

## **Brief submission**

Having worked in the community services sector since 1977 for both State Government and non government agencies, I find it remarkable and incredibly frustrating that Government is still operating from a framework that ongoing competitive tendering will lead to better services and better outcomes for clients. Client needs are best met through establishing long term, stable and coordinated service systems where agencies (Govt and non-govt) understand each others role and services provided, and work in a cooperative manner in the best interests of the clients. Frequent tendering forces competition between agencies, acts against coordinated service systems, decreases service quality and decreases client outcomes. Here is the formula for success: (1) Govt consults and jointly assesses with the NGO sector if current service systems are functional and coordinated (2) If the answer is yes, then contract long term (5+5+5 years) and monitor and evaluate individual services and the service system; and make changes along the way (3) Where it is assessed the service system is not functional, then, and only then, restructure the service system (in consultation with key stakeholders) and then tender. This should be every 20 years, or more - NOT EVERY 3-5 YEARS AS IS THE CASE CURRENTLY where the performance of individual agencies and effective service systems is completely ignored. I continue to be amazed that the default position is to ignore what is currently working well, and go to tender, disrupting anything that is currently effective.

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