



MEDIA RELEASE

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Continued funding for Carer Advocacy Service

Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers SA (CF&KC-SA) is delighted to announce that a further three years' funding for its Carer Advocacy Service has been confirmed by the Department for Child Protection.

That term commenced on July 1 and will run until the end of the 2023-24 financial year.

CF&KC-SA chair Megan Hender expressed gratitude for the continuing faith in the organisation and said the funding would allow the CF&KC-SA team to maintain a valuable service for foster and kinship carers.

"Carers in this sector often face extremely difficult parenting dilemmas and an important part of our role is to assist them in finding pathways through those issues. We always hope we can see them through to a positive outcome, for the sake of them and the child or children they have in their care," Ms Hender said.

"The Carer Advocacy Service is an important component of the work we do and it's a very practical way for us to help carers provide stable, secure home environments for children in care, many of whom have very challenging and complex needs.

"While carers are the major focus of our work I'd also like to pay tribute to our small but incredibly dedicated team - a small team led by CEO Fiona Endacott and Senior Advocate Sharee Borlace. The work they do isn't easy, but it's very rewarding when they help a carer achieve a positive result."

Ms Endacott said CF&KC-SA advocates' work covered a broad spectrum of issues, that sometimes involved guiding carers through what appeared to be an impenetrable maze of bureaucratic regulations, sometimes dealing with difficult medical issues, and sometimes with problems that required legal advice.

"As well as needing a basic working knowledge of child protection legislation, advocates must be empathetic, on the ball, and have great communication skills," she said. "And on the other hand, they have to deal with lawyers and public servants - often very senior public servants. Our little team manages both sides of the equation with great skill."

Ms Endacott said the Carer Advocacy Service was vital at a time when the number foster and kinship carers was failing to keep pace with the increasing number of children in care, which placed greater demands on carers to ease the burden by taking additional children.

"Our role is to care for the carers," she said, "and advocating for them in times of extra strain is central to that."

The quality of the Carer Advocacy Service is assured via the Australian Service Excellence Standards. For further comment or information please call Fiona Endacott, CEO of CF&KC-SA on 0447 422 328.