

CHILD PROTECTION — OUT-OF-HOME CARE

**381. Hon SOPHIA MOERMOND to the minister representing the Minister for Child Protection:**

I refer to the ongoing process of out-of-home care reform.

- (1) Why has the tender process for new service agreements for out-of-home care been delayed until December 2023?
- (2) How many beds are available for at-risk youth who leave foster care?
- (3) Are there plans to increase the number of beds for at-risk youth who leave foster care?

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Child Protection.

- (1) Implementing OOHC reform is complex, including in relation to procurement and transition planning. It is necessary to get the reform right to achieve the best outcomes for children, families, the sector and the Western Australian community, and to deliver improved and more culturally responsive care arrangements. To support this, the Department of Communities has exercised an extension option for the current services agreement with a 10 per cent uplift in funding for general foster care services and family group homes. The tender process remains underway to award new OOHC contracts.
- (2)–(3) The Department of Communities is delivering the \$37.2 million Home Stretch WA program, which extends available support for young people aged from 18 to 21 years who are leaving out-of-home care. Under Home Stretch WA, supports and services available to young people transitioning from out-of-home care are enhanced, and carers continue to receive financial payments to cover expenses such as food, accommodation and utilities.