

Submission

Having read through the draft report it seems that the driving constraint on the system is the limitations of supply, both generally in terms of places and particularly in terms of a lack of flexibility to meet increasingly flexible modern working arrangements and to accommodate changing family needs as additional children are born.

Further, the projected increase in the number of ECEC workers appears low.

The report estimates that a large number of children and informal care by parent or non-parent family members.

The system is focused on quality of care with changes introduced lately to limit the number of places per staff and to increase education requirements for care providers. This is a worthwhile objective but practically it appears unnecessary when whatever benefit that children under this system will can is limited only to a small proportion of children and to also be a constraint on the supply of places.

We have one child in family day care 4 days per week. We feel that we have been very lucky to find our carer who offers the children new and interesting activities to develop their social and learning skills. We do however have concern about whether our carer could accept a second or third child as well given the limitations of places. I find it somewhat ridiculous that it is our interest to keep our child in care during maternity leave in order hold a place. For us, this is an additional cost during a period of single income only. For the system, it is a further constraint on supply.

The report contains various comments from parents regarding lack of places or inflexibility. I wonder how such issues can be collated locally so that the market can identify and respond to demand. Centres and family day care co-ordinators will not share information on the number of requests that they have declined.

The government must seek to increase supply and more closely monitor regional shortages or excess places and provide incentives to firms to relocate or provide additional services where shortages exist. Co-located facilities with schools or health centres with flexibility building design may prove to be highly useful in responding to shortages.

Education of staff is useful but does it need to be all staff? Could flexibility in the system be increased if highly qualified educators development suitable programs that others could then be accredited to implement. Why is it not reasonable for someone that has had children themselves and wishes to retire early, able to quickly provide child care services if under the supervision of an accredited coordination organisation providing oversight and background checks.