



Hatch Carers Pty Ltd is a community-led social enterprise committed to supporting, empowering, and connecting foster and kinship carers across NSW.

Hatch Carers Pty Ltd, appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback IPART's Out-of-Home Care Costs and Pricing Draft Report. We provided feedback for the Interim Report with a number of other financial considerations for carers. That submission is worthy of review in this context.

1. Financial support for foster, relative and kinship carers.

Hatch Carers endorses the several important recommendations of the Draft Report to increase financial support to cover expenses for carers by increasing the carers allowance by around 30% per fortnight. Together with this also are the actual costs of medical expenses and also those associated with family access which are becoming an increasing burden on carers that their agencies are failing to provide. It is becoming increasingly obvious that agencies and the department are expecting carers to meet such costs and they are increasingly reticent to reimburse carers for these expenses. The current allowance, limited as it is, is not for use on these associated matter of care provision.

2. Increased transparency and equity of financial support to carers.

Carers require clear and concise information on what financial supports are available to them and how to go about accessing those supports. Currently carers are not aware, from the carer support packages for the children in their care, of what they are entitled to and agency and departmental personnel do not reveal such information. Hatch Carers supports carers being made aware of the detail of these supports for the children they provide care for.

Similarly Hatch Carers endorses a consistent approach and a standardization of financial supports ensuring equity is reflected for children in similar circumstances. This is currently a very jarring realisation for carers when they see some get support whilst others miss out. Equity and access to financial supports to do the best job they can - a level playing field of provision.

3. A simplified pricing structure based on accurate costings.

Centralising allowance payments to carers would eliminate the current disparity within and between NGOs and the department. NGOs only have recommended to them what payments are made to carers and the NGOs work that out for themselves. If all carers were to receive the allowance via DCJ, that would remove the current disparity from the system for all carers. All the children and young people in care are the Minister's children via an order of the court. Hatch will throw its weight behind such a stabilization in the system.

Kind regards
Hatch Carers Pty Ltd.