

Forced Adoptions Implementation Working Group

Communiqué #4

The fourth meeting of the Forced Adoptions Implementation Working Group was held via teleconference on 19 August 2014.

Members approved the amendment to the Working Group's Terms of Reference to take account of the six month extension to the term of appointment for members granted by the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Kevin Andrews, MP.

The Department of Social Services reported that the selection of providers for the Forced Adoption Support Services is currently underway and is working to have the services in place as quickly as possible. The Department is keen to involve the new service providers in Knowledge Translation and Exchange (KTE) projects which were identified by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in their [Scoping Study](#) report as a means of supporting service sector development, increasing accessibility to evidence-based resources, and enhancing the knowledge base and skill set.

The Department of Health advised members that the Tender Evaluation Committee is currently considering the tenders received for the provision of Guidance and Training on Forced Adoptions for Health Professionals project. Members were also provided with an update on the latest activities around primary health care and mental health funding to maintain service provision in 2014-15 pending the outcome of the National Mental Health Commission review of mental health programmes.

The National Archives of Australia reported that they are undertaking consultations in each state and territory to gather feedback on the content and messaging for the national touring exhibition. This exhibition, planned for launching on the second anniversary of the National Apology in March 2015, will increase public awareness and understanding of forced adoptions in Australia as it tours nationally. The Archives are continuing to work on the content and functionality of the [Forced Adoptions History website](#), and invite contributions to add to the historical record.

Working Group members discussed the importance of progressing engagement with governments on issues of records access and records harmonisation and ways in which that might be achieved. The Senate Report had recognised the importance of records to people affected by forced adoptions, including records from Births, Deaths and Marriage registries, as well as health and like records.

The Working Group will hold their final meeting in early December 2014.