

Author name: Name suppressed

Date of submission: Friday, 17 November 2023

Your submission for this review:

affordability, accessibility and consumer choice IPART recommendations We agree with IPARTs findings of four overarching themes that drive affordability, accessibility and choice broadly in support of the three corresponding priority recommendations. * Structural imbalances, complexity and fragmentation of the current funding system require an integrated approach between state, territory and Commonwealth governments focused on providing targeted support to quality services that enable both workforce participation and inclusive early learning. Recommendations in the final report need to address current inadequacy of government funding for 0-2 places in support of community demand for 0-2 with consideration of the additional cost to service providers for this age group. * Critical labour shortages in a low wage EC sector need to be urgently addressed by a comprehensive workforce strategy that provides incentives for educators to join/re-enter the sector to build expertise, capacity, and quality. This needs to be achieved without comprising affordability of early education and care services for example, not fast tracking. * The burden of communicating complex and often confusing information about accessing the early childhood system is shouldered by the provider. Easing administrative overheads could be achieved by investing in clear, integrated and easily accessible information strategies so families can find, choose and feel confident about using the services they need. * Innovative and flexible models that are locally based (FDC cannot be maintained remotely or out of area) are needed to sustain high quality family day care services that can demonstrate adequate oversight, mentoring, supervision and resourcing of operations. Operational funding is required for Family Day Care. * Adequately fund service providers to support inclusion for children with additional needs - currently most of cost is met by provider which reduces accessibility for families.