

## OSHC - NEW SERVICE CHECKLIST

### **PART 1**

The following are some key steps to take if you are considering a new OSHC service in your community.

If you are starting from the beginning read steps 1 - 9 very carefully as this may help you make some decisions.

1. Refer to [www.decs.sa.gov.au/oshc/files/links/setting\\_up\\_a\\_new\\_oshc\\_service](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/oshc/files/links/setting_up_a_new_oshc_service)
2. Also refer to [www.facsia.gov.au/childcare/publications](http://www.facsia.gov.au/childcare/publications) - then scroll to the Child Care Service Handbook

These two key references will answer most of the complex questions for you. They may also raise other questions, for which you need to find answers before you proceed further - make a list. There are several other key concepts to consider. Read on.

3. How many children actually require care? Unless you have more than 8 children who will fill permanent bookings each day, OSHC may not be the best option for your community. If you survey your community always tell people that there will be a fee for care and remember that surveys do not have a track record of accuracy.
4. Also consider that "small" may offer limited opportunities for both children and staff and the work required to set up is considerable in volume - see the end of this document for an estimate of time required.
5. OSHC is made up of 3 key components - before school care, after school care and vacation care. Which components will your community need and what hours of operation will be required?
6. Finding quality staff for the service will be the highest hurdle for you and staffing is also the greatest single cost. The quality of the service will be linked to the skills of the staff. How might your community address difficulties in finding and keeping suitable staff?

7. On a school site, the OSHC service will be an integral component in a holistic care and education program for your community and all site information will reinforce this.
8. If the OSHC is not on a school site have all issues of transporting children been addressed?
9. Do you have a clear idea of where to seek help as required?

## **PART 2**

10. If you already have already applied for Child Care Benefit places there are some additional steps to take.
11. Check that you are fully aware of the statements 1-9 and that any questions have been addressed
12. If you need additional support to get started contact the **Gowrie Training Centre on 1800 129 606** and identify clearly what support you need, e.g. preparing policies, setting fees and preparing a budget, recruiting staff or you have advertised and still have no staff. You may also need support to market your service within the community.
13. Ask questions to seek clarification, peers and advisory staff will be able to help you find the support you need.
14. Once appointed allow time for your OSHC staff meet with peers to begin establishing their own networks and "seeing how others do it".
15. If the service is on a school site treat it as you would any other program that the school offers and consider the staff as part of the whole professional team.

## **PART 3**

### **Some essentials to address after you have CCB places approved but before the doors open...**

- € Are you aware of all the legal responsibilities associated with operating an OSHC service?

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- € Understand the responsibilities you have as an employer e.g. which award will staff be paid under, who will keep staff records and pay staff, who will prepare contracts and who will manage and support staff?
- € Recruit and induct staff
  
- € Ensure that all operational roles and responsibilities are determined and that those responsible are fully aware of what is required of them.
  
- € Ensure too that communication channels have been identified. In early days of operating a new service time will be required to review and evaluate practices and budget etc. This will best be done through regular meetings with key personnel.
  
- € Develop a service philosophy – this should reflect the existing statements that are used by the operator but needs to address a recreational care setting
  
- € Develop an operating budget and set fees for each component. Determine what financial reports are required
  
- € Promote your new service within the community – its fees, operating hours and enrolment process. It is a good strategy to actively promote the reality that for the service to fully develop and flourish it needs to be supported and used by the community
  
- € Develop an enrolment package for families
  
- € Develop handbooks for staff and families that incorporate a signature page that is returned to show that the handbook has been read and understood
  
- € Develop operational policies (there are 20 policies required to meet the OSHC Standards SA and several of these are complex). Sample policies that are now available on the National Childcare Accreditation website ([www.ncac.gov.au](http://www.ncac.gov.au)) are many pages in length and if a service is going to adapt these samples there is still considerable time required to make the necessary changes. For a service on a state school site they will need to cross reference any sample policies they may be adapting with the *Policies A-Z* from the DECS web site.
  
- € Determine how CCB will be managed – will you purchase a software package for this and who will do the training? (Once you have purchased software you should allow approximately 7 minutes per family to key in the new data.)

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- € Complete a self assessment of the service against the OSHC Standards SA
  
- € Purchase the basic essentials to get started – refer *Our Place – creating a child friendly OSHC environment* – available from this website. Don't forget a computer and software to manage CCB
  
- € Know how and where to go for quick answers to questions as they arise  
Make a list of contacts that you have at your finger tips to make this happen well – see *the Children's Services Diary* available for purchase on this web site.

A **very conservative** estimate of the time required to set up a service from scratch might look like this. (It is important to realise that this estimate has been made by someone who knows their way around and knows where to access the information required.)

♣ Pre reading	18 (hours)
♣ Application forms	2
♣ Recruitment & induction of the director	16
♣ Determination of roles and responsibility as well as the allocation of tasks	6
♣ Develop philosophy statement	2
♣ Prepare budget and set fees	6
♣ Promotion and preparing enrolment info	6
♣ Develop handbooks	8
♣ Develop policies	38
♣ Purchase software and undertake training	12
♣ Self Assessment against OSHC Standards SA	2
♣ Purchasing	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124 hours</b>

There are things that are not included in this estimate such as time for meetings where OSHC must be discussed. There is no time allocated to ratify handbooks & policies.

Another omission from this estimate is any time to set up a venue that is welcoming for new families and children beginning an OSHC journey in your community.

The money that is allocated as establishment money may well be needed for essentials such a fridge, telephone, computer hardware and software, filing cabinet and first aid kit, so you need to consider how the cost of time taken to get ready will be covered. You also need to consider who, in your community, has a spare 124 hours?

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