

Katrine Hildyard MP
Minister for Women and the
Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

Friday, 1 December 2023

Carer Council meets for the first time

The newly-formed Carer Council, which will help reform the South Australian foster and kinship care system, has met for the first time.

The council comprises 12 members and was a key recommendation from Dr Fiona Arney's Independent Inquiry into Foster and Kinship Care.

It will amplify the voices of carers and provide the Minister for Child Protection Katrine Hildyard with independent advice that contributes to the design of policy, practice and reform surrounding foster and kinship care in this state.

The council is being administered by peak advocacy body Connecting Foster and Kinship Carers SA Inc and includes five foster carers and seven kinship carers.

Five of the 12 are from regional South Australia - the Riverland, Limestone Coast, Eyre Peninsula and Far North.

Four of the members are Aboriginal.

The members are:

- Alexandra Ingleton
- Dana Wright
- Ellese Nelson
- Emily Ware
- Gai McMichael
- Gail Ward
- Jakob Schmaal
- Kailah Hurditch
- Kate Thomas
- Lorraine Joy
- Peter Kennedy
- Suzanne Scanlon

The first meeting was an opportunity for the members to meet one another and to be welcomed to the Council by the Minister.

Members also developed a work plan for the next 12 months and confirmed the Carer Council's Terms of Reference.

All members are active carers, with experience as a family-based carer. The council will meet at least four times each year and will report directly to the Minister.

Quotes attributable to Katrine Hildyard

Foster and kinship carers are remarkable people who make such a positive difference in the lives of children and young people, offering love, nurture and support to thrive. The role they play is crucial to the child protection and family support system.

I have met with carers across the state and am determined that their voices are amplified. They have such wise insight about the caring role and about what is needed to help kids who are facing some really tough circumstances.

I am very grateful to Carer Council members for stepping forward into this important role. The Council will provide crucial guidance to me as we strive to improve the lives of children and young people, supports for foster and kinship carers and the child protection and family support system as a whole.

Their valuable and diverse experiences and advice will help to guide policy, practice and legislation. I thank them for that advice and look forward to working alongside them as we continue to strive to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Quotes attributable to Fiona Endacott, Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers SA CEO

CF&KC-SA is thrilled to announce the Minister-appointed 12 Carer Council members, a broad selection of individuals with foster and kinship care experience from both regional and metropolitan locations.

The Carer Council members are dedicated to ensuring the carer voice is amplified and committed to providing the minister with advice to affect positive, sustainable change for the child protection system.

All 12 Carer Council members have extensive knowledge of the South Australian child protection system, and the needs of their children and young people.

Carer Council members are committed to working together to discuss systemic challenges from a solutions-based perspective, and look forward to providing broad spectrum advice to the Minister.

We are committed to ensuring that the conversations and deliberations of the Carer Council yield constructive advice for the Minister to consider, taking into account the needs of all South Australian foster and kinship carers to ensure their voice is heard and their rights are upheld through the process of developing policy, practice and legislation.