



Australian Government  
Department of Social Services



# Inclusion and Professional Support Program Guidelines for 2013-2016



## Version Control

Date	Version	Description
May 2015	1.3	Update to Guidelines including streamlining of ISS processes, ISS rates tables removed and published separately, changes to eligibility requirements for PSC subsidised support; amendment to fee rules for access to PSCs for BBFs, and general revision of Guidelines.
July 2013	1.2	Indexed ISS and FSF Rates for 2013-2014
December 2012	1.1	Update prior to commencement of funding agreements on 1 January 2013
December 2011	1.0	First release of 2013-2016 guidelines

## Contents

Version Control .....	2
Acronyms.....	8
About the IPSP Guidelines .....	9
<b>1. Purpose of the Guidelines</b> .....	9
<b>2. Structure of Guidelines</b> .....	10
Section A – Inclusion and Professional Support Program .....	11
<b>A1. IPSP philosophy</b> .....	11
<b>A2. IPSP objectives</b> .....	11
<b>A3. IPSP and the National Quality Framework</b> .....	12
<b>A4. Key principles of IPSP</b> .....	13
<b>A5. IPSP model</b> .....	14
A5.1 IPSP Regions .....	14
<b>A6. IPSP Forums and Alliances</b> .....	14
<b>A7. IPSP communication protocols, naming conventions and logos</b> .....	15
<b>A8. IPSP eligibility</b> .....	15
A8.1 Services eligible for support through IPSP.....	15
A8.2 Services not eligible for support through IPSP .....	16
A8.3 Eligibility for Inclusion Support Subsidy funding.....	16
A8.4 Long day care services not eligible for subsidised Professional Development and Support from PSCs .....	16
<b>A9. Roles and responsibilities</b> .....	16
A9.1 Department of Social Services.....	16
A9.2 IPSP Providers .....	17
A9.3 Joint roles and responsibilities .....	17
<b>A10. Outcome Reporting Framework for ISAs, PSCs and IPSUs</b> .....	17
<b>A11. IPSP performance monitoring and compliance</b> .....	17
A11.1 Monitoring .....	17
A11.2 ISS Compliance .....	18
A11.3 Reporting .....	18
<b>A12. Complaints procedures</b> .....	18
<b>A13. IPSP continuous improvement and evaluation strategies</b> .....	18
Section B – Inclusion Support Agencies .....	19
<b>B1. Description</b> .....	19
B1.1 Priority groups .....	19

<b>B2. Objectives</b> .....	19
<b>B3. Roles and responsibilities</b> .....	19
B3.1 Support to child care services .....	20
B3.2 Role of ISAs in relation to the Inclusion Support Subsidy .....	20
B3.3 Role of ISAs in relation to Flexible Support Funding .....	21
B3.4 Role of ISAs in relation to Inclusion Support Facilitators .....	21
B3.5 Role of ISAs in relation to planning and coordination .....	21
<b>B4. Networking and collaboration</b> .....	22
<b>B5. Participation in IPSP forums including the ISA Alliance</b> .....	22
<b>B6. Budget and performance monitoring</b> .....	22
B6.1 Funding and budget management .....	22
B6.2 Use of funding .....	22
B6.3 Progress reporting .....	23
B6.4 Monitoring visits .....	23
B6.5 How to access the Inclusion Support Agencies .....	23
<b>Section C – National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider</b> .....	24
<b>C1. Description</b> .....	24
<b>C2. Objective of the NISSP</b> .....	24
<b>C3. The role of the NISSP</b> .....	24
<b>C4. Networking and collaboration</b> .....	24
<b>C5. Budget and performance monitoring and reporting</b> .....	25
<b>C6. Approval of the Inclusion Support Subsidy</b> .....	25
C6.1 Approved purposes .....	25
C6.2 Non-approved purposes .....	25
<b>C7. Accessing the Inclusion Support Subsidy</b> .....	25
C7.1 Eligibility .....	25
C7.2 Eligible child care services .....	25
C7.3 Children with ongoing high support needs .....	26
C7.4 Short-term and irregular utilisation in centre based care .....	26
C7.5 Approval period .....	26
<b>C8. Applying for the Inclusion Support Subsidy</b> .....	26
C8.1 How to apply for the Inclusion Support Subsidy .....	26
C8.2 Exceptional circumstances .....	27
C8.3 Shared Care arrangements in centre based care .....	27
C8.4 Inclusion Support Subsidy assessment and approval .....	27
C8.5 Inclusion Support Subsidy agreement by child care services .....	27

C8.6	Review and renewal of funding .....	27
C8.7	Variations or changes to the child care environment .....	28
C8.8	Conditions relating to educators/carers employed with the Inclusion Support Subsidy ..	28
<b>C9.</b>	<b>Inclusion Support Subsidy rates .....</b>	<b>29</b>
C9.1	Absences from care .....	29
<b>C10.</b>	<b>The claims process .....</b>	<b>29</b>
C10.1	How to claim Inclusion Support Subsidy .....	29
C10.2	Periodic auditing of child care services making Inclusion Support Subsidy claims .....	30
<b>Section D – Professional Support Coordinators .....</b>		<b>31</b>
<b>D1.</b>	<b>Description .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>D2.</b>	<b>Objectives .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>D3.</b>	<b>Professional development and support approach .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>D4.</b>	<b>How to access the PSCs .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>D5.</b>	<b>Roles and responsibilities of the PSCs .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>D6.</b>	<b>Communication activities .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>D7.</b>	<b>Priority areas for professional development and support .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>D8.</b>	<b>Sub-contracting .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>D9.</b>	<b>Professional support fee structure .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>D10.</b>	<b>Planning .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>D11.</b>	<b>Networking and collaboration .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>D12.</b>	<b>Participation in IPSP Forums and the PSC Alliance .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>D13.</b>	<b>Budget and monitoring funding .....</b>	<b>37</b>
D13.1	Funding and budget management .....	37
D13.2	Use of funding .....	37
D13.3	Funding for Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment .....	37
<b>D14</b>	<b>Progress reporting .....</b>	<b>38</b>
D14.1	Monitoring visits .....	38
<b>D15.</b>	<b>How to access the Professional Support Coordinators .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Section E – Indigenous Professional Support Units .....</b>		<b>39</b>
<b>E1.</b>	<b>Description .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>E2.</b>	<b>Objectives .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>E3.</b>	<b>Roles and responsibilities .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>E4.</b>	<b>Communication activities .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>E5.</b>	<b>Priority areas for professional development and support .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>E6.</b>	<b>Support for mainstream child care services .....</b>	<b>41</b>

<b>E7. IPSU Fee Structure</b> .....	42
<b>E8. Planning and coordination</b> .....	42
E8.1 Needs analysis.....	42
E8.2 IPSU Region Plan.....	42
<b>E9. Networking and collaboration</b> .....	43
<b>E10. Participation in IPSP Forums and the IPSU Alliance</b> .....	43
<b>E11. Professional development for IPSU staff</b> .....	43
<b>E12. Budget and performance monitoring</b> .....	43
E12.1 Use of funding.....	43
E12.2 Professional development and support fee structure.....	44
<b>E13. Progress reporting and monitoring</b> .....	44
E13.1 Reporting.....	44
E13.2 Monitoring visits.....	44
<b>E14. How to access the Indigenous Professional Support Units</b> .....	44
<b>Section F – IPSP Resources</b> .....	45
<b>F1. Inclusion Improvement Plan</b> .....	45
F1.1 Description.....	45
F1.2 Why an Inclusion Improvement Plan is needed.....	45
F1.3 What the Inclusion Improvement Plan includes.....	45
F1.4 Evaluation of the Inclusion Improvement Plan.....	46
<b>F2. Flexible Support Funding</b> .....	46
F2.1 Description.....	46
F2.2 Approved purposes for Flexible Support Funding.....	46
F2.3 Types of support for which Flexible Support Funding cannot be used.....	47
F2.4 Flexible Support Funding application and approval processes.....	47
F2.5 Flexible Support Funding claims.....	48
F2.6 Flexible Support Funding subsidy rate and limits.....	48
F2.7 Use of Flexible Support Funding for specialist training and/or Inclusion Improvement Plans.....	48
F2.8 Exceptional circumstances over the 15 hour limit.....	49
F2.9 Role and employment conditions of educators.....	49
<b>F3. Bicultural Support</b> .....	49
F3.1 Description.....	49
F3.2 What Bicultural Support provides.....	49
F3.3 Funding for Bicultural Support.....	50
F3.4 The role of the PSC in providing Bicultural Support.....	51
F3.5 How Bicultural Support operates.....	51

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F3.6	Useful contacts for Bicultural Support providers .....	51
<b>F4.</b>	<b>Specialist Equipment</b> .....	<b>51</b>
F4.1	Description.....	51
F4.2	What is available from the Specialist Equipment?.....	52
F4.3	How child care services borrow Specialist Equipment.....	52
F4.4	Fitting Specialist Equipment.....	53
F4.5	Non eligible services accessing Specialist Equipment.....	53
F4.6	Role of the PSC in relation to Specialist Equipment .....	53
<b>F5.</b>	<b>IPSP Online Library (formerly IPSP Resource Library)</b> .....	<b>53</b>
F5.1	Description and access .....	53
F5.2	Role of the PSC in relation to the IPSP Online Library .....	54
<b>Appendix A – Glossary</b> .....		<b>55</b>

## Acronyms

ACRONYMS	DESCRIPTION
<b>AMEP</b>	Adult Migrant English Program
<b>ACECQA</b>	Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority
<b>BBF</b>	Budget Based Funded
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
<b>CCB</b>	Child Care Benefit
<b>COAG</b>	Council of Australian Governments
<b>FDC</b>	Family Day Care
<b>FSF</b>	Flexible Support Funding
<b>IHC</b>	In Home Care
<b>IIP</b>	Inclusion Improvement Plan
<b>IPSP</b>	Inclusion and Professional Support Program
<b>IPSU</b>	Indigenous Professional Support Unit
<b>ISA</b>	Inclusion Support Agency
<b>ISF</b>	Inclusion Support Facilitator
<b>ISS</b>	Inclusion Support Subsidy
<b>LDC</b>	Long Day Care
<b>NISSP</b>	National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider
<b>NQS</b>	National Quality Standard
<b>OSHC</b>	Outside School Hours Care
<b>PSC</b>	Professional Support Coordinator
<b>SSP</b>	Service Support Plan



## About the IPSP Guidelines

### 1. Purpose of the Guidelines

These Guidelines contain information about the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) and information relating to the obligations of organisations in receipt of grants funded by the Australian Government under IPSP. IPSP Providers are:

- the National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP)
- Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs)
- Professional Support Coordinators (PSCs)
- Indigenous Professional Support Units (IPSUs).

These Guidelines commenced on 1 January 2013. These Guidelines may be amended from time to time during the term of the Funding Agreement. Such amendments may be necessary to reflect Australian Government priorities. Providers will be advised of any changes to the Guidelines in writing.

These Guidelines are available on the [Department of Social Services website](https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/programmes-services/early-childhood-child-care/inclusion-and-professional-support-program) at <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/programmes-services/early-childhood-child-care/inclusion-and-professional-support-program>.

The Department of Social Services (the Department) is responsible for administering IPSP. The full obligations of each Provider are outlined in each Provider's Funding Agreement with the Department. Providers are required to read these Guidelines in conjunction with the relevant IPSP Funding Agreement.

In accordance with clause 3 of the Funding Agreement, in the event of any conflict or inconsistency between any part of these Guidelines and the Funding Agreement, the terms of the Funding Agreement take precedence over these Guidelines to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

## 2. Structure of Guidelines

### IPSP

#### Section A:

- IPSP philosophy, objectives and focus
- IPSP model and key principles underpinning the delivery of IPSP
- Strategies for facilitating integration in IPSP
- National Quality Framework
- Eligibility requirements for IPSP support
- IPSP planning
- Continuous improvement and evaluation strategies

### Inclusion Support

#### Section B:

- Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs)

#### Section C:

- National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP), including the Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS)

### Professional Development and Support

#### Section D:

- Professional Support Coordinators (PSCs)

#### Section E:

- Indigenous Professional Support Units (IPSUs)

### IPSP Resources

#### Section F:

- Inclusion Improvement Plans (IIP)
- Bicultural Support
- Specialist Equipment
- IPSP Online Library
- Flexible Support Funding (FSF)

### Appendices

A – Glossary

## Section A – Inclusion and Professional Support Program

### A1. IPSP philosophy

Early childhood is a critical time in human development. There is comprehensive research that shows the experiences children have in the early years of life set neurological and biological pathways that can have life-long impacts on health, learning and behaviour. Evidence suggests that there are great returns on investment in early childhood services for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Australian Government is committed to addressing disadvantage and social inclusion through a wide range of actions, including IPSP.

IPSP is part of the broader Council of Australian Governments (COAG) vision that, by 2020, all children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation. IPSP promotes the objectives and principles of the *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education*<sup>1</sup>, the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*<sup>2</sup>, the COAG agreed *National Disability Strategy*<sup>3</sup>, the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement*<sup>4</sup>, and the *National Quality Agenda*<sup>5</sup>.

IPSP philosophy for early child care services is based on:

- Universal access<sup>6</sup> to early childhood education for all children.
- Education and care services being ready to meet the needs of all children and equipping them for life and learning.
- Support provided to education and care services being based on the needs of the total care environment.
- Educators developing the capacity to meet the needs of all children attending the service.

### A2. IPSP objectives

The objectives of IPSP are to promote and maintain high quality, inclusive education and care, for all children in eligible child care settings. This is achieved by increasing the knowledge and skills of educators, and the capacity of education and care services, through providing professional development, advice and access to additional resources and support.

This includes:

- Professional development and workforce development that enhances the quality of education and care services.
- Access to a range of resources that educators need to provide care for all children.

1 The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) [National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education](#)

2 The objects [in part] of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 are to:

- a) eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the areas of:
  - (i) work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport; and
  - (iv) the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- b) ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- c) promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

3 The *National Disability Strategy* outlines a 10-year national policy framework to guide government activity across six key outcome areas, and to drive future reforms in mainstream and specialist disability service systems to improve outcomes for people with disability, their families and carers.

4 The [National Indigenous Reform Agreement](#) has been established to frame the task of Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage. To ensure consistency across the development of National Partnership agreements, COAG has agreed service delivery principles and principles for investment in remote areas for Indigenous Australians. These principles are a guide for all COAG reforms, and all governments are expected to take these principles into account in designing policies and providing services.

5 The [Australian Government's agenda for early childhood education and child care](#) focuses on making child care more affordable, flexible and accessible for Australia's families.

6 The Australian Government has committed to providing [universal access to education and care services](#), provided by a four year university-trained early childhood teacher, for 15 hours a week in the year before formal schooling.

- Access to additional educators or carers when required.
- Flexible programmes that support education and care services to be responsive to the needs of all children.
- Good practice and continuous improvement in service delivery.
- The readiness of education and care services to become more inclusive.

The content of IPSP professional development will be guided by the Department, and will support the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes required by those working in education and care services to meet the National Quality Standard and the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, and support the understanding and implementation of approved frameworks such as the Early Years Learning Framework and the Framework for School Age Care. This includes knowledge and skill development to support the inclusion of children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds, Indigenous children and children with disability.

### **A3. IPSP and the National Quality Framework**

The National Quality Framework (NQF) is the result of an agreement between all Australian governments to work together to provide better educational and developmental outcomes for children using education and care services. The NQF aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services, including long day care (LDC), family day care (FDC), preschool/kindergarten and outside school hours care (OSHC).

IPSP drives change, and supports education and care services to understand the NQF and to actively work to adopt and improve their practices in line with approved learning frameworks.

While not covered by the NQF, Budget Based Funded (BBF), Occasional Care and In-Home Care (IHC) services are also eligible for support through IPSP.

The NQF includes a:

- National legislative framework consisting of the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- National Quality Standard (NQS) consisting of seven Quality Areas, which are:
  - Educational programme and practice
  - Children's health and safety
  - Physical environment
  - Staffing arrangements
  - Relationships with children
  - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
  - Leadership and service management.
- National quality rating and assessment process through which services are assessed against the NQS by Regulatory Authorities, and provided with a rating from one of the five rating levels.
- Regulatory Authority in each state and territory that has primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in its jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the NQS.
- New national body, ACECQA, oversees the new system and guides its implementation in a nationally consistent way.

The NQS sets a national benchmark for child care, and OSHC services in Australia. It also is designed to give services and families a better understanding of what constitutes a quality service. This enables families to make informed decisions about the services providing education and care to their children. The NQS allows each service to adopt approaches that are most appropriate to the children being educated and cared for at that service.

A central focus of the National Quality Framework is on outcomes for children. This requires that all education and care services must provide a programme that is based on an approved learning

framework, which considers the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and takes into account the individual differences of each child. The approved learning frameworks have been developed to guide educators in developing quality programmes that support children's learning.

Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (the Early Years Learning Framework) and My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia (Framework for School Age Care) outline practices to support and promote children's learning.

The aim of the Early Years Learning Framework is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to the transition to school. It forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all child care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning, and recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy), and social and emotional development.

The aim of the Framework for School Age Care is to extend and enrich the wellbeing and development of school age children in education and care settings. It assists services to provide children in school age care with opportunities to engage in leisure and play based experiences.

Other approved learning frameworks under the National Quality Framework include:

- Australian Capital Territory: Every Chance to Learn—Curriculum framework for ACT schools preschool to Year 10
- Tasmania: the Tasmanian Curriculum, the Department of Education of Tasmania, 2008
- Victoria: the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- Western Australia: the Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia.

Further information on the National Quality Framework and the approved learning frameworks is available from the [ACECQA website](#).

#### A4. Key principles of IPSP

The Australian Government is committed to improving access for all children to high quality, inclusive education and care services in both early childhood settings and school aged settings.

For the purposes of brevity, in these Guidelines, both early childhood and school aged education and care services, including: LDC, FDC, OSHC, Occasional Care, IHC and BBF services (see section A8 of these Guidelines), may be referred to as 'early childhood education and care services' (child care services).

The following principles underpin the delivery of IPSP:

- **Equity of access**—eligible child care services, regardless of their geographic location or service type, will have equitable access to support services provided by IPSP.
- **Inclusion**—IPSP supports eligible child care services to be inclusive of all children.
- **Professional workforce**—IPSP supports an increase in the professionalism of the child care workforce, and is proactive in meeting the needs of this workforce and service management.
- **Quality**—IPSP assists eligible child care services to provide quality services by actively promoting the National Quality Framework, the Early Years Learning Framework and the Framework for School Age Care.
- **National consistency**—eligible child care services can expect to have access to IPSP services that are delivered in an efficient, flexible, culturally appropriate and timely manner.
- **Integrated approach**—IPSP Providers will work collaboratively with each other and develop organisational relationships that support an integrated approach to service delivery.
- **Capacity building and strengths-based approach**—IPSP Providers will use a strengths-based approach (that is, understanding the capacity and capability of the child care service as a starting point for determining the type and intensity of assistance and support required) to build the capacity of eligible child care services to continuously improve the quality of their care environment.

## **A5. IPSP model**

IPSP Providers are required to deliver IPSP activities in an integrated and collaborative way to support the needs of child care services within specific regions (see sub-section A5.1 of these Guidelines).

IPSP comprises two main types of support – inclusion support and professional development and support:

- Inclusion Support improves access and inclusion for children with additional needs. This support is provided by Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs), the National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP) and through access to the Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS) and Flexible Support Funding (FSF).
- Professional Development and Support raises the quality of the education and care provided in child care settings. This support is provided by Professional Support Coordinators (PSCs) and Indigenous Professional Support Units (IPSUs).

For clarity in these Guidelines, the types of activities undertaken by the ISAs, NISSP, PSCs and IPSUs are referred to as the Programme Elements.

### **A5.1 IPSP Regions**

Each Programme Element is delivered by an IPSP Provider within a specific geographic region.

For ISAs, there are 67 ISA Regions across Australia:

- New South Wales – 18 ISA regions
- Victoria - 17 ISA Regions
- Queensland – 13 ISA Regions
- Western Australia – 8 ISA Regions
- South Australia – 5 ISA Regions
- Tasmania – 3 ISA Regions
- Australian Capital Territory – 1 ISA Region
- Northern Territory – 2 ISA Regions

The NISSP is a national provider.

For PSCs, there are eight Regions and each Region encompasses an entire state or territory.

For IPSUs, there are also eight Regions, one Region for each state, and two Regions in the NT. IPSU activities in the ACT are undertaken by the NSW IPSU.

## **A6. IPSP Forums and Alliances**

Given the collaborative and integrated approach to the delivery of IPSP across Australia, Department of Social Services, IPSP Providers and key stakeholders meet in a number of formal settings throughout the year. These include Alliance meetings, an annual National IPSP Conference, and State/Territory Forums.

These meetings provide opportunities to:

- Review programme activities and the extent to which they are meeting their objectives.
- Facilitate communication, collaboration and information sharing between IPSP Providers.
- Develop a shared vision for the delivery of inclusion and professional development and support for the child care sector.
- Review referral processes and communication protocols.
- Plan for IPSP delivery at a national, state and regional level, including in rural and remote areas.

## **A7. IPSP communication protocols, naming conventions and logos**

IPSP Providers are required to develop clear communication and feedback mechanisms between the Programme Elements within each state and territory to enhance collaboration, and to ensure eligible child care services are able to access the appropriate IPSP support regardless of which Provider is contacted. This is referred to as a 'no wrong door' approach.

IPSP Providers must use the IPSP logo (the logo), an acknowledgment of funding and the correct programme naming conventions in all publications, promotional and advertising materials, announcements and communications in relation to the programme (excluding business cards).

## **A8. IPSP eligibility**

### **A8.1 Services eligible for support through IPSP**

Education and care services eligible for support from ISAs and PSCs, and able to access ISS, are:

- Services approved for Child Care Benefit (CCB), including:
  - long day care<sup>7</sup>
  - outside school hours care (including vacation care)
  - family day care
  - occasional care
  - in home care.
- Services funded under the BBF Program, including:
  - flexible/innovative services
  - mobile child care services
  - Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services
  - Indigenous playgroups
  - Indigenous outside school hours care and enrichment programmes
  - Crèches.
- From 1 July 2015, this includes services that:
  - Previously received financial assistance under the BBF Program, which are continuing services and are now funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Education and care services eligible for support from IPSUs are:

- Indigenous focused services funded under the BBF Program, including:
  - flexible/innovative services
  - mobile child care services
  - Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services
  - Indigenous playgroups
  - Indigenous outside school hours care and enrichment programmes
  - Crèches.
- From 1 July 2015, this includes services that:
  - Previously received financial assistance under the BBF Program, which are continuing services and are now funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

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<sup>7</sup> Please see section A8.4 for eligibility for subsidised support from PSCs.

## **A8.2 Services not eligible for support through IPSP**

Any service of a type not listed in section A8.1 is not eligible for support under IPSP. This includes registered care, and state and territory government occasional care, preschools, kindergartens and early intervention services.

LDC Services that provide state or territory government funded kindergarten/preschool programmes may be approved for support for those hours outside the period funded through the kindergarten/preschool programme.

Services included under the National Quality Framework, but which are ineligible for IPSP, such as preschools and kindergartens, may seek support from PSC and IPSU Providers on a fee for service basis (see sections D9 and E7 of these Guidelines).

## **A8.3 Eligibility for Inclusion Support Subsidy funding**

Certain services eligible for IPSP are not eligible for ISS funding. For the purposes of ISS, where a service has advised that all of the enrolled children have ongoing high support needs, the service is deemed to be a specialist service. These services are not eligible for ISS as they do not offer the opportunity for the children with ongoing high support needs to be included alongside typically developing peers. This is irrespective of whether they are approved for CCB.

In addition, although a service may be eligible for IPSP and also eligible for ISS, this does not mean an automatic entitlement to ISS funding. To receive ISS funding, child care services are subject to additional criteria. For more information, refer to Section C of these Guidelines.

## **A8.4 Long day care services not eligible for subsidised Professional Development from PSCs**

Certain services eligible for IPSP are not eligible for subsidised professional development and support from PSCs. LDC services approved for CCB with a CCB approval date prior to 14 June 2014 will not be eligible for PSC services on a subsidised basis as they were eligible to apply for funding under the Australian Government's Long Day Care Professional Development Programme (LDCPDP). These LDC services will be able to purchase professional development and support from a PSC at the rate for non-eligible child care services, which is on a full cost recovery basis.

Where an LDC service is referred by a state or territory government regulatory authority or the Department, analysis of what professional development and support is needed will be provided free, however any further support and development will be provided on a full cost recovery basis.

LDC services approved for CCB after the close of the LDCPDP application period on 13 June 2014 will be able to access subsidised professional development and support from PSCs, as these services did not have the opportunity to apply for funding under the LDCPDP grant funding process. This does not include services that changed ownership during or following the LDCPDP application period as these services had the opportunity to apply for the LDCPDP during that period with the service's previous CCB approval ID.

LDC services who are owned by providers who received Early Years Quality Fund (EYQF) funding, are also no longer eligible for subsidised PSC support as these providers had the option to vary their funding agreements to use their EYQF funding for professional development.

Regardless of their CCB approval date, all CCB approved LDC services eligible under IPSP will continue to be eligible for free Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment which is provided through PSCs.

## **A9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **A9.1 Department of Social Services**

The Department's National Office has responsibility for managing and administering IPSP: The Department's State/Territory Offices administer operations locally.



## **A9.2 IPSP Providers**

IPSP Providers are responsible for:

- Delivering inclusion support and professional development and support activities.
- Sharing information and materials between Providers, as described in these Guidelines and as specified in their Funding Agreements.

## **A9.3 Joint roles and responsibilities**

The Department and IPSP Providers have a role in supporting good practice and maintaining linkages with other IPSP Providers, ACECQA, the Regulatory Authorities, and providers of other related programmes and services.

## **A10. Outcome Reporting Framework for ISAs, PSCs and IPSUs**

IPSP supports a planned approach to programme management and delivery to ensure resources are targeted to areas of greatest need. This approach increases focus on outcomes, and provides clarity on the direction, and roles and responsibilities of the respective IPSP Providers in achieving these outcomes. Nevertheless, the capacity to respond to emerging or specific local needs will be important, particularly as child care services go through the assessment and rating processes of the National Quality Framework.

To ensure a nationally consistent approach to planning and understanding the needs of eligible child care services within regions, the Department has developed the Outcome Reporting Framework. IPSP Providers are required to implement the Outcome Reporting Framework in accordance with the terms of their Funding Agreement. The Outcome Reporting Framework has been developed to support the continuous improvement of IPSP, particularly in relation to the programme's capacity to achieve its desired outcomes.

## **A11. IPSP performance monitoring and compliance**

The Department of Social Services is responsible for ensuring that IPSP funding is expended in an efficient and transparent manner, and for monitoring IPSP Providers' compliance with the terms and conditions of their Funding Agreements.

The Department's performance monitoring and compliance strategy includes analysis of detailed reports on IPSP funding expenditure, monitoring of performance reports, regular liaison with IPSP Providers, and monitoring visits.

Performance monitoring, in addition to meeting the Department's accountability requirements, is used to:

- determine how IPSP is operating in each state/territory
- contribute to the performance information on IPSP
- enhance opportunities for learning and performance improvement by the Department and IPSP Providers.

### **A11.1 Monitoring**

Monitoring of IPSP Providers will draw on a number of sources, including visits, data analysis, review of reports, quality assessment and rating reports, review of processes and procedures, review of websites, and survey results.

Monitoring visits undertaken by the Department will include:

- Meetings with IPSP Providers to discuss their progress reports and any issues or questions arising from the reports or other monitoring activities. IPSP Providers are required to provide examples of their work, for example, training or professional development calendars, resources, and evaluations.
- Meetings with child care services that have received support from IPSP Providers to gauge levels of satisfaction.

The Department will establish a rolling programme of visits and provide advice to IPSP Providers on the timing and approach for the monitoring process.

The Department will also use data from a range of other sources, including surveys of child care services, to assess the effectiveness of IPSP.

### **A11.2 ISS Compliance**

The Department conducts compliance activities across child care services receiving the ISS including FDC and IHC providers. Compliance activities aim to assist services to use and correctly claim ISS and ensure they are operating in accordance with their ISS Approval, ISS Conditions of Funding and these Guidelines. Further information about compliance is located in the Compliance Information Sheet – Inclusion Support Subsidy which is located on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

### **A11.3 Reporting**

IPSP Providers are required to report regularly on programme activities and demonstrate compliance with programme requirements using templates defined by the Department. The reporting requirements are detailed in the Funding Agreement.

## **A12. Complaints procedures**

IPSP Providers are required to establish and maintain effective complaints-handling and problem-solving mechanisms for eligible child care services. These mechanisms must ensure timely and effective resolution of complaints.

The complaints-handling mechanism must inform child care services of the process for lodging a complaint and the process for providing feedback. The mechanism will ensure that issues arising from complaints are reported to management and are used to improve service delivery.

The mechanisms must also include the development and distribution of written information to IPSP Provider staff or sub-contractors about their rights and responsibilities in relation to the delivery of inclusion support and professional development and support.

The complaints procedures, and records of issues and responses, must be available to the Department on request.

## **A13. IPSP continuous improvement and evaluation strategies**

To ensure the ongoing improvement of IPSP, IPSP Providers will develop and implement internal systems to facilitate continuous improvement in their service delivery.

In addition, the Department will undertake an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of IPSP for 2013-2016, and the extent to which programme objectives have been achieved. All IPSP Providers will be required to participate in the evaluation.

## Section B – Inclusion Support Agencies

### B1. Description

ISAs are funded across 67 regions to provide eligible child care services with practical advice, planning support and access to resources that will build capacity and the ability to provide quality care environments inclusive of all children. This includes working with eligible child care services to remove barriers to participation for children with additional needs, and promote and maintain high quality care that is free from discrimination, segregation and prejudice.

#### B1.1 Priority groups

For the purposes of IPSP, children with additional needs are those from the following priority groups:

- children with disability, including children with ongoing high support needs
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- children from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background
- Indigenous children.

For the purposes of IPSP, quality inclusive child care environments are those that:

- Provide welcoming, accessible, supportive and engaging care environments that are responsive to all children and their families.
- Use flexible programming approaches that are responsive to individual strengths, interests and needs.
- Build on and develop the strengths of the child care community (child, family, educators and community).
- Work in partnership with families and respect their cultural values, needs and circumstances.
- Are well supported through networking with other relevant services and supports.

Eligible child care services may contact their local ISA for assistance if they have, or are intending to enrol, a child with additional needs, or they may be referred to the ISA by another IPSP Provider or other referral pathways approved by the Department.

### B2. Objectives

The objective for ISAs is to assist eligible child care services to build the knowledge and confidence they need to be able to offer quality inclusive environments to children with additional needs. This will enable children with additional needs to participate in the activities available in the service, and to have the same opportunities as others to participate, belong, develop and succeed.

In particular, ISAs aim to:

- promote and support access to quality child care services
- help build the capacity of eligible child care services to successfully include children with additional needs
- ensure inclusion support is delivered in a flexible manner, and is responsive to the needs and priorities of eligible child care services
- ensure inclusion support is delivered in an efficient and cost effective manner, and in accordance with these Guidelines and the Funding Agreements.

### B3. Roles and responsibilities

In relation to the roles and responsibilities set out below, the Department may direct how these are fulfilled by ISAs and may also direct ISAs (or ISAs may seek the Department's agreement) to undertake activities that align with the aims and objectives of the programme, but are outside of those listed, to meet emerging needs.

### **B3.1 Support to child care services**

ISAs are responsible for undertaking activities that provide eligible child care services with practical advice and assistance in accessing resources that will support them to build capacity and the ability to provide a quality care environment inclusive of all children.

These activities include:

- Widely promoting the support and resources available through IPSP, within the ISA's region.
- Assisting eligible services to access IPSP support and resources as appropriate, including professional development, ISS, FSF, Bicultural Support, Specialist Equipment and library resources.
- Engaging suitably skilled and experienced staff (Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISF) to work directly with eligible services, to provide support, information and guidance that assists them to provide inclusive quality environments. The activities of the ISF includes:
  - Promoting an awareness of, and responsiveness to, the identified priority groups within eligible services.
  - Providing practical professional advice and guidance, and sourcing information to respond to identified needs.
  - Providing on-site assistance with the development and review of planning an IIP (supersedes the Service Support Plan), (see section F1) to support the establishment, and/or improvement and maintenance, of quality inclusive care environments.
  - Where appropriate recommend applications for Bicultural Support or Specialist Equipment to the PSC to approve and action.
  - Where possible, visiting the service when Bicultural Support is being provided.
  - Assisting eligible services with the preparation of FSF and ISS applications and, where appropriate, endorsing applications once completed.
- Assessing and, where approved, facilitating FSF to eligible services.
- Assisting eligible services to link with relevant community groups, services and organisations.
- Supporting eligible services to work in partnership with families and local support networks.
- Identifying policies and practices that facilitate inclusion of children with additional needs in child care settings, and sharing these with eligible child care services and with other IPSP Providers.
- Adopting a 'no wrong door' approach to requests for IPSP assistance from the child care sector, and making referrals, as appropriate, to other ISAs or the relevant PSC or IPSU.
- Assisting eligible child care services to identify their professional development needs and opportunities, and make referrals, as appropriate, to the PSC, IPSU or providers of other services and programmes.
- Supporting eligible services to engage in ongoing reflective practices and continuous improvement related to inclusive practices.
- Responding in a timely manner to requests and referrals for inclusion support from eligible services and other IPSP Providers.

### **B3.2 Role of ISAs in relation to the Inclusion Support Subsidy**

Eligible child care services that have enrolled, or are intending to enrol, a child with ongoing high support needs (see C7.3), may apply for ISS to support the engagement of an additional educator (see section C7 of these Guidelines).

ISAs assist, as appropriate, eligible services to apply for the ISS by:

- Supporting the service to develop a plan to support the inclusion of a child with ongoing high support needs so that they can be cared for in care environments with typically developing peers. This plan is referred to as an IIP.
- Assisting eligible services with the preparation of ISS applications and other forms.

- Assisting eligible services with uploading information onto the application system, the IS Portal.
- Assisting eligible services (once approved for the ISS) to complete a review of their IIP to identify whether the ISS is required for a further period of time.
- Providing information to the NISSP as required.

### **B3.3 Role of ISAs in relation to Flexible Support Funding**

ISAs are responsible for the administration of FSF in accordance with section F2 of these Guidelines. This includes monitoring FSF expenditure to ensure that requests are managed and approved within their regional allocation.

A key principle in the administration of FSF is that applications for funding are approved at a local level by the ISA. This reduces the level of administration and ensures greater responsiveness to local needs. ISAs must ensure that FSF expenditure is targeted appropriately across all eligible child care services.

ISAs are required to report on FSF expenditure.

### **B3.4 Role of ISAs in relation to Inclusion Support Facilitators**

ISAs are expected to employ suitably skilled and experienced ISFs to work at the local level with eligible child care services and their qualified educators. ISAs are responsible for ensuring ISFs have ongoing support and access to training to assist them to successfully undertake their role. This includes undertaking comprehensive orientation training, as directed by the Department, and other professional development they may require to successfully undertake their role. ISAs may access PSC professional development and training on a fee for service basis in line with the approved PSC Fee Schedule. This may include training in the following areas:

- guiding change in child care services
- child development and inclusive practice
- adult learning principles
- coaching and mentoring
- reflective practice
- strengths-based practice and capacity building approaches
- innovation and change in child care theory and practice
- interdisciplinary team work and interagency collaboration
- family-centred practices
- cross-cultural competencies.

### **B3.5 Role of ISAs in relation to planning and coordination**

ISAs are required to develop an ISA Region Plan as specified in the Funding Agreement. The plan will document how inclusion support will be promoted, coordinated and delivered to eligible child care services requiring support within the region over the funding period.

ISAs will review the plan as part of their processes for reporting to the Department. This twice yearly review provides an opportunity to ensure identified priorities and activities are on track, and to seek approval from the Department to make adjustments so that the plans remain relevant to the needs of the region.

The plan will include:

- the demographics of the region
- an analysis of regional needs, developed in consultation with relevant local stakeholders, which reflects the needs of child care services in the region
- activities to be undertaken to provide the services with support in areas identified as a priority
- marketing strategies to ensure eligible child care services and relevant stakeholders are aware of the services available through the ISA

- stakeholder management strategies to ensure effective partnerships are built and maintained with all stakeholders in the region and IPSP Providers
- a client satisfaction strategy for receiving feedback from child care services on the quality of ISA support provided
- a complaints-handling strategy, which ensures complaints are effectively managed and resolved
- a continuous improvement strategy, which identifies and addresses opportunities to build on and improve the service being delivered
- communication and referral processes, to access other IPSP services, including other ISAs, and the PSCs and IPSUs
- a risk management strategy.

#### **B4. Networking and collaboration**

ISAs are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective partnerships with all stakeholders, including other ISAs, the NISSP, PSCs, IPSUs and regional networks.

ISAs will work in collaboration with IPSUs to assist mainstream child care services to become culturally sensitive, and inclusive of Indigenous children and their families. ISAs are responsible for sharing information and materials with other ISAs and other IPSP Providers where appropriate.

IPSUs may charge ISAs a fee for service for requests that have significant resource implications for the IPSU (see sections E6 and E7 of these Guidelines).

#### **B5. Participation in IPSP forums including the ISA Alliance**

ISAs must participate in ISA Alliance meetings, State/Territory forum and National IPSP Conferences.

The National IPSP Conference provides an opportunity to review programme activities and the extent to which providers are meeting IPSP objectives.

The Alliances and Forum provide opportunity for planning for the delivery of IPSP services at a regional and state level, reviewing communication protocols, networking with the NISSP, IPSUs and PSCs, and sharing best practice with other ISAs.

#### **B6. Budget and performance monitoring**

##### **B6.1 Funding and budget management**

ISAs are required to manage and monitor their budgets in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement. ISAs will be required to provide a detailed budget to the Department at the start of each financial year of the funding period. ISAs are also required to provide detailed expenditure reports against this budget and to provide an annual audited financial report.

##### **B6.2 Use of funding**

The majority of funding (at least 75 per cent) within an ISA region is to be used for direct service delivery each financial year. The ISA will be able to retain up to 25 per cent each financial year for administrative and coordination costs. ISAs may only spend funding for administration and coordination purposes as proposed in the budget items they specify and which have been approved by the Department each year.

As an indication, administrative and coordination costs may include costs associated with:

- recruiting and training staff
- salaries for administrative staff
- setting up and maintaining an office, including insurance, rent, signage, general office equipment, telephone and internet costs
- monitoring and acquitting all funding allocated to the ISA region, including FSF
- reporting to the Department and participating in evaluation processes

- engaging and ongoing management and support of ISFs
- liaison and stakeholder management, including regional networking and communicating with state/territory based PSCs and IPSUs, where applicable.

Funding cannot be used for overseas travel, outright purchase of a vehicle, or major office renovation or building construction (capital works).

All income generated from the activities funded under IPSP, including bank interest, must be clearly identified and detailed in financial reports. This funding will be considered part of the ISA's operating budget and must be used for the purpose of delivering inclusion support as per the Funding Agreement with the Department.

On occasion, when an ISA is to host the ISA Alliance meeting, a separate allocation of funding will be paid to the relevant ISA.

### **B6.3 Progress reporting**

Providers will report to government as required under their funding agreements with the Department.

### **B6.4 Monitoring visits**

The Department will undertake monitoring visits with ISAs to meet with staff, and discuss their progress reports and any issues or questions arising from the reports or other monitoring activities. See sub-section A11.1 of these Guidelines.

### **B6.5 How to access the Inclusion Support Agencies**

ISAs must widely promote their services and contact details to child care services within their region. This information must be provided regularly and in a variety of formats, including visits and flyers.

Contact details for all ISAs are available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department website](#).

## Section C – National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider

### C1. Description

The NISSP is responsible for assessment and approval of applications for the ISS.

The ISS assists eligible child care services to include children with ongoing high support needs so that they can be cared for in care environments with typically developing peers. The ISS is a contribution towards the costs associated with employing an additional carer or educator and for home based services is a payment in recognition of the additional care and attention needed to include a child with ongoing high support needs.

The ISS is limited to a flat hourly rate, depending on the service type, which is determined by the Department and indexed annually.

### C2. Objective of the NISSP

The objective of the NISSP is to assess ISS applications in a way that ensures eligible child care services have equitable access to the ISS, and that applications are assessed consistently within timeframes that support services to provide quality inclusive care environments.

### C3. The role of the NISSP

In relation to the roles and responsibilities set out below, the Department may direct how these are fulfilled by the NISSP and may also direct the NISSP (or the NISSP may seek the Department's agreement) to undertake activities that align with the aims and objectives of the programme, but are outside of those listed, to meet emerging needs.

The NISSP will:

- Ensure nationally consistent application of these Guidelines, and any other information provided by the Department, when assessing, managing and administering the ISS.
- Facilitate equitable access to ISS assistance across all eligible centre based and home based service types.
- Assist ISAs and services to complete ISS applications.
- Notify applicants and the relevant ISA within 5 business days if the application is incomplete.
- Process all completed ISS applications within 15 business days of receipt.
- Ensure the ISS commitment remains within allocated funding.
- Pay claims for the ISS on a fortnightly basis for BBF services.
- Respond to all inquiries within 5 business days.
- Collect, analyse and monitor ISS data, and identify demographic and geographic usage trends in the ISS.
- Participate in National and State/Territory IPSP Forums and provide reports on trends.
- Maintain an up-to-date website with information on the ISS, and a 1800 phone number to respond to inquiries and provide guidance on applying for the ISS.
- Develop an annual work plan for NISSP activities.
- In consultation with the Department, investigate ways of streamlining the ISS application and approval process to improve outcomes for eligible services and children.

### C4. Networking and collaboration

The NISSP is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective networks with other IPSP Providers, and working collaboratively with ISAs and services to assess and process ISS applications.



## **C5. Budget and performance monitoring and reporting**

The NISSP is required to submit an annual progress report on the NISSP's activities against the annual work plan. The NISSP must also provide Quarterly Data, Expenditure and Commitment Reports and an annual Audited Financial Acquittal Report. All reporting must be in a format agreed by the Department.

The Department will undertake monitoring visits with the NISSP to meet with staff, and discuss the progress report and any issues or questions arising from the reports or other monitoring activities.

## **C6. Approval of the Inclusion Support Subsidy**

### **C6.1 Approved purposes**

The NISSP will ensure that the ISS is used in the following ways:

- In centre based services:
  - to contribute to the engagement of an additional educator to increase the staff to child ratio when a child or children with ongoing high support needs are in care with typically developing peers.
- In home based services:
  - As a capacity payment to FDC educators in recognition of the additional care and attention required by children with ongoing high support needs in their care and the impact of this on the educator.
  - As an additional payment to IHC carers in recognition of the additional care and attention required by children with ongoing high support needs in their care and the impact of this on the carer.
  - To engage an additional carer to accompany a FDC educator or IHC carer and child or children with ongoing high support needs on out-of-home excursions or other special activities with typically developing peers (for example FDC playgroups or vacation care excursions).

### **C6.2 Non-approved purposes**

The NISSP will also ensure that ISS is not used for the purposes advised by the Department.

Examples of such purposes are also available in Fact Sheet 4 – Non-approved Purposes for Inclusion Support Subsidy, available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

## **C7. Accessing the Inclusion Support Subsidy**

### **C7.1 Eligibility**

The ISS is limited to an annual capped allocation available under the Child Care Services Support Program. Eligibility for the ISS does not mean an automatic entitlement to ISS funding. For more information refer to the fact sheets on applying for and claiming the ISS.

The NISSP will apply the following criteria in assessing an application for ISS funding:

- Ensure the child who is attending the child care service has ongoing high support needs.
- An IIP has been developed to assess the child care service's inclusion capacity and the child care service and the ISF assesses from the plan that there is justification to proceed to apply for ISS funding.

### **C7.2 Eligible child care services**

The NISSP will ensure that the ISS is only available to eligible child care services that are approved for CCB or funded under the BBF Program (see section A8 of these Guidelines).

### **C7.3 Children with ongoing high support needs**

Children with demonstrated ongoing high support needs include children:

- with assessed/diagnosed disability
- who are undergoing continuous assessment of disability
- from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background.

The ISS application must include documentary evidence of the child's assessed/diagnosed disability, continuous assessment of disability, or refugee status. Refer to Fact Sheet 3 – Documentary Evidence for Inclusion Support Subsidy, available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

Some children with assessed/diagnosed disability may not require ongoing assistance in order to be included in the care environment. For example, a child might only require environmental modifications to be included in a care environment. Where children require specialist equipment for their inclusion, see section F4 of these Guidelines.

The ISS age eligibility of a dependent is under the age of 21 years in conjunction with the Family Assistance Act and relevant state and territory regulations.

### **C7.4 Short-term and irregular utilisation in centre based care**

For children with ongoing high support needs who attend child care on an occasional basis, or whose pattern of attendance is not regular and not likely to be ongoing, services may apply for FSF (see section F2 of these Guidelines). Child care services should seek advice from ISAs regarding FSF support.

### **C7.5 Approval period**

The NISSP can approve ISS for up to 52 weeks for a child care service including a child or children with a diagnosed disability, undergoing continuous assessment for disability or a child from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background.

The number of times an application for the renewal of ISS can be approved will depend on the individual circumstances of each case. Refer to Fact Sheet 1 – Inclusion Support Subsidy Applications, available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

## **C8. Applying for the Inclusion Support Subsidy**

### **C8.1 How to apply for the Inclusion Support Subsidy**

ISFs assist eligible child care services to develop a plan, referred to as the IIP, to support the inclusion of a child or children in the service.

If the IIP identifies a need to apply for the ISS, or if the service insists on applying for the ISS, the ISA will assist the service to submit an application for the ISS. This will either be online through the Inclusion Support Portal, or in paper form. The application must be endorsed by the service's local ISA and the application is then submitted to the NISSP for assessment. For further information refer to Fact Sheet 1 – Inclusion Support Subsidy Applications, available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

#### ***Inclusion Improvement Plan***

The development of the IIP may be triggered by the enrolment of a child or children with ongoing high support needs. The focus of the IIP is on building the capacity of educators to include the child or children in the child care environment with typically developing peers, and must reflect the needs and modifications educators will make to support the inclusion of all children. The completed IIP must be included as part of the ISS application.

For further information about IIP (see section F1 of these Guidelines).

**Documentary evidence**

The NISSP's assessment of an application for ISS is based on an eligible child care service supplying documentary evidence of the child's diagnosis/assessment of disability, or that the child is undergoing continuous assessment of disability, or is from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background.

For further information refer to Fact Sheet 3 – Documentary Evidence for Inclusion Support Subsidy, available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

Documentary evidence will be assessed by the NISSP. In some cases, the child care service will be notified that documentary evidence will not be required for future applications for this child while enrolled at the service.

**C8.2 Exceptional circumstances**

Where it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist in respect of a child who is currently being supported through the ISS and the child care service requests additional hours to provide this additional support, an exemption from the normal eligibility requirements for the ISS may be granted by the NISSP in negotiation with the Department. The details of the additional need must be included in the IIP and included in the ISS application submitted to the NISSP.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are subject to approval by the Department. The Department will advise the NISSP of the outcome of the request for exemption from the child care service.

**C8.3 Shared Care arrangements in centre based care**

Where more than one child with ongoing high support needs is in attendance in the same care environment, the child care service must explore the use of a Shared Care arrangement. A Shared Care arrangement occurs where one additional educator is employed to support the inclusion of more than one child with ongoing high support needs in a child care environment. When completing the ISS application, the child care service (in consultation with the ISA) will determine if a Shared Care arrangement could meet the service's needs.

**C8.4 Inclusion Support Subsidy assessment and approval**

The NISSP will assess the ISS application against the eligibility requirements as set out in these Guidelines, and will notify the service of the outcome of the ISS application.

If the ISS application is approved, the NISSP will inform the service of the:

- approved level of funding
- approved number of hours an additional educator can provide per week;
- start and end date of the ISS period
- date on which the service should apply for a continuation of funding.

**C8.5 Inclusion Support Subsidy agreement by child care services**

The approval of an ISS application is contingent on a child care service agreeing to the terms and conditions of the ISS application, as detailed on the ISS application form, online application and the Department website. This includes ensuring the service is:

- using ISS for the purposes for which it is approved in accordance with these Guidelines
- claiming ISS in accordance with these Guidelines and the ISS approval letter sent to them by the NISSP.

**C8.6 Review and renewal of funding**

After the initial approval period, eligible child care services can apply for a renewal of ISS. Additional information about approval periods is available in Fact Sheet 1 – Inclusion Support Subsidy Applications, available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

Firstly, the child care service, in consultation with their ISA, must review:

- the previous IIP and care environment
- whether ongoing ISS is required
- whether there is a change in the level of funding needed.

Other events that can trigger a review of the IIP include:

- changes in the child's needs, impacting on the number of hours approved, Shared Care arrangements, or the physical environment
- a child with ongoing high support needs enters or leaves the service and/or care environment
- significant changes in the care environment, such as staffing changes
- a change in service ownership.

Where a review indicates that the required level of ISS has increased, the service can apply to the NISSP to vary its approval. Variations to the original ISS approval may carry the same end date as the original approved application.

A decrease in the level of support needed will also require the service to notify the NISSP of this change.

A child care service must notify the NISSP if the required level of ISS changes, or is no longer required, by completing and submitting the appropriate ISS forms. The Department may audit claims made by child care services (see sub-section C10.2 of these Guidelines).

### **C8.7 Variations or changes to the child care environment**

#### ***A child with ongoing high support needs enters or leaves the care environment and/or child care service***

The level of ISS required will be determined by the NISSP, taking into consideration the child care service's capacity to include children with ongoing high support needs. When a child with ongoing high support needs moves to another care environment within the service, discussion with the ISA will determine whether to review an existing IIP or to develop a new IIP. The IIP process will identify if the child care service requires additional support to include the child and, if so, what level of support is required.

#### ***A service changes owner and/or operator***

Where a child care service in receipt of ISS changes owner and/or operator, the new operator is required to:

- advise the NISSP of the change in ownership within 30 days
- review the current IIP with the support of an ISA
- if support is required, submit a new ISS application and their CCB approval to the NISSP
- if support is not required, inform the NISSP accordingly.

Services using the IS Portal will be unable to enter a new IS Case until it has received its CCB approval ID; however, they can commence working on their IIP with the ISA.

Claims for payment made before the notification of the outcome of the ISS application cannot be accepted. Refer to Fact Sheet 6 – Change of Service Ownership and Inclusion Support available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

### **C8.8 Conditions relating to educators/carers employed with the Inclusion Support Subsidy**

Where the ISS is used to employ an additional educator or carer for out of home excursions, the service is responsible for:

- Complying with the requirements of the relevant state/territory legislation, regulatory requirements and awards for child care employees, or applicable Federal Industrial Relations Laws and its requirements, and considering these requirements when employing additional

educators.

- Ensuring that the number of ISS funded additional educators in a service at any one time is limited to no more than 10 per cent of the service's currently utilised child care places.

Note: Due to the nature of vacation care bookings, Vacation Care Services that are unable to provide utilised child care places for the full application period may provide an estimate of expected utilisation based on usage over the past 12 months.

Where a child is absent from the centre based service, the ISS funded educator should receive appropriate notice in line with award provisions. If employed as a casual staff member, stand down provisions should apply.

Child care educators funded by the ISS cannot be used to meet the educator to child ratio requirements under the National Quality Framework. Any educators funded by the ISS must be in addition to the number of staff already required under the National Quality Framework.

Trainees cannot be employed as the additional child care educator funded by the ISS at the same time that they are completing their required trainee hours.

## **C9. Inclusion Support Subsidy rates**

The ISS rates and limits for centre based care services and home based care services are indexed each financial year. ISS limits differ depending on the child care service type. Refer to the Inclusion Support Subsidy Payment Rates – Home Based Care Services and the Inclusion Support Subsidy Payment Rates – Centre Based Services fact sheets available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

### **C9.1 Absences from care**

For ISS purposes, an absence occurs when an eligible child does not attend an approved session of care.

Funding allocated to cover an ISS eligible child's absences from care is calculated based on the relevant percentage according to service and/or care type, multiplied by the total number of hours over the ISS approved period, refer to the Payment Rates fact sheets available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#) for payment amounts and limits.

Note: Absences cannot be claimed in relation to IHC.

#### ***Exceptional circumstances and absence hours***

Where child care services reach their total allocated absence hours before the end of the approval period, they may submit a case for additional absence hours. However, this must be done before the end of the approval period. Any requests for additional absence hours will be assessed by the Department on a case-by-case basis through an exceptional circumstances process (see section C8.2 of these Guidelines).

## **C10. The claims process**

### **C10.1 How to claim Inclusion Support Subsidy**

Services that have been approved for ISS may submit a claim for payment. Most eligible child care services are able to apply for the ISS online through the *IS Portal*. Some services, such as BBF services are required to submit paper-based applications.

In the case of centre based services, ISS is paid to the service. In relation to FDC educators or IHC carers, the payment is made to the FDC scheme or sponsors of the IHC service who are required to pass the payment directly to the FDC Educator, or the IHC carer.

Refer to Fact Sheet 2 – Claiming the Inclusion Support Subsidy available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

**C10.2 Periodic auditing of child care services making Inclusion Support Subsidy claims**

Periodic audits of child care services' records will be conducted to verify claims for payment. These audits will require child care services to submit relevant documentation, including ISS eligible children's attendance records and educators' attendance records relating to ISS claims.

The details of any audit requirements will be provided in writing, giving a minimum of 2 weeks' notice. Services will be required to provide the relevant information required within the time period stated. Services that do not comply will be unable to claim the ISS until the information is supplied and the audit process is completed.

Further action may be taken if child care services are found to make fraudulent claims for payment for the ISS.

## Section D – Professional Support Coordinators

### D1. Description

PSCs deliver and/or facilitate professional development and support to eligible child care services to assist them to understand and meet the requirements of the National Quality Standard, and to implement approved learning frameworks, including the Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being, Becoming, and, if appropriate, the Framework for School Age Care: My Time our Place.

The Department will provide guidance to the PSCs to assist them to deliver nationally consistent professional development and support which aligns with the National Quality Framework and the approved learning frameworks. In addition, PSCs are required to share knowledge and resources with their counterparts in other jurisdictions in an effort to reduce duplication and ensure national consistency.

PSCs also manage Bicultural Support, the IPSP Online Library (previously IPSP Resource Library), and Specialist Equipment (see section F of these Guidelines).

### D2. Objectives

The objective of the PSCs is to provide professional development and support that meets the needs of eligible child care services, and that is based on evidence and good practice, in order to:

- Drive continuous improvement.
- Support services to meet the National Quality Standard, in particular with self-assessment and development of Quality Improvement Plans, and to understand and implement approved learning frameworks, including the Early Years Learning Framework, and the Framework for School Age Care.
- Prepare and support educators for their changing roles under the National Quality Framework, and enhance their knowledge and skills on existing and new areas of practice.
- Support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds, including Indigenous children, children with disability and children from CALD backgrounds.

### D3. Professional development and support approach

Professional development is an ongoing process that provides the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of skills and knowledge. It also helps develop the interpersonal qualities necessary for educators to carry out their responsibilities and enhance their performance.

Professional development and support provided under IPSP will:

- Have a sound theoretical and philosophical base.
- Take into account participants' individual backgrounds, experiences and context of their role.
- Demonstrate clear linkages between theory and practice.
- Adopt an interactive approach where appropriate.
- Incorporate the use of new technological advancements such as teleconferencing, email, social networking where appropriate.
- Be delivered by persons with relevant training and skills. Persons delivering accredited training must have a minimum of Certificate IV in training and assessment.

The content of IPSP professional development and support will be guided by the Department and will support the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes required by those working in child care services to meet the National Quality Standard, and support the understanding and implementation of approved learning frameworks, including the Early Years Learning Framework and the Framework for School Age Care. This includes knowledge and skill development to support the inclusion of children from CALD backgrounds, from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds, Indigenous children and children with disability.

Professional development and support must be provided in a variety of formats suitable to the needs of child care services and the workforce, including those in remote areas.

Professional development and support may include:

- accredited and non-accredited courses
- conversations and informal sessions
- events, forums, hubs and networks
- collaborative projects
- mentoring and coaching
- advice and information
- access to information/resources.

Where feasible and appropriate, technologies such as teleconferencing, email, social networking and other developments in information technology may be used to deliver professional development and support to child care services.

Professional development and support must, in addition to meeting local needs, be delivered using nationally consistent materials that can be accessed by ISA and IPSU staff on a fee for service basis.

#### **D4. How to access the PSCs**

The PSCs must widely promote within their state or territory upcoming training opportunities, and provide information to eligible child care services within their state or territory on how to access this professional development and support, library resources, Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment. This information must be provided regularly and in a variety of formats.

Contact details for all PSCs are available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department website](#).

#### **D5. Roles and responsibilities of the PSCs**

The Department may direct how the roles and responsibilities of the PSCs are fulfilled, including, but not limited to, approval of resources and the content of training and professional development and support.

The Department may also direct PSCs and/or PSCs may seek agreement from the Department, to undertake activities that align with the aims and objectives of the programme, but are outside of those listed below, to meet emerging needs.

The PSCs will:

- Provide eligible child care services with nationally consistent professional development, support and training to assist them in meeting the requirements under the National Quality Framework, and to implement the Early Years Learning Framework and, if appropriate, the Framework for School Age Care.
- Develop calendars of training and courses, in consultation with the Department, and widely promote these to child care services in the state or territory.
- Provide tailored professional development, support and training to individual eligible services when they are referred through approved referral channels advised by the Department.
- In consultation with the Department and other relevant stakeholders, develop and regularly review a plan for the delivery of PSC services across the state/territory for the funding period, which includes face-to-face delivery and the use of emerging technologies to ensure eligible services, including those in remote areas, are able to access IPSP services and resources.
- Adopt a 'no wrong door' approach to all requests for IPSP services, and link eligible child care services needing additional support to make their care environment more inclusive to the local ISA or IPSU as appropriate.
- Provide eligible services with free access to a range of up-to-date online resources and materials that will assist them to provide high quality inclusive care environments. These resources will be available from the IPSP Online Library.



- Note that over the period of the Funding Agreement, the PSCs will consolidate appropriate resources currently available in individual General Resource Libraries and make these available from a national IPSP Online Library, which will be accessible from a website managed by the PSC Alliance (see section F5 of these Guidelines).
- Manage the provision of Bicultural Support, and make available from the IPSP Online Library resources developed to assist with the enrolment and inclusion of children from CALD and/or Indigenous backgrounds (see sub-section D13.2 and section F3 of these Guidelines).
- Manage IPSP Specialist Equipment (see sub-section D13.2 and section F4 of these Guidelines).
- Attend and participate in IPSP Forums and the PSC Alliance to contribute to planning and the sharing of information, and to provide input and assist in the development of nationally consistent approaches, such as: an outcomes reporting framework and measuring tools, the development of a national IPSP Online Library, and the consolidation of information on the PSC Alliance website.
- Establish and maintain effective partnerships with ACECQA, State and Territory Regulatory Authorities and other key stakeholders to ensure the professional development and support delivered through IPSP is meeting current and emerging needs.
- In consultation with the Department, establish effective referral pathways with State and Territory Regulatory Authorities, ISAs and IPSUs for PSC services.
- In consultation with the Department, establish efficient, effective and consistent referral and approval processes to enable eligible child care services to access Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment.
- In consultation with the Department, establish a fee structure for the delivery of IPSP professional development and support for eligible and non-eligible child care services (see section D9 of these Guidelines).

## **D6. Communication activities**

Each PSC will:

- Maintain a 1800 phone line to provide eligible child care services with an access point for PSC professional development and support.
- Maintain a website or webpage with links to the websites and contact details of other IPSP Services Providers, the PSC Alliance website and the IPSP Online Library.
- Actively and widely promote professional development, publications, the website and other media to eligible child care services in the state or territory.
- Actively promote the PSC and network with relevant stakeholders, including other IPSP providers.
- In collaboration with the state/territory IPSUs, establish strategies for updating services funded under the BBF Program with the latest child care research and news from the sector.

## **D7. Priority areas for professional development and support**

The priority areas for professional development and support are aligned with the quality areas of the National Quality Standard. Further information is available in the Guide to the National Quality Standard, available from the ACECQA website: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au).

The priorities areas include:

- National Quality Framework and other mandatory requirements.
  - Implementing mandatory requirements, including the National Quality Framework and the national Child Care Management System as well as developing Quality Improvement Plans.
- Child care services funded under the BBF Program to understand and implement compliance with the requirements of their Funding Agreements.
- Educational programme and practice.

- Using an Approved Learning Framework to inform the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.
- Educators and coordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the programme for each child.
- Children's health and safety.
  - Promoting the health of each child.
  - Embedding healthy eating practices and physical activities in the programme for children.
  - Protecting each child.
- Physical environments.
  - Designing and locating premises so they are appropriate for the operation of a child care service.
  - Developing inclusive environments that promote competence, independent exploration and learning through play.
  - Actively caring for the environment and contributing to a sustainable future.
- Staffing arrangements.
  - Staffing arrangements that enhance children's learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing.
  - Respectful and ethical behaviours for educators, coordinators and all staff members.
- Relationships with children.
  - Developing and maintaining respectful and equitable relationships with each child.
  - Supporting each child to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.
  - Developing and maintaining respectful supportive relationships with families.
  - Supporting and respecting families in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing.
  - Collaboration with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.
- Leadership and service management.
  - Establishing and maintaining effective leadership that promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.
  - Child care service directors and other staff are committed to continuous improvement.
  - Child care services have effective leadership that promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.
- Support the Government's priority on school attendance by including a focus in all relevant activities with services and educators on:
  - Continuity of learning and transition to school through Quality Area 6 of the National Quality Standard - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities, in particular element 6.3.2 'Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities' and the Early Years Learning Framework practice – 'Continuity of learning and transitions'.
  - Promoting transition to school resources.

The Department reserves the right to:

- direct the content of professional development to other emerging priorities
- approve training resources and materials developed and/or used by IPSP Providers.

### **Long Day Care Professional Development Programme**

The Long Day Care Professional Development Programme (LDCPDP) is an Australian Government initiative and provides funding to LDC services to assist educators to meet the qualification requirements under the National Quality Framework and to improve practice to ensure quality outcomes for children. The application period for LDCPDP funding was 19 May to 13 June 2014. LDC services who were approved for funding were sent a letter of offer on 25 September 2014.

As a result of the introduction of the LDCPDP PSCs have increased their focus on other parts of the child care sector that were not eligible for LDCPDP funding including FDC, OSHC, occasional care, IHC and BBF services.

Further information about the changes to eligibility of LDCs for subsidised PSC support is at section A8.4 of these Guidelines.

## **D8. Sub-contracting**

PSCs may subcontract other providers to assist with service delivery as per the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement.

In general, the following would not be approved as a sub-contractor by the Department:

- bodies that are not incorporated and without a sponsoring organisation
- Australian Government departments.

PSCs may also request IPSUs, where appropriate, to provide:

- Advice on culturally appropriate service delivery to meet the needs of Indigenous children attending mainstream child care services.
- Advice on the needs of Indigenous children and Indigenous educators, and strategies for meeting their needs.
- Advice for the PSC on strategies to ensure the IPSP Online Library contains resources to support the social inclusion of Indigenous children and families, and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities.
- Consultancy services for the PSC when required on a fee for service basis.

## **D9. Professional support fee structure**

PSCs will establish and adopt a consistent fee structure for the delivery of professional development and support for eligible and non-eligible child care services. The fee structure must be agreed by the Department.

The fees will be based on the following national fee setting principles. That is, fees:

- reflect the capacity of the market to pay
- charged to eligible child care services are not based on full cost recovery
- charged to non-eligible child care services are based on full cost recovery
- maximise client participation (low enough to encourage attendance but high enough to be a disincentive to non-attendance post booking)
- will not be charged to all services funded under the BBF Program for the provision of professional development and support.

## **D10. Planning**

While recognising the need to maintain some flexibility to respond to individual eligible child care services referred to the PSC in special circumstances, PSCs will take a planned approach to the delivery of professional development and support.

PSCs are required to develop a plan, in consultation with the Department, as specified in the Funding Agreement for the funding period. The plan will document how professional development and support will be promoted, coordinated and delivered to all eligible child care service types across the state/territory and within ISA regions, including in remote areas.

PSCs will review the plan as part of their processes for reporting to the Department. This twice yearly review provides an opportunity to ensure activities are on track and to seek approval from the Department to make adjustments so that the plans remain relevant to the needs of the state/territory. The review will also take into account advice and research from ACECQA and/or the Department in relation to changes in priority.

The plan will include:

- Proposed approaches to delivering professional development and support to all eligible child care services in the state/territory.
- Activities to be undertaken to provide the services (including professional development, Bicultural Support, Specialist Equipment and the IPSP Online Library) with support in areas identified as a priority.
- A marketing strategy to ensure eligible child care services and relevant stakeholders are aware of the services available through the PSC.
- Stakeholder management strategies to ensure effective partnerships are built and maintained with all stakeholders.
- A client satisfaction strategy for receiving feedback from child care services on the quality of PSC support provided.
- A complaints-handling strategy, which ensures complaints are effectively managed and resolved.
- A continuous improvement strategy, which identifies and addresses opportunities to build on and improve the service being delivered.
- Communication and referral processes to access other IPSP services, including from the ISAs and IPSUs.
- A risk management strategy.

### **D11. Networking and collaboration**

PSCs are expected to use IPSP communication protocols and are responsible for establishing effective partnerships with all stakeholders, including the IPSUs, ISAs, Regulatory Authorities and ACECQA.

The PSCs are expected to work in collaboration with IPSUs and ISAs to assist eligible child care services to be culturally inclusive of Indigenous and CALD children and families.

All resources and materials developed by the PSCs must be shared through the PSC Alliance for use and or adaptation by other PSCs.

### **D12. Participation in IPSP Forums and the PSC Alliance**

PSCs must participate in PSC Alliance meetings, State/Territory forum and National IPSP Conferences.

The National IPSP Conference provides an opportunity to review programme activities and the extent to which providers are meeting IPSP objectives.

The Alliances and Forum provide opportunity for planning for the delivery of IPSP services at a regional and state level, reviewing communication protocols, networking with the NISSP, IPSUs and ISAs, and sharing best practice with other PSCs.

Costs associated with participation in PSC Alliance meetings are to be covered within the PSC administration budget as specified in the Funding Agreement.

## **D13. Budget and monitoring funding**

### **D13.1 Funding and budget management**

PSCs are required to manage and monitor their budgets in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement. This includes providing detailed annual expenditure reports on the budget and an annual audited financial report. PSCs will also be required to provide a detailed budget to the Department at the start of each financial year of the funding period.

### **D13.2 Use of funding**

The majority of funding (at least 75 per cent) is to be used for direct service delivery each financial year. The PSCs will be able to retain up to 25 per cent each financial year for administration and coordination costs. PSCs may only spend funding for administration and coordination purposes as proposed in the budget items they specify and which have been approved by the Department each year.

As an indication, administration and coordination costs for the activities of the PSCs, including but not limited to professional development, resource development, Bicultural Support, Specialist Equipment and the IPSP Online Library, may include costs associated with the following items:

- recruiting and training staff
- salaries of administrative staff
- maintaining an office, including insurance, rent, signage, and general office equipment
- operating the toll free phone line
- developing and maintaining a website
- maintaining policies, such as fee structures, equipment loans and conflict resolution;
- monitoring and acquitting all funding allocated to the PSC, as well as incoming funds from service users
- reporting to the Department, including undertaking needs analyses and revision of service delivery plans
- participating in the IPSP evaluation process;
- liaising with stakeholders
- engaging and managing all aspects of any subcontracting
- participating in IPSP forums and PSC Alliance meetings.

All income generated from the activities funded under the PSCs, including fees for service, consultancy services, training, resources and bank interest, must be clearly identified and detailed in financial reports. This income will be considered part of the PSC's operating budget, and must be used for the purpose of delivering professional development and support as per the Funding Agreement.

Funding cannot be used for overseas travel, outright purchase of a vehicle, or major office renovation or building construction (capital works).

### **D13.3 Funding for Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment**

The PSCs receive a separate allocation for the provision of Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment. The PSCs are responsible for ensuring that the Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment are provided to eligible child care services within the funding allocation and purposes specified in the Funding Agreement (see section F of these Guidelines).

PSCs are required to include details on the expenditure of Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment funding in their annual reports.

## **D14 Progress reporting**

Providers will report to government as required under their funding agreements with the Department.

### **D14.1 Monitoring visits**

The Department will undertake monitoring visits with the PSCs to meet with staff, and discuss their progress reports and any issues or questions arising from the reports.

## **D15. How to access the Professional Support Coordinators**

PSCs must widely promote their services and contact details to child care services within the state or territory and other IPSP Providers. This information must be provided regularly and in a variety of formats, including visits, websites and flyers.

Contact details for all PSCs are available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

## Section E – Indigenous Professional Support Units

### E1. Description

IPSUs provide or facilitate professional development and other support to assist Indigenous focused Budget Based Funded (BBF) services and their managing bodies to provide high quality education and care environments. IPSUs also provide advice to other IPSP Providers on culturally appropriate support and resources to assist mainstream services to include and support Indigenous children and educators.

### E2. Objectives

The objectives of the IPSUs are to provide support that meets the needs of the managing bodies and staff in Indigenous focused BBF services, which is based on evidence and good practice, in order to:

- improve the quality of their environments
- implement approved learning frameworks, including the Early Years Learning Framework
- improve governance and build the capacity of the service and its managing body.

### E3. Roles and responsibilities

The Department may direct how the roles and responsibilities of the IPSUs are fulfilled, including, but not limited to, approval of resources and the content of training and professional development and support.

The Department may also direct IPSUs and/or IPSUs may seek agreement from the Department, to undertake activities that align with the aims and objectives of the programme, but are outside of those listed below, to meet emerging needs.

The IPSUs will:

- Provide and/or facilitate professional development, support and training to management and employees in Indigenous focused BBF services, in relation to minimum standards and high quality service provision in regulated and non-regulated BBF services, with reference to the relevant state and territory licensing requirements and the National Quality Standard.
- Provide support and advice to Indigenous focused BBF services experiencing difficulties, or that are identified as being at risk of failing to meet requirements under their funding agreements, and refer them to other relevant service providers, including the PSCs for tailored intensive support.
- Provide tailored intensive support to Indigenous focused BBF services at the direction of the Department and/or a PSC.
- Refer Indigenous focused BBF services to relevant service providers, including the PSC, where necessary, to assist them to improve the quality of their services.
- Where appropriate, facilitate partnering and mentoring between Indigenous focused BBF services and non-Indigenous services.
- Assist Indigenous focused BBF services to access other IPSP support and resources, including the ISS, FSF, Specialist Equipment, and Bicultural Support as appropriate.
- Foster relationships between Indigenous focused BBF services and the Department to support the development of the services' workforce and their governance.
- Assist Indigenous focused BBF services in linking with relevant community groups, services and organisations.
- Assist Indigenous focused BBF services to identify their professional development needs and opportunities, and support them to access relevant resources that cannot be provided by the IPSU.
- Provide pathways for Indigenous focused BBF services to access information that promotes high quality programmes for children.
- In consultation with the Department and other relevant stakeholders, develop a plan for the delivery of IPSU services across the state/territory for the funding period.

- Adopt a 'no wrong door' approach to all requests for IPSP services, and link Indigenous focused BBF services needing additional support to make their environment more inclusive to the local ISA or PSC as appropriate.

#### **E4. Communication activities**

Each IPSU will undertake the following communication activities:

- Maintain a 1800 phone line to provide a central point of contact for Indigenous focused BBF services seeking professional development and support.
- Actively promote the contact details and range of support available from the IPSU to Indigenous focused BBF services within the region, and network with other relevant services and IPSP providers.
- Develop a range of communication activities and resources suited to Indigenous focused BBF services and their managing bodies. These may include online resources and marketing materials.
- Establish strategies for updating Indigenous focused BBF services with the latest child care research and news from the sector, including collaborating with PSCs to ensure the IPSP Online Library contains relevant and appropriate information.
- Establish, maintain and promote a website providing relevant information about IPSP services available and how Indigenous focused BBF services can access these.

#### **E5. Priority areas for professional development and support**

The professional development and support provided by IPSUs will be in the priority areas agreed by the Department. These may change over time but currently include:

- Leadership and management
  - The development of operational management systems for Indigenous focused BBF services in the areas of:
    - financial management
    - employment and workforce issues, such as recruitment and retention strategies
    - business planning
    - orientation training and support for management committees, directors and educators
    - the role of service directors as leaders.
- Educational programme and practice
  - Using an Approved Learning Framework to inform the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.
  - Educators and coordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the programme for each child.
- Children's health and safety
  - Promoting the health of each child.
  - Embedding healthy eating practices and physical activities in the programme for children.
  - Protecting each child.
- Physical environments
  - Designing and locating premises so they are appropriate for the operation of a child care service.
  - Developing inclusive environments that promote competence, independent exploration and learning through play.
  - Actively caring for the environment and contributing to a sustainable future.



- Staffing arrangements
  - Staffing arrangements that enhance children’s learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing.
  - Respectful and ethical behaviours for educators, coordinators and all staff members.
- Relationships with children
  - Developing and maintaining respectful and equitable relationships with each child.
  - Supporting each child to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
  - Developing and maintaining respectful supportive relationships with families.
  - Supporting and respecting families in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing.
  - Collaboration with other organisations and service providers to enhance children’s learning and wellbeing.
- Leadership and service management
  - Establishing and maintaining effective leadership that promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.
  - Child care service directors and other staff are committed to continuous improvement.
  - Child care services have effective leadership that promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.
- Support the Government’s priority on school attendance by including a focus in all relevant activities with services and educators on:
  - Continuity of learning and transition to school through:
  - Quality Area 6 of the National Quality Standard - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities, in particular element 6.3.2 ‘Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities’ and the Early Years Learning Framework practice – ‘Continuity of learning and transitions’.
  - Promoting transition to school resources.

### ***Mandatory requirements***

All training materials and other resources developed by the IPSUs must reflect the requirements of the relevant children’s services regulatory and other legislative requirements, including the National Quality Framework, which impact on the delivery of services for young children.

Where appropriate, all training and support should support Indigenous focused BBF services to meet their contractual requirements under the BBF Funding Agreements.

### ***National Quality Framework***

All training and support provided to Indigenous focused BBF services should reflect the intent of nationally agreed frameworks, including the National Quality Framework, the Early Years Learning Framework, and Framework for School Age Care.

## **E6. Support for mainstream child care services**

When requested by the Department or other IPSP Providers, IPSUs will work in collaboration with PSCs and ISAs to assist eligible mainstream child care services to become more culturally competent, and inclusive and supportive of Indigenous children and their families and Indigenous educators.

Requests for assistance from PSCs or ISAs may include:

- Advice on culturally appropriate service delivery to meet the needs of Indigenous children attending mainstream child care services.

- Advice on the needs of Indigenous children and Indigenous educators in mainstream child care services, and strategies for meeting their needs.
- Advice for PSCs on strategies to ensure the IPSP Online Library contains resources to support the social inclusion of Indigenous children and families, and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities.
- Consultancy services for PSCs and ISAs when required.

## **E7. IPSU Fee Structure**

For minor requests of assistance from ISAs, PSCs and eligible mainstream child care services, for example, those that can be addressed by phone or within a short period of time (up to half a day), the IPSU will provide support free of charge. When requests are for more significant assistance, IPSUs will charge for their services in line with the IPSU Fee Structure agreed by the Department.

## **E8. Planning and coordination**

### **E8.1 Needs analysis**

The IPSUs will undertake a standardised needs analysis process that draws on data sources, such as surveys (including those undertaken by the Department), in planning and reviewing how they deliver support to Indigenous focused BBF services.

IPSUs will share the findings of their needs analysis at IPSP Forums (as appropriate and respecting confidentiality and/or privacy), and with PSCs and ISAs. This information may be used by the PSCs to identify current and future professional development and support needs of the child care sector and help them plan for their activities.

### **E8.2 IPSU Region Plan**

The IPSUs will develop a Region Plan as specified in the Funding Agreement for the funding period. The plan will document how professional development and support will be promoted and delivered across the region to meet the needs identified through the needs analysis.

IPSUs will review the plan as part of their processes for reporting to the Department. This twice yearly review provides an opportunity to ensure activities are on track and seek approval from the Department to make adjustments so that the plans remain relevant to the needs of the region.

The Region Plan will include:

- Activities to be undertaken and areas of need identified as priorities to be addressed within the Region.
- Proposed approaches to delivering and or facilitating professional development and support to Indigenous focused BBF services in the Region.
- A marketing strategy to ensure Indigenous focused BBF services in the Region and relevant stakeholders are aware of the services available through the IPSUs.
- Stakeholder management strategies to ensure effective partnerships are built and maintained with all stakeholders, including other IPSP Providers in the Region.
- A client satisfaction strategy for receiving feedback from Indigenous focused BBF services on the quality of IPSU support provided.
- A complaints-handling strategy, which ensures complaints are effectively managed and resolved.
- A continuous improvement strategy, which identifies and addresses opportunities to build on and improve the service being delivered.
- Communication and referral processes to access other IPSP services, including from the ISAs and PSCs.
- A risk management strategy.

## **E9. Networking and collaboration**

The IPSUs are jointly responsible for establishing effective partnerships with all stakeholders, including the ISAs, PSCs and other IPSUs. IPSUs are required to encourage better service integration and collaboration between IPSP Providers.

IPSUs also work closely with their respective state/territory ISAs and PSCs to share knowledge and resources. Where appropriate, IPSUs collaborate with IPSP Providers in other states/territories.

In the case of tailored intensive support, IPSUs may refer Indigenous focused BBF services to PSCs for additional support. The PSCs and IPSUs will collaborate in determining the level of tailored intensive support required and the most appropriate provider of the support.

## **E10. Participation in IPSP Forums and the IPSU Alliance**

IPSUs must participate in IPSU Alliance meetings, State/Territory IPSP forums and National IPSP Conferences.

The National IPSP Conference provides an opportunity to review programme activities and the extent to which they are meeting the IPSP objectives.

The Alliances and Forums provide opportunity for planning for the delivery of IPSP services at a regional and state level, reviewing communication protocols, networking with the NISSP, ISAs and PSCs, and sharing best practice with other IPSUs.

## **E11. Professional development for IPSU staff**

The IPSUs are responsible for ensuring their staff have the relevant skills and experience to effectively carry out their roles. Where staff do not have these skills, IPSUs should provide access to a range of professional development opportunities to support their staff in enhancing their knowledge and skill level.

IPSU staff should be skilled in the following areas:

- reflective practice and capacity building
- communication skills
- family centred approaches
- cross-cultural competence and cross-cultural child development
- interdisciplinary team work and interagency collaboration
- inclusive practices and the use of natural learning environments
- innovation and change in child care theory and practice
- PSC product knowledge.

The IPSUs may participate in PSC professional development activities as appropriate and must fund their participation within the IPSU administration budget or through their own resources.

## **E12. Budget and performance monitoring**

The IPSUs are required to manage and monitor their budget in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement, this includes providing an annual detailed expenditure reports on the budget and an annual audited financial report.

IPSUs will also be required to provide a detailed budget to the Department at the start of each financial year of the funding period.

### **E12.1 Use of funding**

The majority of the funding each financial year (at least 75 per cent) is for direct service delivery. The IPSU is able to retain up to 25 per cent of the total funding each financial year for administration and coordination costs. IPSUs may only spend funding for administration and coordination purposes as proposed in the budget items they specify and which have been approved by the Department each year.

As an indication, administration and coordination costs include costs associated with (but not limited to):

- recruitment and professional development for IPSU staff
- maintaining an office, including insurance, rent, signage, and general office equipment
- operating the toll free phone line
- developing and maintaining a website
- reporting to the Department
- undertaking needs analyses of Indigenous focused BBF services within the region and revisions of service delivery
- developing and distributing promotional and marketing material to Indigenous focused BBF services
- liaison and stakeholder management
- participating in the State/Territory IPSP Forums
- participating in the IPSP evaluation process.

Funding cannot be used for overseas travel, outright purchase of a vehicle, or major office renovation or building construction (capital works).

On occasion, when an IPSU is to host the IPSU Alliance meeting, a separate allocation of funding will be paid to the relevant IPSU.

All income generated from the activities funded under the IPSU, including fees for service, consultancy services, training, resources and bank interest, must be clearly identified in financial reports. This funding will be considered part of the IPSU operating budget and must be used for the purpose of delivering professional development and support as per the Funding Agreement with the Department.

### **E12.2 Professional development and support fee structure**

The IPSUs will not charge fees to Indigenous focused BBF services for the provision of professional development and support.

Indigenous child care services that do not meet eligibility requirements, as outlined in section A8 of these Guidelines, may be supported on a fee-for-service basis. Fees will be determined by the IPSUs and will reflect the capacity of the child care service to pay.

## **E13. Progress reporting and monitoring**

### **E13.1 Reporting**

Providers will report to government as required under their funding agreements with the Department.

### **E13.2 Monitoring visits**

The Department will undertake monitoring visits with IPSUs to meet with staff, and discuss their progress reports and any issues or questions arising from the reports or other monitoring activities.

## **E14. How to access the Indigenous Professional Support Units**

IPSUs must widely promote their services and contact details to Indigenous focused BBF services within the state or territory and other IPSP Providers. This information must be provided regularly and in a variety of formats, including visits, websites and flyers as set out in the Funding Agreement.

Contact details for all IPSUs are available on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

## Section F – IPSP Resources

### F1. Inclusion Improvement Plan

#### F1.1 Description

The IIP is an assessment and planning tool used in the ISF consultation process to systematically explore the child care service's needs and identify strategies to build the capacity of the service to successfully include children with additional needs from the IPSP priority groups (see B1.1). Additional information regarding the IIP can be found on the Department's website ([www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)). In September 2014, this plan superseded the Service Support Plan.

#### F1.2 Why an Inclusion Improvement Plan is needed

The IIP is used by child care services with the ISF to identify goals and strategies to achieve quality inclusive environment/s. In developing the IIP the service and ISF may determine the strategies identified in the plan that can be implemented within the service's current capacity to successfully include a child or children with additional needs.

Where there is a need for additional resources, these can be provided within IPSP or from external providers, in areas such as health and education. The IIP is a prerequisite to applying for ISS, FSF or Bicultural Support funding, and accessing Specialist Equipment.

In the case of FSF, Bicultural Support and Specialist Equipment, the completion of an IIP should not unnecessarily delay the provision of needed assistance. An eligible child care service that is unable to complete an IIP in time to accompany an application for support, may contact the ISA and commence the development of an IIP over the phone. The IIP can be completed once support is in place at the child care service.

In the case of the ISS, an IIP must be completed before the service is able to apply for the subsidy. The IIP must accompany the application for ISS.

#### F1.3 What the Inclusion Improvement Plan includes

There are three key sections to the IIP:

- Service Information – includes child care service and ISA details
- Service Review – includes issues and dynamics that impact on the child care service
- Educator Capacity Building Plan – includes Goals, Actions, Resources available to support goal implementation and Progress.

In developing the IIP, the child care service examines the care environment and the educator capacity to include a child or children with additional or ongoing high support needs. This plan is linked to the National Quality Framework's Quality Improvement Plan and can be used as evidence of continuous quality improvement for the National Quality Standards assessment and ratings process. The IIP identifies:

- The impact on the environment, and what educators will need to change to enable them to support a child's or children's access to the service and engagement in all aspects of the programme.
- Modifications educators may have to make to policy, pedagogy, planning, activities and the physical environment, including social play.
- How the educators will engage with the family and any relevant organisations.
- New knowledge, training or supports educators require in the area of inclusion.
- Goals that will guide all educators in the environment.
- Internal and external capacity building opportunities, including other IPSP supports, such as Bicultural Support, and family and professional learning experiences.
- Actions the service will implement to meet the goals, including policies and practices the child care service might adopt to support future inclusion.

To support the active use of the IIP in the environment, the information should be organised so that the staff can track issues across each column from the Service Need to the related Action.

Through the IIP, the service will identify goals to achieve inclusion. These can include professional development or access to resources, such as specialist equipment and general resources. The service may determine that, with the support of the ISA, the strategies identified in the IIP can be implemented within the service's current capacity to successfully include a child with additional needs.

Where there is a need for additional resources, these can be provided from within IPSP, through FSF, the ISS or Bicultural Support, or from external providers, such as health or education providers.

#### **F1.4 Evaluation of the Inclusion Improvement Plan**

The service, together with the ISA, should plan and engage in an evaluation of the IIP. Evaluation is a tool to guide and support the capacity building of educators, and is part of a reflective professional learning cycle. Comments should be inserted in the IIP template in Section C under the heading "Progress Notes". The Progress is part of the ISS evaluation process which identifies:

- changes in the environment
- barriers to implementing change
- strategies used to try to overcome barriers
- identifying further goals, strategies, resources etc.

The outcomes of this process will inform the development of the new IIP.

An evaluation may occur at a time that the educator and/or ISF deem it would support and progress inclusion in the environment or when needs change. An evaluation may also occur when a child is leaving an environment so educators in the new environment have current information to inform the development of the IIP for their environment.

It is expected that a new IIP would be completed at least every 12 months.

## **F2. Flexible Support Funding**

### **F2.1 Description**

FSF is a subsidy administered by ISAs and paid to eligible child care services. It enables services to be more responsive to families and children with additional needs, such as those with disability, from a CALD background, a child from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background, or an Indigenous child.

To be eligible for FSF, the service must have already enrolled a child with additional needs.

If the IIP has identified the need for FSF, a FSF Application must be completed and submitted to the ISA.

### **F2.2 Approved purposes for Flexible Support Funding**

The ISAs may approve FSF to assist the service to employ an additional educator to increase the staff-to-child ratio above licensing requirements. However, it can also be used as a financial contribution to FDC educators and IHC carers to attend specialist training after hours.

Approved purposes for FSF include:

- Assisting child care services to include a child with ongoing high support needs in circumstances where it is unclear whether the ISS is required on an ongoing basis.
- Enabling release time for permanent educators to settle a child with ongoing high support needs into the child care environment (for example, a child who is transferring to a new care environment or type (such as from LDC to OSHC)).
- Enabling release time for permanent educators to attend specialist training that is relevant to the inclusion of a child with additional needs.

- Enabling release time for permanent educators to prepare an IIP to support the inclusion of a child with additional needs.
- Providing a financial contribution to FDC educators and IHC carers unable to attend specialist training during business hours. Specialist training must relate specifically to the additional needs of the child in care.
- Providing home based educators with an additional carer so that a child or children with additional needs who attends on an irregular basis can participate in out-of-home excursions or other special activities (for example, playgroups or vacation care excursions).
- Assisting services to include a child with additional needs in circumstances where attendance may be irregular and an application for the ISS may not be appropriate (for example, in occasional care, Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services, flexible/innovative services or mobile services).
- Assisting services in circumstances where the ISS has already been approved, but an emergency situation has resulted in the child requiring additional hours of care for a time-limited period.

### **F2.3 Types of support for which Flexible Support Funding cannot be used**

The ISAs will ensure FSF is not used to provide assistance for the following purposes:

- augmenting staffing levels to meet local licensing requirements
- as an interim or alternative source of funding while an application for the ISS is being processed
- purchasing specialist equipment or resources
- transport costs
- medical and therapeutic interventions
- settlement services for immigrants
- support more appropriately funded through the ISS or Bicultural Support
- support more appropriately funded by state/territory governments or other agencies.

### **F2.4 Flexible Support Funding application and approval processes**

Child care services wishing to apply for FSF will contact their local ISA. An ISA will then help identify the support needs of the child care service and assist with the development of an IIP.

If the IIP identifies the need for FSF, the ISA will assist the service to complete a FSF application. If an IIP has been completed, it must accompany the FSF application. If the need for FSF is urgent, a child care service can commence an IIP over the phone and complete it once support is in place.

Once an ISA has received a FSF application, the ISA must:

- Notify the child care service within 4 business days of the outcome of the FSF application and, if approved, provide the service with a FSF approval letter.
- Provide a follow-up call or visit to the service within 10 business days of FSF approval to assess the appropriateness of the support provided.
- Process claims for FSF within 30 days of receipt of a correctly rendered invoice.

The ISAs are responsible for assessing applications in line with these Guidelines. Once the service has been notified that the FSF application has been approved, the service can proceed with the employment of an additional educator/carers.

By signing and submitting a FSF application, the service accepts that it will be entering into an agreement with the ISA with regard to the conditions for use and receipt of FSF. FSF must be expended in line with these procedures, and for the hours and purposes approved.

## **F2.5 Flexible Support Funding claims**

Child care services will be required to submit a FSF Claim Form, available from ISAs, to the local ISA within 60 days of the support end date. Claims submitted after this time will be invalid unless the service has applied for and received written approval from the ISA for an extension to the 60 days.

The claim for FSF must be for the actual hours for which the additional staff member was employed, up to the approved FSF hours. The claim should be accompanied by evidence such as time sheets. Only expenses incurred following the approval by the ISA can be claimed through FSF. Claims for retrospective funding will not be accepted.

For FDC schemes or IHC carers that are submitting a FSF claim on behalf of an educator/carer for out-of-hours training, the claim must be submitted within 60 days of the training being completed.

FSF is paid in arrears by the ISA direct to the child care service or the coordinating service/scheme for FDC and IHC. FSF cannot be claimed when the service is closed (for example, on public holidays), or when the child does not attend child care on the days that FSF has been approved.

## **F2.6 Flexible Support Funding subsidy rate and limits**

The FSF subsidy is a flat hourly rate that is indexed on 1 July each year. The rate is aligned with the ISS rate and is consistent across all states and territories.

Actual staffing costs may vary from one area to another according to the state or award level, the contract of the additional employee, and the basis on which they are employed. FSF is not intended to cover all employee costs, but does provide a significant contribution to meeting these costs.

Limits apply to the number of daily and annual hours of FSF a service can access. These limits vary according to service type and activity. Refer to the Flexible Support Funding Limits – Inclusion and Professional Support Program fact sheet on the [IPSP page](#) of the [Department's website](#).

The FSF limits apply to the service, not the child. In other words, a service enrolling a child with additional needs is eligible for the maximum FSF, regardless of whether the child has already been supported by FSF at another service. Equally, if a child has moved from one child care environment to another within the same service, and additional assistance is needed to settle the child, the service may be eligible for additional FSF up to the maximum annual limit.

In cases where the FSF allocation has been expended and funds are not available, the ISA may be required to implement a 'waitlist'. In these circumstances, approved FSF applications will be processed according to the date on which they were received.

If an ISA receives more than one FSF application from a child care service for the same care environment, the ISA will be required to assess the total amount of FSF that can be approved. For example, a LDC centre that has applied for FSF for three children with additional needs, all of whom attend the same child care service on the same day, will not necessarily be eligible for 300 hours.

## **F2.7 Use of Flexible Support Funding for specialist training and/or Inclusion Improvement Plans**

Child care services may be eligible for FSF as a contribution towards engaging relief educators while permanent educators attend specialist training and/or prepare IIPs in respect of a child with additional needs.

For FDC and IHC, FSF can also be used to provide a financial contribution for educators who are unable to attend specialist training during business hours. Specialist training must be identified in an IIP, and must relate specifically to the inclusion of an identified child with ongoing high support needs. It must be relevant to building the service's capacity to include these children.

For FSF applications that seek funding to allow release time for permanent educators to develop an IIP, an IIP is not required. However, a FSF Application Form must be completed stating the reason for the request and the number of hours of funding being sought.



## **F2.8 Exceptional circumstances over the 15 hour limit**

Where it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist in respect of attending specialist training and/or for the preparation of IIPs, and the child care service requests additional hours to attend training and/or prepare IIPs, an exemption from the 15-hour limit may be granted by the ISA. The details of the additional need must be stated in the FSF - Exemption – Approval Form, and included in the FSF application submitted to the ISA.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered by the ISA on a case-by-case basis.

ISAs can approve above the maximum of 15 hours per 12 month period of FSF, up to a cap of 30 additional hours of FSF for training and/or to prepare IIPs in respect of a child with ongoing high support needs. This will allow services, under exceptional circumstances, to access a maximum of 45 hours of FSF per 12 month period.

## **F2.9 Role and employment conditions of educators**

The primary role of educators employed with FSF is to increase the staff-to-child ratio in the child care service for a time limited period when the child with additional needs is in care. Educators funded by the FSF cannot be used to meet the educator to child ratio requirements under the National Quality Framework. Any educator funded by FSF must be in addition to the number of educators already required under the National Quality Framework.

Educators support all children in the service, and all educators in the service may be involved in providing support to the child with additional needs. However, educators who have been employed with FSF funds will not:

- assist the child with additional needs on a one-to-one basis
- provide specialist assistance (for example, medical assistance or physiotherapy)
- provide support that would otherwise be provided by the ISA.

The requirements of relevant workplace relations laws must be considered when employing additional educators.

When a child is absent from the child care service, the educator employed under FSF should receive appropriate notice in line with award provisions. If employed on a casual basis, stand down provisions apply.

FSF may not be claimed when services are closed (for example, on public holidays), or when the child is not attending care.

The educator employed by FSF is the employee of the child care service. In the case of FDC and IHC, the scheme or coordinator is responsible for employing the additional carer to accompany the educator on excursion-based activities.

## **F3. Bicultural Support**

### **F3.1 Description**

Bicultural Support provides eligible child care services with access to an interpreter or other bilingual/bicultural person to support the service to enrol and settle a child/children from CALD, Indigenous, or refugee or humanitarian intervention backgrounds.

### **F3.2 What Bicultural Support provides**

Bicultural support may be delivered either on or off-site and PSCs are responsible for ensuring eligible child care services are able to access Bicultural Support free of charge.

When support is required for the enrolment and settlement of Indigenous children, the PSC should contact the IPSU to either: directly provide the bilingual/bicultural advice or support required (on a fee for service basis); or advise of alternate appropriate bilingual/bicultural support in the local area that may be able to meet the specific need of the eligible child care service.

Where an appropriately skilled interpreter, bilingual or bicultural person is not available to visit in person, this support can be provided via phone or other technologies, such as Skype.

Assistance provided by the interpreter, bilingual or bicultural person under Bicultural Support funding may include:

- Facilitating communication between eligible child care services and families by:
  - Assisting educators in communicating with culturally diverse families and children (for example, interpreting meetings between parents and educators, providing verbal translation of enrolment documents, and providing educators with key words and phrases that can be used to communicate with the child).
- Facilitating cultural awareness by:
  - Assisting eligible child care services to better understand particular ethnic backgrounds, cultural experiences, and child rearing practices of the children and families.
  - Enabling the exchange and sharing of information between educators and parents about the child and family life.
  - Providing educators with an understanding of relevant cultural issues.
- Supporting curricula or programming by:
  - Advising on culturally and linguistically appropriate practices and culturally inclusive curriculum.
  - Advising on programmes or resources that support the development of English as a second language.
  - Advising on resources and programmes that assist newly arrived children and families from refugee backgrounds.
- Supporting resources and linkages by:
  - Providing educators with information, where available, about relevant community resources and services to support the inclusion of culturally diverse children and families.
  - Providing bicultural advice and support to ISAs.

### **F3.3 Funding for Bicultural Support**

The funding allocations for Bicultural Support will be determined before the commencement of each financial year and paid to the PSCs.

Funding for Bicultural Support may be used:

- To engage an interpreter, or provide bilingual/bicultural support for each child to work with the staff of the eligible child care service.
- For resource materials that will support the inclusion of the new child (up to 5 per cent of the Bicultural Support allocation).

Bicultural Support funding cannot be used for:

- regular interpreting and translating assistance for families or eligible child care services
- supervision of a child or group of children
- providing settlement and community support services to families and children
- providing support that is available through existing programmes (for example, clients of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) using child care while they are attending English language tuition. The cost of AMEP related child care is the responsibility of the AMEP service provider).

### **F3.4 The role of the PSC in providing Bicultural Support**

The PSC is responsible for:

- Ensuring eligible child care services in metropolitan, regional and remote areas have timely access to bilingual or bicultural support to assist them to enrol and settle a child from a CALD, Indigenous, refugee or humanitarian intervention background when requested by an ISA.
- Responding and actioning requests supported by an IIP (or verbal recommendations by the ISA when the IIP is still under development) for Bicultural Support within 5 business days. This includes notifying the child care service and ISA of the arrangements (time and details of person who will provide the support).
- Establishing networks in the region to source suitable agencies or persons able to provide the type of support required.
- Developing, maintaining and promoting a list of appropriately skilled contacts to facilitate or provide Bicultural Support across the region.
- Ensuring the provision of services is in accordance with these Guidelines.
- Ensuring Bicultural Support funding is expended in accordance with these Guidelines and the terms of the Funding Agreement.

### **F3.5 How Bicultural Support operates**

Eligible child care services can make requests for Bicultural Support through the ISA, PSC or IPSU. The request must be accompanied by a IIP (see section F1 of these Guidelines) approved by an ISA.

However, as Bicultural Support must be responsive, and to avoid delays, the ISA may recommend the request to the PSC before the completion of an IIP. For example, the development of an IIP could commence between the ISA and the child care service over the phone. The decision to approve Bicultural Support can proceed before the PSC receives the completed IIP.

The request for Bicultural Support should include the written or verbal consent of the relevant parent, carer, or child care professional (other than the educator).

### **F3.6 Useful contacts for Bicultural Support providers**

The PSC should network with a wide range of agencies and organisations to ensure it is able to develop a useful list of suitable contacts. This may include Migrant Resource Centres, local ethnic community groups, and interpreting services.

Other contacts may include the *National Translating and Interpreting Service*, providers of programmes that support the settlement of migrants and/or refugee and humanitarian entrants, such as *Humanitarian Settlement Services*, *Settlement Grant Program*, the *AMEP*, or other programmes funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). Contact details for these providers are available from the [DIAC website](#).

## **F4. Specialist Equipment**

### **F4.1 Description**

Specialist equipment is available on loan from the PSC to eligible child care services (excluding IHC) to assist the inclusion of a child who has demonstrated ongoing high support needs in a child care environment.

A child care service can gain access to specialist equipment by contacting their ISA who will assist them to complete an IIP to determine their needs. See section F4.3 for further information about borrowing specialist equipment.

Ultimately, provision of Specialist Equipment is the responsibility of the PSCs.

#### **F4.2 What is available from the Specialist Equipment?**

The specialist equipment includes, but is not limited to:

- portable ramps to create access to the environment
- standing frames and full support swings to allow a child with high physical support needs to participate in the daily child care programme and activities
- hoists, slings, harnesses, change tables, commodes, toilet seats or steps, potty chairs, mobile stools and seating or posture aids for educators to enable them to lift and transfer children safely when carrying out basic care functions, such as changing and going to the toilet
- specialised 'basic furniture', such as chairs, tables, desks and sleeping equipment;
- communication cards or charts, and Auslan dictionaries to enable the child and educators to communicate effectively
- specialised inclusion toys, such as switch sensory mats
- individualised equipment, such as foam items, specific to the needs of a child care environment and a child being included.

Specialist Equipment does not include:

- therapeutic equipment (for example, hearing aids and therapist tables)
- equipment that the service would reasonably be expected to supply
- equipment that the parent or carer would reasonably be expected to supply (for example, wheelchairs, walking frames and body suits)
- equipment for which there are hygiene issues (for example, padded cots).

Providing specialist equipment is contingent on:

- The completion of an IIP in which the child care service demonstrates the need for the specialist equipment requested to enable the inclusion of a child within the care environment.
- Confirmation that the child has disability.
- Recommendation by the child's therapist that the equipment will support the child's inclusion in the child care service.

Given the range of potential unique needs of individual children, this guide may not cover all situations. Where the guide does not explicitly address such needs, or a request falls outside the scope but within the principles of IPSP, a written application from the PSC to the Department should be made to seek clarification.

#### **F4.3 How child care services borrow Specialist Equipment**

If an IIP (see section F1 of these Guidelines) demonstrates the need for specialist equipment to include a child with disability, the ISA will contact the PSC and the child care service will submit the IIP along with a completed Specialist Equipment Request Form for approval and action.

The Specialist Equipment Request Form will be available from the ISA's or the PSC's website, and must be completed by a qualified professional, such as an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, who is familiar with the biomechanical functioning and needs of the child requiring the specialist equipment for their inclusion in the child care service.

A catalogue of Specialist Equipment items will also be available from the PSC's website. Eligible child care services and therapists are encouraged to check the catalogue before completing the request form. The PSC may be contacted for advice on the availability or suitability of Specialist Equipment.

The Specialist Equipment will be loaned for as long as it is required and remains appropriate to the needs of the child. From time to time, the ISA or IPSU will monitor the continued appropriateness and good working order of specialist equipment on loan to a child care service.

When the equipment is no longer needed, the service will notify the PSC to arrange the return of the equipment.

#### **F4.4 Fitting Specialist Equipment**

It is the responsibility of the child care service to ensure that specialist equipment is prescribed and fitted by an appropriate professional, such as an occupational therapist or physiotherapist who has knowledge of the child's biomechanical functioning and needs.

#### **F4.5 Non eligible services accessing Specialist Equipment**

Non-eligible child care services may, where equipment is available, access the specialist equipment. In these instances, equipment will be loaned on a full cost recovery basis.

#### **F4.6 Role of the PSC in relation to Specialist Equipment**

The role of the PSC includes:

- Ensuring eligible child care services have access to the loan of Specialist Equipment that is suitable for purpose and in good working order.
- Ensuring requests are assessed and actioned within 5 business days of a request being received. This includes notifying the service of any delays or issues in the provision or availability of the equipment.
- Notifying the ISA or IPSU, in writing, that the Specialist Equipment has been supplied to the service.
- Maintaining and promoting an online, up-to-date catalogue of Specialist Equipment items that are available.
- Purchasing new equipment in line with the provisions of these Guidelines and the IPSP Funding Agreements.
- Seeking prior agreement from the Department for the purchase of equipment costing \$5,000 or more.
- Providing advice on the availability of Specialist Equipment to eligible child care services and other IPSP Providers.

### **F5. IPSP Online Library (formerly IPSP Resource Library)**

#### **F5.1 Description and access**

The [IPSP Online Library](#) provides up to date, high quality, nationally relevant resources for the child care sector. The collection is intended for educators, educational leaders, students and anyone working under the National Quality Framework in Australia.

The library is a consolidated repository for resources that were previously located in individual PSC libraries. Stage one of the Library has been released and ongoing additions to the collection will include:

- in-service training materials (manuals, training materials, online modules, workbooks, visual aids, audio-visual material)
- fact sheets, pamphlets and newsletters
- journals and professional literature
- resources that support quality programmes, and that enable cultural inclusion and bilingual education for educators and children.

Under the 2009-2012 IPSP Guidelines, each PSC was responsible for managing a General Resources Library. During the first year of the new funding agreement period, PSCs, in consultation with the Department, were required to consolidate resources currently available within each library into a single collection, and, as appropriate, make these available from a single, on-line repository on a website managed by the PSC Alliance.

PSCs will be responsible for ensuring the resources available are appropriate, up-to-date, of high quality, and in a format that will be easily used by child care services.

**F5.2 Role of the PSC in relation to the IPSP Online Library**

The role of the PSCs includes:

- Ensuring child care services can access the resources throughout the period of the Funding Agreement, including through the transition to a single library.
- Working collaboratively to ensure the smooth transition and operation of the new library.
- Consulting with the Department on issues arising from the transition to or operation of the new library.
- Contributing new information and resources to the library.

Ensuring materials are appropriate, current and in useful formats.

## Appendix A – Glossary

Word/Phrase	Definition
Additional Payment	An ISS payment made to IHC carers in recognition of the additional care and attention required by children with ongoing high support needs in their care and the impact of this on the carer.
Alliances	Collective of representatives for each of three of the Programme Elements and includes: National ISA Alliance state/territory based ISA Alliances (in states/territories with a high number of ISA Regions) PSC Alliance IPSU Alliance.
Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	ACECQA is an independent national authority and guides the implementation of the National Quality Framework for education and care nationally and ensures consistency of delivery.
Bicultural Support	Provides time limited support to child care services to assist in including children from cultural and linguistically diverse and Indigenous backgrounds, including language assistance.
Budget Based Funded Programme	Funding provided under the Child Care Services Support Program to several types of non-mainstream child care services, and provided by not-for-profit organisations, mainly in rural, remote or Indigenous communities. The aim of the funding is to provide access to early childhood learning and child care where the market would otherwise fail to deliver these services. These services are generally not approved for the purposes of administering the CCB, and parents using these services are not eligible to receive CCB or Child Care Rebate. The cost to families for using these services, however, is minimal as the Australian Government meets the majority of the costs involved in providing these services.

Word/Phrase	Definition
Budget Based Funded services	Include: flexible/innovative services mobile child care services Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services Indigenous playgroups Indigenous outside school hours care and enrichment programmes Crèches.
Care Environment	A specific setting, room or grouping of children in care (for example, a 0-2 years room in LDC, or an educator's home in FDC).
Capacity Building	An approach that develops and strengthens the skills, abilities, processes and resources that child care services need to respond to challenges and change.
Capacity Payment	An ISS payment made to FDC educators in recognition of the additional care and attention required by children with ongoing high support needs in their care and the impact of this on the educator.
Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved services	Include: long day care services outside school hours care (including vacation care) family day care occasional care IHC services.
Curriculum	A planned course of action leading to certain outcomes for children, and includes what is desirable, how and why it should be learnt, and how it can be evaluated.
Department of Social Services (the Department)	The Australian Government Department of Social Services.
Early learning	Refers to the structured learning experiences for children (from stimulation, experience and play-based activities) from birth to 5 years.



Word/Phrase	Definition
Child Care services	Includes LDC, Preschool/Kindergarten, and FDC and OSHC, IHC, Occasional Care, BBF services in Australia.
Educator	Early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings or care environments.
Family Assistance Act	A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
Funding Agreement	The document signed by the successful applicant and the Australian Government in relation to the delivery of the Programme Elements.
Flexible Support Funding	<p>FSF is a subsidy administered by ISAs and paid to eligible child care services. It enables services to be more responsive to families and children with additional needs, such as those with disability, from a CALD background, a child from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background, or an Indigenous child.</p> <p>To be eligible for FSF, the service must have already enrolled a child with additional needs.</p>
IPSP Provider	<p>Organisation in receipt of a grant funded by the Australian Government for the delivery of IPSP:</p> <p>Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs)</p> <p>National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP)</p> <p>Professional Support Coordinators (PSCs)</p> <p>Indigenous Professional Support Units (IPSUs)</p>
Inclusion	Access to and participation of all children, including those with ongoing high support needs, in the child care environment. This includes children with disability, Indigenous children and children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, including children from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background.
Inclusion Improvement Plan (formerly known as	The plan developed by child care services with support of an ISF to identify the capacity of the child care services to include a child or children with additional needs. IIPs also identify the

Word/Phrase	Definition
a Service Support Plan)	supports that may be needed by the service to ensure that successful inclusion is achieved.
Inclusion Support Facilitators	ISFs work directly with eligible child care services, to provide support, information and guidance that assists them to provide inclusive quality child care environments.
Inclusion Support Subsidy	A subsidy that assists eligible child care services to include children with ongoing high support needs so that they can be cared for in environments with typically developing peers. The subsidy is a contribution towards the costs associated with employing an additional carer or educator.
Indigenous focused BBF services	Indigenous focused BBF services are those services that identify as Indigenous.
IPSP Forums	IPSP Forums bring together IPSP Providers and other key stakeholders. The forums are held at a national level and at a state/territory level.
IS Portal	The Inclusion Support (IS) Portal is an online system for lodging ISS applications and claims for payment.
National IPSP Conference	IPSP forum that provides the opportunity to discuss and respond to issues at a national level and bring together all key stakeholders.
National Quality Framework	The overarching framework that includes the regulatory body responsible for ensuring quality in child care; the Early Years Learning Framework; the National Quality Standards; and the Quality Rating System.
Needs analysis	The process that is designed to identify the gaps between existing skill levels and desired skill levels for child care service educators. The needs analysis is the first step in planning activities.
No wrong door	Any IPSP Grant Recipient will assist child care services to receive IPSP support and information required in a timely manner. This is

Word/Phrase	Definition
	achieved through effective referrals and collaborative practices between IPSP Providers.
Professional Development and Support	The advice, support, training and resources to assist educators in providing a high quality service as defined by the National Quality Standards. This support is to assist services in developing strategies that are sustainable in the longer term.
Programme Elements	The four elements of IPSP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs)</li> <li>• National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP)</li> <li>• Professional Support Coordinators (PSCs)</li> <li>• Indigenous Professional Support Units (IPSUs).</li> </ul>
Pupil-free day	A day set by an educational institution where students do not attend school due to teacher training. Also known as multi-purpose day, curriculum day or professional development day.
Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)	A mandatory requirement under the National Quality Framework.
Reflective practice	As professionals, early childhood educators examine what happens in their settings and reflect on what they might change to improve outcomes for the children.
Registered Care	Care that may be provided by relatives, friends, neighbours, nannies or babysitters who are registered as carers with the Department of Human Services. In some circumstances it can also include registered care provided by individuals in private preschools and kindergartens, some Occasional Care services, and some OSHC services. Families who are working, training or studying and use registered care are entitled to the registered care rate of CCB for 50 hours per child per week, but not the Child Care Rebate.

Word/Phrase	Definition
Regulatory Authorities	State and territory bodies with the primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard.
Skype	Software application that allows users to make voice and video calls and chat over the internet.
Specialist Equipment	Equipment recommended as necessary for the inclusion of an eligible child with ongoing high support needs. The equipment must be prescribed, fitted and reviewed by an appropriate professional, for example, occupational therapist or physiotherapist, who has knowledge of the child's biomechanical functioning and needs.
Specialist Service	A child care service where all of the enrolled children have ongoing high support needs.
State/Territory IPSP Forums	IPSP Forums that meet to focus on issues at the regional, state or territory level.
Strengths-based approach	A capacity building strategy that builds on the strengths and resources of child care services. A strengths-based approach operates on the assumption that people have strengths and resources for their own empowerment. In a strengths-based approach, the focus is on the individual, not the content. By focusing on what is working well, informed successful strategies support the adaptive growth of organisations and individuals.

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