

MEDIA RELEASE



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Care Pathways partners with the Department of Communities to achieve great outcomes

After establishing foster care support services in Mount Isa in 2006, Churches of Christ Care, through its service group Care Pathways, undertook a review and evaluation of service practices to reflect on the challenges of operating in a rural and remote location.

The challenges identified included servicing a large geographical area, facing different cultural norms and, and also the difficulty in accessing practical resources to meet the needs of children, young people and carer families.

After some challenges arose in late 2009, Care Pathways and the Department of Communities – Child Safety Services (Child Safety) commenced discussions on how they could better work together and build an effective service system to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families they were working with - including the foster carers taking on frontline care.

In March 2010, Care Pathways, Foster Care Qld and Child Safety staff came together for the first time in a series of workshops aimed at looking at the current service system in Mount Isa, the Gulf and surrounding communities.

The goal of the workshops was to improve relationships and most importantly the outcomes for shared clients. One of the emerging issues that was immediately apparent was the lack of support services for carers in the Gulf communities of Doomadgee and Mornington Island, including access to training and assessment and obtaining blue cards for potential foster carers.

In order to assess and then improve the situation, the workshop participants put forward an exciting and innovative proposal that would see a caseworker from Care Pathways be seconded to work in the Mount Isa/Gulf Child Safety Service Centre.

This case worker was placed alongside departmental staff to form a project team to address these challenges. Over a three-month period, the Care Pathways Case Worker worked in conjunction with departmental staff from the Placement Services Unit and the Gulf and Mount Isa Child Safety Service Centre to undertake approximately 29 carer assessments, as well as deliver training and assistance to carers to obtain practical resources such as new beds for children.

As a result of the successful first round of partnership workshops, and the exciting and new project that developed out of them, Care Pathways, Foster Care Qld and Child Safety staff have committed to ongoing workshops. They will continue looking for ways to work together and combine resources to achieve great outcomes for the children, young people and families of Mount Isa, the Gulf and surrounding communities.

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About Churches of Christ Care

Churches of Christ Care is a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland—a group of churches that is part of the worldwide Christian church.

We strive to create an inclusive, caring, compassionate environment that meets its clients' needs without discrimination or prejudice. Everyone is welcome to call on our help regardless of their religious background.

Churches of Christ Care is one of Queensland's leading providers of early childhood, child protection, affordable housing, retirement living and aged care services. We are a not-for-profit organisation that supports more than 27,000 clients each year in urban, rural and remote areas.

We operate 137 services throughout Queensland with the support of more than 2,800 staff and over 700 volunteers.

Churches of Christ Care is built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.