

# Looking after Children's Health in Out-of-Home Care

## A state-wide consultation to inform a Victorian OOHC Health Strategy

### GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

#### Background

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has commissioned the University of Melbourne, Department of General Practice to consult a wide range of stakeholders from across Victoria about future strategic directions for addressing the health needs of children and young people in Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) with a view to development by DHHS of a first, state-wide OOHC Health Strategy. The consultation is being led by Prof Lena Sancı, Chair of General Practice.

The DHHS has already identified potential strategic objectives including:

- Increasing the capacity of the child protection and agency workforces to monitor and prioritise the health needs of children in OOHC;
- Identifying the best approaches to navigating the health system for children and young people in OOHC;
- Implementing the National Clinical Assessment Framework for Children and Young People in OOHC;
- Enhancing health management planning and care coordination in OOHC;
- Improving systems to monitor and track health assessments and outcomes for children and young people in OOHC;
- Improving timely access to quality health services;
- Removing barriers to children and young people in OOHC accessing necessary services;
- Increasing young people's engagement in their healthcare and general health literacy.

DHHS is now seeking expert guidance gathered through this consultation on some more specific priorities and measurable, evidence-based objectives which could be embedded in a state-wide OOHC Health Strategy.

The consultation team will report to DHHS in early October 2019 about key findings. Written submissions are welcomed from organisations and individuals including people who previously lived in OOHC, carers and advocates and will form a key part of data gathering.

#### CONSULTATION THEMES

We welcome submissions addressing one, several or all questions below. These questions and themes are not exhaustive but indicate the broad areas of interest in this consultation.

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## Key questions and themes

### **1. Protecting and promoting child health in OOHC: ensuring risks to health are identified, investigated and controlled without delay**

- 1.1 What are the current system gaps?
- 1.2 What strategic changes are advisable to ensure health promotion initiatives and health education effectively reach children and young people in OOHC?
- 1.3 Are there evidence-based objectives or approaches related to any of the following themes which would could be incorporated in a state-wide strategy to better protect and promote child health in OOHC?
  - a. Clinical guidelines for initial and comprehensive health assessments for children and young people in OOHC
  - b. Health management planning and healthcare coordination in OOHC

- c. Clinical pathways
- d. Immunisation
- e. Dental, optical and auditory care
- f. Diet, nutrition and lifestyle
- g. Mental Health
- h. Alcohol and other drugs
- i. Sexual health
- j. Safe use of medicines
- k. Health literacy and preparation for self-management in adulthood

1.4 What measures would be appropriate to track the effect of future strategies to protect children's and young people's health in OOHC?

**2. Keeping children well in OOHC: providing carers and children with knowledge, information and skills to manage common health issues in OOHC;**

2.1 What are the current systems gaps?

2.2 What future strategies are advisable to ensure we keep children in OOHC as well as possible given increased risks of chronic and complex health conditions?

2.3 Are there evidence-based objectives or approaches around any of the following themes that could be incorporated to help with keeping children well in OOHC?

- a. Clinical guidelines for initial and comprehensive health assessments for children and young people in OOHC
- b. Health management planning and healthcare coordination in OOHC
- c. Clinical pathways
- d. Immunisation
- e. Dental, optical and auditory care
- f. Diet, nutrition and lifestyle
- g. Mental Health
- h. Alcohol and other drugs
- i. Sexual health
- j. Safe use of medicines
- k. Health literacy and preparation for self-management in adulthood

2.4 What measures would be appropriate to track the effect of future strategies to keep children as well as possible in OOHC?

**3.Preventing avoidable adverse health outcomes in OOHC: health screening and early intervention.**

3.1 What are the current systems gaps in preventing avoidable adverse health outcomes?

3.2 What future objectives are advisable where we have evidence that poor health outcomes could be avoided with the right strategies?

3.3 Are there specific, evidence-based objectives or approaches around any of the following themes that could be incorporated to better prevent poor health outcomes in OOHC?

- a. Clinical guidelines for initial and comprehensive health assessments for children and young people in OOHC
- b. Health management planning and healthcare coordination in OOHC
- c. Clinical pathways
- d. Immunisation
- e. Dental, optical and auditory care
- f. Diet, nutrition and lifestyle
- g. Mental Health
- h. Alcohol and other drugs
- i. Sexual health
- j. Safe use of medicines
- k. Health literacy and preparation for self-management in adulthood

3.4 What measures would be appropriate to track the effect of future strategies to prevent avoidable poor health outcomes for children and young people in OOHC?

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If you are considering making a written submission, please note that:

- this consultation is considering future directions at a strategic and systems level;
- submissions about any individual health case of a child or young person in OOHC would not be appropriate;
- at the discretion of the Consultation Lead Prof Lena Sancı, submissions may be attached as appendices to our final report to DHHS.

If you wish your submission to be treated 'in confidence' please include formal advice to that effect when you forward your submission. Confidentiality can be protected on request and in that case your submission will not be available to anyone outside of the University's consultation team. All written submissions will be acknowledged on receipt.

If you have any questions about the submission process, please phone Dr Anne-Maree Duncan on 8344 7196 (Mon, Wed or Fri) or 0479 060 880 (Tues or Thurs) or email to [oohealth-consult@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:oohealth-consult@unimelb.edu.au).

**Written submissions can be made until Friday 30 August 2019**

Submissions can be made in either hard copy or electronic copy (preferred)

**Email:** [oohealth-consult@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:oohealth-consult@unimelb.edu.au). Please enter the word **SUBMISSION** in the subject line

**Mail:**

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