

Public Service Association of New South Wales
General Secretary: Stewart Little ♦ President: Kylie McKelvie 160
Clarence Street, Sydney
GPO Box 3365, Sydney NSW 2001

Telephone: 1300 772 679 Email:

psa@psa.asn.au

Facsimile: 02 9262 1623

Website: www.psa.asn.au

ABN: 83 717 214 309



In reply please quote: *CM:ej: A1/0102*

Mr Michael Coutts-Trotter
Secretary
Family and Community Services
Locked Bag 10
STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2012

By email: petra.kathagen@facs.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Coutts-Trotter,

I am writing to you in regard to the PSA's concerns about the OneSAP system.

The PSA is aware that the Department implemented the new system following the establishment of the FACs Cluster Operating Model. Our members advise that there are continuing problems with OneSAP, which are impacting significantly on service delivery to vulnerable members of the community, payments to suppliers and the day to day work of FACs staff.

The implementation of OneSAP occurred at a time of budget and staff reductions in the Department's information technology division which meant a loss of expertise. There are too few people to assist staff, clients and vendors struggling with a system where the rhetoric has not matched the reality. The PSA has been advised by our members that instead of being more efficient the new system is frustrating, slow and cumbersome.

The Department has managed to implement a system which does not support the needs of children and young people in care and its frontline caseworker staff. OneSAP has eliminated petty cash in a large number of Community Services Centres, which now places caseworkers in the position of using their own money to assist young people meet urgent needs such as medication prescriptions, travel and meals. This is particularly the case in Adolescent and Intensive Support Services (ISS) teams who work with homeless young people every day. Caseworkers are under enough pressure with increasingly complex cases and excessive workloads without having to use their own money to assist clients and wait several weeks for reimbursement. They are effectively being penalised for doing the right thing in their day to day work which the PSA finds unacceptable.

The PSA is also aware that the OneSAP system is resulting in suppliers waiting for periods of up to five weeks before they are paid. Our members have been verbally abused by suppliers who have lost patience because of the length of time it takes for them to be paid. Many motels that are used for housing children and young people when placements are not available are refusing any further Community Services bookings due to unpaid accounts. Vendors are also not receiving remittance advice, so they are unsure if and when they have been paid or what they've been paid for, which is adding to the confusion. The State Government frequently expresses its support of the business sector, yet the Department's new system is making it look like an organisation not to do business with.

Carers are the people the system relies on to care for children and adolescents who are unable to live with their families. Some carers are also experiencing delays of several weeks in being paid some or all of their entitlements, which is again resulting in angry phone calls to service support and casework staff. Given the difficulties in recruiting and retaining carers it should be a priority to ensure they are paid in a timely fashion.

The PSA is also aware that a carer has been waiting for over 6 weeks for a back payment to be made. Relevant staff have been in contact with OneSAP in relation to this matter and on their advice gave the carer the Accounts Payable phone number. Accounts Payable told the carer that the issue was the responsibility of the local CSC because 'the child wasn't on the system'. However the child has been on the system for a year! This bureaucratic run around because of a flawed IT system meant that a dedicated carer became extremely annoyed with the system and staff and still waited weeks to be paid correctly.

The PSA finds it baffling that the Department would implement a system that makes it harder for suppliers and carers to be paid.

The difficulties experienced by staff are myriad and include:

- Ongoing problems using the system including enquiries to MyPay not being responded to.
- OneSAP acknowledge that leave balances on payslips may not match leave balances on OneSAP which creates huge confusion for staff.
- Staff have been unable to access historical leave records. This has and continues to cause problems with verifying leave on time sheets and determining available leave which is frustrating for staff trying to plan their leave, as the State Government demands over the Christmas/new year period and to ensure that excess leave is not accrued as per the requirements set down. The PSA is aware of an example of an employee who lost all records including recreation sick, FACS and extended leave records. It took several weeks for the correct information to be reinstated. In the meantime the staff member needed to take sick leave and was unable to ascertain the amount of sick leave available.
- Overtime and on call allowances cannot be entered as the system does not recognise dates entered. This means that caseworkers have to send an email to a designated MCS who has to verify and request manual entry. The PSA is aware that there are members who have not been paid their overtime or allowances since October 2016 due to this problem. After experiencing a significant delay staff are then paid their claims all at once which means they can be pushed into a higher tax bracket.
- Pay slips do not itemise allowances/overtime/additional hours which means staff have no way of knowing what they have or have not been paid for. When they seek to have this clarified they are often met with resistance through the service support line. This is contrary to the information that was provided in training sessions, including the online training.
- There are problems with the timeframes with KIDS payments. Previously a Community Services Centre could process and pay within forty eight hours. This is now not possible when sending OOHHC payments to invoice payments via One SAP.
- Furthermore in relation to KIDS, purchase orders are no longer attached to approval emails. It is very time consuming when searching for the purchase order in OneSAP.
- The removal of the five percent leeway allowance in KIDS is problematic. Many purchase orders have to be cancelled and re-entered which is again a very time consuming exercise.

Along with the loss of expertise from the Department it is clear that there was inadequate robust testing of the system prior to it going live and inadequate training provided. The PSA is extremely concerned that a system has been implemented which makes it harder for our members to record their Award entitlements such as leave and allowances. This is fundamentally unfair and unjust. OneSAP is another example of the public sector outsourcing to save money to the detriment of public servants, carers, children and young people and the community.

The PSA believes it is important to conduct a truly independent evaluation of OneSAP. This evaluation should not be conducted by Accenture as we believe that would be a clear conflict of interest. The evaluation would be an opportunity to fully examine the systemic issues which require resolution. The PSA believes this evaluation should proceed as a matter of urgency and we seek the opportunity to have input to the terms of reference.

In the interests of transparency the PSA requests that you provide data on the logged issues which would include the numbers and types of level 1, 2 and 3 categories. This information will assist in formulating the terms of reference.

We trust that you will act on our concerns and proceed with the evaluation which must occur to address the concerns of your staff, our members, carers and vendors. We also request that you take urgent action to restore the petty cash system and prioritise the reimbursement to caseworkers of money they have used to buy meals and other incidentals for children.

I can be contacted on 9248 3304 to arrange a meeting.

Yours faithfully,



TROY WRIGHT
ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

8 February 2017