

Fact Sheet

Office for the Community Sector

Achievements in 2008-09

- The Office for the Community Sector was created in recognition of the vital role that community sector organisations play in undertaking the delivery of health and human services.
- The work being undertaken by the Office for the Community Sector is essential considering that there are 240 organisations funded to provide over 600 services worth \$167 million, each year.
- The establishment of this Office was almost resource neutral, with only one position being created in addition to the positions transferred from within the Department.
- An ambitious reform agenda was articulated in a strategic plan launched in October 2008.
- Three major reforms were progressed during 2008-09:
 - A Quality and Safety standards framework for community sector organisations funded by the Department. The framework includes mandatory standards that apply to all organisations, specialist standards that apply according to the service type provided, and processes to continuously improve service quality;
 - Significant reform to the way DHHS administers grants with the introduction of a Finance and Performance Framework. The framework clarifies the purpose of the funding, focuses on client outcomes and improves the financial management of funds; and
 - Progressing a partnership framework with the community sector that includes the potential development of a compact between the Department and the community sector and clarifies the role of Peak organisations funded by the Department.

Key areas for 2009-10

- During 2009-10 the Office for the Community Sector will continue its ambitious reform agenda as activity moves from the consultation and development phase to implementation. This includes:
 - Introducing new Funding Agreements from 1 July 2009 for all grant funded services provided by the Department.
 - Implementing the Quality and Safety framework from 1 July 2009, including conducting intensive training on the framework for all community sector organisations funded by the Department during the second half of 2009.
 - Commencing a quarterly service reporting structure comprising internal desktop reviews (in September and March) and organisation reporting (in December and June).
 - The introduction of an electronic Community Management Information System.
 - Progressing the partnerships framework through the introduction of consistent funding Agreements for peak bodies; a revised Terms of Reference for the Agency Sector Forum; and ongoing discussion with community sector organisations regarding the possible development of a Compact between the Department and the sector.

- Funding provided in budget for \$250,000 for a Strengthening the Community Sector Fund.
- Provision of 3.3% indexation to funded community organisations.