



Questions to ask your Child Care Management System (CCMS) Software Provider

September 2014

This fact sheet will provide assistance to child care services who are:

- A newly approved Child Care Benefit service, currently selecting a CCMS Registered Software Product,
- An existing service transferring from one CCMS Registered Software Product to another, or
- A service wanting to know more about choosing a CCMS Registered Software Product.

Communicating with your Software Provider

Whilst all registered CCMS Software Products are tested to ensure they meet the CCMS technical specifications, each Software Product works differently, and may have different (or additional) functionalities. It is important for you, the service, to ensure your CCMS Software Provider meets your business requirements.

If your service intends to change Software Product in the future, it is important to talk with both Software Providers (current and potential) to identify how you will access data prior to date of change to new Software Product.

The CCMS Helpdesk has compiled a list of questions (below) that you should consider when communicating with your current or potential CCMS Software Provider.

Support

- What type of support does the Software Provider offer?
- Does the Software Provider offer training?
- Does the Software Provider have a user manual?
- Does the Software Provider have a Helpdesk for ongoing support? What hours does the Helpdesk operate?
- Can your service get on-site support from the Software Provider?
- If you lose your CCMS database, what support is available from the Software Provider?

System

- What hardware and operating system will be needed to run the Software Product?
- Will the Software Provider back-up your CCMS database?
- Can the Software Provider assist with upgrading your Software Product, or transitioning to another Software Provider?
- When transitioning from one Software Product to another, is it possible to use two different Software Products for an overlapping period of time?
- Do you need broadband to run the Software Product and to interact with the CCMS?

Software Functionality

- CCMS payments are made in arrears (i.e. after attendance is reported). How does the Software Product handle charging of fees?
- Will the Software Product allow you to view or alter attendance data that you have submitted via another CCMS Software Product?
- Does the Software Product have the functionality to synchronise? If so, what does this mean for your service?
(Synchronising is when the Software Product automatically sends and retrieves CCMS data based on the information currently held in the user's database).

This list of questions should only be used as a guide.

Please remember, selecting or changing your Software Product is a very important business decision. If you are unsure about whether a particular Software Product will suit your needs you should seek information or recommendations from other child care centres. It is important to keep the lines of communication open with your Software Provider, especially when your service is closing, or transferring to a new Software Product.

Changing Software Provider

Services who change CCMS Software Provider should discuss the transition from one Software Provider to another, with both providers.

The questions below will assist services who are transitioning from one Software Provider to another.

- Does the new Software Provider provide access to at least 3 years of historical data? If not, how will you meet your record keeping obligations?
- Will you need to maintain and pay for access to your old Software Product? If so, how much will this cost?
- If required, will you be able to amend historical data in your new Software Product?
- Does either Software Product have a 'Synchronising' functionality? If so, will this functionality impact data submitted via another Software Product?

Record Keeping Obligations

Services are required to keep records for 3 years from the end of the calendar year in which the care or event took place. You must ensure that you continue to have access to all data you have submitted to the CCMS as you may need to change or make corrections to data you have submitted via your Software Product. Compliance reviews can occur at any time, irrespective of whether your service is currently operating. This means that you may be required to access or make edits to your CCMS data after your service has ceased operating. It is important that your service is able to submit accurate records to the CCMS, even after closure, so that families receive correct entitlements.

If you have any concerns that you are unable to meet these requirements, or may not be able to in the future, use the questions provided in this fact sheet as a guide when discussing with your Software Provider.

CCMS Helpdesk

The CCMS Helpdesk is unable to provide advice on which Software Product to select for an individual service's business requirements. Should your service have any questions regarding your service's legal obligations, please contact the CCMS Helpdesk for assistance

Phone 1300 667 276

Email ccmshelpdesk@dss.gov.au

More Information

General information on child care obligations can be found in the *Child Care Service Handbook*, located on the [Department of Social Services](#) website

www.dss.gov.au

Legislation

The main laws governing child care service's obligations are set out below.

Commonwealth family assistance law

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000 and other legislative instruments made under the two acts above.

All of these are available on the [Comlaw](#) website at:

www.comlaw.gov.au

The National Law (administered by your state or territory)

For detailed information about the [National Law](#) and [National Regulations](#), please go to:

- <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-law>
- <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-regulations>

For questions about state or territory specific areas of the National Law and Regulations contact your local [State or Territory Regulatory Authority](#).

Related Fact Sheets

Record Keeping for Child Care Services.