



PeakCare
Queensland Inc.

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

2ND August 2019

This notice is directed to executive and senior managers of all PeakCare's Member organisations and registered Supporters.

Your attention is drawn to the [26th July](#) and [19th July](#) editions of PeakCare's eNews and this linked [blog](#) in which PeakCare reported on extreme contrasts in the feedback received about the National Child Protection Conference co-hosted by the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and PeakCare on 24th and 25th June.

Some of the comments entered into the on-line survey went far beyond what might be regarded as feedback about an event of this type and instead served as statements of the beliefs and values held by a number of the conference attendees, the nature of which was viewed by PeakCare as alarming.

The response so far

The large number of strongly worded comments entered in response to the blog that you can read [here](#) suggests that many others were similarly alarmed about the "racist overtones" and hostility directed towards Queensland's human rights legislation that characterised some of the conference feedback.

In particular, your attention is drawn to the responses to the blog entered by several senior officers of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women including the department's Director-General, Mr Michael Hogan within which he delivers a very clear message about his "expectation that staff who work in my department and those who

we partner with in the NGO sector through funding relationships, have a deep commitment to addressing this over representation and are daily applying active efforts in their partnering with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and communities".

PeakCare has received anecdotal feedback that Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders working within both the government and non-government sectors have achieved a sense of edification and support from reading the responses to the blog.

You are strongly encouraged therefore to 'formally' enter your own organisation's response to the blog if you have not done so already, and to **bring your response and those made by others to the attention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in your employ and/ or those who are employed by community-controlled organisations with which you partner** so that they may also benefit from reading them.

Where to from here?

Your attention is also drawn to the response to the blog entered by Ms Ellen Rhodes in which she states that the conference feedback "suggests the need for the sector to consider our responsibilities in moving the industry forward with regard to anti-discrimination and cultural respect". Ms Rhodes adds that her organisation would value "being involved in any dialogue regarding this".

PeakCare sees the merit in Ms Rhodes' suggestion and is now calling upon you and/ or one or more nominated representatives to

participate in a gathering of our Members and Supporters to initiate this dialogue.

It is envisaged that the outcomes of this dialogue may result in strategies that may be further pursued 'within' organisations and at a whole of sector level 'across' organisations as well as within the public domain.

Relationship with Family Matters

As a long-time supporter and sponsor of the [Family Matters Campaign](#), PeakCare does not envisage that these strategies will detract from or operate in any ways other than being complementary to, and supportive of, the messages of this campaign and respectful of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership.

Our responsibilities

In PeakCare's opinion however, there is a clear responsibility held by non-Indigenous community sector leaders to own, speak about and comprehensively address discriminatory values, beliefs and behaviours that can often accompany membership of a dominant white culture and deleteriously impact others. **This is a responsibility held by non-Indigenous persons, rather than Indigenous spokespersons, to initiate and lead.**

It may be anticipated that the act of taking on and exercising this responsibility will benefit not only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, but also groups who suffer similar unjust or prejudicial treatment due to their ethnicity, sexuality or other characteristics.

Possible ways forward

Your attention is also drawn to the very well-considered responses to the blog posted by Ms Megan Cornock and Ms Toni Cash.

PeakCare's view is that they provide some very useful suggestions about approaches that could be incorporated within the range of strategies that arise out of our dialogue. Others, of course, will add their suggestions about possible ways forward.

Nominate

If you and/or nominated representatives of your organisation wish to participate in this dialogue, you are invited to email Stephanie Fielder, PeakCare's Principal Policy Adviser - sfielder@peakcare.org.au – your name, position title and contact details (and/or the details of your nominated representative/s) by **no later than cob on 16th August 2019**.

Upon receiving this advice, further consultation will take place with those wishing to participate about the best possible arrangements for initiating this dialogue.

Yours sincerely



Lindsay Wegener
Executive Director
PeakCare Queensland Incorporated