

# Participant Handover Summary – Practice Guidelines



The Handover Summary was developed through co-design sessions with young people, front line child protection workers, and Transition Coaches working in Home Stretch WA services.

## Overview

A Handover Summary must be completed with every young person before they age out of Home Stretch WA services by the age of 21, and in cases where a young person chooses to Opt-Out of the service offer. The document is the responsibility of the young person's transition coach.

The Handover Summary functions as an updated *Leaving Care Plan*, articulating the future goals and aspirations of the young persons, and describe the progress they have made and the support circles that the young person has developed. The document should clearly identify any future goals that may require financial support from the Leaving Care Fund, with such potential requests aligned to the practice approach and principles of Invest In Me.

## A Record of Financial Support Provided

The tool was in part developed to support district offices to have relevant information that can be referenced when making decisions about how to respond to requests for discretionary funding made by a young person who has aged out or opted out of the Home Stretch WA Service Offer. This is typically for young people aged 21 – 25.

Under the Home Stretch WA, young people have access to a significant safety net of financial resources that is visible, accessible and individualized, but also provided within a model of support that works to build their capacity and self-reliance. The primary focus of transition coaching is to build a young person's interdependence, assisting them to grow natural support networks and more mainstream support services beyond the child protection system.

The safety net includes individual allocations for a Housing Allowance that can financially support young people to Stay On in stable placements or to have other options subsidized. The financial support also includes access to the Invest In Me Fund [brokerage] provided as part of 1:1 transitional coaching support.

Young people supported in the Home Stretch WA have all of their financial supports resourced through Home Stretch WA Transition Coach, and they are flagged within the ASIST database to be referred back to Home Stretch WA for non-emergency after hours requests for financial assistance. Financial support provided by Home

Stretch WA is not recorded in the ASIST database, but is captured by the Home Stretch WA Provider.

### Opportunity to 'Tweak' the Leaving Care Plan over time

One of the key benefits of extending supports to care leavers to 21 is to provide a more developmentally appropriate approach to leaving care planning. Working with their Transition Coach, young people have a consistent and reliable support that can assist them with developing the skills of planning and problem solving in a consistent and intentional way. This allows them to adapt and change their plans over time, and co-create a 'Leaving Care Plan' that is more reflective of their individual needs and how they might access supports in the community after 21.

The Handover Summary provides an opportunity for a young person to be supported to articulate these needs, and to have developed an approach to help seeking, communicating and advocating for themselves.

### Trauma Informed - Reduce how often young people need to repeat their story

Young people involved in the design and testing of the Home Stretch WA model identified that the handover summary provides an opportunity for them to be able to communicate their experiences and expressed needs in a format that reduces that number of times they may need to re-tell their story when requesting assistance.

This is particularly relevant for young people who may be accessing support from a district office they are unfamiliar, or where they have lost contact of connection with staff and individuals they had previously relied upon for support.

### How is a Handover Summary prepared?

The Handover Summary should be prepared in collaboration with the young person and developed over the last 12 months of support provided by the Home Stretch service. Transition Coaches should draw on the assessment and planning activities they have undertaken over the length of engagement with the young person, with a particular emphasis on ensuring a young person is aware of their support circles.

Most young people will still require some support after 21, however in most cases that will be related to a specific life domain rather than an ongoing need for specialist child protection support and resources. Home Stretch WA providers should be working with young people from 17 1/2 to grow their connections and interdependence with mainstream services and natural support networks. When a young person reaches 20, engagement with any longer-term specialist supports (e.g. Housing, Mental Health, Employment) should be a priority of support. Where there is a need for ongoing specialist support from a Leaving Care program, this

should also be mapped out and the young person connected with the relevant service or support option.

Developing a Handover Summary is an important opportunity to reflect positively on the progress a young person has made, and help celebrate and acknowledge their transitions across different areas of their life. It provides a structured way to bring the Transition Coach's relationship with the young person to a positive end, and helps to offset in potential self-sabotage behaviours by ensuring any ongoing support needs are well understood and mapped to the young person's support circles.

The Summary also is an opportunity to educate and empower young people with an awareness of their rights and confirm their capacity to independently seek financial support from the Leaving Care Fund.

### **What information should be included?**

Information included in the handover summary must be approved by the young person, and capture the information they feel is relevant to support their ability to access discretionary financial support from the Department of Communities under the Children and Communities Act.

The Summary is structured into discrete sections that cover each of the life domains identified in the National Framework for Transitioning from Care. It also includes sections for Parenting Skills and for information about NDIS packages.

The handover summary does not need to provide a full summary for each of the life domains, but should be restricted to what is relevant, useful and important from the agreed perspective of the young person and their coach.

Young people have articulated that this document provides them an opportunity to shape how they are perceived and responded to, as well as reduce the number of times they have to justify or rationalize their support needs when seeking discretionary assistance.

Support circles are identified as the first and primary focus, in line with the transition coaching approach of building young peoples interdependence.

Financial supports are listed last as a quick reference for CPFS workers to refer to.

### **Where is the Handover Summary shared?**

A copy of the document must be provided to the Department of Communities within 1 month of the young person reaching 21 or Opting Out of the service. Ideally the document is shared with the District Office that the young person is most comfortable in accessing should they need supports after 21, or with any District

Office they may have had positive relationships and experiences with. Home Stretch WA providers should use the Handover Summary as a way to deepen connections with District Office staff and reassure them of the positive impact support has had on young people, and share good news stories about outcomes and success for young people.

The District Office receiving the Handover Summary will document in the ASIST database that it has been received and link to where a copy has been saved.

While the Handover Summary is provided to the Department of Communities, it does not constitute a handover of support back to a District Office, but rather a contemporary source of information for District Office staff. The Department of Communities will typically use the Handover Summary as a reference to assist them in making decisions about future requests for financial support from the Leaving Care Fund.

The Handover Summary document can also be used by a Transition Coach to clearly communicate relevant information to another agency or individual who will be providing support to a young person who has been supported by a Home Stretch WA service, helping to create a smooth transition of support. This includes handing over support to another Home Stretch WA provider.

### **How should it be shared?**

Young people should be encouraged to be directly involved in sharing information back to a District office, empowering them to redefine how they connect and seek help through the Child Protection System.

For young people who may require more support, it can be helpful for the Transition Coach to arrange a meeting with the relevant post-care team or duty officer in a nominated District Office identified by the young person as where they would most likely access for future financial support after 21. This can help to familiarise a young person with how each District responds to requests for post care support. For regional districts, young people should be supported to understand how the central duty system works in responding to and authorising requests for financial support.

### **What if a young person doesn't wish to share any information?**

The level of detail and information required in the document will be guided by the young person's right to determine what is shared back with the system. Transition Coaches must apply a strengths approach when developing the summary, using the document as an opportunity to clearly define and articulate the internal strengths and resources a young person has developed. The handover summary should create a positive narrative of the young person that they have helped to define, which can help to redefine their relationship with the child protection as no

longer a dependent, but as an interdependent young adult who is part of and contributing to the community.

While young people will shape most of the content, the Handover Summary must contain a summary of financial payments made through Invest In Me, in line with the Data recording requirements of the Home Stretch WA minimum data set.

### Practice Tips

- Highlight strengths and progress
- Be brief and be specific about expressed needs
- Explain the process of seeking financial assistance after 21 – reinforce principles from Invest In Me. Chipping In etc
- Provide the rationale for the young person in writing - help them to articulate their rationale clearly when they return to a district for help.
- Inform them of their rights and responsibilities to access support to 25 in completing this document
- Prioritise what young people identify as important in the summary
- Think Interdependence beyond the District Office – Identify the option

## Quick Reference Guide for Completing a Handover Summary

### Overview of Progress

- This section provides the Transition Coach and Young Person the opportunity to provide a strengths based narrative of a young person, affirming and reflecting back to the Department of Communities the growth and development over the time they have been supported.
- Many young people identified that they felt that their case file history and experiences while in care often meant they were perceived or defined by things that had happened to them, or mistakes they had made when they were in care.
- This brief snapshot provides an opportunity to define a new narrative that can be shared back with a district office that can help define a young person by what they have achieved and where they are headed.

## Life Domains

### Social Relationships and Support Networks

#### Current Support Circle

- Consider who are the primary supports a young person has identified in ecomapping, family finding or other support circle activities that they would like to be included as contacts in times of crisis.
- What services are currently supporting the young person, and what are they assisting with, how long will this support continue.
- Siblings or family members currently in the care system with whom the young person may need support to visit.

### Housing and Accommodation

#### Current Housing Status

- This section provides a brief snapshot of the details of the young person's current living arrangement.
- An update on a young person's status with the Department of Housing Waitlist must also be included.

#### Summary of Support

- Relevant information about the young persons living arrangements and how they were supported through the Housing Allowance or Staying On Subsidy as part of Home Stretch WA.

#### Future Supports

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may be linked in with around their housing pathway plan.
- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues. Active referrals, placed on waitlist, identified goals around future housing options.

### Health [Exclude NDIS Related]

#### Summary of Support

- Relevant information about the young person's progress and support needs across health, mental health, sexual health and dental.
- May include information regarding their mental or physical health care needs that is relevant for accessing support through Rapid Response Agreements, public services or private options.

## **Future Supports**

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may be linked in with around their health and wellbeing.
- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues. Active referrals, placed on waitlist, identified goals around future health or medical supports.

## **Education, Training, Employment or Meaningful Activity**

### **Summary of Support**

- Relevant information about the young person's progress and achievements in education, training and employment
- May include information relevant to their goals and aspirations around future study or work pathways, and interest areas.
- Identify key support circle – people, places, courses that have been important and meaningful for the young person.

## **Future Supports**

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may need around education, training or employment.
- A rationale for the ongoing funding of education costs – particularly where there is a career pathway that is being undertaken.
- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues.

## **Life and After Care Skills**

### **Summary of Support**

- Relevant information about the young person's progress and achievements in this domain
- May include information relevant to their goals and aspirations around future social and recreational activities, and interest areas.
- Identify key support circle – people, places, courses that have been important and meaningful for the young person.

## **Future Supports**

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may need around life skills
- A rationale for the ongoing funding of recreational or life skill development costs – particularly where there is a strong link to the development of support circles.

- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues.

## Identity and Culture

### Summary of Support

- Relevant information about the young person's progress and achievements in this domain
- May include information relevant to their connection to cultural identity, beliefs, values or connection to country.
- Who's My Mob Book Attachment
- Identify key support circle – people, places, courses that have been important and meaningful for the young person to develop their identity and culture.

### Future Supports

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may need to help connect or reconnect them to country, culture or community.
- A rationale for the ongoing funding of costs – particularly where there is a strong link to the development of cultural identity or connection community. Including appropriate reunification with community or family.
- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues.

## Legal Matters

### Summary of Support

- Relevant information about the young person's progress and circumstances in this domain.
- Has the young person accessed information relevant to their personal history through freedom of info requests.
- May include information relevant to any ongoing or outstanding legal issues, unpaid fines or pending court matters that may impact the young person.
- Information about progress of CIC Claims
- Information about any current guardianship orders

### Future Supports

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may need around legal matters.
- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues.



## Parenting Skills

### Summary of Support

- Relevant information about the young person's current children, and their living and custody arrangements.
- Strengths, Needs and Challenges around parenting skills.
- History of notifications of concern made about the child, what interventions or supports were put in place that were effective.

### Support Circle – Child

- Consider who are the primary supports for the child as identified by the parent in eco-mapping, family finding or other support circle activities.
- What services are currently supporting the child, and what are they assisting with, how long will this support continue [Child Health Nurse, Intensive Family Support etc.].

### Future Supports

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person may need around parenting skills.
- Outstanding or current issues that are unresolved, and what has been put in place to overcome these issues.

## NDIS Supports

### Current Details of NDIS Package

- A summary of the package of support currently provided to the young person through the NDIS. Can be attached to the Handover Summary documents.

### NDIS Provider Details

- Current provider, support coordinator and key contact.

### Summary of Support

- Any current or identified future supports or resources a young person has needed on top of the NDIS package that have been provided by Home Stretch WA,
- Particularly note any ongoing support that has been provided as part of Staying On agreements and what additional services or supports have been brokered and provided to carers.

## Financial Security

### **Summary of Financial Support Provided**

- An itemised summary of the spending provided through the Invest In Me Fund, linked to life domain and aspiration vs emergency
- An itemised summary of Housing Allowance Expenditure [Staying On Subsidy Payments or Housing Subsidy]
- TILA Status – Has the young person utilized their TILA grant.

### **Recommendation for Future Financial Support**

- Specific Itemised List of financial support that a young person has requested as part of adapting their leaving care plan funding commitments.
- Any specific recommendations around opportunities for the young person to access mainstream resources
- Account of the progress a young person has made towards financial independence, and key motivators and drivers towards these.
- A reflection on the capacity of the young person to independently advocate or negotiate requests for additional funding that are not identified in this section.