**FACT SHEET: PLANNING AND EVALUATING PROFESSIONAL** **DEVELOPMENT**

It is strongly recommended that services funded under the Long Day Care Professional Development Programme (LDCPDP) take a strategic approach to identifying and planning their approach to professional development. There is no “one size fits all” way to do this. This fact sheet provides a list of questions services might ask as they consider how best to spend, and report on, funds allocated under the LDCPDP.

1. **Undertake an environmental scan**
   * What qualifications are required to meet the National Quality Standards?
   * What has the service achieved already in terms of improving outcomes for children? What is going well? Are there areas for improvement identified in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)?
   * What are your aspirations for educators and for the service?
   * Do the priorities in the QIP need to be updated?
   * Use evidence to assess the progress your service is making towards the QIP. Record this as a baseline and use it to report on the decisions you made under the LDCPDP.
2. **Planning for professional development**
   * It is recommended that educators are engaged in the professional development decision making process in order to build ownership and commitment
   * What do educators need to learn, know about, understand and put into practice in relation to each of the identified priorities in the QIP?
   * How does professional development meet the workforce requirements of the service
   * Select professional development activities strategically: choose activities that will have a long term impact on the quality of the service and resist ‘quick fix’ or ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach that may not improve service quality
   * What are the requirements to achieve the next level of rating under the NQF? Use this to set goals and milestones against which you can track the outcomes
   * Will activities be more focussed on training (hands on practical and technical skills or competencies to carry out a particular task) or professional development (designed to stimulate longer term sustained changes in the thinking, knowledge, skills and approaches to educators’ practice)? Or a balance between the two?
   * Are there benefits in networking and coordinating professional development across other services in your local region?
   * How will the professional development plan be reviewed? How will you measure the outcomes of the professional development? How is it making a difference?
   * What information will you need to collect to report on improvements?
3. **Undertaking Training and Reflecting on Professional Development**
   * What are we learning?
   * How will the new learnings be embedded into programs, practices or policies?
   * How are educators sustaining engagement over time?
   * Is there sufficient time and ongoing support for educators to undertake professional development, and reflection?
   * Are your choices in line with the LDCPDP programme guidelines?
4. **Evaluating Professional Development**
   * How have individual educators, and the service, applied what has been learnt?
   * What support is required to apply new knowledge and skills?
   * What have been the overall benefits for children, educators and families?
   * Are you now delivering a higher quality in those areas identified as priorities?
   * What milestones have been achieved?
   * What would you have done differently?
   * How will the results contribute to planning future professional development?
5. **Reporting**
   * How might you report what has been achieved in the QIP? Do the priorities need to be revised as a result?
   * What have you documented in relation to expenditure of LDCPDP funds as you have worked from identification of professional development priorities through planning, implementation and evaluation?