sufficiently to know how much of this allocation will find its way to CSGP youth services.

Therefore, **youth services are encouraged to base their response to the CSGP Streaming Process solely upon the “Service Specification Streaming Criteria” in the letters from CS, and the details contained in this document.**

² See page 37, “Community Builders – guide to applicants” for more information on the existing program - <http://www2.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/multiattachments/3688/DocumentName/ComBuildProgGuide5.pdf> or <http://bit.ly/az8TrC>

Factors to consider – Direct Services Stream

Services that work directly with individual or groups of young people, delivering specific assistance or interventions based on identified needs will largely fit into this category. Service models for CS funding that does not fall under the new Keep Them Safe funding are yet to be developed (see below).

Keep Them Safe (KTS) funding and models

Several funding allocations under Keep Them Safe have been discussed by CS as possible sources of new funding for CSGP services in the Direct Services Stream. Funding under these programs are likely to be tied to fairly rigid funding models (e.g. the current Brighter Futures model is designed with strict referral pathways). The three sources are as follows:

1. KTS Prevention and Early Intervention - Within the funds available for prevention and early intervention under Keep Them Safe, \$4.5 million in 2010/11 has been given to CS to “realign the Community Services Grants Program”³ through establishing “parenting skills, general advice and support programs”.⁴

2. KTS Brighter Futures – Whilst CSGP services may tender for the \$8 million allocated this year for additional places for Brighter Futures (for 0-8 years and their families), no funds are currently available for young people aged 9 years and above, despite the Wood recommendation 10.5(b) that “Brighter Futures should be extended progressively to provide services to children aged 9-14 years with priority of access to services for Aboriginal children and their families”.⁵ YAPA is working with CS and other NGO and government representatives, to develop a model that would provide a Brighter Futures-style service to vulnerable children and young people aged 9-15 years, in line with the NSW Government commitments under the KTS Action Plan. However, there is no current allocation of funding for this group and will require a strong bid for the funding to be given to the model in the 2011/12 state budget.

3. KTS Intensive Family Support, Preservation and Restoration – CSGP services may also wish to tender for the “\$7.2m for additional Intensive Family Preservation Service places”, however YAPA understands that the Intensive Family Preservation and Restoration funding is likely to go to more acute service provision in an attempt to keep children out of statutory care. Therefore, it is assumed that much of this funding will be allocated to families with younger children aged 0-8 years.

³ D’Adam, V, “Keep Them Safe Budget 2010-11” (unpublished presentation slides)

⁴ http://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/13571/7-6-10_StatePlan-2_Keep_Them_Safe_on_track_to_deliver.pdf

⁵ Wood, J “Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in New South Wales”, pp 385-386

As we noted in the previous YAPA CSGP letter in February, this new funding will be tied to particular service models being developed, and be subject to performance-based contracting requirements in order to access the new money. Pre-existing CSGP funds that your services has currently would also be pooled together with the new funding under the new service models, and therefore subject to new CS requirements.

However, as with the Community Strengthening Stream, the funding allocation models and processes for Keep Them Safe funding available to CSGP Direct Services have not been developed sufficiently to know how much of this allocation will be successfully accessed by CSGP youth services.

Therefore, **youth services are encouraged to base their response to the CSGP Streaming Process solely upon the “Service Specification Streaming Criteria” in the letters from CS, and the details contained in this document.**

Existing CSGP Direct Services

Unlike the Community Strengthening Stream, **it is unclear what service specifications will be required from services that fall within the Direct Services Stream, that do not attract further funding through the identified KTS funds listed above.** YAPA and its peak partners will continue to work with CS to develop arrangements for existing CSGP Direct Services to children, young people and families, and will keep the youth sector informed as much as possible.

Future Considerations – Crossing Streams

As discussed earlier and in previous updates, many youth services use CSGP funding to conduct tasks in both streams. YAPA and its peak partners have continually raised this as an issue of concern with CS and options are currently being discussed. Indeed, youth services who predominantly undertake community strengthening through a drop in model, but also provide general advice, support and informal counseling are one clear service type that would fall into this category.

In any case, discussions with CS have indicated they are well aware of this issue and it is anticipated that a workable solution will be found to allow services to continue to undertake both direct service and community strengthening work. YAPA understands that **the allocation of your CSGP Service Specification to either stream in this Stage One of the process should not affect this in any way.**

Future Directions and Final Comments

YAPA will continue to work with youth services, our NGO peak partners, and representatives from Community Services, in developing:

- the final details of the service activity models which will govern the

services to be delivered under both Community Strengthening and Direct Services streams;

- the process and principles which will be used to allocate available funding to services; and
- information to be provided to the sector to ensure the changes and further implications are understood as much as possible, either from YAPA directly or through CS briefings in the regions.

Throughout these processes, YAPA will work to ensure that CSGP-funded youth services have a fair chance of accessing much needed funds to deliver services to young people in need.

YAPA has developed a diagrammatic representation of the above analysis, which appears below. Please note, this diagram has not been endorsed by Community Services as an accurate representation of the current state of affairs, and may be redeveloped as more information becomes available.

As mentioned above and in the latest letter from CS to service providers, Community Services will be undertaking a road trip around NSW, conducting regional meetings in July/August to provide more information about the directions of the reform and to deal with any concerns or questions raised by service providers directly. All CSGP services are highly encouraged to attend these meetings, as well as provide any questions, comments, thoughts or concerns to YAPA via email to info@yapa.org.au with "CSGP" in the subject line, or by calling 02 9281 5522 – then dial 0 for reception.

Yours sincerely,



Reynato Reodica
YAPA Chief Executive



18/06/10 - YAPA analysis of the new elements of Community Services funding that relate to the CSGP realignment process, based on discussions with CS.

Note: Community development services appear at the top of this plot, whilst acute (non-statutory) services appear at the bottom.

