

Childstory the rage continues

Child protection workers, including administrative support workers, continue to be frustrated by the excuses they keep getting from the FACS executive about this not-fit-for-purpose computer system. They are angry and frustrated about the impact this is having in their capacity to do their work. It is taking a lot more time to do the tasks they were doing using the previous computer system. As one member told us: "KiDS was not perfect but at least it worked".

"Just because your old car is not perfect, you don't go out and buy a car that you can't drive" was an analogy used by another member trying to use the new computer system.

The department and the architects of ChildStory keep trying to deflect their responsibility to fix this new computer system and seem to be hoping that workers will give up demanding this system is fixed, and asking for adequate levels of support. They still send out false claims about progress and fixes; the most recent example being the email to staff of 28 March trumpeting that all records had been migrated from KiDS.

The PSA met with the architects of ChildStory on 10 April and reiterated that some 15 years of records (CIS records) still had not been migrated. They implied the PSA was lying. Members report that some of the CIS records suddenly appeared on ChildStory on 13 April. They only started migrating these records the previous night! Employees don't know what to believe and have no confidence in ChildStory communiques.

Many of the staff trained to support their districts have given up and have returned to their normal

roles as they became frustrated about the lack of support they were getting when they were trying to assist their colleagues. Some also had the pressure to carry their normal caseload responsibilities, which made it untenable for them.

Staff are still encountering multiple data errors, but feel there is no point in reporting these problems as they feel nothing is done to fix them. Staff have lost confidence in FACS and their ability to fix this mess. It is crucial that all ChildStory users continue to lodge issues with the ChildStory Support Team, otherwise the department will claim that all the problems have been fixed, switch off KIDS and redirect the limited resources and support to Release 2. Members have expressed their disbelief that FACS plans to proceed with Release 2 in June without fully addressing all the in-house problems with Release 1. The PSA will continue to pressure FACS to defer Release 2 and focus on fixing and simplifying what is currently in place.

Staff have also told us that they are astonished by the wastefulness of money this new computer system has caused, while seeing no increase in resources to frontline work.

Staff at Charlestown CSC had a lunchtime walk-out to protest and highlight their loss of confidence in the FACS executive. Their three major concerns are excessive workloads, OOH accreditation for Hunter New England and ChildStory.

The PSA has heard from members, delegates and our own industrial staff of significant numbers of workers having breakdowns at work and suffering



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psychological injuries. Workers are being forced to work unsafe and unpaid hours, staying late at night and coming in on weekends to stay on top of their work. When the PSA raised these concerns, FACS's response was that reports on SAP and Workers Compensation claims don't support this. FACS takes the position – no problem, no need to do anything! This is unacceptable and we regard FACS as being clearly in breach of its duty of care to its employees. The PSA is looking at all options to expose the truth, protect members and force FACS to address these very serious and very real issues.



Staff at the Liverpool OOH team had a lunchtime walk-out to protest and highlight the added stress, frustration and unrelenting work demands since the introduction of ChildStory.

