

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Tuesday, 22 April 2025

Your submission for this review:

Our current agency, [REDACTED], stopped paying for our foster daughters essential medical needs a few years ago. We have private health insurance which covers her dental and optical and a large portion of her surgery for grommets etc. We have been told that we need to get annual hearing checks however the agency has said they will not cover the costs. The only financial assistance we receive is the carers allowance. We have received nothing else in the last few years. We have never received compensation for family visits at play centres etc. we do not receive compensation for after school activities etc we pay her private school fees ourselves. She is lucky that we are financially able to support a wonderful lifestyle for her including overseas trips. The agency very much take advantage of our financial situation and refuse financial support. I would welcome a focus on the financial aspects of the OOHHC sector, specifically oversight on the decisions made by individual managers within agencies. The carer allowance absolutely does not cover our spending on our foster daughter. From my observation other foster children who aren't living in as financially strong households miss out on many experiences and activities compared to our birth and foster daughters and their peers. Our foster daughter is also indigenous, there is supposed to be additional funding for indigenous children, when I asked about this and a visit to her family in another state the agency did not follow through they said the money had been spent. The only thing that our daughter received was printed and laminated cards. We purchase cultural materials, clothes and pay for her cultural experiences ourselves. In short the OOHHC funding model does not prioritise spending on the children in care. Carers get frustrated by all the training and lunches we see caseworkers and case work managers participate in that would be better directed to the children in care.