

**Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

**Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care**

**DEEWR Question No. CA0028\_12**

**Senator Siewert provided in writing.**

**Question**

**Indigenous Childcare Hubs (Health - FaHCSIA)**

Also, what is the thinking (if any) around the potential for these hubs to function as multidisciplinary clinics for identification and intervention for FASD?

**Answer**

The COAG announcement on 3 July 2008 regarding the establishment of 35 Children and Family Centres (CFCs) in urban, regional and remote areas was an expansion and remodelling of the 'Innovative Child Care Hubs' announced in the 2007/08 Budget. Through negotiation with State and Territory Governments this was subsequently increased to 38 CFCs.

There is broad consensus that the most effective means of delivering early childhood services, particularly for vulnerable children, is through a multi-agency or integrated systems approach. This is supported by the recent emergence of integrated services, established by governments across various jurisdictions.

The design and operation of the CFCs will differ from centre to centre so that services meet local needs. While the final service mix for each centre will be subject to community consultation, it is envisaged that each centre will offer Indigenous children and families access to a range of services offered at or through the CFCs, including but not limited to child care, early learning, child and maternal health and parent and family support services.

It is envisaged that greater service integration will result in a more cohesive support system for children and families. These approaches, however implemented, should result in children's developmental problems being identified earlier, with more prompt referrals to specialist services and appropriate help and support being provided quickly.