

ACCS Policy on Child Care Planning Controls

ACCS believes that families and children have the right to choose not for profit community owned children's services. No community should be limited to commercial, for-profit services.

ACCS believes that the Australian Government has an important role in developing planning legislation for all service types (long day care, occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care, in-home care) that ensures that families have access to not-for-profit community owned children's services, allowing families' choice in child care. Australia needs a system that allows and encourages the development of community owned services, while preventing new commercial for-private-profit services from opening where they will undermine the viability of existing services.

Options for achieving this include:

- A cap on CCB places for for-profit services in communities where the community based service has vacancies, or where there are existing private services with vacancies
- Denial of CCB approval for new for-profit services in communities where there is no community based service or where the for-profit service will be located in close proximity to an existing community based service
- Government capital investment to develop community based services in communities where none exist and where there is evidence of viability.

Planning systems such as this are successfully applied in other industry sectors. For example, the National Health Act 1953 controls the location of pharmacies that are approved to dispense pharmaceutical benefits, taking into account the distance from the nearest approved pharmacy and the resident population in the catchment area.

ACCS believes that the Federal Government could develop similar legislation in regard to approval of children's services for Child Care Benefit fee relief, which takes into account ownership and location.

ACCS goal is for Federal child care planning policy that will:

- Build Australian community capacity and empower families
- Retain, grow and strengthen the community based children's services sector
- Provide **all** Australian families with the choice to utilise not-for-profit community based children's services