

FOSTER CARE — SERVICE PROVIDERS

919. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the Department of Communities foster care program:

- (a) can the Minister please list the non-government service providers who manage foster care;
- (b) how many children does each provider listed in (a) care for;
- (c) is there a requirement for non-government employees to meet the same benchmarks as departmental staff with regard to workload management of child protection case allocation numbers;
- (d) if yes to (c), how are the caseloads of non-government employees monitored; and
- (e) if no to (c), what accountability is placed on the non-government providers regarding case load management?

**Ms S.E. Winton replied:**

The Department of Communities (Communities) advises:

Communities is reforming the child protection system including the commissioning of new Out of Home Care (OOHC) services which will see \$217 million invested annually in the OOHC sector from 2024–25. On 13 October 2023, 16 OOHC providers, including five new Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, to deliver OOHC services were announced. Communities and the sector are in a transition period to support the successful transition of some children and carers to new providers.

(a)–(b) As at 29 November 2023:

<b>Non-Government Service Provider</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>
AccordWest	10
Foundations Care Ltd	35
Key Assets WA	99
Life Without Barriers	89
Lifestyle Solutions	11
MacKillop Family Services	24
MercyCare	50
Parkerville Children And Youth Care Inc	30
Salvation Army (WA) Property Trust	0
Uniting WA	14
Wanslea Family Services	84
Yorganop Association Inc	111

- (c)–(e) The workload management Industrial Relations Order does not apply to non-government employees. Each non-government service provider manages their own workloads in accordance with their internal workload management policies and procedures to ensure the quality of the services they provide. In addition, there are a range of quality standards applicable to out of home care Service Agreements, including the Better Care, Better Services Standard. Better care, Better Services Standards outlines Safety and Quality Standards to ensure organisations are child focused and accountable and that people working with children and young people are well supported. The department undertakes regular service reviews, alongside contract management meetings with each agency within the term of the contract, in which carer and employee supports are considered.