

8 September 2016

Dear Colleagues,

The PSA in its submission to the Legislative Council child protection inquiry has raised a range of concerns about the wellbeing of its members in FACS.

FACS and the PSA have met to talk about what we can do together to support a workplace culture where FACS staff know what's expected of them, that those expectations are reasonable, and they are supported to plan and review their work and maintain their wellbeing.

In its letter, and at the meeting, the PSA raised concerns about the workload of our frontline staff, their health and safety and the importance of ensuring they're well supported.

FACS shares those concerns.

Every employee is entitled to quality support and regular supervision, and can benefit from structured and planned discussions with their supervisor about their progress and skills development.

Staff should be encouraged to use tools that help them plan their work.

FACS has previously expressed support for caseworkers and managers casework to use the workload planner, if the caseworker wants to.

In our discussion, FACS and the PSA agreed to jointly review and work on refreshing the workload planner after the implementation of ChildStory early in 2017.

In the meantime, caseworkers who want to use the workload planner have the support of the department to do so.

FACS will work with managers casework so they know what the workload planner is and how to use it with members of their casework team who want to.

While the NSW Government has provided significantly increased resources to deal with pressure on the care system, much of the practical work of implementation has to be done by caseworkers and managers on the ground.

This means that there are opportunities for FACS and PSA representing its members to cooperate in delivering real improvements for staff.

FACS and the PSA understand that we will not always agree on issues, but that we are each obliged to cooperate when it can improve outcomes for children and families who need our support.

With our best regards,



Steve Turner
Assistant Secretary
Public Service Association of NSW



Michael Coutts-Trotter
Secretary
NSW Department of Family and Community Services