

**Productivity Submission - Wide Bay In Home Care, Longreach & Districts
Rural In Home Care Program, Longreach & Districts Rural In Home Care
Program – Northern Territory and Capricornia In Home Care**

Capricornia In Home Care is based in Rockhampton and has an allocation of 100 IHC places, this service is currently housed in a hub with Capricornia Family Day Care and Central West Inclusion Support Agency. Capricornia IHC is operated by the Family Day Care Association Queensland who also operates and support a range of other child care services across Qld.

Families accessing the service: 36

Children accessing the service: 110

Wide Bay In Home Care is based in Maryborough and has an allocation of 190 IHC places, this service is in a Hub with Family Day Care and Family Support Services. Wide Bay is operated by Churches of Christ who also operate and support a range of other child care services

Families accessing the service: 88

Children accessing the service: 272

Longreach & Districts Rural In Home Care Program and Longreach & Districts Rural In Home Care Program – Northern Territory are based in Longreach and has an allocation of 245 Queensland places and 35 Northern Territory places. This service is operated by the Longreach Regional Council who also operate Long Day Care, Out of School Hours Care, Mobile Child Care and Family Day Care programs.

Families accessing the service: 100 Queensland 11 Northern Territory

Children accessing the service: 226 Queensland 29 Northern Territory

The managers of the above three program who are completing this submission have collectively held 23 years' experience operating an IHC program as well as experience in a variety of other child care service types

The above three services provide the majority of care to families in rural and remote Queensland, there is only one other Queensland In Home Care Service provider that provides care to families located outside of metropolitan cities and towns.

8.5 Qualifications:

1. Qualification requirements will limit staff options for rural and remote areas creating a larger service availability gap between rural and metropolitan families
2. Educators working in rural and remote areas will have limited access to an RTO when required to complete study, putting further workload onto service providers
3. Currently families are able to contract working visa holders who are willing to work in rural and remote areas however the qualifications and experience of these individuals is often not recognised

4. RTO's not having the knowledge of home based services and an inability to meet the needs of the student
5. Currently an individual can not commence a Certificate III qualification unless working in the child care field
6. Educators could be faced with paying the expense of a Qualification as funding is no longer available for Certificate III level, this is potentially \$3000 in costs for an Educator who is just starting out in the field of child care
7. Currently the In Home Program caters for families and children with a variety of needs including disabilities and illness where often a nurse or skilled therapist is better suited to this role
8. Assessments of regulatory compliance - how is this going to be implemented when families can be living in rural and remote areas of Queensland, who completes these assessments?
9. In order for families and Educators to meet the current NQF, regular support and monitoring is required which needs to be reflected in funding options for services
10. Costs to services could potentially be unachievable if needing to visit families who live a vast distance from the service more regularly in order to meet the NQF requirements

8.7 Working Holiday Visa:

1. That consideration is given to include child care on the list of approved employment for working holiday visa's in rural and remote areas
2. If allowing Au pairs to work for 12 months, there will be the potential for them to meet the NQF requirements and families to receive government subsidies

5.2 Disadvantaged Services

1. In Home Care families in rural and remote areas should fall under the disadvantaged communities definition to ensure children in these locations are able to access ECEC
2. In Home Care is already providing care to families in disadvantaged communities and under the existing IHC model, does this effectively
3. Current funding models allow existing IHC services to provide support to families in rural and remote Queensland and Northern Territory, however if this program, being Nannies, was to fall under the NQF then visitation, support and monitoring would increase adding further financial costs to the service. How will you ensure that service providers are funded well enough to ensure these services continue?
4. Existing service providers have been providing support to families and children in these areas since 2001, allowance needs to be made for these services to continue

Capricornia In Home Care

- currently services families within a 1000km radius of the coordination unit
- 95% of families using this program are located in rural and remote Queensland

Wide Bay In Home Care

- currently services families within a 1500km radius of the coordination unit
- 80% of families using this program are located in rural and remote Queensland

Longreach & Districts Rural In Home Care and Longreach & Districts Rural In Home Care Program
– Northern Territory

- currently services families within a 2200km radius of the coordination unit
- 95% of families using this program are located in rural and remote Queensland and Northern Territory

8.6 Removal of In Home Care:

1. Will the Nanny program fall under the current In Home Care eligibility requirements, and if not who will define the requirements for families to access a nanny?
2. Allowing any family to access a Nanny will be detrimental to all existing child care services
3. Families using Nannies need to fall under the existing IHC eligibility requirements to ensure that families are accessing main stream child care options where possible
4. Nannies need to be targeted at families whose work commitments, child's needs or location make them eligible for this program as under the current In Home Care model
5. A clear assessment process for families wishing to access home based nannies needs to be developed to ensure it is targeted at those most in need and not taking children away from main stream services
6. Outcomes for children need to be considered when assessing a families suitability for a home based nanny and whether a main stream child care service is in the child's best interest
7. The current IHC model works well, however the limited number of places available does not allow service providers to meet demand.
8. IHC providers are best placed to implement the Nanny program as it appears this program is mirroring the current IHC program
9. The term Nanny takes away from the professional reputation from the ECEC field, if this form of child care is to fall under the NQF then a program name needs to reflect the professional nature that will be required under this model
10. The current In Home Care model that operates in major cities and towns is a completely different model than those services who operate in rural and remote locations, how will ACECQA ensure that requirements that are developed are fair for all families no matter their location?

7.8 National Quality Framework

1. What will happen to families who are currently using the IHC program who may no longer be eligible or whose home or Educator may not meet the NQF? For example, a contract mustering family who regularly moves location, a family who lives on a rural property and is supplied a home by their employer, how will these families be transitioned into a new model?
2. Will ACECQA talk to existing services to ensure any requirements fit within the model needed to provide care within the families home, taking into account that families often live in remote locations, work shift work, have a child with a disability?

3. Will tailoring the NQF requirements take into account service providers in different locations, for example services operating in metropolitan areas compared to those operating in rural and remote locations and disadvantaged communities?
4. The current In Home Care Interim Standards ensure quality outcomes for children and these should be reviewed and adopted for the new Nanny program, or used to guide ACECQA when developing the new requirements

7.6 Assessment and Rating System

1. Under the current system, service providers have already lost regular contact with their local Office of Early Childhood Education and Care, how will adding to this work load be best for all services.
2. At present services under the NQF can have no face to face contact with staff from their local office for up to 2 years
3. Currently under the existing system no guidance is provided by staff at local OECEC due to assessment and rating taking priority

7.10 National Working with Children Check

1. We fully support a nationwide working with Children check to minimise administration burden to Services, cost to potential staff and speed of processing.