

# Summary of key findings from Evaluation of the Home and Community Care Program Cultural Planning Strategy

**Key Finding 1:** The Cultural Planning Strategy (CPS) has embedded the concept and practice of cultural planning into service providers' operation. It has developed service providers' appreciation of planning within service quality improvement.

**Key Finding 2:** CPS is not designed in a conventional structure which makes monitoring and assessment problematic and also leaves the strategy open to individual interpretation.

**Key Finding 3:** CPS does not have formal links to other initiatives, strategies and programs. This limits its currency and impact.

**Key Finding 4:** CPS has no formal coordination with other planning requirements for service providers. There is a broad level understanding within the department that integration is required to avoid duplications.

**Key Finding 5:** CPS lacks a system to consolidate information and in consequence there is very limited record of the work of the strategy over the last 10 years. This has restricted analysis of trends and issues which could inform future work priorities.

Exceptions:

**Eastern:** Electronic system – service provider uses computer system which stores all previous plans submitted. Equity and Access staff provide analysis reports of best practice within the region.

**North West:** Regional office consolidates information and reports to region each year.

**Key Finding 6:** Structure of CPS is weak and requests prospective information only. No broad-scale collection of retrospective or comparative data.

(B) Responsibility for the co-ordination of the strategy is delegated to the non-government sector. This distances CPS from strategic initiatives.

**Key Finding 7:** System is perceived as lacking in meaning because it is not aligned to core business processes of an organisation. Support for integrating CPS into other planning and reporting requirements.

**Key Finding 8:** Planning often done in isolation from organisational processes. Organisations indicated frustration in monitoring from department and supported a triennial planning process.

**Key Finding 9:** There is strong support to integrate Cultural Action Plans (CAPs) within HACC quality management systems.

**Key Finding 10:** Despite mandatory requirement to submit CAPs, there is no meaningful process for dealing with non-compliance.

**Key Finding 11:** Suggested that regions should have flexibility to modify state-wide Cultural Planning Tool (CPT) and guidelines in order to meet local needs and priorities. This requires a balance between some minimum core requirements and flexibility to the needs of the community.

**Key Finding 12:** In terms of the roles and responsibilities, it was found that:

- At a regional level, the HACC Equity and Access staff works independently;
- The role contains some inherent anomalies in terms of participation in the assessment of CAPs;
- HACC Equity and Access staff are skilled and well positioned in the NGO sector to provide support to service providers which requires community development knowledge and expertise;
- The role of the regional office of the Department of Human Services is critical, yet the role is perceived as 'overcrowded' and lacking capacity to dedicate appropriate time and energy to the CPS;
- The coordination of the Equity and Access staff who focus on the Cultural Action Plans is outsourced to the NGO sector;
- There is essentially no assignment of responsibility for overall management of the strategy at a state-wide level.

**Key Finding 13:** Current CPS tools and resources require updating.

**Key Finding 14:** Findings in relation to outcomes of the strategy were variable. There is clearly a gap in information on measurable outcomes. At the same time, the data clearly suggests that positive outcomes have been achieved. In some cases, these are clearly achieved as a result of the strategy. In other cases, the link between the strategy and outcomes is less clear, with the suggestion that they would have achieved, regardless of the strategy.

**Key Finding 15:** Evaluation process has collected data on a wide range of activities being undertaken. This underscores the absence of any central collection of this valuable data.