Process for accessing external advanced training

Funds are available through child safety service centres (CSSCs) to support foster and kinship carers to attend external advanced training where this is required to provide care for a specific child or young person. These funds are intended only to meet training needs that cannot be met through existing advanced training options (including online training) provided by the Department of Child Safety and non-government foster and kinship care services.

Examples of needs that may be met through external advanced training include:

- specialised training regarding autism for a long-term carer of a child who has the condition;
- training in therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI) for a carer of a child who has challenging and complex behaviour.

Criteria for external advanced training

External advanced training must:

- contribute directly towards meeting the needs of a specific child in the care of an approved foster or kinship carer
- be recorded in the Learning Plan in the Foster Carer Agreement for a foster carer or Placement Agreement for a kinship carer
- only be accessed when the training need cannot be met through existing advanced training options
- be at least two hours in duration
- be developed and delivered by a person with recognised expertise in the content area.

External advanced training should preferably be based on clear competencies, upon which the trainee is assessed and provided with written acknowledgement of completion. Where this is not possible, the carer should be able, upon completion of the training, to identify with the departmental or licensed care service support worker ways in which the training will assist them in their role.

Application and approval process

Applications for external advanced training for a specific carer may be submitted by the carer’s support worker (either a departmental officer or a staff member from a non-government foster and kinship care service) to the CSSC manager well in advance of the proposed training event, using the ‘Application for external advanced training’.

1. Applications for funds to support access to external training are to be submitted to the manager of the local child safety service centre in hard copy or electronic form.

2. Applications are to be submitted via the approved form and should be accompanied by a copy of the carer’s learning plan (or relevant section of the Placement agreement for kinship carers) that identifies the need for the training.

3. Requests for funding will only include training costs. Anticipated travel and child care costs should be noted on the application, however these will be reimbursed as per the usual Quality Care procedures.

4. Applications are generally considered and approved quarterly by the manager of the CSSC, although urgent applications can be considered at a managers discretion (for example, a need arising from a matter of concern or placement of a new child with particular needs).
5. The business support officer will maintain:
   - a separate general ledger account for the administration of funds for external advanced training to allow expenditure to be tracked over time
   - a register of training that has been approved by the CSSC manager to facilitate processing of invoices or claims for reimbursement by carers or non-government organisations.

6. The business support officer is also responsible for notifying non-government services and departmental workers of the success or otherwise of applications. This is done by forwarding a copy of the signed application to the staff member cited on the form.

7. The carer's support worker is responsible for notifying the carer of the outcome of the application.

**Limitations on access to external advanced training**

While managers can exercise discretion in this matter, generally any individual carer will not be eligible to access more than one external advanced training event in a financial year.