

Commissioning Conversations #8

In this edition:

- [First Annual Insights](#)
 - [Share Your Experience](#)
 - [Peak Body Partnerships](#)
 - [Cohort Spotlight: Carers](#)
 - [Key Upcoming Dates](#)
 - [Commissioning Roundup](#)
-

FIRST ANNUAL INSIGHTS

We are committed to continually improving the commissioning process for all participants and we rely on insights, feedback, and formal evaluations to help us improve.

We are always listening through post-activity survey results, one-on-one discussions, formal feedback sessions through peak bodies, engagement with Ministerial Advisory Councils and other networks, and through the annual commissioning survey.

Together we have established our expectations for commissioning with the baseline survey which was undertaken in early 2022.

Thank you to the 195 participants including senior executive, policy officers and frontline staff from across government and non-government organisations (NGO) for sharing your view on process trust, relationship health and confidence in the process.

We heard:

- Most participants have high levels of **trust** that commissioning will be done in line with the [Shared Priorities and Principles](#). Yet these levels of **trust** are lower amongst NGO survey participants.
- Most participants view **relationship health** within the NGO sector or within government as good to very good. However, nearly one third of NGO participants view their relationship with government as 'neither good nor bad'.
- Most participants are **confident** that commissioning will make a positive difference in the lives of Canberrans. There was a difference with government participants more optimistic and at least one quarter of NGO participants believing no change will result from commissioning.

We are just beginning our commissioning journey together and as our commissioning cycles and partnerships mature, this annual survey will be an important indicator of the trust, confidence, and relationship health underpinning our commissioning cycles.

Find out more: [Commissioning Baseline Survey](#).

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Have you recently participated in a commissioning process? Did you share your experience via a post-activity survey? We are very keen to hear about what has and has not worked for participants at each step in the process and urge you to share your views through the survey.

The post-activity survey is always available and ready for your feedback via the commissioning website at this link: [Post-Activity Survey](#). Click through, select the sub-sector and date of the activity you participated in and then take five minutes to answer the standard questions.

Your responses are collated and shared via listening reports, sector updates and through here via Commissioning Conversations.

Find out more about the evaluation of commissioning: [Evaluation of Commissioning](#).

PEAK BODY PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborative partnerships between government and passionate, hardworking, and knowledgeable peak bodies are essential for effective commissioning and for delivering outcomes for Canberrans that need it most.

Together, Peak Bodies, the Community Services Directorate and ACT Health, worked to commission Peak Bodies. We have developed a phased approach; with the first phase being finalised now through signing of five-year, outcome based, Deeds of Grant with all existing peaks.

The first phase of peaks commissioning was a valuable opportunity to clarify, consider and discuss challenges and apprehension about the approach from all partners' perspectives. We have been able to develop a deeper, shared understanding of the next steps, intentions, and the collaborative process.

Find out more about the process so far and future peak body commissioning phases: [Peak Body Commissioning](#).

COHORT SPOTLIGHT: CARERS

We have all been called to care, particularly in recent times as we support friends and family through the pandemic. Yet for more than 50,000 Canberrans providing unpaid care is a daily commitment to people with disability, mental illness, chronic conditions, terminal illness, or people who are frail or aged.

Carers are as diverse as our community, with unique needs, accessing a wide range of services and requiring support for their wellbeing.

Every commissioning process will have an impact on carers and so Carers ACT provided an information sharing session for government to cultivate a better understanding of carers and their experiences in the ACT.

We heard carers report:

- not having enough time for themselves which can make it challenging to attend community events and activities.
- feeling lower levels of inclusion, respect and communication from services.
- lower levels of personal wellbeing and health than the general population.

- high levels of confidence in their abilities as carers.
- some difficulty in accessing support, both from formal organisations as well as from family and friends.
- challenges around being involved and across multiple reforms and reviews, including two Royal Commissions, and government strategy development (including commissioning).

Thank you, Carers ACT. The valuable insights shared by Carers ACT will help inform preparations for commissioning of all sub-sectors to ensure the carer voice is considered as part of the strategise and service design phases.

If your organisation also represents a cohort whose voices and experiences will inform multiple commissioning processes, and would like to host a similar session, please contact the CSD Commissioning Team to discuss further: CSDCommissioning@act.gov.au.

[Click here to find out more about Carers ACT and the great work they do.](#)

KEY UPCOMING DATES

- Tuesday 21 June – Community Services Directorate Sector Update Forum
- Tuesday 19 July to Thursday 28 July – Sexually Transmitted Infections and Blood Borne Viruses (STIBBV) various commissioning round tables
- Thursday 21 July – Community Support Roundtable #2

Stay aware of the indicative commissioning schedule via the [commissioning calendar](#), a tool to support your participation, particularly where you may be involved in multiple process.

This indicative calendar can include ‘to-be-confirmed’ dates that may change but will be confirmed via email invitations to commissioning activities. Check the sub-sector pages for further insights on timings and processes where you may be a participant.

COMMISSIONING ROUNDUP

Homelessness Services

- During the period from January to May 2022, 19 workshops have been organised with stakeholders.
 - There were 621 attendances by 224 participants over 19 workshops.
 - Of the 224, 66 were from ACT Government and 158 were from community sectors.
- In addition, a further 25 people were interviewed about their lived experiences of the homelessness service system.
- Housing ACT also facilitated five Deep Dive sessions about needs and services for children, older women, LGBTIQ+ people, men, and people with disability.
- In coming months, further conversations about the needs and services for clients from First Nations community will be continued.
- In late June 2022, we will bring everything we have heard and worked through together into an insights report. The insights report will inform our strategic procurement processes from July 2022 onwards.
- The progress of the homelessness commissioning and background documents are regularly updated on [Homelessness Services - Commissioning \(act.gov.au\)](#).

Next Steps for Our Kids 2022 - 2030



- *Next Steps for Our Kids 2022 – 2030: ACT Strategy to Strengthen Families and Keep Children and Young People Safe (Next Steps)* was launched on 3 June 2022. The Strategy is supported by 3 documents: A Step Up for Our Kids Journey, Review of Contemporary Practice in Out of Home Care and Sources.
- The Strategy and Companion documents are available on the Community Services Directorate (CSD) website at: <https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/children/child-and-youth-protection-services/Strengthening-families-and-keeping-children-and-young-people-safe>.
- A Tender Briefing was held on 25 May 2022 for the new specialised therapeutic care services Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP closes at 2.00pm on 27 June 2022. Further information is available on the Tenders ACT site at: <https://www.tenders.act.gov.au/tender/view?id=238096>.
- New Service Funding Agreements and Deeds of Variation are being prepared with Service Partners following completion of the recommissioning workshops.
- Regular updates on the progress of the *Next Steps* reform are available on the [CSD website](#).

Non-Statutory Children, Youth and Family Services (Community Development Program, Children's Services Program, and Child, Youth and Family Services Program)

- Contract extensions to 30 June 2024 for Community Development Program (CDP), Children's Services Program (CSP), and Child, Youth and Family Services Program (CYFSP) are in the final stages with final contracts currently going out to organisations to ensure execution before 30 June 2022. This extension along with the release of the [Next Steps for our Kids 2022-2030: ACT Strategy](#); and the progress made in other aligned Commissioning Processes mean we are in a great place to move forward with the Commissioning of Non-Statutory Children, Youth and Family Services. Information on CSP and CYFSP is below.
- Children's Services Program
 - The Children's Services Program (CSP) advisory group met in April 2022 to share recommendations developed in working groups, which had focused on key areas of concern within the program design and delivery. The issues included geography of places available for children, providing a trauma informed approach to care and education, and ongoing issues with the referral process.
 - In May 2022 the CSP advisory group met and progressed discussions on the recommendations and how these would be implemented into contract extensions from July 2022. The group were engaged and provided positive feedback expressing that they had a clear plan to continue working through and contributing to the trial of program changes.

- The CSP working groups will continue to meet and work collaboratively to develop guidelines for the flexible funding pool trial; redevelop the program application form and a referrer information sheet; and develop a community of practice for information and resource sharing across providers.
- Child, Youth and Family Services Program
 - CYFSP Directors came together on 7 June 2022 to have the next conversation in the commissioning process. This conversation sought to identify the best approach to design our engagement strategy for the commissioning process to ensure all relevant stakeholders are engaged in an appropriate and meaningful way. Developing the commissioning engagement strategy with stakeholders enables taking into consideration feedback we have received in relation to the challenges associated with collaborating in several commissioning processes including consultation fatigue, sector anxiety, availability and competing demands on time. It was agreed that an EOI should go out seeking participation from key Community Partners and Government stakeholders to be a part of this working group, who will co-design an engagement plan that will help to identify how we will work together through this Commissioning Process.

ACT Health Directorate sub-sectors

- ACT Health is progressing with commissioning health services in the community, with collaborative design planned to commence in July for Community Support, Alcohol and other Drugs, and Sexually Transmissible Infections and Blood Borne Viruses sub-sectors. The commissioning webpage will be updated regularly with information on planned forums and discussion papers.
- Sector partners and ACT Health representatives have been meeting over the past few weeks to finalise contract variations to allow for commissioning.

SUBSCRIBE

If you are interested in regularly receiving Commissioning Conversations, please email CSDCommissioning@act.gov.au and ask to be added to the distribution list.

USEFUL LINKS

- [Post Activity Survey](#)
- [Commissioning Calendar](#)
- [Joint ACT Government Commissioning website](#)

For additional information on **ACT Health Directorate** commissioning health services in the community visit [Commissioning health services in the community | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#).

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Community Services Directorate



ACT Health Directorate



www.act.gov.au/commissioning