

NSW IPSP Communication Protocols

October 2010

IPSP

INTRODUCTION

The **Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP)** is funded by the Australian Government and is delivered in accordance with the IPSP Guidelines 2009-2012.

The IPSP is an integrated approach to supporting and enhancing the professional development needs of child care services and promotes good practice and continuous improvement in service delivery.

The IPSP comprises the following:

- **Inclusion Support Program (ISP)**, funds the Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs) and National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP) to support eligible child care services to improve access and inclusion of children with additional needs.
- **Professional Support Program (PSP)**, which funds the Professional Support Coordinators (PSCs) and Indigenous Professional Support Units (IPSUs) to provide professional development, advice or resources to assist child care services to provide quality child care. (*IPSP Guidelines, July 2009, p 7*)

The following protocols provide approaches and guidance to support communication between the NSW providers of the IPSP therefore enhancing the delivery of support, professional development and inclusion.

Objectives

The objectives of the *NSW IPSP Communication Protocols* are to:

- Enhance the communication across the Program to promote a greater understanding of the roles and responsibilities within the IPSP.
- Establish a framework to support collaboration within the IPSP.
- Enhance the capacity of program delivery for eligible services through the IPSP.

Key Messages

- The IPSP is placing a greater emphasis on collaborative relationships.
- All of the program providers (PSC, ISAs, IPSU, NISSP) within the IPSP are committed to working together to support the inclusion of all children in eligible child care services.
- Communication and feedback mechanisms enhance our collaborative efforts.

- Eligible services should experience a ‘no wrong door’ approach when accessing any part of the IPSP.
- The IPSP works to support eligible child care services to offer quality inclusive environments.
- Inclusion philosophy for child care services is based on:
 - universal access for all children;
 - services being ready for children;
 - support being based on the needs of the total care environment;
 - educators developing the capacity to meet all children’s needs; and
 - promotion of the principles of anti-discrimination legislation and practice (*IPSP Guidelines, July 2009*).

Who do these protocols apply to?

These protocols apply to **all providers** within the **Inclusion and Professional Support Program** within NSW.

The companion documents of the IPSP are:

1. **IPSP Guidelines 2009-2012**
2. **IPSP Communication Protocols**
3. **Australian Government Funding Agreements, resource and information materials within each program.**

Communication Protocols

IPSP Providers should read and follow the Communication Protocols listed in all sections. Communication Protocols for **Inclusion Support Agencies** are included under each section due to the role of the ISA in facilitating access for child care services to IPSP program supports.

Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU)

- Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) to contact IPSU by email when a request has been received by the ISA from an Indigenous service.
- ISF will contact the IPSU about the outcome of the request.
- IPSU will email the ISA when an Indigenous service requires support from the ISA.
- The IPSU will inform the ISA via email about the training or support they will be offering an Indigenous service.
- IPSU will email ISA when support is delivered to a non-Indigenous service within their ISA region.

- IPSU will refer requests to ISA, NISSP or PSC, as appropriate, depending on the nature of the request and service type.
- ISA and IPSU will encourage services to share information from visits (i.e. Service Support Plan (SSP) or IPSU plan documentation) with other IPSP Providers supporting the service.

Professional Support Coordinator (PSC)

- The PSC will continue to email ISAs when services accept offers for supports such as those outlined above.
- The PSC Project Officer and Manager, ISA team leaders and IPSU representative will continue to meet at six monthly intervals. These meetings will be utilised to identify what program supports child care services are accessing, to inform programs and products provided by the IPSP, and to feedback information.
- Six monthly meetings between the ISA, PSC and IPSU will support the development of and information sharing about the ISA's Region Plan, PSC's State Plan and IPSU's State Plan. The NISSP will be involved if related issues are identified prior to the meeting or arise as a result of the meeting.
- ISAs and IPSU will provide feedback to the PSC on the professional development of program staff and all will engage in discussions regarding meeting these professional development needs.
- ISAs will provide written feedback to the PSC on PSC training attended.

Specialist Equipment Provider

- ISF to discuss Specialist Equipment Provider (SEP) with child care service.
- Service Director sends the application to the SEP.
- SEP advises the ISA when equipment has been sent to a service.
- SEP will periodically send ISA a spreadsheet of SEP users in the region and ISFs will check with the services to see if the specialist equipment is still being used or not, or if a service has changed ownership.

Bicultural Support Program (BSP)

- Bicultural Support Program (BSP) to contact IPSU by email when a **request** for an Aboriginal worker is made by an eligible service.
- BSP to email ISA when a **request** for support for a Bicultural worker is received from an eligible service within their ISA region.
- The ISA, if contacted by the BSP or service, will assist the service to complete a SSP, where required, and request Bicultural Support from the BSP.
- The Bicultural Support Consultant Protocols will be reviewed in December 2010.

General Resource Library

- The PSC will provide ISA team leaders with information on the membership of the General Resource Library at the six monthly meetings. This information may be included in the ISA Region Plans.
- IPSP Providers will promote the General Resource Library to Child Care Services.

National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP)

- The NISSP will notify ISAs about the outcomes of ISS (Inclusion Support Subsidy) applications using the email address as per the ISS application.
- The NISSP will notify the child care services directly regarding the outcome of their ISS application.
- In the instance that questions arise regarding the application, the NISSP may contact the child care service and/or the ISA.
- ISAs will assist services to submit complete applications and to notify the NISSP of changes within care environments, such as changes to children's attendance or the service need for ISS.
- The NISSP will provide program updates to ISA team leaders via email.
- The NISSP provides an 'ISS Info Box' email facility for ISAs and child care services. Written responses are made within 48 hours.
- The NISSP provides a toll free number for ISAs and child care services to use.
- The NISSP can hold telephone conferences or visits with ISA teams on request. An agenda for these meetings must be given to the NISSP prior to the discussion.
- The NISSP can provide regular contributions for IPSP providers to use in their own communications. Each ISA should contact the NISSP if they have any specific content requirements.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) – NSW/ACT State & Territory Office

- DEEWR will respond within 5 working days with an acknowledgement and action to requests in writing from IPSP Providers.
- Where appropriate, DEEWR will make available to all IPSP Providers a response to general requests for information
- DEEWR will provide updates of the status of eligible child care services.
- DEEWR will host and facilitate the IPSP Forum meetings.

- DEEWR will maintain relationships with other funded programs and act as a conduit for information between these agencies and IPSP Forum members.
- DEEWR will invite representatives from appropriate external agencies to the IPSP Forum when requested by the Forum members.
- DEEWR will provide feedback to individual IPSP Providers on their Reports and Plans.

Feedback

IPSP provider to child care service

If a child care service has a complaint to make about an aspect of the IPSP service delivery, the child care service should be encouraged to look at the individual provider's Complaint Management Policy and to make the complaint directly to the provider of the service.

IPSP provider to IPSP provider

Feedback on individual program delivery should be given directly to the IPSP Provider and will be addressed using the provider's policies and procedures. Feedback may provide an opportunity to clarify service delivery expectations between providers within the IPSP.

If a member of the IPSP has a complaint regarding another provider's service delivery of the IPSP, they should follow the provider's Complaints Management Policy. Where necessary, feedback and issues may be taken to the Communications Working Group or IPSP Forum for discussion with the intention of informing the continuous improvement of the IPSP.

Explanation of the IPSP

There is great value in promoting information and a clear picture of the IPSP. The attached visual representation will assist in explaining the IPSP to child care services and the children's services sector.

Review Timeframe

The *NSW IPSP Communications Protocols* will be reviewed every six months at the IPSP Forum. This version is due for review in November 2010.