

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

### **Changes to ACT Together Consortium**

Premier Youthworks (PYW) have informed Barnardos Australia (Barnardos) of their intention to withdraw from the ACT Together Consortium effective from 14 August 2019.

PYW have advised that this is not a decision taken lightly, given the current funding arrangements in the ACT and their inability to cover the costs of delivering services.

Barnardos would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the services PYW have provided in the ACT since 2006, and most recently with Barnardos under the ACT Together Consortium since 2016.

We wish PYW all the best and thank them for the work they have done during their engagement with ACT Together.

Ms Elizabeth Cox, Executive Manager, OOH NSW/ACT, Barnardos said “Barnardos remains committed to the vulnerable children and young people in care in the ACT and the A Step Up For Our Kids Strategy 2015-2020. This includes working with OzChild, the Australian Childhood Foundation and the ACT Government to deliver on the intent of this ground-breaking reform.

This commitment is reflected in Barnardos investment in the ACT Together Consortium beyond the value of the contract. This includes providing PYW with more funding than we receive. However, Barnardos has reached the limits of its ability to contribute further funding.”

As lead agency, Barnardos participates in frequent discussions with all its consortium partners, and sometimes this has included CSD.

Ms Cox advises further that “We are working with PYW and the ACT Government to ensure a smooth transition. This includes working with PYW to ensure continuity of staff for the young people in residential care and the essential enabling and support staff that support this. Critical to this is ensuring that all ACT Together Consortium staff are supported to continue delivering the highest level of care building on the good work that has been done to date.”

Barnardos will commence individual discussions with PYW staff early next week and will focus on direct care staff, supervisory staff and then enabling and support officers. Continuity of the housing arrangements for young people is a priority. PYW has agreed to assign the leases for the private properties and the ACT Government houses are already leased to Barnardos.

Barnardos is simultaneously exploring options for the future delivery of residential care within the ACT Together Consortium. The planning and implementation of the future model requires careful consideration and planning. This is an opportunity to build on the work done to date and explore new opportunities to enhance the delivery of targeted, therapeutic and trauma informed residential care. Continuity of staff for our young people in residential care is essential.

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**For more information or to arrange media interviews, contact:** Irene Saunders, Head of Communications, Barnardos Australia [isaunders@barnardos.org.au](mailto:isaunders@barnardos.org.au)

### **About Barnardos Australia**

Barnardos Australia is a leading non-government, non-denominational, child safety and family care organisation providing services for vulnerable children, young people and their families. Barnardos Australia believes all children and young people deserve caring families in which they can grow safely and fulfil their potential. We work together with children, young people and families to break the cycle of disadvantage, creating safe, nurturing and stable homes, connected to family and community.

[www.barnardos.org.au](http://www.barnardos.org.au)