

Community of Practice Terms of Reference

1. What is a Community of Practice?

Community of Practice is an internal initiative of Inala Community House, which offers a forum for caseworkers from the Family Intervention Service (ICH-FIS) and Out of Home Care (ICH-OOHC) teams to explore, discuss and reflect on topics relating to practice knowledge and skills, ensuring there is a continued focus on professional development.

2. Purpose

The purpose of Community of Practice is to provide a platform for caseworkers to maintain, improve and broaden their skills, knowledge and expertise required for professional practice. The sessions provide an opportunity for caseworkers to share their knowledge with others, including any specific training they have completed, so that others can benefit from the shared learning. Community of Practice sessions allow for caseworkers to discuss how new skills and knowledge are being embedded into their practice and also ensures that strong connections are maintained across the ICH-FIS and ICH-OOHC teams. This ongoing commitment to professional development leads to improved service delivery for the clients of Inala Community House programs.

3. Who chooses the topics for each session?

Community of Practice sessions are held on a quarterly basis and are scheduled by either the FIS Manager or OHC Manager. Sessions are held at the Inala Community House business hall and are scheduled for two hours.

4. Who chooses the topics for each session?

Topics for discussion are identified by the FIS Manager or OHC Manager, with consideration for areas of improvement across the teams, as well as any suggestions from caseworkers. Examples of Community of Practice sessions have included 'Trauma-Informed Practice' and 'Capturing the Child's Voice'. It is noted that staff may be required to complete relevant readings in preparation for the session (these readings will be distributed via email ahead of time).

5. Who facilitates the session?

Anyone can be called upon to facilitate the session and everyone in attendance is encouraged to participate fully and contribute. In some instances, the Managers will facilitate, however Senior Case Workers are also expected to provide a strong leadership role in the sessions and may also take the lead with the facilitation of learning. At times, caseworkers will be requested to present on material that they have deep content knowledge in, or have recently undertaken training in. External parties who can deliver relevant training will also be invited to attend.

It is not expected that internal facilitators of the session have expertise, but rather create an environment conducive to shared learning and provide some input to stimulate reflection and conversation.

6. Record Keeping

An agenda will be prepared for each session to guide the contents and direction. Documents such as articles, handouts, guidelines etc for each session are stored in a shared Teams folder between FIS and OHC.