

Quality Assurance Function: Partnering for Outcomes

Te Kāhui Kāhu (formerly known as Social Services Accreditation) changes for Partnered Care from 1 July 2021

Information for care partners and Partnering for Outcomes staff



Context

The introduction of the National Care Standards & s7AA means that there are now clear quality expectations relating to the care and support for children and young people in care, their caregivers, and family or whānau. This has highlighted the need to better understand the outcomes and experiences for tamariki in care and the quality of practice within Oranga Tamariki and across care partners.

Over the past few years Oranga Tamariki and Te Kāhui Kāhu (formerly Social Services Accreditation) have worked together to identify what the National Care Standards mean for the work each agency does to support the quality of care delivered by our external care partners.

Feedback from care partners was clear:

- Care partners want a more joined-up assessment and quality assurance approach – with a focus on quality of practice and outcomes for children and young people
- Assessing and building *quality of practice* cannot be done via a visit every 6 or 12 months – it is an ongoing process that needs to be based on a collaborative approach, frequent discussion, a strong mutual understanding of strengths, contexts, and challenges
- Partners want minimal duplication and overlap
- There is a consensus that the quality of practice within care partners and Oranga Tamariki needs to be assessed consistently, particularly given the intertwined roles in the provision of care.

Changes from 1 July 2021

The decision was taken to establish a new Quality Assurance function within Oranga Tamariki that will support practice quality and learning across partnered care.

What will stay the same?

- From 1 July 2021, Te Kāhui Kāhu will focus on assessing care partners' business processes and systems against the SSA core Level 1 Standards.

What will be different?

- Te Kāhui Kāhu focuses on assessing a potential care partners' business processes and systems against Te Kāhui Kāhu core Level 1 Standards. Te Kāhui Kāhu will no longer perform the role of reviewing partners against their Specialist Care Standards. The Partnering for Outcomes (PfO) National Quality Hub will be taking over this function – using a new Quality Assurance Framework that was developed with existing care partners to understand the quality of care provided.



- The new Quality Assurance function within Partnering for Outcomes will assess the quality of practice for care partners against the National Care Standards.
- Approval of care partners will require both the Level 1 core SSA standards and an assessment of their readiness to provide quality care practice by Oranga Tamariki to be approved under s396 approval from the 1 July 2021.
- From 1 July 2021, accreditation for care partners will be a joined-up approach between our agencies.

Oranga Tamariki and Te Kāhui Kāhu are proactively working to ensure both organisations are aligned to minimise the compliance burden and reduce duplication for care partners as much as possible. Te Kāhui Kāhu and Oranga Tamariki will manage their own assessment cycle and reporting. Where requested by care partners, Te Kāhui Kāhu and the PfO National Quality Hub will work together to plan a suitable process, on a case-by-case basis.

What does this change mean?

Oranga Tamariki will take on the role of assessing the quality of practice with a greater focus on understanding the experiences of the children, young people, carers, and whānau or family involved in care. This change will mean:

- Oranga Tamariki is taking back the mandate for s396 care partner approval, and the responsibility for the specialist care standards from 1 July 2021
- Te Kāhui Kāhu will cease to assess care partners against the care services specialist standards from 30 June 2021.
- Te Kāhui Kāhu will no longer provide assurances to Oranga Tamariki regarding care services apart from organisational assurances. However, for all non-care services, Te Kāhui Kāhu will continue to provide Level 2 and Level 3 accreditation.
- Approval of care partners will require both the Level 1 core SSA standards and approval by Oranga Tamariki as a care partner as being assessed on their ability to provide quality care practice and be approved under s396 from 1 July 2021.
- Oranga Tamariki Quality Assurance Hub and Te Kāhui Kāhu will continue to work together to minimise duplication for partners where practicable.

This means the role of Te Kāhui Kāhu in assessing care partners from 1 July 2021 will be:

- Te Kāhui Kāhu will continue to assess all existing Level 1 accreditation.
- Partners will be assessed at the highest level of active services.

- Assessments will include the recruitment and selection of caregivers and care staff under the Staffing standard, based on provider records (review of staff files).
 - Te Kāhui Kāhu staffing standard will now assess care partners against, the selection and recruitment requirements for caregivers and care staff under National Care Standards and Other Matters 2018 (regs 45-56) and Appendices B, C and E (as applicable) of the [Shared Care Service Specification](#).
 - If care partners have employed children's workers they also need to consider any additional requirements that may exist under the Children's Act 2014.
 - The level 1 staffing standard has been updated to reflect these changes/requirements: [Accreditation Levels -Te Kāhui Kāhu](#)
- There will be no visits to care homes, caregiver interviews, or review of client files (unless relevant to Level 2 or Level 3 service types).
- Site visits continue for all sites where staff are based and services are delivered from (Level 2 or Level 3 services).
- Level 1 care partners move to 24-month review frequency (unless shortened due to risk factors)
- Each partner's review frequency will be adjusted on a case-by case basis according to their circumstances and last full accreditation assessment.

The role of the PfO National Quality Hub in assessing care partners from 1 July 2021 will involve:

Approving new care partners

- For organisations that are considering becoming a care partner, approval will require both the Level 1 accreditation from Te Kāhui Kāhu and approval of Quality of Practice by Oranga Tamariki from the 1 July 2021.
- There are four steps in the process to receiving approval to provide Care Services prior to becoming a care partner: (1) preparation, (2) care partner readiness, (3) approval, and (4) transition into the Quality Assurance cycle.
- Preparation: Regional Oranga Tamariki teams will lead this step in the process with potential care partners. We expect that organisations considering becoming a care partner will have already been in discussions at a local / regional level with Oranga Tamariki staff including, for example, Partnering for Outcomes advisors, local site managers, and / or specialist teams such as Whānau Care, High Needs Services or Youth Justice.
- Readiness and approval: The PfO National Quality Hub will lead these steps in the process with potential care partners. During these phases, we begin building our partnership, welcoming the potential care partner, understanding their needs and aspirations, and developing a clear picture of the model of care and the capacity and capability needed to deliver it.



From 1 July 2021

PfO Advisors should notify Te Kāhui Kāhu and PfO National Quality Hub of an intent to contract and explore with the potential partner the details of the approval process which includes: Te Kāhui Kāhu Level 1 accreditation and becoming a care partner process. If a joint approach is requested by the care partner, the PfO advisor will organise a meeting with PFO National Quality Lead and Te Kāhui Kāhu to plan the approach.

Te Kāhui Kāhu will advise PfO National Quality Hub when a level 1 care partner is ready for level 1 accreditation review and Te Kāhui Kāhu will ascertain whether the partner would like a joint approach.

Key contacts

We recognise a level of adaptability and flexibility will be needed over the next few months as all parties familiarise themselves with the new processes.

For questions around the Quality Assurance function within Oranga Tamariki, please contact the PfO National Quality Hub at: PfOQuality@Ot.govt.nz

For questions around Te Kāhui Kāhu, please contact: accreditation@tekahuikahu.govt.nz

More information

For information and guidance around the Quality Assurance function within Oranga Tamariki, please visit the [Quality Assurance](#) and [Becoming a Care Partner](#) pages on the Oranga Tamariki website