



Community interagency PORT STEPHENS

Port Stephens Community Interagency Meeting

Minutes of Zoom meeting held on Tuesday 4 August, 9:30am

Chair: Carolyn Fisher

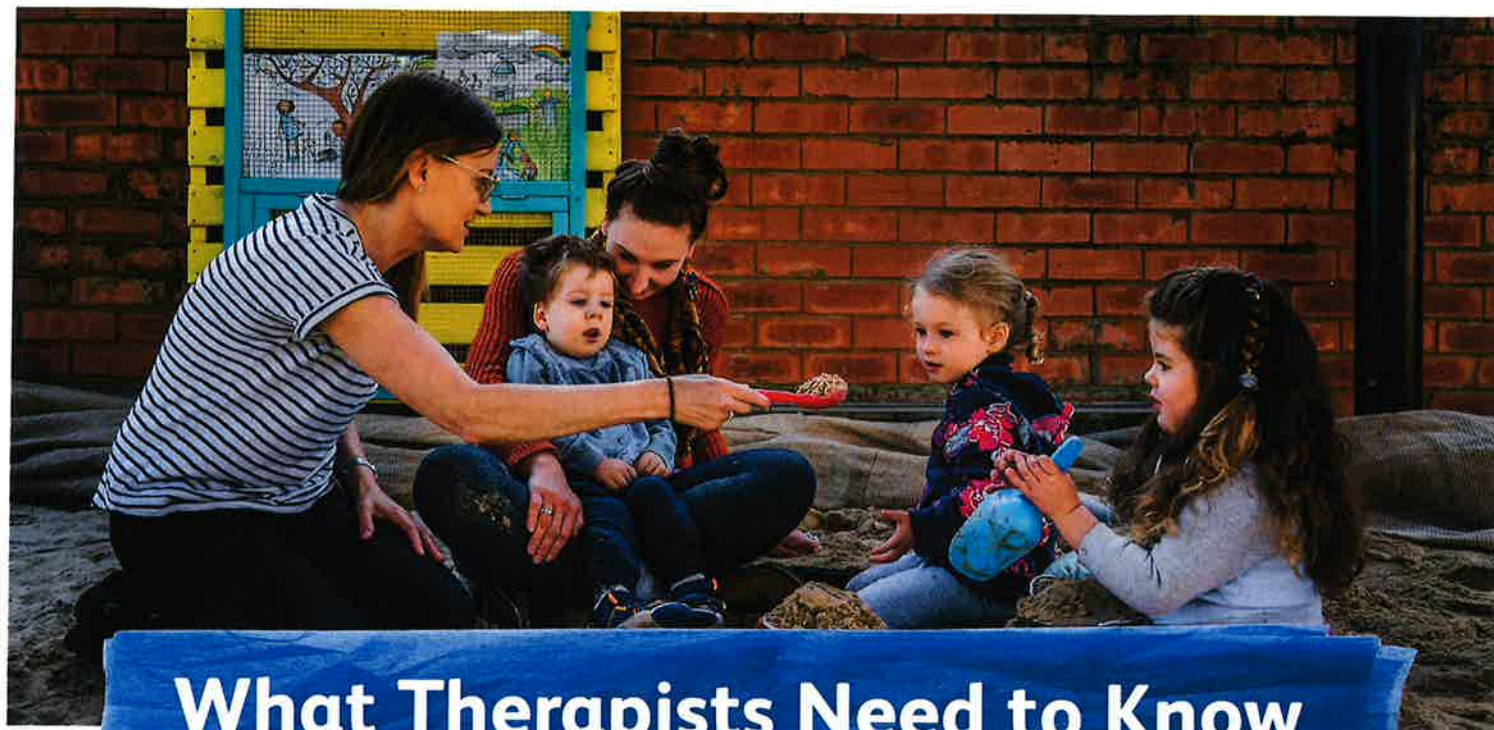
Minute Taker: Dominique Northam

Present:

Naomi Writer	NSW Inclusion Agency
Jennifer Underwood	PSC
Carolyn Fisher	PSC
Dominique Northam	PSC
Sue Shilcock	Northcott
Claire Taylor	Carers NSW
Mike Heckrotte	Linked Community Services
Alicia Harris	AJ Occupational Therapy Services
Kathryn Puckeridge	Uni for You
Karen McKenzie	Carrries Place DV and Homelessness Services
Seema Sanghi	CLSD
John de Ridder	COPSY
Marisa Wilson	Path 2 Change
Joan Gillis	Gambling Impact Society
Bill Cottrell	HNEHealth Consumer Rep
Kim Harding	Sunnyfield

Item	Details / Decision/Action Summary	Resp.
1.	Welcome and introductions	Carolyn Fisher/All
2.	Seema Sanghi – Cooperative Legal Service Delivery project	
	- Hunter wide project based on community need, meetings move around, 4 x per year - Services based on community need (for example - Community legal education) https://www.legallaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/community-partnerships/cooperative-legal-services-delivery-clsd-program/hunter-cooperative-legal-service-delivery-program-partnership	

	• Salvation Army Money Care Team offer financial counselling and no interest loans in the Hunter area (Newcastle based office). • This link was shared as an example of innovative localised DV response https://vimeo.com/280624333 (DV training for hairdressers in Melbourne)	
3.	Sue Shilcock – Northcott ECEI	
	• NDIS Partner in the Community to deliver Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Services in NSW, Northcott works closely with families and carers of children aged 0-6 years to develop the skills children need to take part in daily activities and achieve the best possible outcomes throughout their lives • See presentation attached to email of Minutes	
4.	Naomi Writer – NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency	
	• Supports access and participation in early childhood services by engaging and supporting educators • Priority groups include mental health, medical conditions, ATSI, CALD, refugees and humanitarian backgrounds, challenging behaviours and trauma • See brochures attached	
5.	Claire Taylor – Carers NSW	
	• New Carer Gateway went live in April and can provide emergency respite, planned respite, peer support, referrals etc. • See brochures attached • https://www.carersnsw.org.au/advice/services-supports/carergateway	
	Next meeting 1 September 9:30am	



What Therapists Need to Know

Inclusion in early childhood education and care

Benefits of inclusion

Research and experience tell us that inclusive early childhood education leads to the best outcomes for all children and families.

What happens in early childhood education and care (ECEC)?

It is important for therapists who visit ECEC settings to learn about how each setting operates in order to work together in a way that is complementary.

Inclusive children's services provide a unique opportunity for children to play, develop and learn together with their peers. These relationships are the foundations for learning and provide a powerful way of belonging to a group and developing a sense of who they are.

ECEC environments are designed to facilitate and maximise these opportunities through a play-based curriculum, with the expertise of educators who are trained to assess children's learning and development within the social context of the service.

Early childhood settings have their own curriculum and legal obligations for the education and care of all children in the form of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and National Quality Framework which includes the National Quality Standard (NQS).

Every child's right to inclusion is underpinned by all quality areas of the National Quality Standard which ECEC services need to meet.

NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency



In partnership with





Educators' knowledge and skills

Educators are well placed to share their knowledge of children's learning, interests and social connections within the everyday context of the service with therapists. Educators have a strong working knowledge of child development and are aware of barriers to participation that may be impacting on children's inclusion at the service. It can be helpful for educators to tell therapists about their service's philosophy around inclusive practice and the everyday routines and learning experiences offered to all children. Educators can let therapists know about any areas they would like support with and when it would be most helpful for visits from therapists to occur. It is important to be mindful that educators are responsible for the education and care of a large group of children.

Therapist Visits to ECEC settings

It is important for any strategies to be determined collaboratively and focus upon enhancing the child's participation and access to the ECEC setting. Any strategies agreed on need to be able to be readily embedded in the ECEC's everyday program. Visits from therapists should involve working with the child in the social context with their peers rather than on a 1:1 basis. There may be some therapy goals and strategies that are more relevant and suitable to a family or community context rather than the ECEC setting.

It is important to be aware that often there are multiple therapists seeking to visit the ECEC setting and educators need to ensure that this doesn't impact on curriculum provisions and opportunities for uninterrupted play with peers.

Working together

ECEC services may ask families and therapists to set up a Working Together Agreement when visits are planned in an ECEC setting. This can be helpful in order to establish roles, responsibilities and to clarify the way in which a therapist's visit to inclusive ECEC services occur. The agreement supports best practice and planning as a team.

Information about the Working Together Agreement is available here: www.ecia.org.au/Resources/Working-Together-Agreement

The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency (IA), managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Include Me and Gowrie NSW, is part of the Inclusion Support Program. The program aims to build the capacity and capability of educators to address participation barriers for all children through implementing quality inclusive practices.

NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency
What Therapists Need to Know: Fact Sheet

The Australian Government funded Inclusion Agency is managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Include Me and Gowrie NSW.

For more information, visit:
inclusionagencynswact.org.au
or call **1800 703 382**

Inclusion happens when educators:

- ▶ Are supported in their practice by strong leadership
- ▶ Work together as a team to think about how inclusive their practices are
- ▶ Work collaboratively with families and support them to understand inclusion and how children learn in social settings
- ▶ Support children to communicate with, and learn from each other
- ▶ Value and view all children as capable and competent
- ▶ Recognise that every child is different, and plan programs to support this
- ▶ Build relationships with all children and families
- ▶ Support children to make choices about their play and learning
- ▶ Encourage children to develop confidence and be independent

Parent consent forms

There are two parent consent forms that you may be asked to complete. Each of them has a different purpose.

1. NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency (IA) Consent

- **Permission to Share Personal Information**

This form gives permission for educators in your child's service to discuss and share information about your child with an Inclusion Professional.

2. Department of Education and Training Consent

- **Permission to share personal information for the purposes of the Inclusion Support Programme**

This form gives permission for information about your child to be linked to a service's application to access Inclusion Development Funding on the Australian Government Department of Education and Training Inclusion Support Portal.

*The Australian Government funded
NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency is managed by
KU Children's Services, in partnership with
Include Me and Gowrie NSW.*

Inclusion Support Programme

NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency

Information for families

*Providing inclusion support to early childhood
and child care services in NSW and ACT*



Contact us for further information

T 1800 703 382

E inclusionagency@includeme.com.au

www.inclusionagency.nswact.org.au



Children's Services
Since 1895

In partnership with



Gowrie
New South Wales

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Inclusion is important – everyone benefits

All children have the right to be included in children's services. We know from research that all children benefit from belonging to, and participating in, quality inclusive child care.

An inclusive children's service provides a unique opportunity for children to play, develop and learn together with children of their own age. These relationships are the foundations for learning and provide a powerful way of belonging to a group and developing a sense of who they are.

When children are included you will see them:

- ▶ Feel safe and valued
- ▶ Be encouraged to do things on their own
- ▶ Be supported to contribute
- ▶ Make their own choices
- ▶ Play with their friends
- ▶ Have opportunities to learn new things
- ▶ Participate in the programme alongside their same age typically developing peers



What is the role of an Inclusion Professional?

Inclusion Professionals (IPs) support educators to develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan that takes into consideration the whole room your child is part of. The plan is not focussed on your child alone, or any one child specifically. Instead, the plan identifies what the service needs to do to support educators to include all children.

IPs provide free support to all Commonwealth funded children's services, including Long Day Care, Outside School Hours Care and Family Day Care services. Support is provided when requested by the service. This could include support to:

- ▶ Identify relevant professional learning opportunities
- ▶ Facilitate team meetings to discuss inclusion
- ▶ Reflect on policies, practices and procedures
- ▶ Provide networking opportunities for educators
- ▶ Access to the Inclusion Agency website and other resources such as newsletters and sector updates
- ▶ Provide support to apply for an additional educator for the environment (if required)

Providing access to funding support for services is not the primary role of an IP. A diagnosis of a disability alone does not mean that funding for an additional educator is the best type of support for educators and services.



What Inclusion Professionals do:

- ▶ Support educators to reflect on how they think and work so that all children are included
- ▶ Work with educators to identify any changes that need to be made to ensure all children are included and can participate with their friends
- ▶ Support educators to identify and access any resources they require to meet the needs of all children
- ▶ Provide access to specialist equipment to support children's inclusion at the child care service

What Inclusion Professionals don't do:

- ▶ Assess or work with individual children
- ▶ Provide funding for one to one support for individual children
- ▶ Tell educators what to do or what resources they have to use
- ▶ Provide access to specialist equipment for ongoing therapy needs

Strategic Inclusion Plan

The development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is the first step in accessing support from the Inclusion Agency.

A SIP is a self-guided inclusion assessment and planning tool for services, which includes strategies for improving and embedding inclusive practice, in line with the National Quality Standard (NQS). The development of a SIP recognises the current inclusive capacity and capability of a service and outlines the strategies and actions educators will implement to include all children.

A SIP is developed, implemented and evaluated within a 12 month period. A SIP can be updated during this period to reflect any changes and record the progress made in implementing the strategies and actions outlined.

The Inclusion Support Program

The Inclusion Support Program (ISP) assists Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to include children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers in order that all children have genuine opportunities to access, participate and achieve positive learning outcomes as per the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time Our Place.

Additional needs may arise for children who:

- ▶ Have a disability or developmental delay
- ▶ Are presenting with challenging behaviours
- ▶ Have a serious medical or health condition, including mental health
- ▶ Are presenting with trauma-related behaviours

Children from:

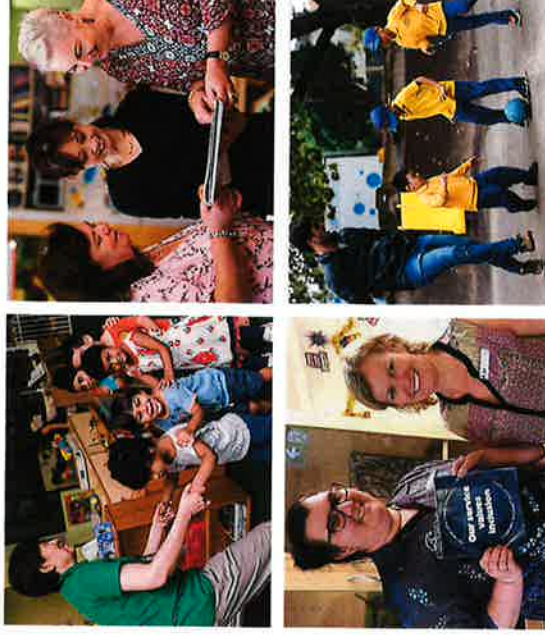
- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- ▶ Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ▶ Refugee or humanitarian backgrounds

may also require special considerations to ensure they are able to fully participate in ECEC services.

Inclusion Support Program

NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency

Inclusion benefits all children both now and for the future



The Australian Government funded NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency is managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Include Me and Gowrie NSW.

Contact us for further information

T 1800 703 382

E inclusionagency@includeme.com.au

www.inclusionagency.nswact.org.au



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NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency

The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency (IA), managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Include Me and Gowrie NSW, is part of the Inclusion Support Program.

The program aims to build the capacity and capability of educators to address participation barriers for all children through implementing quality inclusive practices.

We provide free tailored inclusion support to all Australian Government funded services including Centre-Based Day Care, Outside School Hours Care and Family Day Care. Our teams of Inclusion Professionals are based at Inclusion Hubs located across NSW and the ACT.

The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency also includes the:

- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inclusion Hub
- ▶ Specialist Equipment Library

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inclusion Hub supports Inclusion Professionals in their work with services in relation to the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The Specialist Equipment Library is a free service where specialist equipment is loaned to services to support children to access and participate in every aspect of an ECEC program.

How will we support your service?

Inclusion Professionals will work directly with services to develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan to:

- ▶ Support educators to acknowledge and identify their strengths.
 - ▶ Support educators to reflect on their understanding of inclusion and identify inclusion barriers.
 - ▶ Assist educators to critically reflect on their practices.
 - ▶ Support educators to overcome specific inclusion barriers by identifying and planning practical strategies and solutions.
 - ▶ Facilitate access to all Inclusion Support Program (ISP) resources including the Inclusion Development Fund, if required, to support children to access and participate in every aspect of your program.
 - ▶ Encourage educators to work in partnership with families, community groups, services and organisations.
 - ▶ Support educators to promote an understanding of inclusion principles with families and other professionals.
- ▶ Every child has the right to participate in high quality early childhood education.
 - ▶ All children are viewed as being capable learners and contributors in ECEC services.
 - ▶ The strengths and interests of each child are acknowledged. Inclusion is not about 'fixing' the child or improving their skills so that they fit into the ECEC environment, it is about changing what we do as educators so that all children can participate.
 - ▶ The focus is on the whole environment and not just on an individual child.
 - ▶ Diversity is acknowledged, respected and viewed as a resource for learning, growth and change.
 - ▶ All educators are responsible for identifying inclusion barriers and learning about ways to overcome them.
 - ▶ Educators build partnerships with families, other professionals and the wider community.

Where carers can find support

Giulia, carer to
her daughter.



 **Carer
Gateway**

An Australian Government Initiative

What is Carer Gateway?

Carer Gateway provides in-person, phone and online services and support to Australia's 2.65 million unpaid carers.

What services does Carer Gateway provide for carers?

-  **Coaching**
-  **Counselling**
-  **Respite care – emergency and planned**
-  **Connects you with other carers**
-  **Online skills courses**
-  **Financial support**

How do I contact Carer Gateway?

By calling **1800 422 737** Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm, you can talk to a Carer Gateway service provider who will help you access services and support.

Carer Gateway also offers a national website at **carergateway.gov.au** where you can find online support and information.



carergateway.gov.au

Connecting carers  to support services

Let Carer Gateway help you care



Carer Gateway
An Australian Government Initiative

How do I contact Carer Gateway?

Carer Gateway offers a national website at www.carergateway.gov.au or you can phone **1800 422 737** Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm.



Julie-anne, carer to her son,



Carer Gateway
An Australian Government Initiative

carergateway.gov.au
Connecting carers to support services



...

Do you look after a family member or friend with disability, a medical condition, mental illness or who is frail due to age?

...

Do your caring responsibilities affect your wellbeing or your ability to work, study or socialise?

...

If you answered yes to any of these questions, Carer Gateway can help you.

What is Carer Gateway?

An Australian Government service providing information and support to help people who look after a family member or friend with disability, a medical condition, mental illness or who is frail due to age.

How will Carer Gateway help me?

By calling 1800 422 737 Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm, you can talk to a Carer Gateway service provider who will help you access services and support.

The Carer Gateway website (carergateway.gov.au) connects you with online supports and information. The new supports can help you manage daily challenges, improve your health and wellbeing and plan for the future.

Who can use Carer Gateway?

Anyone who cares for a friend or family member can use Carer Gateway. You can find out what types of services and supports are right for you. We know that all caring situations are different. Some carers look after another person 24 hours a day, and help with daily living, while other carers look after people for a few hours to help with everyday things.



What services can I use?



Coaching

Learn new ways to manage stress and improve your wellbeing.

- **Self-guided coaching** – undertake online courses.



Counselling

If you feel stressed, sad or angry, a counsellor can talk through your worries and help you.

- **In-person** – speak one-on-one with a counsellor in your local area.
- **Phone counselling** – speak with a counsellor over the phone.



Respite care

'Respite' means taking a break. If you get sick or hurt and you can't look after someone, then emergency respite services can help you. They will find ways to look after the person you care for while you have a break. Planned respite care can help you plan for regular breaks to rest and recharge.



Talk to other carers

Meet with people like you who care for someone. Share stories, knowledge and experience.

- **In-person** – meet other people in your area who care for someone. Learn from each other in a safe space.
- **Online community** – join the online chat groups and talk to other people who look after someone.

'Being a carer can be restrictive, your time is not your own. It's a difficult juggling act but you need to look after yourself too.'

Lyall, carer to his mother-in-law.



Online skills courses

Learn new skills to look after someone and yourself. Learn new ways to deal with stress, legal issues, and your happiness, health and safety.



Financial support

Get financial support to help you look after someone. **Financial support packages:**

- equipment or an item to help you look after someone.
- get a service provider to look after the person you care for so that you can have a break.
- transport.



Giulia, carer to her daughter.

A carer is someone who looks after a family member or friend with disability, a medical condition, mental illness, or someone who is frail due to age.

If you are a carer, you can get help and support through Carer Gateway.

What is Carer Gateway?

Carer Gateway provides in-person, phone and online services and support to Australia's 2.65 million unpaid carers.

Carer Gateway has many services that can help you with any daily challenges, emotional and financial stresses that you may experience in your role as a carer.



carergateway.gov.au
Connecting carers to support services



How do I contact Carer Gateway?

Carer Gateway offers a national website at www.carergateway.gov.au or you can phone 1800 422 737 Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm.

Where carers
can find support

Razi, carer
to his mother.



How do I use Carer Gateway services?

You can talk to a Carer Gateway service provider by calling **1800 422 737** Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm. Carer Gateway staff will talk through what you need and help you to find services and support. If you want to talk with someone in your language, you can phone the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450**. The Translating and Interpreting Service provides access to interpreters who speak more than 160 languages. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Carer Gateway also has a national website (carergateway.gov.au) that has online services and information to support you as a carer.

Carer Gateway provides many services, including:



Coaching

If you want to learn new ways to manage stress and improve your wellbeing, the self-guided coaching courses on the Carer Gateway website can help you.



Counselling

If you are feeling stressed, anxious, sad or frustrated, a professional counsellor can talk through your worries and help you. You can talk one-on-one, in-person with a professional counsellor in your area or on the phone in the comfort of your own home. If you want to talk with someone in your language, you can phone the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450.



Respite care

Respite or 'respite care' is when someone else takes care of the person you care for. You might need emergency respite care if you suddenly find you can't provide care, for example if you are ill or injured. You can also plan respite care so that you can have a break. To arrange emergency respite care, or planned respite care, call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 to talk about options in your area.



Connect with other carers

If you feel alone or want to get advice from other carers, Carer Gateway can help you meet with people in similar caring situations to share your stories, knowledge and experience. You can meet local carers in-person and share advice and learn from each other in a safe space. The Carer Gateway website also provides an online forum that you can join and become part of a supportive online community with other carers.



Online skills courses

You can learn new skills through short interactive online courses on the Carer Gateway website. The courses will help you in your caring role and provide information on how to take care of your own wellbeing, deal with stress and legal issues.



Financial support

As a carer, you may be able to get financial help. There are two financial support packages available to eligible carers through Carer Gateway. You may be able to get funding to buy a one-off practical support in the form of equipment or an item to assist you in your caring role. You may also be able to get funding for a range of ongoing practical supports, such as planned respite or transport, provided over a twelve-month period.

'Joining a carer support group was the best thing that happened to me. I became part of a big family of carers with a shared understanding.'

Abbey, carer to her son.

