

Terms of Reference for the *National Research Study on the Service Response to Past Adoption Practices.*¹

Description	<p>The Research Study will examine experiences of people as a result of the adoption practices; the service and support needs of individuals affected by past adoption practices²; the extent to which those affected have sought help, building on existing research and evidence about the impact of past practices.</p> <p>The Research Study may also produce best possible estimates of the number of mothers and children currently living in Australia who were affected by past adoption practices but will not provide precise quantitative data on the extent or prevalence of the practices.</p>
Purpose	<p>The aim of the Research Study is to utilise and build on existing research and evidence about the extent and impact of past adoption practices to strengthen the evidence available to governments to address the current needs of individuals affected by past adoption practices.</p>
Terms of Reference	<p>The National Research Study on the Service Response to Past Adoption Practices will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with affected individuals, representative bodies, service providers and relevant professionals including psychologists, counsellors and social workers, to gather information from affected individuals through large-scale quantitative surveys and in-depth qualitative interviews; • Analyse information on the long-term impacts of past adoption practices, as they relate to current support and service needs of affected individuals, including the need for information, counselling and reunion services; • Examine the extent to which affected individuals have previously sought support and services and the types of services and support which were sought; • Analyse the findings and present information from the study that could be used in the development of best-practice models or practice guidelines for the delivery of supports and services for individuals affected by past adoption practice; and • Prepare a report for the Community and Disability Services Ministers Conference detailing the evidence collected through the Research Study.
Timeframe	<p>Early 2011 – Mid 2012</p>

¹ For the purpose of the Research Study *past adoption practices* refers to adoption practices in Australia from the 1940s through to the 1980s.

² The focal point of the Research Study will be mothers affected by these past adoption practices; however, the Research Study will also consider adoptees, adoptive parents and fathers.