

Response to the Ministerial Advisory Board's Te Kahu Aroha Addendum Report - **Improving pathways to achieving Permanency of Care for Children who have been in the Care of the State**



Oranga Tamariki response to Improving pathways to achieving Permanency of Care for Children who have been in the care of the State

Oranga Tamariki acknowledges the Ministerial Advisory Board's (the Board's) report, *Te Kahu Aroha: Addendum Report - Improving pathways to achieving Permanency of Care for Children who have been in the Care of the State* (the Report), outlining their views on improving pathways for tamariki and rangatahi who are in the care of the State.

The Report discusses several barriers the Board believe are preventing tamariki and rangatahi from being discharged from care, including the current State care system, visibility and planning for tamariki and rangatahi in care, capacity for social workers, and the current level of accountability across agencies that make up the State children's system.

Tamariki and rangatahi entrusted in the care of the Oranga Tamariki Chief Executive are precious taonga. It is important to ensure that decisions made about their care arrangements are made as quickly as possible, the reality is that permanency planning is complex, and can take time to work through.

The beginning of a new care strategy

The Report strongly indicates that the State care system needs to be reset, where care services are procured and monitored. The Report has asked for Oranga Tamariki to consider implementing a new care strategy with urgency.

We agree and acknowledge that urgent work is required for tamariki and rangatahi in our care or needing to come in to care. We recognise that finding appropriate care placement options and the quality of care in many cases can be challenging due to a lack of forward planning, resourcing and competing priorities that exist at a local, regional and national level.

In April 2024, a new temporary role was established - Director Care Strategy Development - to lead the development of a national care strategy, including an implementation approach. The existing Chief Social Worker of Oranga Tamariki has been seconded to this role and will lead this important work. The strategy will be inclusive of all settings that currently provide care for tamariki and rangatahi who are in State care, including residences and homes, whānau, and non-kin care, as well as care provided through iwi and community organisations. The Board's Report is integral in informing this important work.

As an organisation, we have been on the journey of devolving decision-making and resources back to iwi and community partners for some time. There has been significant progress in iwi partnerships across the motu, but there is still more to do. Continued devolution will take time; however, we expect that the development of a new strategy will enable the devolution of caregiving services while also being clear on the enduring role that Oranga Tamariki will have in care.

The Report rightly raises the need for ongoing implementation and resourcing of the Oranga Tamariki Disability Strategy (Disability Strategy), so that this can continue to inform the continuum of care, and can enable placements and care for tamariki whaikaha to be realised. The Disability Strategy is vital for upholding the rights of tamariki and rangatahi whaikaha. While engaging with the community as part of the strategy development, we heard that 'caregiving' needs to be reimagined, including support for caregivers in every situation. This includes ensuring that those providing any type of care have a foundational level of disability capability. We will continue to work on ensuring that tamariki and rangatahi whaikaha in care, their whānau and caregivers are given the support they deserve.



Supporting tamariki and rangatahi to return home from care

The Report notes that there are a range of changes and actions that are needed within Oranga Tamariki to consistently support tamariki to return home safely, some of which are operational in nature. The Report also details that many of the tamariki and rangatahi who have been in stable placements for 18 months or more may be able to be discharged from the care of the Chief Executive into the stable placement they are currently in, and that they would likely benefit from this action.

The Board heard from both Oranga Tamariki and the Independent Children’s Monitor challenges in returning tamariki and rangatahi home to their whānau and progressing to permanency. We are continuing our dedicated approach to identifying tamariki and rangatahi who should be returned home to their whānau, and increasing our support and engagement with our local and system-level partners to ensure that these are successful and enduring placements.

A Service Delivery approach to returning tamariki to parents, family or whānau was set up as a project at the beginning of 2023. The purpose of this work is to support the discharge of orders for tamariki and rangatahi who are in long-term safe, stable placements with parents or whānau, ensure there is visibility of care arrangements at site and regional levels. The project also focusses on ensuring there are plans in place for tamariki and rangatahi and that reviewing and monitoring of these plans is taking place across our regions, utilising care clinics and other existing mechanisms to support progress. There is work underway to lift the visibility of tamariki and rangatahi in care and ensure that sites and regions are working together with partners, including the Family Court to progress permanency. This includes reviewing policy and guidance on Returning Home from Care and working with the Family Court.

The Disability Strategy also identifies ‘transitions’ as a focus area. Through our engagements, we have heard from the disability community (including caregivers and whānau of disabled people) that disabled tamariki and rangatahi need more support returning home from care.

Social worker capacity and prioritisation of tamariki and rangatahi in care

The Report highlighted the need for both children in care and caregiver social workers to have adequate time and capacity to effectively plan and implement exit plans for tamariki and rangatahi. The Board also notes that it would like to see collaboration between children in care and caregiver social workers to be strengthened, and for there to be a strategy to “address the tension” that exists between the roles, with greater oversight of permanency cases and visibility of tamariki and rangatahi in care at a site level.

Although there is still more work to do, we have been focused on ensuring collaboration between children in care and caregiver social workers for some time. Many sites now have a permanency or care clinic where site kaimahi working with tamariki and rangatahi who have been identified for permanency meet on a regular basis and discuss the progress being made towards permanency being achieved. This is an opportunity to identify any barriers to achieving permanency, and to make a collaborative and time-sensitive plan to address them. At these clinics there is a focus on accountability for planning, as decision-making is recorded and is followed up at subsequent meetings. These clinics are an ongoing opportunity for children in care and caregiver social workers to discuss cases and plan collaboratively, and a place for any perceived tension to be addressed.

The Office of the Chief Social Worker is also carrying out an in-depth analysis of social worker caseloads to look at evidence-based, safe and appropriate caseload benchmarks for social workers. Social workers have been surveyed and the Office of the Chief Social Worker has consulted with kaimahi throughout the motu to understand more about the complexities

involved in caseloads. As part of this project, a literature review of social work caseload size, the relationship between size, complexity and workload, and a discussion paper on the role and responsibilities of care and protection social workers have been completed. While this work is ongoing, the flow on work will enable us to identify areas where there are gaps in our resourcing and make better decisions about how to support social workers to dedicate their focus to the tamariki and rangatahi on their caseload in a safe and manageable way.

Oranga Tamariki are progressing the development of a Frontline Workforce Strategy. This acknowledges that social workers are at the center of statutory accountabilities and responsibilities, but that a wider team is required to ensure social workers the capacity to focus on their core responsibilities and to better respond to the holistic needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau. A recent trial and evaluation of an Allied Support Worker role demonstrated positive results for enabling social workers to have more time for core mahi, with the recommendation made by sites for the role to continue. The Social Workers Registration Board is also undertaking work scoping an Assistant Social Worker role, with a lens to assuring public safety for 'social work-like' roles and have indicated a desire to work closely with Oranga Tamariki in its development.

As mentioned in Appendix Three of the Report, there are several specialised roles that have already been introduced with a dedicated focus to progressing permanency planning, so that caregiver and children's social workers can maintain their focus on tamariki and rangatahi. These roles include Open Home Foundation kaimahi working as dedicated permanency social workers, as well as kairaranga-a-whānau who are able to assist with strengthening whānau, hapū and iwi connections.

Children's system needs to work together to support permanency

We agree strongly with the Board's views that the Children's system needs to work together cohesively, including with community partners to ensure that all agencies are focusing on ensuring good outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi in care. There is more work to do to strengthen relationships between agencies to ensure each agency is fulfilling their role.

The Report recommended legislative change to the Children's Act 2014, the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, and the National Care Standards to ensure that the obligations of each agency within the children's system is identified and held accountable for their responsibility to delivering services to children in the care of the State. Oranga Tamariki will consider the recommendations made by the Board and provide an update on progress in July 2024.

Similarly, the Report raises concerns about the role of the Family Court in progressing tamariki and rangatahi to permanency, and that changes are required to ensure that timeliness and decision-making is improved, with a recommendation that the Family Court has the ability to make orders against other state agencies in addition to Oranga Tamariki.

We are in agreement that we require the entire Children's system to work together to support tamariki and rangatahi to reach their full potential. At present, Oranga Tamariki is expected to address and meet the needs of tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau that should be met by other State agencies. To affect significant change across the Children's system, we need all agencies to be engaged and involved in the process, and committed to a long-term vision that sees tamariki and rangatahi who have been in the care of the State able to have secure futures that are fully resourced and supported.

The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan is a commitment from government agencies to collaborate and deliver better outcomes for children and young people in Aotearoa with the greatest needs. The Plan contains 11 Actions that were approved in mid-2022. Continuing this work will enable the required changes to be made.



The Gateway Assessment Review is an example of Oranga Tamariki, Health and Education working collaboratively to consider how an existing service can be improved to support better outcomes for vulnerable tamariki and rangatahi. The Gateway Assessment is currently in place to identify and meet the health and education needs of tamariki and rangatahi in care, coming into care, or at risk of coming into care. The review includes gathering insights on what is working and what needs to change by talking to those currently involved with the assessment process.

The Report raises concerns that there are lengthy wait times for follow up, and that agencies do not always work together to address the recommendations raised through the Gateway Assessment. Open Home Foundation is currently the only non-government organisation who is able to take orders, but unable to access the Gateway Assessments. These concerns are being considered as part of the Gateway Assessment Review process, and it is our hope that this will result in a strengthening in the relationship between the services involved to achieve greater outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi. We will provide a further update on the progress of this review in July 2024.

Further work is required to fully consider the recommendations made with regards to the Children's system, and potential legislation changes to driver greater collective accountability for the outcomes for children in care across agencies. We are committed to providing further updates as this work progresses.

Evaluation of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service is well underway

The Report discusses the funding and functioning of the Permanent Caregiver Support Service, Turuki Healthcare. Oranga Tamariki initiated a review of the service in October 2023. It is important that Turuki Healthcare is able to manage the complexity and volume of referrals that it receives, and therefore a review of the service is timely. It is expected that this review will be completed by July 2024.

Commitment to change

We recognise that the Board has played a significant role in informing the reshaping of Oranga Tamariki through Te Kahu Aroha, subsequent reports, and in providing independent advice and assurance to the Minister.

While this Report has been provided during a time of significant change for Oranga Tamariki, it is timely as it will inform our work to implement the new operating model, shift our focus to our core business, and put tamariki and whānau at the centre of all we do. The current operating context and complexity of the recommendations made in the Report mean that in some cases further work is required to fully articulate the action to be taken in response. Oranga Tamariki remain committed to providing regular updates on this work as it progresses.

No.	Recommendation	Activities Underway	Status	Indicative timeframe
1.	<p>Tamariki in stable placements 18 months or more could be discharged</p> <p>We believe that many of the tamariki who have been in stable placements for 18 months or more may be able to be discharged from the care of the Chief Executive into the stable placement they are in, and that they would likely benefit from this action.</p>	<p>A project was established to focus on the return of tamariki to parents, family or whānau at the beginning of 2023.</p> <p>The purpose of the project is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the discharge of orders for those tamariki and rangatahi who are in long term, safe and stable placements with parents, family or whānau • ensure there is visibility of care arrangements at a site and regional level • ensure there are plans in place, and that monitoring and reviewing of these plans are taking place across regions • strengthen Oranga Tamariki relationships with our partners, lawyers, judiciary and courts to discharge those tamariki and rangatahi from our care • utilise care clinics and existing mechanisms as engagement opportunities to make progress. <p>As part of the monitoring and review of this mahi, Oranga Tamariki will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify mechanisms that make family or whānau, or return/remain home care arrangements visible at a site and regional level • establish regular monitoring across regions of tamariki in family and whānau or return home care arrangements • utilise court liaison meetings to report on progress, seek shared decisions around barriers, and maintain an ongoing focus on permanency cases. • encourage sites to develop processes to identify tamariki who have been in long-term stable placements with whānau where there is potential to establish permanency and discharge orders • identify regional and site practice. examples of tamariki who have returned or remained home and are thriving to learn from these. <p>What have we done and what are we doing to continue this mahi:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oranga Tamariki has established a governance group to oversee delivery of the project, and a working group to form a direct link to regions and sites to ensure the project is delivered and this mahi is given priority. • All regions have developed action plans (returning tamariki to parents, family or whānau plans) that focus on the challenges, barriers, goals and mechanisms to identify those tamariki that have been in safe stable long-term placements with parents, family or whānau. • The mahi is guided by the Oranga Tamariki practice approach (relational, inclusive and restorative) and plans to return tamariki to parents, family or whānau have been developed alongside the judiciary, Permanent Caregiver Support Services (PCSS), community partners, and regional operation specialists who have 	Inform	<p>Key factors that contribute to positive examples of tamariki and rangatahi will be gathered by the end of June 2024.</p> <p>The second review of regional plans to determine progress across sites and regions will be completed by June 2024.</p> <p>Oranga Tamariki will provide regular updates as part of the quarterly assurance process, and a final update against all other activities will be provided by June 2025.</p>



		<p>engaged site managers and their practice leaders to set realistic targets to achieve permanency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oranga Tamariki has identified tamariki and rangatahi who can move to permanency. Each site has set up systems and goals to ensure moves to permanency occur, including through strengthening existing mechanisms such as care clinics and/or care leadership processes. There is work underway to update our policy and practice guidance to support this mahi, including the development of a return home policy. Practice prompts for tamariki in care/returning home have been drafted to support kaimahi when working with tamariki who are returning home. In order to ensure that tamariki and rangatahi are safe when they are returning home from care, Oranga Tamariki will work to upskill social workers on how to establish safety planning skills. <p>Oranga Tamariki will continue to identify key factors that contribute to positive examples of tamariki and rangatahi returning home and will use this information to improve and strengthen practice in this area.</p> <p>Finally, Oranga Tamariki is currently undertaking the second review of the regional plans to determine progress across our sites and regions. Regional operation specialists and regional litigation managers are undertaking this review with their regions and sites, which will be completed by the end of June 2024.</p>		
<p>2.</p>	<p>Reset of state care model</p> <p>Our final finding is that we believe it is time for the concept of State care to be rethought. We make this statement to assist and support your discussion with Oranga Tamariki. While a substantial work programme would be needed to reset the model of care, we think the returns for tamariki, for family and whānau, for community and for New Zealand as a whole could be considerable and are profoundly needed.</p> <p>The care strategy needs to address the shortage of placements, and also ensure ongoing resourcing of the Disability Strategy to support tangata whaikaha.</p>	<p>Oranga Tamariki Chief Executive Chappie Te Kani announced in April 2024 that the development of a national care strategy and implementation approach was needed. The strategy will be inclusive of all care settings that currently provide care for tamariki and rangatahi who are in Oranga Tamariki care – including residences and homes, whānau and non-kin care, and care provided through iwi and community organisations.</p> <p>The strategy will help enable the devolution of caregiving services, while also being clear on the enduring role that Oranga Tamariki will have in the care system.</p> <p>Placements for tangata whaikaha will be a priority. In particular, investments in disability capability in the community and with community providers could alleviate the pressure on placements.</p> <p>A temporary role has been established, Director – National Care Strategy Development, to lead this work, reporting directly to the Chief Executive for six months.</p>	<p>Inform</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Prioritising visibility of tamariki in care</p> <p>We believe it is vital that Oranga Tamariki continues to ensure greater visibility of the needs of children in the care of the Chief Executive. This includes ensuring that sites and regions know that the needs of this cohort must be prioritised, within their busy and demanding workloads.</p>	<p>Refer to Recommendation 1.</p> <p>This project is currently underway and is working on ensuring there is visibility of our care arrangements at both site and regional levels. It is also focusing on ensuring there are plans in place for tamariki and rangatahi in care, and that these are monitored and reviewed across our regions.</p> <p>In addition, there is specific work already underway under the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan that is addressing this recommendation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification of children in care within the health care system 	<p>Inform</p>	<p>Oranga Tamariki will provide regular updates as part of the quarterly assurance process, and a final update against all other activities will be provided by June 2025.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Gateway Assessment review and enhancements improved information and data sharing across the children's system, with the first focus being education attendance and data sharing. 		
4.	<p>Returning home from care</p> <p>This Oranga Tamariki work plan to support safe transitions home and/or to permanent placements and to address the barriers to tamariki safely exiting care should remain a priority. To support this, we assert that it is necessary to regularly review the implementation of this work plan, thereby mitigating the risk of slippage and the de-prioritisation of care in future.</p>	<p>Refer to Recommendation 1.</p> <p>Specifically, this project has resulted in all regions having developed action plans (returning tamariki to parents, family or whānau plans) that focus on the challenges, barriers, goals and mechanisms to identify those tamariki that have been in safe, stable, long-term placements with parents, family or whānau.</p> <p>The work has been guided by the practice approach, and returning tamariki to parents, family or whānau plans have been developed alongside legal (who are working with the judiciary, Maori, Partnerships and Communities team who are connecting with PCSS and our community partners, and our regional operation specialists who have engaged site managers and their practice leaders to set achievable targets to achieve permanency.</p> <p>There is work underway to update our policy and practice guidance to support this mahi to remain a priority, including the review of the Return Home policy and guidance. This review will closely align to our practice framework and aligns with a number of aspects included in the Report including planning and ensuring the voice of te tamaiti is heard.</p> <p>Additionally, part of the Frontline Technology System Upgrade work is in progress to redesign the All About Me Plan, including digitisation of the content. This will ensure the All About Me Plan is more purposeful and allows all participants of the care team (including caregivers) to contribute.</p> <p>The Disability Strategy identifies 'transitions' as a focus area. Through Oranga Tamariki engagements we have heard from the disability community (and caregivers, whānau of disabled people) that disabled people need much more care and attention in this regard.</p>	Inform	Oranga Tamariki will provide regular updates as part of the quarterly assurance process, and a final update against all other activities will be provided by June 2025.
5.	<p>Adequate time and capacity for social workers</p> <p>The Oranga Tamariki work plan needs to continue to include a specific focus on:</p> <p>Children in Care social workers and Caregiver social workers having adequate time and capacity to effectively plan and then implement exit plans for tamariki and rangatahi, so that returns home or to permanent placement have the highest degree of certainty and safety. The Board believes that the role of the Caregiver Support social worker and the Children in Care social worker are critical so that there remains a focus on the needs of children in care and the support for caregivers. The Board would like to see the collaboration between these roles strengthened and a proactive strategy developed to address the tension that exists where these roles intersect. (See Appendix Four for more detail on the Oranga Tamariki briefing.)</p>	<p>The Office of the Chief Social Worker (OCSW) is currently carrying out an in-depth analysis of the caseloads of care and protection social workers. Social workers have been surveyed and OCSW has consulted with kaimahi across the country to understand case load complexities.</p> <p>A literature review has been completed to look at social work case load size and the relationship between case size, complexity and workload.</p> <p>A discussion paper on the role and responsibilities of care and protection social workers has been completed.</p> <p>The flow on effect of this work will be the ability to identify areas where there are gaps in resourcing and ensure that social workers are able to dedicate their focus on tamariki and rangatahi in a safe and manageable way.</p> <p>Following consideration of advice to Te Riu on how caseloads can be managed moving forward, a further update will be provided on any subsequent actions or changes to caseloads.</p> <p>There are several specialised roles that support care and protection social workers with a dedicated focus on permanency planning. These roles include Open Home Foundation permanency social workers and kairaranga-a-whānau. These roles help to lift and strengthen the capacity</p>	In progress	Te Riu to consider work on caseload complexity in April 2024

		of the workforce to focus on progressing tamariki and rangatahi towards permanency and enables social workers to focus on other work.		
6.	<p>More regular placement reviews</p> <p>More regular review of placements for children subject to Oranga Tamariki orders, to ensure greater visibility of children in care at the site level. We state this knowing that there are competing pressures on Oranga Tamariki sites, and these pressures can risk de-prioritisation of children who are stable in care as their attention is drawn to crisis incidents and those who are not in stable placements.</p>	<p>Placement reviews are regularly taking place as part of day-to-day social work. Placements are also being regularly reviewed as part of existing site mechanisms including care or permanency clinics and Court reviews.</p> <p>Oranga Tamariki will consider what further mechanisms can be established to ensure placements are reviewed at an appropriate frequency.</p>	In progress	
7.	<p>Six monthly reports from MAB to the Minister on progress</p> <p>For this reason, we believe that Oranga Tamariki and the Ministerial Advisory Board should report to you on a regular basis, at least six monthly, as to how the work to address the barriers that can keep children drifting in care are being addressed. Reporting should a focus on several aspects, including the development of the new Operating model and the work by the Chief Social worker to address workload capacity of social workers.</p>	<p>Oranga Tamariki will provide regular updates as work to respond to the recommendations of this review progresses.</p>	Inform	<p>Oranga Tamariki will provide regular updates as part of the quarterly assurance process, and a final update against all other activities will be provided by June 2025.</p>
8.	<p>Children’s system working together</p> <p>The Children system needs to work cohesively together, as well as with community partners, if the wellbeing of children who are brought to the attention of the State is to have the best potential to improve.</p>	<p>The Oranga Tamariki Action Plan (OTAP) is a commitment from government agencies to collaborate and deliver better outcomes for children and young people in Aotearoa with the greatest needs.</p> <p>There are currently several joint projects underway to strengthen our partnerships with other government agencies These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Gateway Assessment review and enhancements to ensure health, disability and education needs are identified and met • identification of children in care in the health system • improved information and data sharing, with an initial focus on education attendance data. <p>It is accepted that further work needs to be done to ensure that all Children’s system agencies are working together to enable tamariki and rangatahi in State care to progress towards permanency. Oranga Tamariki will consider what existing mechanisms are in place to address this recommendation, as well as any new work that may need to be undertaken.</p>	In progress	<p>Ongoing, with a final update expected by June 2025</p>
9.	<p>Legislative change to Children’s Act 2014 and Oranga Tamariki Act 1989</p> <p>The Children’s Act 2014 should be amended to make specific obligations on each agency within the State children’s system to share responsibility for delivering OTAP.</p> <p>In parallel, the Oranga Tamariki Act should also be amended to enable accountability for outcomes for tamariki that currently sit solely on the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki to be shared with other government agencies.</p> <p>This should also include amending the Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018, so that all relevant Chief Executives of the State Children’s agencies and all partners working with Oranga Tamariki, are obliged – as section 396 providers are already</p>	<p>It is accepted that a change to the legislation could offer substantial benefit to ensuring that the State Children’s system shares responsibility for delivering the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan. Oranga Tamariki will consider this recommendation when resourcing allows, as further work is required to determine what actions could to be taken in response.</p> <p>Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People have taken on the delivery of disability supports, formerly delivered by Ministry of Health. Whaikaha needs to be added to the list of Children’s system agencies and included in OTAP and any changes to legislation that would require action on the part of the Children’s system agencies.</p>	Under consideration	<p>Will be considered with final update to be provided by June 2025.</p>

	<p>– to meet the care standards. Currently the obligations sit on the Oranga Tamariki Chief Executive and their section 396 delegates alone but should be understood as a shared societal responsibility.</p>			
<p>10.</p>	<p>Investment for iwi and community partners</p> <p>There must also be equitable investment in resourcing of community partners to set them up for success to achieve the future vision of iwi and community partners being the primary leaders in the provision of care.</p>	<p>It is accepted that in order to devolve decision- making and resources to iwi and community partners, Oranga Tamariki must consider its ongoing investment strategy. This work is already underway, alongside the implementation of the new operating model and ongoing work regarding enabling communities.</p> <p>Investment in disability capability in communities is vital to setting community partners up for success. Consistent with the Disability Strategy anyone who cares for children (in any setting) must have a foundational level of disability capability.</p>	<p>Inform</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Changes to the Family Court System</p> <p>We believe that the legislative settings that create this inability for the Court to compel other State agencies to provide necessary supports to tamariki under the care of the Chief Executive requires urgent amendment. We suggest that a meeting between you and the Minister of Justice is a priority, to enable discussion of the critical role of the Family Court and whether there is an appetite to consider both legislative and process changes.</p> <p>We think these changes should include:</p> <p><i>Timeliness of court processes and decision making.</i> These need to be urgently addressed, as lengthy waits for both initial judgements and for consideration and approval of safe exit plans from State care are causing significant negative impacts for tamariki, while affecting their ability to plan for their future and to enjoy security and stability.</p> <p>Adding the ability for the Family Court to make orders against other state agencies in addition to Oranga Tamariki. Separately to addressing delays in the Family Court, the Family Court should be able to make binding orders against other children’s agencies rather than only against Oranga Tamariki, considering that the needs of many tamariki coming into the care of the Chief Executive are best able to be met by other portfolios (for example Health or Housing), and as the State as a whole has responsibilities to tamariki in care and therefore other state agencies should be accountable for their agency’s service to these children.</p> <p>Enabling innovation in approaches to decision on placements and custody orders. We believe there is merit in considering new options and innovations in how decision on custody orders, placements and exits from care are made. In particular, we believe active consideration should be given to the creation of a community panel approach to decisions on placements and custody orders. This could be a priority for a joint work programme between Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Justice over 2024. Committing to a work programme to consider this option should not require significant change at this stage, rather we seek a willingness to explore and potentially pilot and evaluate new options because we think it is apparent the current system is not working optimally for many. The Board suggests that the strengths of Parole Boards as a community panel model may provide some beneficial insights.</p>	<p>A review of Family Court policy and guidance is currently underway. Oranga Tamariki will work closely with the Family Court to better align our processes.</p> <p>Oranga Tamariki will further consider this recommendation when resourcing allows, as additional work is required to determine what actions can be taken in response.</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>	<p>Will be considered, with final update to be provided by June 2025.</p>

<p>12.</p>	<p>Evaluation of PCSS</p> <p>We otherwise note a final point on the PCSS regarding the need for a formal evaluation and funding review of the service [Turuki Healthcare]. We consider this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>Oranga Tamariki has advised the Board that it has been asked by Turuki Healthcare to carry out an evaluation of the PCSS, to enable opportunities for options to strengthen the service to be identified. Evaluation should include an understanding of the resourcing, service design, implementation, and overall effectiveness of the PCSS, as well as an understanding of its continual improvement goals. Our view is that an evaluation is both essential and timely.</p>	<p>An evaluation of PCSS is currently underway to provide insights about demand and resourcing, effectiveness, the appropriateness of current service delivery, and an understanding of caregivers' experiences within this service. The objectives of the evaluation are to know if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSS is currently effectively meeting the needs of permanent caregivers • the current model is cost-effective and providing value for money • legislation, policy settings, and service design provides whānau and families with the support they require • PCSS is inclusive, relational, restorative, and aligned to the overall purpose and strategy of Oranga Tamariki. <p>The evaluation is being completed in two phases which will be consolidated into a final evaluation report by July 2024.</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>July 2024</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Data and Information</p> <p>The Board believes that this reflects a lack of “one source of data truth” within Oranga Tamariki, and that this is a risk to the organisation as it undermines the ability of Oranga Tamariki to make evidence-informed decisions. We are concerned that the lack of robust detailed data can lead to imprecise planning and resourcing. We further believe it can contribute to a child’s custody status, whereabouts or length of time in care not being visible enough to drive implementing plans to enable them to safely exit the care of the Chief Executive.</p>	<p>Oranga Tamariki accepts that ongoing work is required to ensure that data is robust and detailed.</p> <p>The Frontline Technology Systems Upgrade programme is working to replace legacy Ministry of Social Development systems that are outdated and no longer meeting the needs of frontline kaimahi. One example of work included in the programme is the digitisation of All About Me Plans. This will provide kaimahi with easier ways of recording information. The long-term approach will mean this information will be populated to other areas where we record tamariki and rangatahi information resulting in less duplication and increased accuracy of information.</p> <p>We will work to consider what mechanisms can be utilised to ensure that there is a greater level of accuracy and confidence in our data.</p>	<p>Inform</p>	<p>N/A</p>